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Climate Change and News Audiences Report 2024: Analysis of News Use and Attitudes in Eight Countries

Waqas Ejaz, Mitali Mukherjee and Richard Fletcher

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Contents

About the Authors 2
Acknowledgements 2

Executive Summary 3
Introduction 6
Methodology 8
Chapter 1: Climate Change News Use and Trust 10
Chapter 2: Perceived Exposure to Climate Change Misinformation 19
Chapter 3: Public Perception of the Conference of the Parties (COP) 22
Chapter 4: Extreme Weather Events: Experiences and Media Representation 27
Chapter 5: Change in Public Views on Climate Action and Impacts 33
Conclusion 40

References 41

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About the Authors

Dr Waqas Ejaz is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. His research interests include studying comparative journalism practices, climate change communication, and the use and effects of digital media.

Mitali Mukherjee is Acting Director and Director of Journalist Programmes at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. She has more than two decades of experience as a political economy journalist across TV, print, and digital platforms. She was a Chevening fellow for the South Asia Journalism Fellowship 2020, a Raisina Asian Forum for Global Governance Young Fellow 2019, and a 2017 fellow of the Australia India Youth Dialogue. In 2020, she was nominated for the prestigious Red Ink Awards in India for two of her business stories.

Dr Richard Fletcher is Director of Research at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. He is primarily interested in global trends in digital news consumption, comparative media research, the use of social media by journalists and news organisations, and more broadly, the relationship between technology and journalism.

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Published by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism with the support of the Laudes Foundation and the European Climate Foundation (ECF).

Executive Summary

This report is part of an ongoing project to explore public engagement with news and information about climate change, and how people perceive, experience, and respond to its escalating impacts. The data come from an online survey of people in eight countries: Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Pakistan, the UK, and the USA. The data were collected in November 2024.

A key theme emerging from this year's findings is 'climate perception inertia' – a stagnation in public views on, attitudes to, and engagement with climate issues and information over time, despite the growing urgency of the crisis. The public understanding of risks, evaluations of institutional responses, interaction with climate news, and views on policy actions have, in most cases, remained remarkably stable since 2022, reflecting limited shifts in awareness and engagement.

Based on survey data from eight countries, we find the following related to climate change news and information consumption:

- On average across eight countries, half (50%) see, read, or hear news or information about climate change on a weekly basis – showing little change from 2022 (51%).

- Climate news and information consumption is highest in France (60%), with lower numbers in the USA (34%) where, against the backdrop of the presidential election, there was a 16 percentage point (pp) fall from 2023.

- The news media continues to be the primary way people access climate change information – ahead of documentaries, social media, and interpersonal communication – with television news (31%) and online news websites/apps (24%) the most widely used media. Video is people's preferred format, ahead of text.

- Half (50%) say that they trust the news media on climate change – a figure that has also changed little from 2022 (52%). Scientists are by far the most trusted source of climate change information (74%) as well as the most visible source in news coverage.

- Although some argue that 'every story is a climate story', people are most interested in climate news that intersects with local news (52%) and weather (54%), emphasising the importance of personal relevance. People say they are less interested in climate news that intersects with entertainment coverage (25%).

Findings related to climate change misinformation:

- On average across eight countries, the proportion that think they see false and misleading information about climate change on a weekly basis is 25% – with little change from 2022 (27%).

- The highest figures for self-reported climate change misinformation exposure can be found in India (43%), with considerably lower figures in the UK (17%) and Japan (16%). However, it is crucial to keep in mind that these are perceptions and do not necessarily reflect the prevalence of misinformation in these countries.

- People associate climate misinformation with a range of different sources, with politicians and political parties (12%), government (11%), celebrities (10%), and activists (10%) topping the list.

Findings related to public awareness of and attitudes to the Conference of the Parties (COP), which overlapped with the survey fieldwork:

- We find little evidence that the occurrence of COP29 during the survey fieldwork widened access to climate change news and information, given that the proportion in the data who saw, read, or heard news or information about climate change showed little change from previous years.

- One reason for this is that, on average across eight countries, 14% say they had 'never heard of' COP, while 21% acknowledge they had 'heard of it but know nothing about it'. However, a majority (61%) do claim to know at least a little about COP – though just 9% say they know 'a lot'.

- Public perceptions of COP reveal a mixture of optimism and scepticism. While 62% believe the meeting ensures vulnerable countries' voices are represented and 60% think it succeeds in shaping climate policy, 59% think it is influenced by big business interests.

- Younger respondents (18–34) are more likely to view COP positively, while women and older age groups express slightly less optimism about its role and success.

Findings related to extreme weather events and perceptions of risk:

- A majority of respondents in Brazil (76%) and India (65%) report experiencing heatwaves, while severe floods affect more than half of respondents in India (59%) and Pakistan (54%). Perceptions of worsening trends are consistent, with two-thirds (63%) of respondents globally believing heatwaves are becoming more severe, followed by floods (56%).

- On average across eight countries, people are more likely to think that extreme weather events are getting worse rather than better, and that the risks from them are getting higher. People have mixed views on whether their government's handling of them is getting worse or better.

- People tend to have a favourable view of how the news media covers extreme weather events. People are more likely to think the news media does a good job than a bad job, especially when it comes to providing information in a timely manner, but less so when it comes to providing information about the underlying causes.

Findings related to public views on climate action and impacts over time:

- Over two-thirds of people in every country are concerned about the impact of climate change on people and the planet. This proportion has remained stable across the past three years, reflecting perception inertia in public concern, despite increasing climate challenges.

- Although climate concern is high across the board, it remains a politicised issue, with political ideology driving differences in concern more than other demographic variables. In 2024, concern among those on the left peaked at 91%, dropping to 77% among those on the right – widening the left–right gap.

- Views on serious climate impacts also highlight perception inertia, with the average across eight countries remaining similar in the past two years. While Brazil (+10pp to 68%) and Japan (+5pp to 52%) saw increases, Pakistan experienced a decline (−8pp to 40%).

- Over two-thirds of respondents in Brazil, and more than half in India and Pakistan, think that climate change is having a large impact on their own, their family's, and their fellow citizens' health. However, these numbers have changed little from 2023.

- Governments (−33), energy companies (−37), and citizens themselves (−39) are overwhelmingly seen as doing 'too little' to address climate change – and these perceptions have become slightly more widespread since 2022.

Introduction

In October 2024, a group of leading climate scientists wrote 'We are on the brink of an irreversible climate disaster… We are stepping into a critical and unpredictable new phase of the climate crisis' (Ripple et al. 2024). This cautionary statement underscores an urgent reality: the climate crisis is no longer a distant threat – it is here, now, reshaping lives, economies, and ecosystems across the globe.

The escalating impacts of climate change are not abstract or theoretical in many parts of the world. They are felt through the wildfires that engulfed communities, the relentless floods that displaced millions, and the heatwaves that pushed entire regions to their limits. The year 2024 is now certain to be the hottest year on record, and the first in which average global temperatures exceeded 1.5°C,[1] the threshold set under the Paris Agreement. These events are no longer isolated tragedies; they are persistent reminders of a warming world, leaving an indelible mark on public consciousness. They demand not only urgent action but also a deeper understanding of how people perceive, engage with, and respond to this unfolding crisis.

In contemporary information environments there are many ways for people to consume news and information about climate change – but the news media remains central (Newman et al. 2024). As the most widely used source of information, news media shapes not only what people know, but also how they feel, and indirectly how they act. From headlines warning of impending disaster to coverage of international negotiations and protests, media narratives have the power to amplify urgency, foster scepticism, or inadvertently spread misinformation. In this critical decade for climate action, although the news media is not the only way people can be informed about climate change, its role should not be underestimated.

Since 2022, this annual survey has sought to capture the evolving relationship between the public, the news media, and climate change. Now in its third year, it tracks how people engage with climate news, whom they trust, and how this shapes climate-related beliefs. This year's survey builds on our previous work by examining new dimensions, including how media coverage frames extreme weather events and public perceptions of global initiatives like the Conference of the Parties (COP).

This report not only documents the present state of affairs, it also describes trends shaping public understanding of climate change over time. Based on the analyses of engagement with climate news, trust in information sources, and lived experiences of climate impacts, it offers critical insights into how narratives shape knowledge and action.

Each chapter unpacks these findings in detail, beginning with how people interact with climate news and evaluate its trustworthiness. Subsequent sections explore the sources and prevalence of misinformation, the public's experiences with extreme weather events, and their evaluations of global initiatives like COP. At its core, this report underscores the influence of the media in shaping how societies understand and respond to the defining crisis of our time.

[1] https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/2024-will-be-hottest-year-record-eu-scientists-say-2024-12-09

As the stakes rise, so too does the need for thoughtful, rigorous, and clear understanding of how people navigate the climate crisis, how they use sources to get information about it, and how such information influences their attitudes. By analysing the public's relationship with media and climate information, this study provides a vital roadmap for navigating the challenges of informing and empowering action in an era of unprecedented climate change.

Methodology

The findings in this report are based on survey data collected by Ipsos on behalf of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ) at the University of Oxford. The fieldwork was conducted online between 6-25 November 2024 in eight countries: Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Pakistan, the UK, and the USA.

Ipsos conducted the fieldwork and provided weighted datasets and tables, while the Reuters Institute oversaw the survey design, analysis, and interpretation of the findings.

Samples were structured using nationally representative quotas for age, gender, and region, with data subsequently weighted to reflect the demographic composition of each country's population. While this approach ensures comparability across countries, the results are representative of the online population. This may exclude older or less affluent groups, particularly in countries like India and Pakistan, where internet access remains limited and concentrated in more urban areas. Moreover, online samples generally over-represent politically active individuals who choose to participate in surveys voluntarily.

Table 1. Nationally representative sample sizes

Country	Sample size	Fieldwork dates	Internet penetration
UK	1,074	6–7 November 2024	98%
USA	1,028	7–11 November 2024	92%
France	1,034	11–12 November 2024	93%
Germany	1,031	14–16 November 2024	93%
Japan	1,001	14–21 November 2024	83%
Brazil	1,053	14–20 November 2024	84%
India	1,007	7–15 November 2024	49%
Pakistan	1,026	15–25 November 2024	37%

Source: Digital 2023 – July global statshot report by Datareportal.

This 2024 sample is consistent with the 2023 sample, but both differ slightly from 2022 in terms of the respondents' age range. In 2024 and 2023, the age range is 18–75 in France, Germany, the UK, and the USA, 18–65 in Japan and Brazil, and 18–55 in India and Pakistan (but this was 18–65 in 2022). Each country's sample includes approximately 1,000 respondents, with a margin of error of at least ± four percentage points (pp). Hence, differences smaller than 5pp, particularly within demographic subgroups, should be interpreted with caution.

Readers should note that the fieldwork in all countries, except the UK and USA, overlapped with COP29 (which was held 11–22 November 2024), an event that significantly amplifies media attention to climate issues (Hase et al. 2021; Lochner et al. 2024). This overlap could

have increased public exposure to climate-related news compared with what it would have been otherwise, with additional respondents potentially reporting consumption of climate information or encountering content about COP. Readers should consider this context when interpreting findings related to media use and awareness of climate issues, but as we will see in Chapter 1, the proportion who accessed climate change news and information remains broadly comparable with previous years.

Furthermore, online surveys relying on self-reported data face challenges, particularly with respondents' memory, which can be influenced by inaccuracies and biases. For example, on topics like climate change, respondents may feel compelled to present themselves as more environmentally conscious than they really are, through what social researchers call social desirability bias (Vesely and Klöckner 2020). This tendency can inflate self-reports of pro-environmental views for some people (Lange and Dewitte 2019), potentially skewing the accuracy of the data. Similarly, questions about misinformation often capture perceptions rather than providing an objective measure of exposure to false information.

To mitigate these challenges, we followed established research practices, employing careful questionnaire design and rigorous testing to reduce bias and improve the reliability of responses.

Some figures in this report do not display all the percentages. All percentages can be viewed in the interactive figures at: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/climate-change-and-news-audiences-report-2024-analysis-news-use-and-attitudes-eight-countries

Chapter 1: Climate Change News Use and Trust

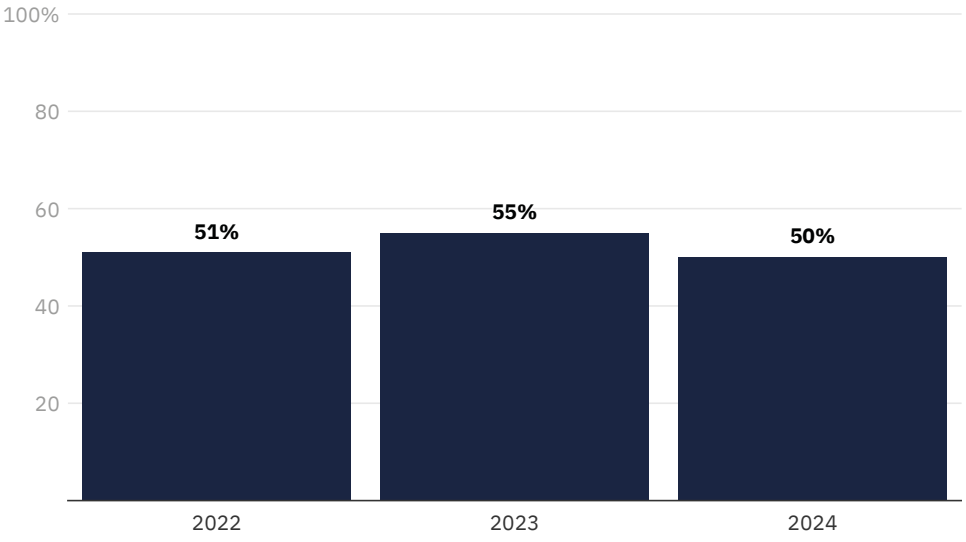
We start by considering the proportion of the online population that come into contact with news and information about climate change on a weekly basis. In 2024, 50% of respondents across the eight countries in our survey say that they 'saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week' (Figure 1). This figure is similar to those from previous years. Although it is slightly lower than the 55% figure we saw in 2023, it is in line with the 2022 figure of 51%.

Even though the 2024 survey fieldwork coincided with COP29 and one might expect this to boost the numbers given that COP always generates additional climate-related coverage, the data suggest that this did not happen – or, at least, that COP29 coverage did not meaningfully extend the reach of climate news and information to new audiences, with any additional consumption confined to those already consuming it.

Instead, the findings on weekly climate change news and information use are evidence of '*climate perception inertia*' – a stagnation in public views on, attitudes to, and engagement with climate issues and information over time, despite the growing urgency of the crisis.

Figure 1. Proportion that saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week

On average across eight countries, half of people saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week, and the proportion has remained similar since 2022.



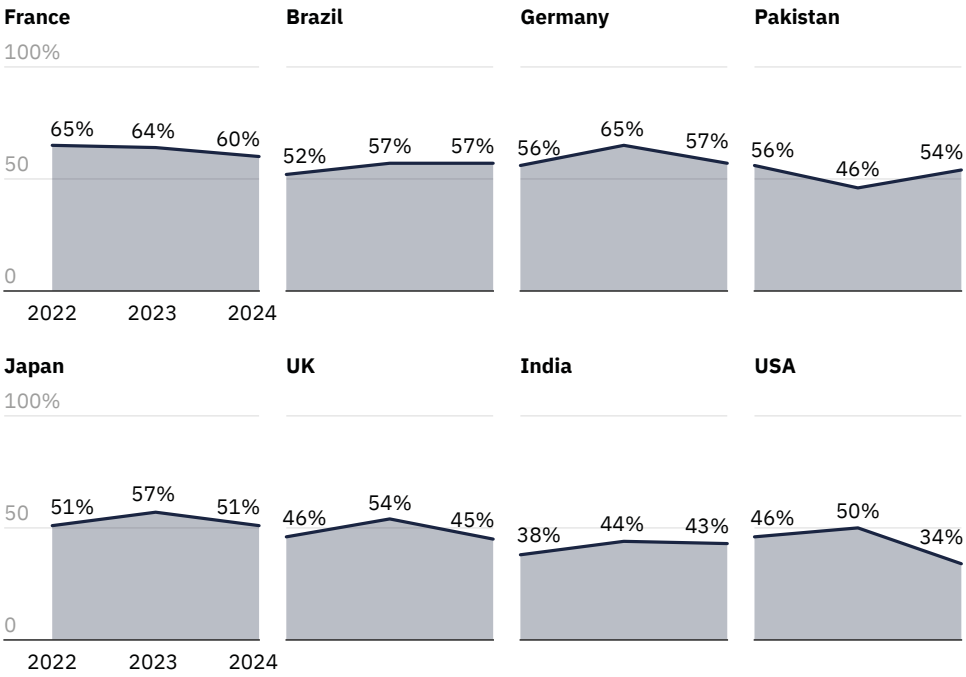
Q5A. When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source?
Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.

If we split the data by country in Figure 2, we mostly continue to see relatively stable levels of climate news and information use – though it is difficult to be certain about broader trends with just three data points. Nevertheless, we do not find any evidence of increased engagement with climate news and information since 2022, despite the growing urgency of the crisis.

The exception to this is the USA, where the proportion who 'saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week' actually fell from 50% in 2023 to 34% in 2024 – meaning that in 2024 the USA has the lowest levels of climate news and information engagement of all the eight countries surveyed (France has the highest at 60%).

Figure 2. Proportion that saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change in the last week

Weekly climate news use is highest in France and lowest in the USA. In most countries weekly climate news use has returned to 2022 levels, but it has decreased by 16pp in the USA.

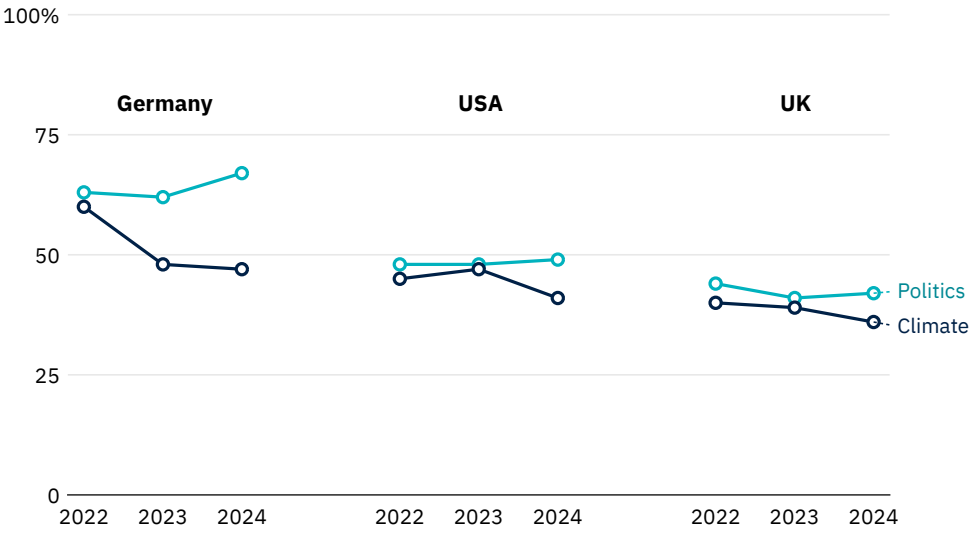


Q5A. When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read, or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source?
Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.

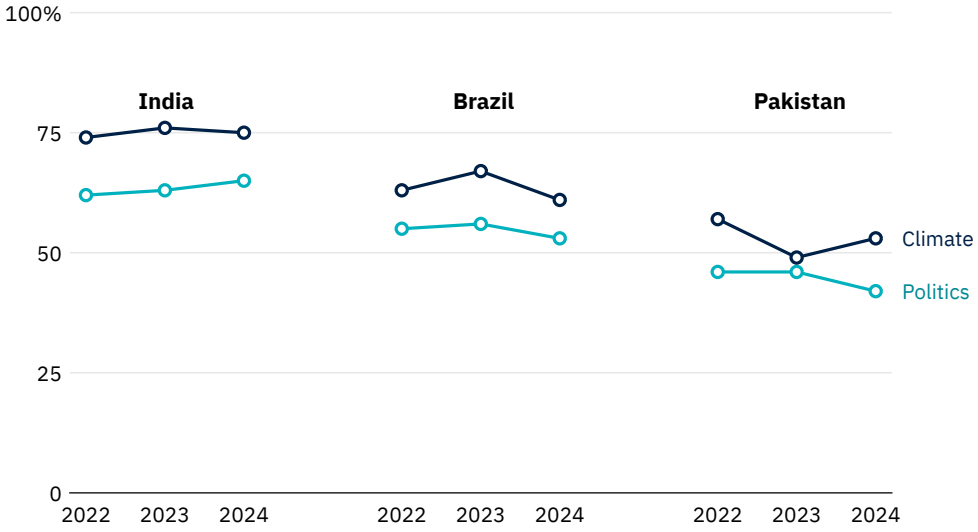
This fall, which is evident across all age groups, men, women, and those on both the left and the right, is mirrored by the data on people's interest in environmental and climate-related news. Although there has been little change to interest levels on average, in the USA the proportion who say they are 'very' or 'extremely' interested fell from 47% in 2023 to 41% in 2024, with a similar 6pp decline also seen in Brazil (Figure 3).

The fall in climate news and information engagement in the USA could simply be because the fieldwork took place shortly after the presidential election, meaning that news and information about climate change may have been squeezed out by election coverage. On the other hand, it may reflect a deeper disengagement with climate issues among both the public and the news media. It is difficult to tell with the available data, but even if the patterns we see in the USA are the result of a temporary election effect, they serve as a reminder that the public's engagement with and interest in climate issues can be buffeted by political events.

Figure 3. Proportion who are interested in news about each
In countries in the Global North, people tend to be more interested in news about politics.



... but in countries in the Global South – which also have higher levels of climate risk – interest in news about climate is higher.



Q2. How interested, or not, are you in the following types of news? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

We can also see from Figure 3 that the gap between interest in political news and climate news has widened considerably in Germany in recent years. In 2022, there was no meaningful difference between levels of interest in politics and climate, but by 2024 a 20pp gap had emerged – perhaps also partly a result of political turmoil following the government's collapse, and the media coverage that followed.

More broadly, we also see differences in interest levels between countries in the Global North and the Global South. Specifically, in the UK, the USA, and Germany, levels of interest in news about politics tend to be slightly higher than those for news about climate. But in India, Brazil, and Pakistan – which are countries that tend to have higher levels of climate risk, and the negative consequences of climate change tend to be more pronounced – levels of interest

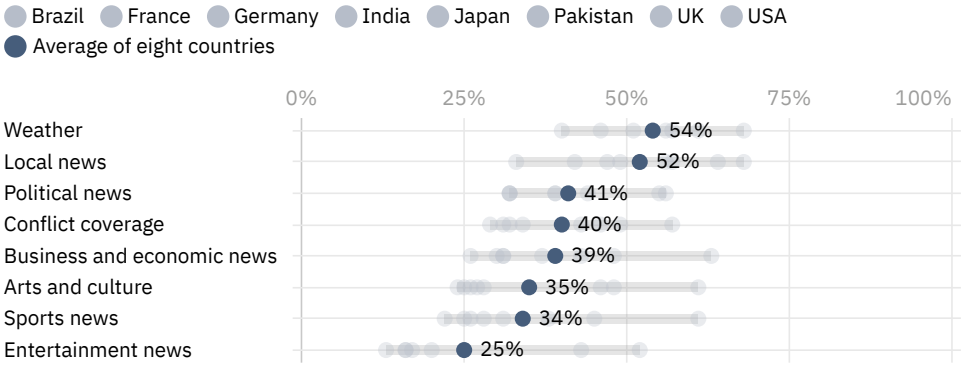
in news about climate are consistently higher than those for news about politics (though, of course, there is considerable overlap between these two areas).

It is sometimes said that 'every story is a climate story', given that climate change affects almost every area of life, and decisions around climate policy are often influenced by political and economic concerns. Many news organisations often treat climate as a distinct topic, though some have made a conscious effort to connect climate change to their reporting in other areas.

With this in mind, we asked people whether they are interested in news covering how climate change has been impacted by a range of other topics (e.g. business, conflict, sport), or how each topic impacts climate change. As Figure 4 shows, on average across eight countries, people are most likely to say that they are 'very' or 'extremely' interested in news that connects climate change to weather (54%) and local news (52%). Leaving aside the connection with weather (which we explore in more detail in Chapter 3 on extreme weather events) this perhaps suggests people are still primarily interested in news that connects climate change to their daily lives and their surrounding area, even though the underlying issue is clearly global.

Figure 4. Proportion interested in news and information covering how climate change has been impacted by each topic (or how each topic impacts climate change)

Aside from the obvious connection between weather and climate change, people are most interested in news that connects climate change to their local area.



Q34. We'd now like you to think about different types of news. For each of the following, to what extent are you interested, or not, in news covering how climate change has been impacted by that topic or how the topic impacts climate change? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Around a third on average say that they are interested in news and information that connects climate change to arts and culture (35%) and sport (34%), and a quarter say the same for entertainment news (25%). However, it should be kept in mind that people are less interested in these topics more generally, and – as well as being substantially important – they may still represent an opportunity for publishers looking to find an under-covered niche.

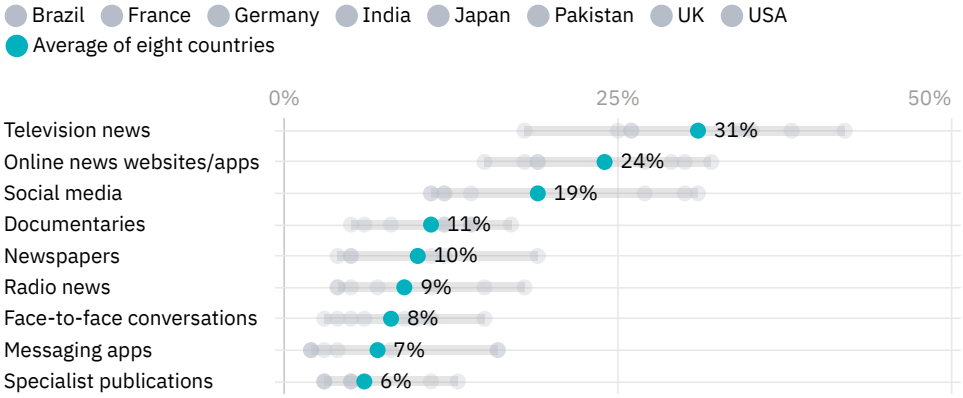
Returning to climate news and information exposure, although the definition we use in the survey aims to capture people's exposure to climate news and information about climate beyond what they might see from the news media (we ask about people's use of messaging apps, documentaries, and their face-to-face conversations) it is still the case that the news media is responsible for the bulk of people's engagement with climate news and information. When it comes to the media through which people access information, in most countries television news and online news websites and apps are the most widely used. On average across

eight countries, 31% of respondents say they saw, read, or heard climate news and information on television news in the last week, with 24% saying the same for news media websites and apps (Figure 5). Around one in five (19%) access climate news and information on social media (which combines content from the news media and content from other users) with higher figures in India and Pakistan (which partly may be due to the use of an online sample).

Around one in ten (11%) say they get climate news and information from documentaries and 8% from face-to-face conversations, with strikingly similar numbers for printed newspapers (10%) and radio (9%) – which nonetheless still feature prominently in the scholarly understanding of what shapes public opinion. These numbers have changed very little (by ±3pp or less) since our first study in 2022, but these small changes tend to be in line with the continued overarching shift away from traditional offline media and towards online media use that we have documented in our *Digital News Report* (Newman et al. 2024).

Figure 5. Proportion that saw, read or heard news and information about climate change from each in the last week

On average across eight countries, television news and online news websites/apps are the most widely used sources of news and information about climate change.

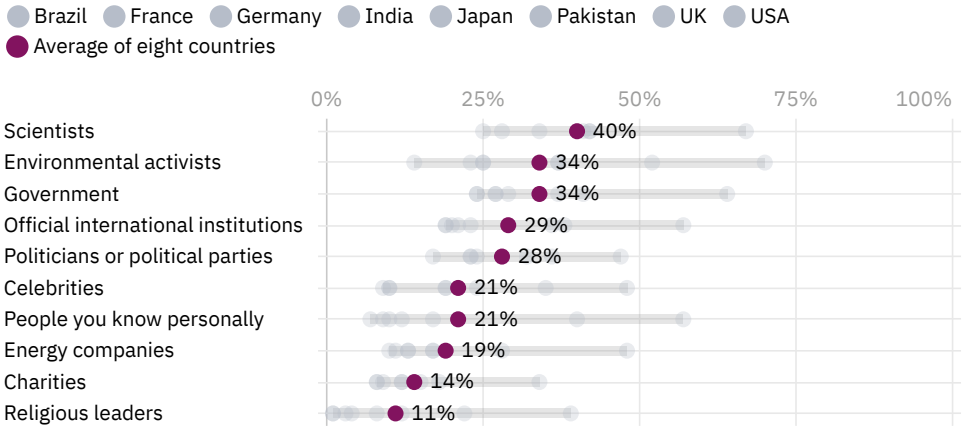


Q5. Thinking specifically about the news or information about climate change you saw, read or heard within the last week. Where did you see, read or hear this? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Of course, it's not just the media through which people access information that matters – the sources of information drawn on by the media are arguably even more important. As Figure 6 shows, when we asked those who had accessed climate change news and information through the mass media (which we define as the news media and social media) what sources of information they had seen used, scientists (40%) are the most frequently encountered, followed by environmental activists (34%) and the government (34%). Energy companies (19%), charities (14%), and religious leaders (11%) are less commonly seen used as sources, but it is important to keep in mind that this is dependent on respondents' recall of what they have seen and does not necessarily reflect what sources are actually used by the media as a whole.

Figure 6. Proportion that saw each commenting or being mentioned as the source in any news or information about climate change used in the last week

In most countries, scientists are the most frequently seen source commenting or being mentioned in news and information about climate change.

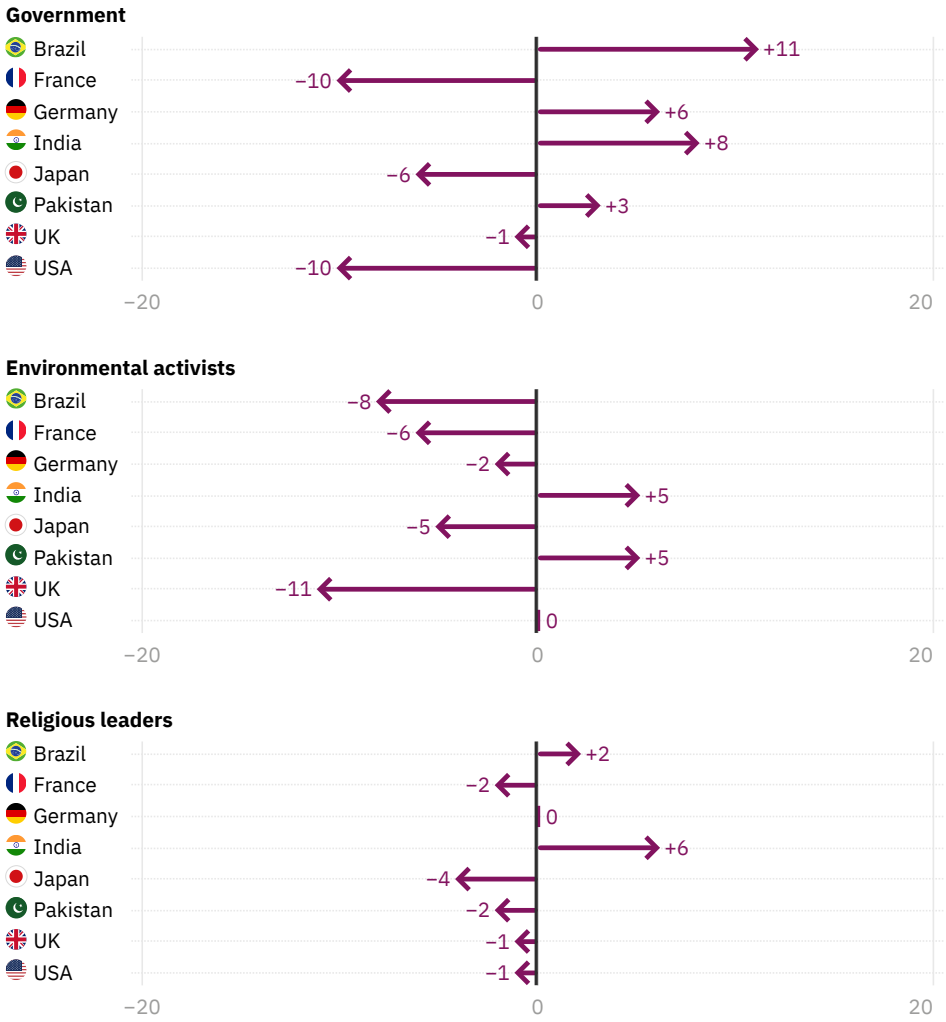


Q6. Thinking about the news or information you saw, read or heard about climate change within the last week in the following places. Aside from any journalists, reporters, presenters, etc. that may have delivered the news or information, which types of organisations or individuals do you recall commenting or being mentioned as the source? *Base: All who accessed news or information on climate change in the last week ranging from USA = 347 to France = 627*.

On average across eight countries, these numbers have changed very little since 2022, but there have been some quite large shifts for some sources within specific countries (Figure 7). If we compare the data from 2024 with equivalent data from the same questions in our 2022 survey, people are more likely to see the government used as a source in Brazil (+11pp), but less so in France and the USA (both −10pp). This may reflect the extent to which governments prioritise climate change as an issue as much as the sourcing patterns used by journalists. There has also been a decrease in the extent to which people saw activists used as sources in several countries, including the UK (−11pp), but for some actors (such as religious leaders) there has been little real change.

Figure 7. Change in proportion that saw each commenting or being mentioned as the source in any news or information about climate change used in the last week

Compared with 2022, perceived use of government as a source has increased by 11pp in Brazil, but decreased by 10pp in France and the USA. Environmental activists are seen as a source less, but for others there has been little change.

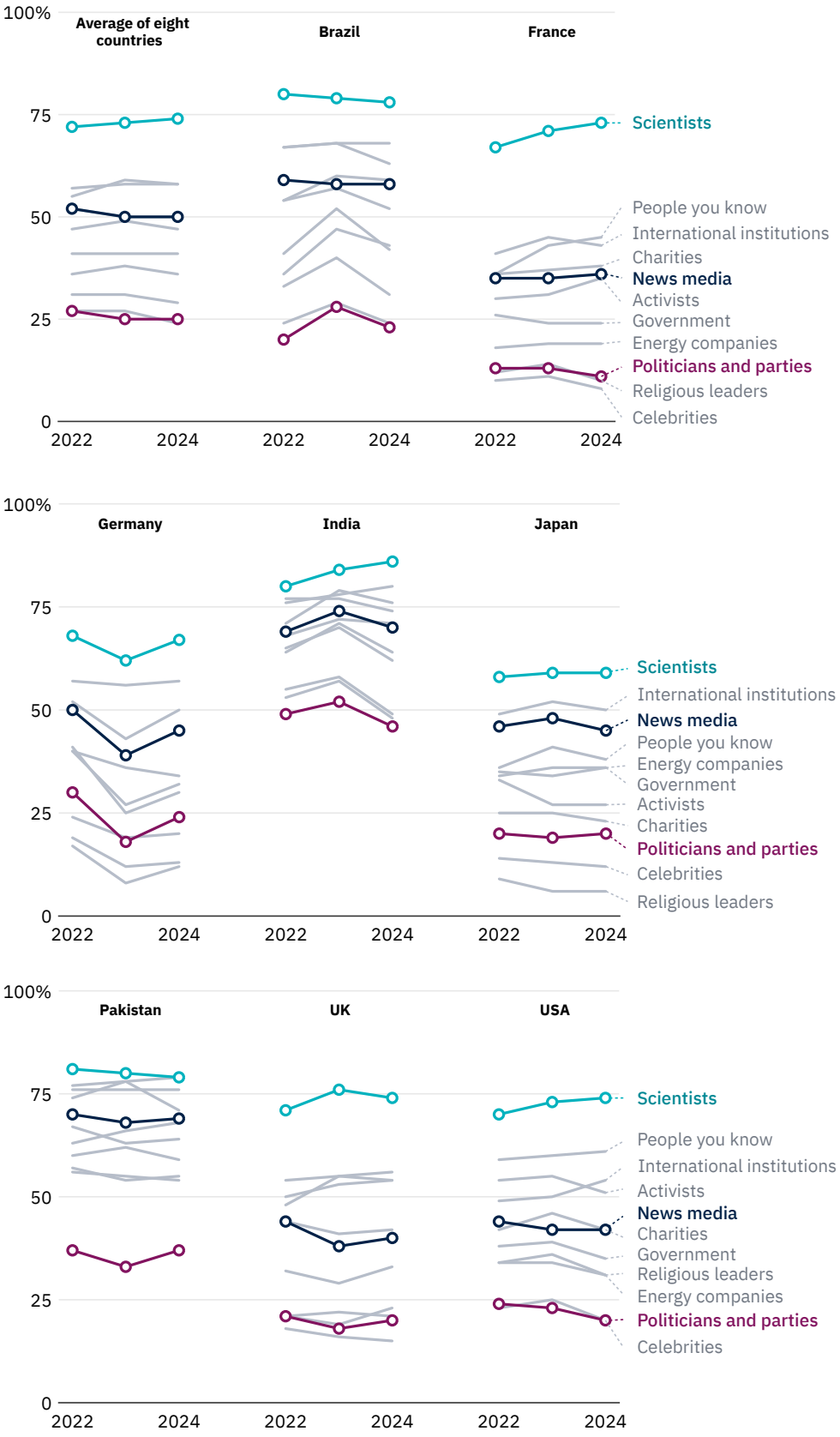


Q6. Thinking about the news or information you saw, read or heard about climate change within the last week in the following places. Aside from any journalists, reporters, presenters, etc. that may have delivered the news or information, which types of organisations or individuals do you recall commenting or being mentioned as the source? *Base: All who accessed news or information on climate change in the last week ranging from USA = 347 to France = 627.*

Trust in different sources of news and information about climate change – which can include the news media – has also remained relatively stable in recent years. On average across eight countries, 50% say that they 'somewhat' or 'strongly' trust the news media for news and information on climate change – the same proportion as in 2023 (Figure 8). This, again, provides further evidence for climate perception inertia, though it is worth keeping in mind that this 50% figure is slightly higher than the figure for 'trust most news most of the time' from the *Digital News Report* (Newman et al. 2024), which also documents a decline in trust since 2015. Of the countries covered here, France (36%) has the lowest trust in the news media for news and information about climate change, with the highest figure in India (70%).

Figure 8. Proportion that trust each as a source of news or information about climate change

On average across eight countries, scientists are the most trusted source, with politicians and political parties the least trusted.



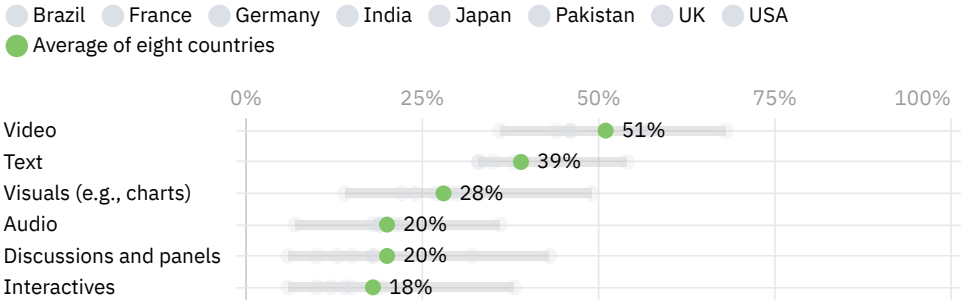
Q7. Please look at the groups below and indicate the extent to which you would generally trust or distrust each one as a source of news or information about climate change. *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.*

As well as being the most visible source in the mass media, scientists remain the most trusted source on climate change, trusted by a majority in all eight countries. Despite already high levels, trust in scientists increased in France (+6pp) and India (+6pp) since 2022. In contrast, celebrities (24%) and politicians (25%) are trusted by just a quarter, with trust in both decreasing by 6pp in Germany. As we showed in last year's report, it remains broadly true that, with the exception of politicians and government, people are more likely to see sources of climate information that they trust in the mass media.

In a new question for 2024, we also asked respondents about their preferred formats for consuming news and information related to climate change (Figure 9). In line with the fact that television remains the most popular medium for climate change news and information – and with the growing popularity of online news video (Newman et al. 2024) – video (51%), which also includes documentaries, emerged as the most popular format. Video is ahead of text in every country apart from the UK, where text still leads. Interactive content (e.g. quizzes, polls, and simulations) is preferred the least. It may be that respondents see these as an interesting complement to text-based articles, but they are not yet seen by audiences as a stand-alone format for climate change news and information. Live discussions and panels also feature low down the list. This could simply be because many people do not come across them, or perhaps in part because some people can be frustrated by what they see as both-sidesism around issues that are largely settled.

Figure 9. Proportion that say each is among their preferred ways of consuming news and information on climate change

On average across eight countries, people say that their preferred way of consuming news and information on climate change is through videos (e.g. news segments, documentaries). The UK is the only country where people say they prefer text.



Q33NEW. Which of the following formats, if any, is your preferred way of consuming news and information on climate change?
Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.

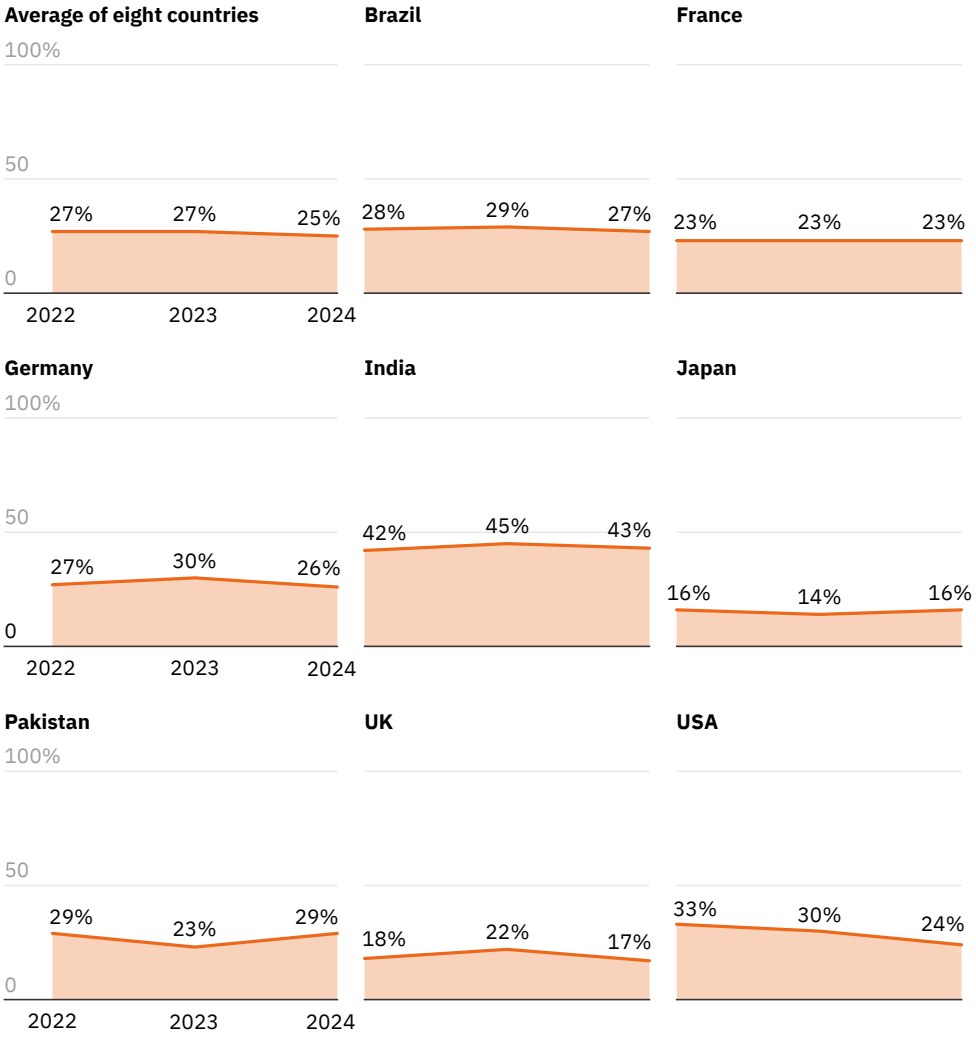
If we split the data by demographic variables such as age and gender we see little difference in format preference. Although younger audiences do have a preference for *online* news video, the fact that video here also covers television means that video is also the most popular format among the over 55s. People more interested in climate change, and regular climate change news users, also say that video is their preferred format.

Chapter 2: Perceived Exposure to Climate Change Misinformation

As the effects of climate change worsen, and action becomes more necessary, many experts increasingly worry about climate misinformation. On average across eight countries, 25% of respondents in 2024 say that they had 'personally seen, read, or heard any news or information that [they] believe to be false or misleading' on the topic of climate change in the last week (Figure 10). This is very similar to the 27% figure from 2023 and 2022.

Figure 10. Proportion that have seen, read, or heard any news or information on climate change that they believe to be false or misleading in the last week

In most countries the proportion that think they have seen climate misinformation has remained stable. The decline in the USA may be partly due to the absence of climate from the Presidential Election debate.



Q16. To the best of your knowledge, have you personally seen, read, or heard any news or information that you believe to be false or misleading about any of the following topics, in the last week? *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.*

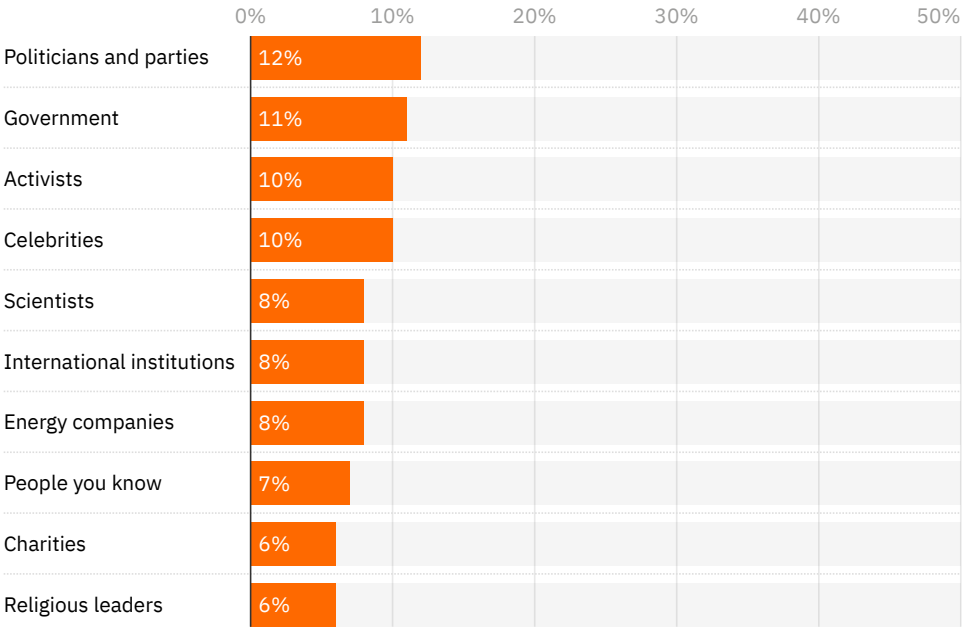
When we split the data by country, we also see no statistically significant changes. The only exception is the USA, where the 2024 figure of 24% is down from 30% in 2023 and 33% in 2022. Similar to the decrease in climate news use that we described in Chapter 1, this may be because

the presidential election, which overlapped with the fieldwork, was not heavily focused on climate issues, and election coverage dominated the news agenda.

Since 2022, the highest figures for self-reported climate misinformation exposure have been found in India (43%), with considerably lower figures in the UK (17%) and Japan (16%). It is important to keep in mind that self-reported data on misinformation exposure do not necessarily accurately describe how much misinformation exists or even how much people have seen, as this also partly reflects people's perceptions about the prevalence of misinformation, how vigilant they are, how able they are to discern it, and their pre-existing views. A useful illustration of this is that self-reported climate misinformation exposure is higher (36%) among the small minority of respondents in the survey who think that 'global warming is not happening'. This means that some of the 'false' information reported by this group may simply be, for example, a scientist acknowledging the existence of climate change. However, because only 8% of respondents think that global warming is not happening, this likely has a small effect on the overall results.

Figure 11. Proportion that have seen, read, or heard any news or information on climate change from each that they believe to be false or misleading in the last week

On average across eight countries, no one source stands out as being most closely associated with climate change misinformation.



Q17. Thinking about the news or information you saw, read or heard about climate change within the last week in the following places that you believe to be false or misleading. Aside from any journalists, reporters, presenters, etc. that may have delivered the news or information, which types of organisations or individuals do you recall commenting or being mentioned as the source? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

When it comes to specific sources of misinformation about climate change that people think they have seen, there is little difference in prevalence between the sources we asked about. As Figure 11 shows, politicians and political parties (12%), government (11%), celebrities (10%), and activists (10%) tend to top the list, but it is clear that people associate climate change misinformation with a range of different sources. As we described in Chapter 1, many

of these sources, with the exception of environmental activists, are not highly trusted by the public, which may diminish the effect of any actual misinformation exposure. That being said, the mechanisms through which misinformation influences public opinion remain poorly understood, so it is difficult to interpret high-level data on self-reported exposure.

Chapter 3: Public Perception of the Conference of the Parties (COP)

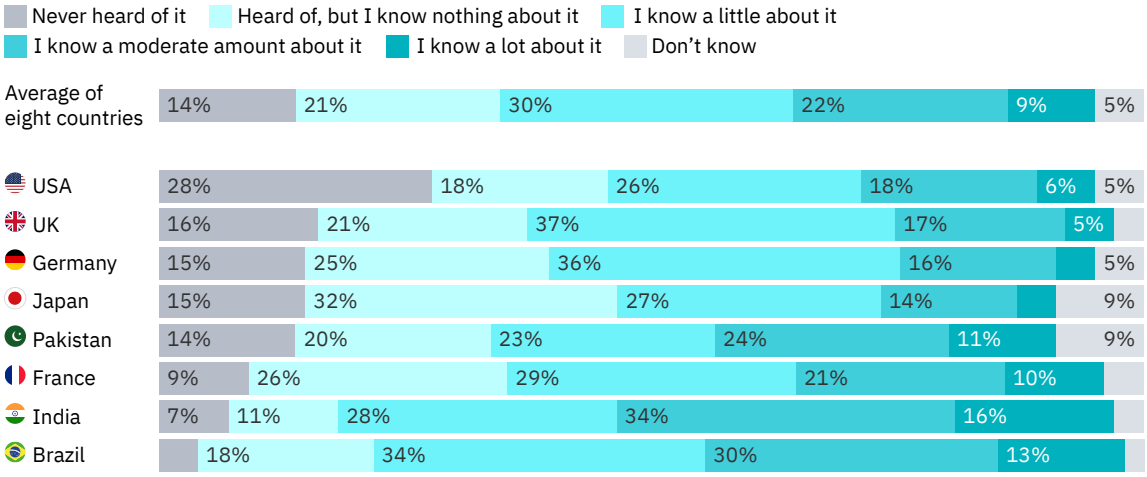
As the urgency of the climate crisis has deepened, the prominence of the annual COP meetings has grown, accompanied by increased scrutiny. The feeling of success at securing the Paris Agreement in 2016 has somewhat dissipated, with some experts now, including those central to COP, suggesting that it is 'no longer fit for purpose' (McGrath 2024).

What does the public think about COP and how people engage with it? To better understand this, we used our 2024 survey, which coincided with COP29, to explore public opinion on COP's effectiveness and relevance in addressing the climate emergency.

Figure 12 illustrates how aware people are of COP. Overall, an average of 14% of respondents across the eight countries surveyed state they have 'never heard of' COP, while 21% acknowledge they have 'heard of it but know nothing about it'. However, this means that over half of people (61%) claim to know at least a little about COP. The most common response, at 30%, is from those who report knowing 'a little about it', followed by 22% who claim to have a 'moderate amount' of knowledge. Only a small proportion (9%) indicate that they 'know a lot about it'.

Figure 12. Proportion who say they know about Conference of the Parties (COP)

Most people claim to know at least 'a little' about COP, but a significant minority have not even heard of it. Few claim to know a lot about it.



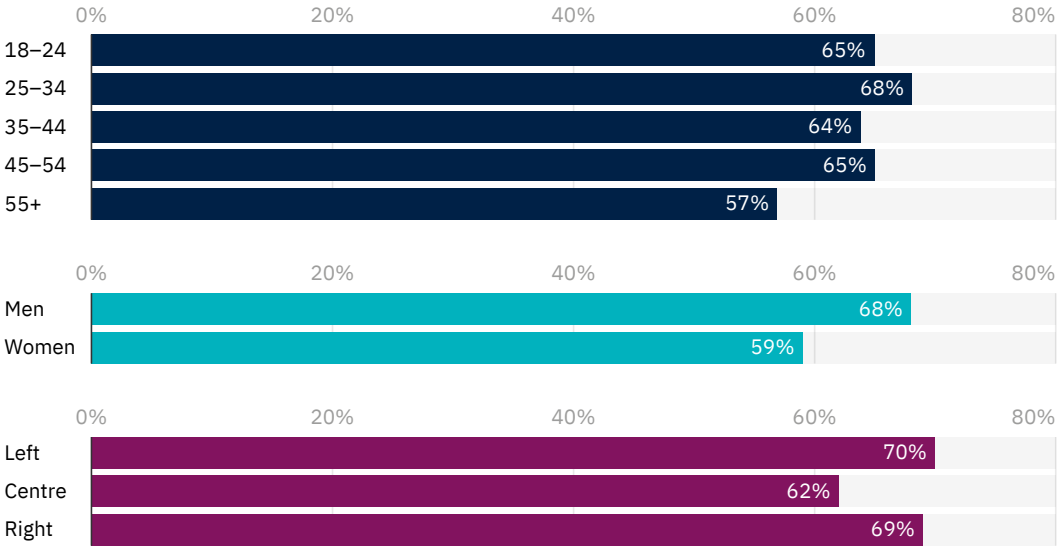
Q24. Before today, how much, if anything, would you say you knew about the annual UN Convention on climate change called Conference of the Parties (COP)? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Awareness levels vary significantly by country. The USA has the highest proportion of respondents (28%) who have 'never heard of' COP, suggesting lower visibility of global climate summits in public discourse. But even here, around half claim to know at least 'a little' about it. In contrast, countries like Brazil and India show more familiarity, with significant proportions reporting they 'know a little' (34% in Brazil and 28% in India) or 'know a moderate amount' (30% in Brazil and 34% in India). These differences suggest that public engagement with COP

is influenced by domestic media coverage and the salience of climate issues within national contexts, but it could also be partly due to online samples in these countries over-representing respondents with higher levels of formal education.

Building further on the above findings, Figure 13 shows that awareness of COP is relatively consistent across age groups and political orientations, with only modest differences between categories. Younger respondents, particularly those aged 25–34, report the highest awareness (68%), while those aged 55 and older are slightly less aware (57%). Despite the 11pp difference, overall we observe a relatively small generational gap, indicating that basic COP awareness spans age groups more evenly than many other climate-related issues.

Figure 13. Proportion that say they know at least a little about the Conference of the Parties (COP)
On average across eight countries, younger age groups, men, and political partisans are more likely to say they know at least a little about COP.



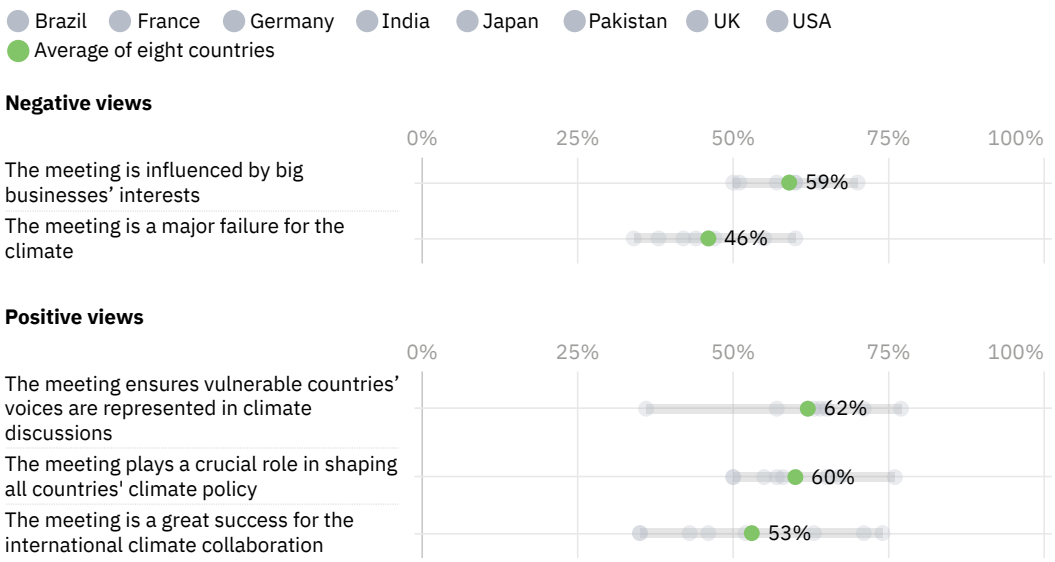
Q24. Before today, how much, if anything, would you say you knew about the annual UN Convention on climate change called Conference of the Parties (COP). *Base: 18–24/25–34/35–44/45–54/55+ = 1304/1790/1710/1532/1918, Men/Women = 4049/4176, Left/Centre/Right = 2043/2553/2332*.

Similarly, political orientation shows only modest variation, with respondents on the left (70%) and right (69%) reporting nearly identical levels of familiarity. Those in the centre are slightly lower at 62%. The most noticeable difference lies in gender. Men (68%) are significantly more likely than women (59%) to report familiarity with COP, indicating a potential disparity in access to or engagement with discussions on global climate governance. This disparity could stem from the under-representation of women in COP delegations and decision-making roles (Maguire et al. 2022; WEDO 2024), potentially leading to perceptions that these spaces do not adequately reflect their voices or concerns. On the other hand, it may simply reflect the fact that men are relatively over-confident about their level of knowledge.

In terms of where people encounter news and information about COP, television news and online news websites and apps are the most mentioned media – in line with the general pattern for climate change news and information that we described in Chapter 1.

Figure 14 examines public perceptions of COP's role and impact. The chart shows that people tend to hold a mixture of broadly positive and negative views about COP. While COP has been widely criticised for failing to amplify the voices of marginalised groups – such as indigenous communities and nations most vulnerable to climate change – these critiques appear to have limited influence on public perceptions. A majority (62%) believe COP ensures that vulnerable countries' voices are represented in climate discussions, indicating a broadly held perception of inclusivity.

Figure 14. Proportion who think each of the following is true for the Conference of the Parties (COP)
On average across eight countries, people who have heard of COP hold a mixture of broadly positive and negative views about COP.



Q32NEW. In your opinion, to what extent would you say each of the following statements relating to COP are true or false? *Base: All who have heard of COP in each country ranging from USA = 688 to Brazil = 989.*

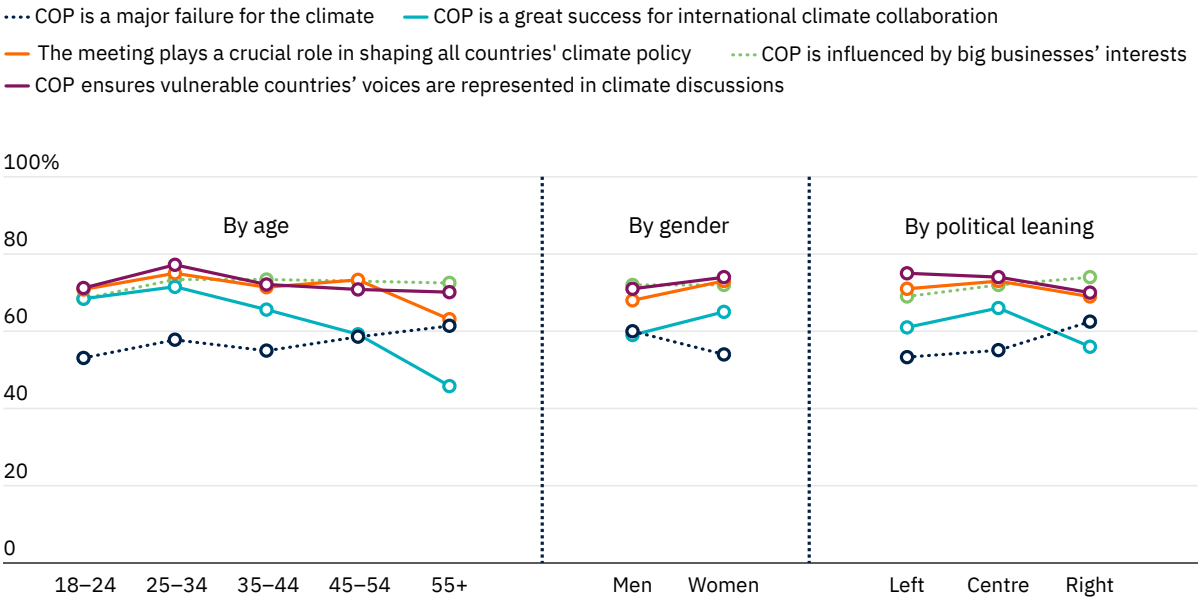
This perception is likely shaped by the scope of COP, which features the participation of delegations from nearly 200 countries, projecting an image of global representation. However, critics contend that this inclusivity is often superficial, with powerful nations and corporate interests dominating decision-making processes (Diaz and Wang 2024). Reports from previous COP meetings highlight how smaller nations and marginalised groups often struggle to shape key outcomes, as wealthier countries and corporate actors prioritise their own agendas (Borenstein and Arasu 2024; Rowley 2024). This gap between the visible diversity of participants and the actual distribution of influence suggests that public perceptions may be driven more by the optics of representation than by substantive inclusivity.

At the same time, scepticism about the fairness of COP processes persists. A majority (59%) believe that big business wields undue influence over the meetings, and 46% think that the meeting is a major failure for the climate. These findings reflect a tension: while the public acknowledges the inclusive appearance of COP, doubts about its effectiveness and equity endure, raising broader concerns about the capacity of multilateral systems to achieve meaningful progress on climate action.

Figure 15 examines how perceptions of COP's role and effectiveness vary across age, gender, and political leaning. The results reveal generational and gender-based differences, as well as ideological divides, but also areas of consensus.

Younger respondents (18–24 and 25–34) who say they know something about COP are more likely to agree that it plays a crucial role in shaping global climate policies, with similarly high agreement on its success in fostering international collaboration. While 68% of those aged 18–24 view COP as a success in fostering collaboration, this drops to just 46% among those aged 55+, marking a significant +22pp difference. However, this optimism among younger respondents does not preclude criticism. A notable 53% of those aged 18–24 still view COP as 'a major failure for the climate', a sentiment that increases with age to 61% among those aged 55+. This contrasting dynamic suggests that while younger people see COP's collaborative potential, they remain critical of its ability to deliver meaningful results, a scepticism that deepens among older generations.

Figure 15. Proportion who think each of the following is true for the Conference of the Parties (COP)
On average across eight countries, views on COP's role and effectiveness vary across age, gender, and political leaning, but there are also areas of consensus.



Q32NEW. In your opinion, to what extent would you say each of the following statements relating to COP are true or false? *Base: All those who say they know something about COP aged 18–24/25–34/35–44/45–54/55+ = 801/1162/1034/947/1049, Men/Women = 2673/2304, and Left/Centre/Right = 1387/1505/1577. Note: Negative views are represented with a dotted line.*

Differences by gender are also evident. For example, women are more likely than men to describe COP as a 'great success for international climate collaboration', with 65% of women agreeing compared with 59% of men. Conversely, men are more likely than women to view COP as 'a major failure for the climate', with 60% of men agreeing compared with 54% of women. This suggests that women are more inclined to see value in COP's processes and policymaking importance, even as they acknowledge its shortcomings – but it is important to keep in mind that these differences are small.

Although some views on COP do not vary by political leaning, there are also some differences. Those on the right are more likely to describe COP as 'a major failure for the climate' (63%)

compared with 53% on the left. This ideological divide likely reflects varying levels of trust in international institutions, with those on the right more sceptical of COP's ability to enact meaningful change and more critical of its perceived alignment with big business interests. Conversely, those on the left may prioritise COP's collaborative and representational aspects, even if its outcomes fall short.

Chapter 4: Extreme Weather Events: Experiences and Media Representation

Extreme weather events – such as floods, hurricanes, heatwaves, and wildfires, including recent instances in Los Angeles – are increasingly recognised as tangible manifestations of climate change. These events not only disrupt lives and livelihoods but also play a pivotal role in shaping public understanding of and concern about the climate crisis. Research shows that personal experiences with extreme weather can strongly influence individuals' beliefs about climate change, often reinforcing the perceived urgency of addressing it (Reser et al. 2014; van der Linden 2015). For many, such experiences provide an emotional and direct connection to a global issue that can otherwise feel abstract.

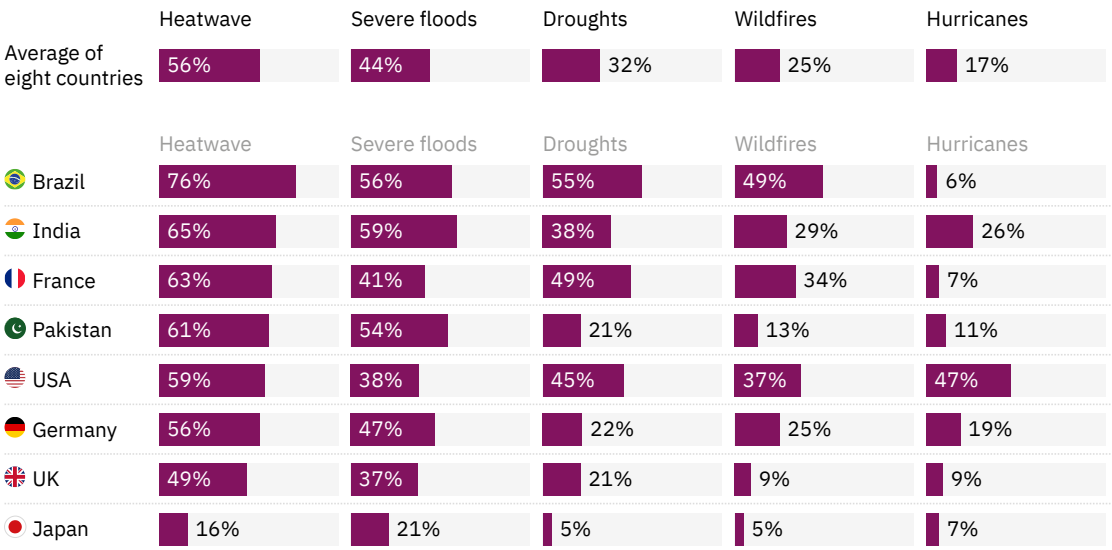
Research by Worldwide Weather Attribution found that the past 12 months have seen an unprecedented number of heatwaves, floods, wildfires, and droughts, underscoring the dangerous reality of living in a 1.3°C warmer world than when we started burning fossil fuels (Otto et al. 2024). Excessive heat is one of the most dangerous outcomes. Analysis by Climate Central shows that, globally, climate change resulted in, on average, 41 additional days of dangerous heat in 2024 that threatened people's health.

In addition to lived experience, the role of news media is important for how these events are understood by the public. Media coverage of extreme weather often connects such events to climate change, but the extent and tone of this connection vary across regions, outlets, and political contexts (Boykoff 2007). This chapter examines how extreme weather events are experienced by individuals and communities, their risk perceptions of these events, governments' ability to handle them, and the ways these events are represented in the media. By analysing these dimensions, it seeks to uncover how personal experience and media narratives converge to shape public attitudes and responses to climate change.

Figure 16 shows the proportion of respondents across eight countries who report having personally experienced specific extreme weather events, including heatwaves, severe floods, droughts, wildfires, and hurricanes. The results underscore how experiences with these events vary significantly across regions, reflecting both geographical and climatic differences.

Figure 16. Proportion who say they have personally experienced each extreme weather event in their country

With the exception of Japan and the UK, a majority in each country say they have personally experienced a heatwave.



Q35. Which of the following extreme weather events have you ever personally experienced in your country? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

Heatwaves emerge as the most commonly experienced event, with an average of 56% of respondents across the eight countries reporting personal encounters. Brazil (76%) and India (65%) report the highest prevalence, likely due to their tropical climates and increasing vulnerability to rising global temperatures. In contrast, Japan (16%) and the UK (49%) report notably lower rates, aligning with their temperate climates and lower exposure to extreme heat.

Severe floods are the second most commonly reported event, with an average of 44%. The highest numbers are found in India (59%), Brazil (56%), and Pakistan (54%), reflecting their vulnerability to heavy monsoons and flooding. At the other end of the spectrum, the UK (37%) and Japan (21%) report fewer experiences of flooding, likely due to different climatic patterns and infrastructure for flood prevention.

Droughts, experienced by 32% on average, are particularly prevalent in Brazil (55%) and France (49%), where recent years have seen severe dry spells. In France, the 2022 and 2023 droughts dried up reservoirs and rivers, severely stressing agriculture and ecosystems, with shifting climate patterns raising concerns about long-term water availability (Valo 2024). In Brazil, prolonged droughts in the Amazon and Pantanal, driven by deforestation and rising temperatures, have disrupted rainfall cycles, exacerbating environmental and socio-economic challenges (Poynting and Buschschlüter 2024).

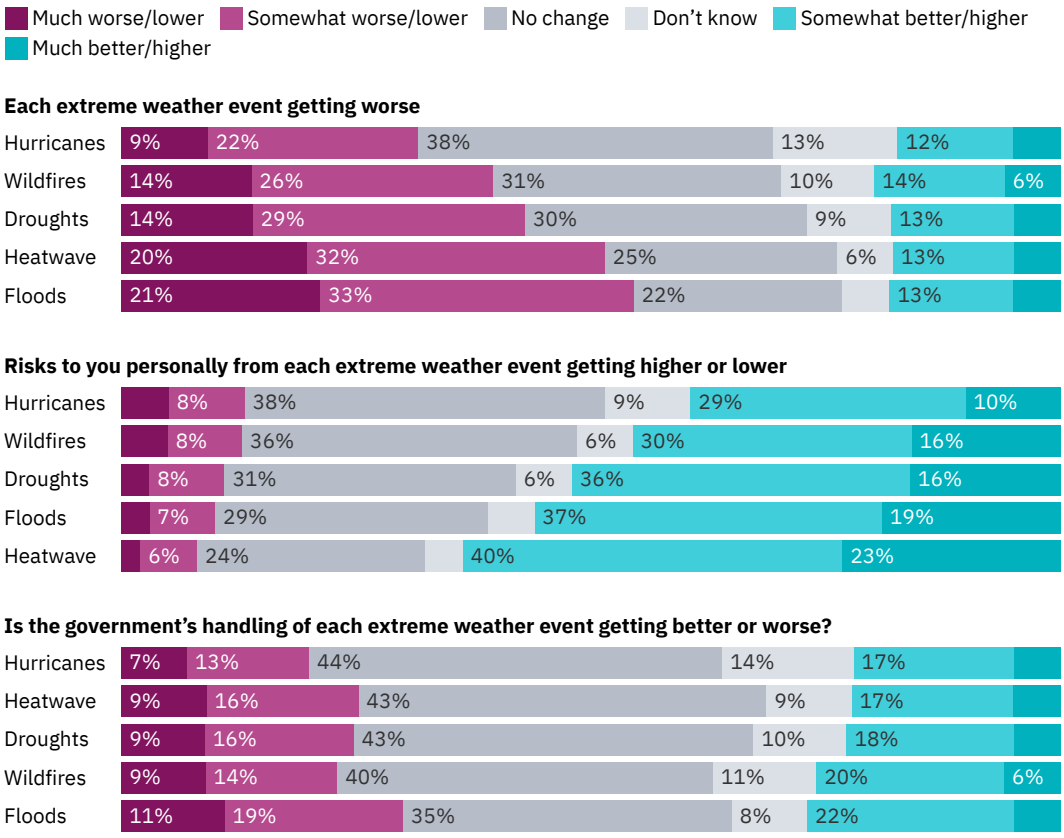
Wildfires are less commonly experienced, with countries such as Brazil and the USA standing out due to recent, widespread fire events exacerbated by hotter, drier conditions. Meanwhile, regions with wetter climates, such as Japan and the UK, report fewer experiences. Hurricanes are the least experienced extreme weather event globally, though the USA stands apart with significant exposure due to its susceptibility to tropical storms along the Gulf Coast.

These findings highlight how regional climatic and geographical factors shape public exposure to extreme weather events, which in turn helps us interpret what follows in the rest of the analysis. It is also a reminder that people can vary in terms of their awareness or interpretation of what constitutes an extreme weather event, which is likely influenced by broader demographic and ideological divides in how climate-related phenomena are perceived.

This is important to keep in mind when we examine how people perceive these events in terms of worsening trends, personal risks, and government responses (Figure 17). Earlier the results indicated that heatwaves and floods are among the most widely experienced events, and Figure 17 adds another layer by examining whether people see these events as becoming more severe and how effectively governments are managing them.

Figure 17. Views on extreme weather events and how they are handled

On average across eight countries, people are more likely to think that extreme weather events are getting worse rather than better, and that the risks of them are getting higher. People have mixed views on the government's handling of them.



Q36. For each of the following events, please indicate whether you think the situation is getting better or worse in your country.
Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.

Heatwaves and floods are again the dominant concerns, with 52% and 54% of respondents, respectively, believing these events are either getting 'somewhat' or 'much' worse. This reinforces their prominence in earlier findings, as both are widely experienced and closely linked to the tangible impacts of climate change. When it comes to personal risks, heatwaves stand out once more, with 63% believing the risks are increasing – the highest of all events. The equivalent figure for floods is 56%.

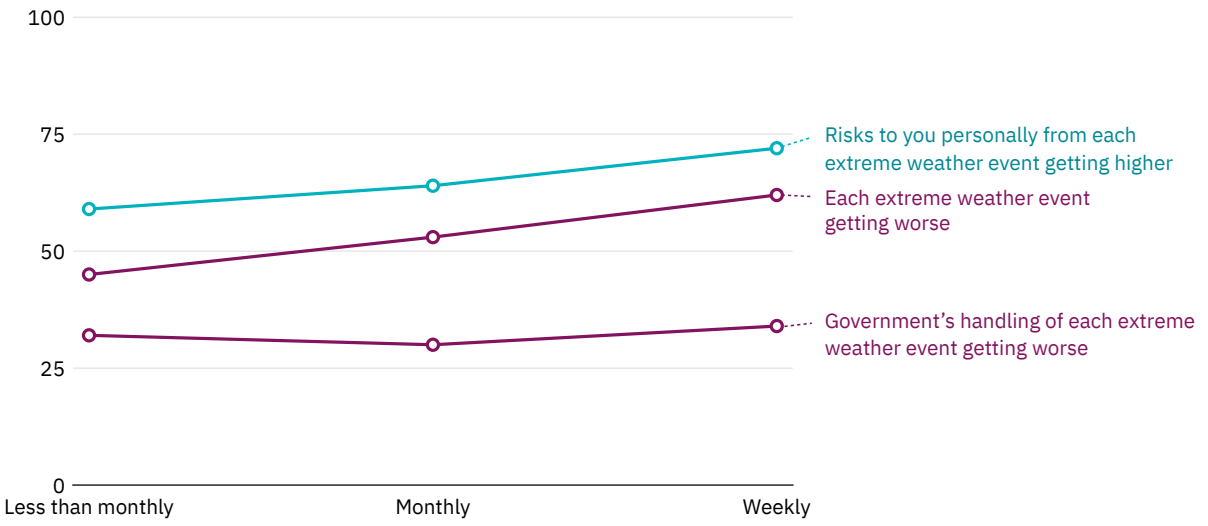
When it comes to government handling of extreme weather events, we see mixed views. A third or more of our respondents across eight countries see 'no change', and roughly equal proportions say the handling is getting better as say it is getting worse.

Previous work suggests that the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events, such as heatwaves and floods, drive media coverage, which in turn is expected to shape public perceptions of climate change (Lochner et al. 2024). Most of this research, however, focuses on analysing media content rather than understanding how audiences engage with and respond to such coverage (Hopke 2020; Lochner et al. 2024). Figure 18 builds on this by examining how *frequency* of climate news consumption relates to people's perceptions of these events.

The findings show a clear pattern. If we average across extreme weather events, respondents who consume climate news more frequently are more likely to view extreme weather events as worsening and to feel personally at risk. Among weekly news consumers, 72% believe personal risks from extreme weather are increasing, compared with 59% among those who follow such news less than monthly. Similarly, the perception that extreme weather events are worsening rises from 45% among infrequent news consumers to 62% among weekly consumers.

Figure 18. Proportion of people's perception of extreme weather events

On average across eight countries, respondents who more frequently consume climate news tend to think extreme weather events are getting worse, and the risks to them are getting higher.



Q36. For each of the following events (heatwaves, floods, droughts, hurricanes, and wildfires), please indicate whether you think the situation/risk/government's handling is getting worse/higher in your country. **Q5a.** When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source? *Base: Those that consume climate news on a weekly/monthly/less than monthly basis in all eight countries = 4145/2129/1205*.

Interestingly, views on government handling remain consistent regardless of news consumption, ranging between 32% and 34% across all groups believing responses are worsening. These findings reinforce the critical role of media in shaping public understanding of climate risks while also revealing the limits of its influence on perceptions of government action – which is likely also influenced by partisanship and a range of other factors.

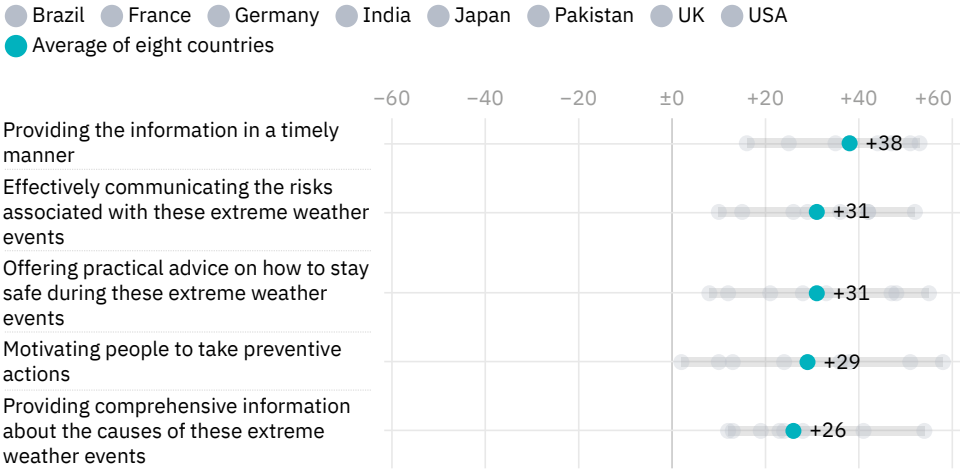
Following the relationship between climate news consumption and perceptions of worsening trends and risks, Figure 19 shifts attention to how well the news media performs during

extreme weather events. Media coverage plays a critical role in raising awareness, and encouragingly the public's view on its effectiveness in delivering essential information is generally positive.

If we consider the difference between the proportion of respondents who say the news media does a good job and those who say it does a bad job, we see that for each aspect of extreme weather coverage, people are more likely to offer a positive evaluation. Respondents are most positive about the media's ability to provide information in a timely manner (+38) with around half (53%) on average saying the media does a 'fairly' or 'very' good job in this regard. This highlights the media's capacity to deliver up-to-date coverage when extreme weather events occur. However, people are slightly less positive (+26) about the news media's ability to provide comprehensive information on the causes of these events.

Figure 19. Net difference between proportion who say the news media does a good or a bad job of each

In every country, people are more likely to think that the news media does a good job of each than a bad job. People are more likely to think the media does a good job of providing timely information than of explaining the causes of extreme weather events.



Q37NEW. Still thinking about news and information about each of these extreme weather events (heatwaves, severe floods, droughts, etc.). On balance, do you think the news media does a good job or a bad job of each of the following? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000*.

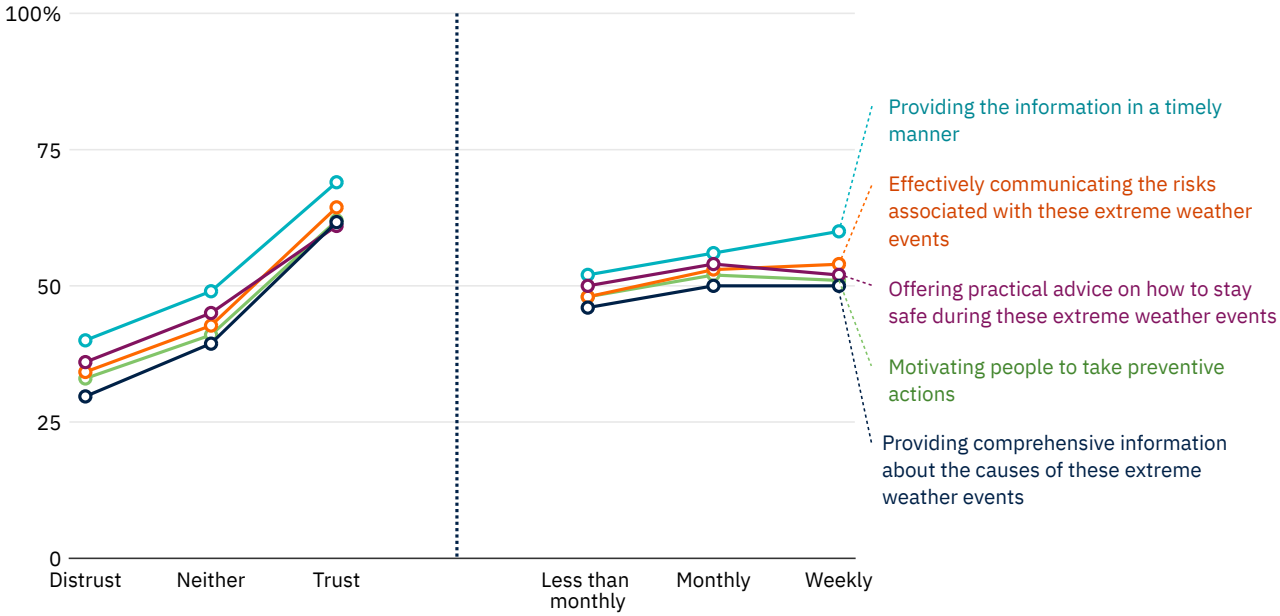
Motivating people to take preventive actions also sees relatively low net approval (+29), especially in Germany (+2), where there is no real difference between the proportion who think the media does a good job (27%) and the proportion who think it does a bad job (25%). As these numbers indicate, a relatively large proportion (40%) think that the news media does neither a particularly good nor bad job here – something that we see across this set of questions in light of the fact that many people are infrequent climate changes news consumers (see Chapter 1).

While past work highlights the importance of media exposure in shaping attitudes related to climate change (Brulle et al. 2012; Carmichael and Brulle 2017), other research underscores that trust in news media plays an equally, if not more, critical role (Ejaz et al. 2024). Figure 20 explores how both trust in news media for climate information and the frequency of its use are related to evaluations of media performance during extreme weather events. The results

reveal a clear association: those with higher trust have more positive perceptions of media performance, while frequent engagement is only associated with more positive views on delivering timely information.

Figure 20. Proportion that think news media does a good job of each

On average across eight countries, people who trust the news media on climate change tend to think it does a better job of covering extreme weather events.



Q37NEW. Still thinking about news and information about each of these extreme weather events (heatwaves, severe floods, droughts, etc.). On balance, do you think the news media does a good job or a bad job of each of the following? **Q7.** Please indicate the extent to which you would generally trust or distrust news media for news or information about climate change. **Q5a.** When, if at all, was the last time you saw, read or heard any news or information about climate change, from any source? *Base: Those that distrust/neither/trust in climate news and use climate news weekly/monthly/less than monthly across eight countries = 2055/1890/4028 and 4145/2129/1205.*

Among those who trust the media, 69% believe it provides information in a timely manner – the highest-rated aspect of media performance. Similarly, almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents in this group feel the media effectively communicates risks and motivates preventive actions. By contrast, among those who distrust the news media on climate change, positive evaluations drop significantly to 40% or lower. Even providing timely information – typically the strongest aspect of media performance – receives a much lower rating among distrusting respondents. The association with frequent climate news consumption is rather small. While weekly use of climate news boosts positive evaluation ratings for providing timely information (60%), it has little impact on other aspects of media performance.

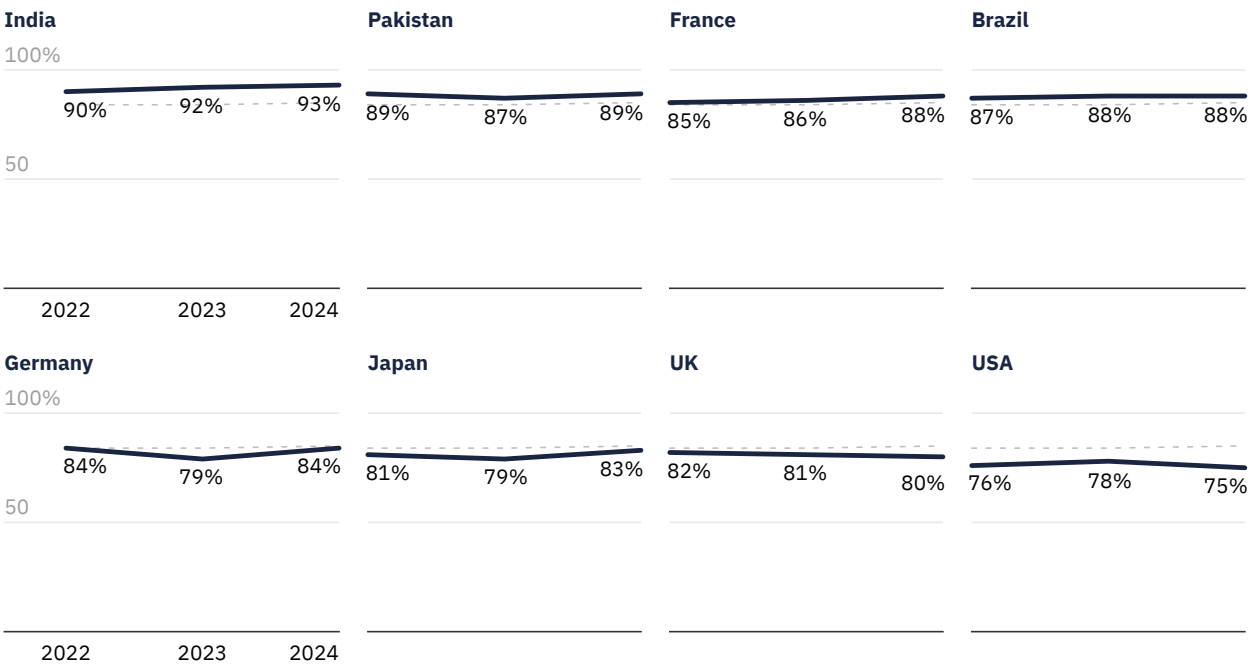
In line with previous work, the findings underscore the importance of trust in shaping public perceptions of media performance during extreme weather events. While frequent exposure to climate news can strengthen views of timeliness, trust appears to be an important factor for whether people view the media as a credible source of risk communication and practical advice. However, it is important to state that we are only able to use the data to examine associations, and it is not possible to know whether higher trust causes more positive evaluations of news media performance, or vice versa.

Chapter 5: Change in Public Views on Climate Action and Impacts

Climate change continues to intensify, bringing increasingly severe impacts and escalating the urgency for action. We might therefore expect public concern and engagement to deepen to reflect this growing urgency. This section explores whether public attitudes over the past three years – such as perceived psychological distance from climate change, levels of worry, concern over impacts, and perceptions of its effects on health – have shifted to meet the rising challenges, or if they remain unchanged.

We first examined people's concern about the impacts of climate change. Figure 21 displays the average of responses to two questions, one asking how worried people are about the impact of climate change on 'the planet' and another on 'people all over the world'. Similar to recent work emphasising the prevalence of climate concern globally (Vlasceanu et al. 2024), our findings show that, across the eight countries surveyed, worry remains consistently high, with two-thirds or more respondents expressing concern over the three years.

Figure 21. Proportion of people who are worried about the impact of climate change
In each country, two-thirds or more of respondents remain worried about the impacts of climate change, and this proportion has remained stable since 2022.



Q12. To what extent are you worried, or not, about the impact of climate change on (a) people all over the world and (b) the planet. *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000. Note: Solid line is the average of people all over the world and the planet in each country. Dashed line is the average across eight countries.*

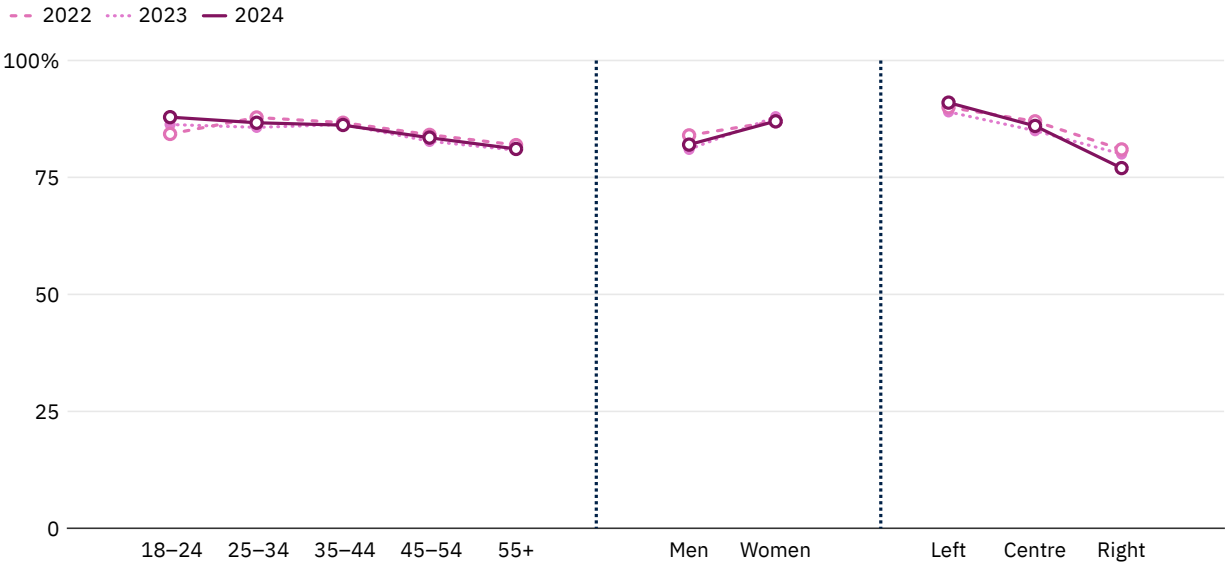
This high level of concern is particularly evident in countries like France (88%), Brazil (88%), Pakistan (89%), and India (93%), where worry consistently exceeds the average across all three years. The USA reported the lowest levels of concern among the surveyed countries, ranging from 75% to 78% over the three years and consistently falling 8pp to 10pp below the average

each year. Germany and Japan experienced temporary dips in 2023, with concern dropping to 79% in both countries before rebounding in 2024. These regional and temporal differences highlight that while climate concern is widespread, its intensity can vary based on contextual factors.

We now turn to variations in concern about climate change across age, gender, and political leaning. While overall concern remains high across all groups, the data reveal demographic and ideological differences (Figure 22). Concern is slightly but consistently higher among younger groups. The 25–34 age group has the highest levels of worry, exceeding 85% across all three years. By contrast, the over 55 group consistently reports the lowest levels, with concern below 82%. This difference between the youngest and oldest age groups widened to 7pp by 2024.

Figure 22. Proportion who are worried about the impact of climate change

On average across eight countries, concern over the impacts of climate change is high and stable. Younger people, women, and those on the left are slightly more concerned.



Q12. To what extent are you worried, or not, about the impact of climate change on (a) people all over the world and (b) the planet. *Base: All 18–24/25–34/35–44/45–54/55+ = 1304/1790/1710/1532/1918, Men/Women = 4049/4176, and Left/Centre/Right = 2043/2553/2332. Note: Lines show the average proportion worried about 'people all over the world' and 'the planet'.*

With regard to gender, women consistently express higher concern than men, with the gap peaking at 7pp in 2023 (88% vs 81%). Political ideology shows the most pronounced differences. Respondents on the left report consistently high levels of concern, reaching 91% in 2024, while those on the right see a slight decline from 81% in 2022 to 77% in 2024. This 14pp gap between the left and right in 2024 highlights how climate change remains a highly politicised issue, deeply shaped by ideological divides.

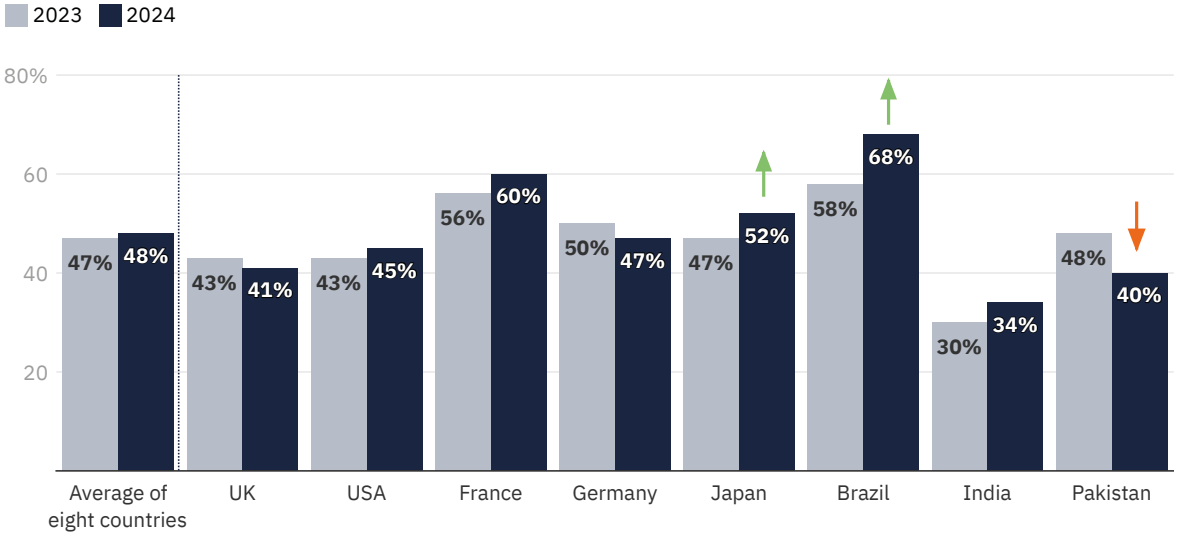
Building on the widespread concern about climate change, it is useful to examine whether people perceive the impacts of climate change as happening now as opposed to some time in the future. This relates to the concept of psychological distance (PD), which refers to the extent to which people see climate impacts as immediate versus distant (Keller et al. 2022). PD is frequently highlighted as a barrier to action on climate change, as distant impacts often feel less urgent and harder to prioritise in decision-making, and it is therefore recommended

to reduce PD by framing climate change in ways that make it feel closer to people's immediate reality (Van Lange and Huckelba 2021).

On average across eight countries, around half (48%) think that the more serious consequences of climate change are happening now (Figure 23), as opposed to in 10 years (12%), in 25 years (10%), in 50 years (8%), in 100 years (4%), even further into the future (7%), or never (2%). At the country level, notable variations are evident. Brazil shows the largest increase, with perceptions rising by 10pp to 68%, indicating growing awareness of the immediate impacts of climate change. Japan reports a modest increase, with 52% perceiving immediate impacts in 2024 compared with 47% in 2023.

Figure 23. Proportion that think people in their country are being affected by the more serious consequences of climate change now

On average across eight countries, the proportion of people who think their country is being affected by climate change now remains unchanged – but there were small shifts in Japan, Brazil, and Pakistan.



Q33. In what timeframe, if any, do you think people in [country] will be affected by the potentially more serious consequences of climate change (e.g. flooding, droughts, extreme weather events, etc.)? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

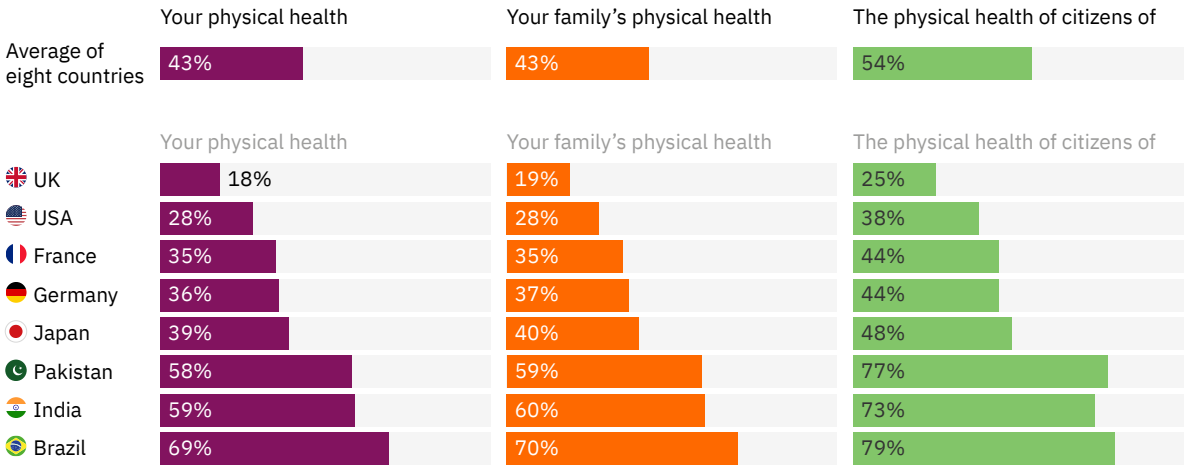
In contrast, we see a small 8pp decline in Pakistan to 40% in 2024. This drop is surprising given Pakistan's exposure to severe climate events in recent years, such as floods and extreme weather. The decline may reflect a shift in public focus, with ongoing political and economic crises dominating national discourse. India, meanwhile, continues to report the lowest levels of perceived immediacy, with just over a third (34%) recognising their country is being impacted by climate change, again reflecting a disconnect between the country's high vulnerability to climate change and public awareness – potentially shaped by competing national concerns or less visible links between climate impacts and daily life for many respondents. These cross-country results underscore a key challenge: while climate concern is widespread, perceptions of immediacy remain uneven, with PD acting as a persistent barrier.

One important way to understand the urgency of climate change impacts is by examining the effects on human health, especially as climate change claims lives and disrupts livelihoods worldwide, as highlighted by the 2024 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change (Romanello et al. 2024).

When we asked people about the perceived impacts of climate change on their personal health, their family's health, and the health of fellow citizens (Figure 24), the data reveal a stark difference between high-income and low-income nations. In Brazil, nearly 69% of respondents recognise significant impacts on their health, with relatively high figures in Pakistan (58%) and India (59%). In contrast, only 18% in the UK and 28% in the USA perceive large health effects. This underscores the structural inequalities that shape views on climate-related health impacts. In countries like Brazil, India, and Pakistan, the absence of robust infrastructure and limited social safety nets amplify the immediate consequences of climate events, making health impacts more visible and tangible. Frequent exposure to extreme weather events, alongside inadequate healthcare systems, reinforces the perception of significant health risks. By contrast, relatively stronger healthcare infrastructure and governance in the UK and the USA often buffer against these effects, leading to lower public perception of direct risks. These disparities highlight how systemic differences and lived experiences influence understanding of the health impacts of climate change.

It is also worth noting that the difference in perceptions of personal and familial health impacts is relatively small. However, perceptions of health impacts on fellow citizens are significantly higher, reflecting the belief that others will be more affected than themselves – a phenomenon commonly referred to as the third-person effect.

Figure 24. Proportion who say climate change has large effects on each of the following
There is a significant disparity between high-income and low-income countries on the perceived health impacts of climate change.



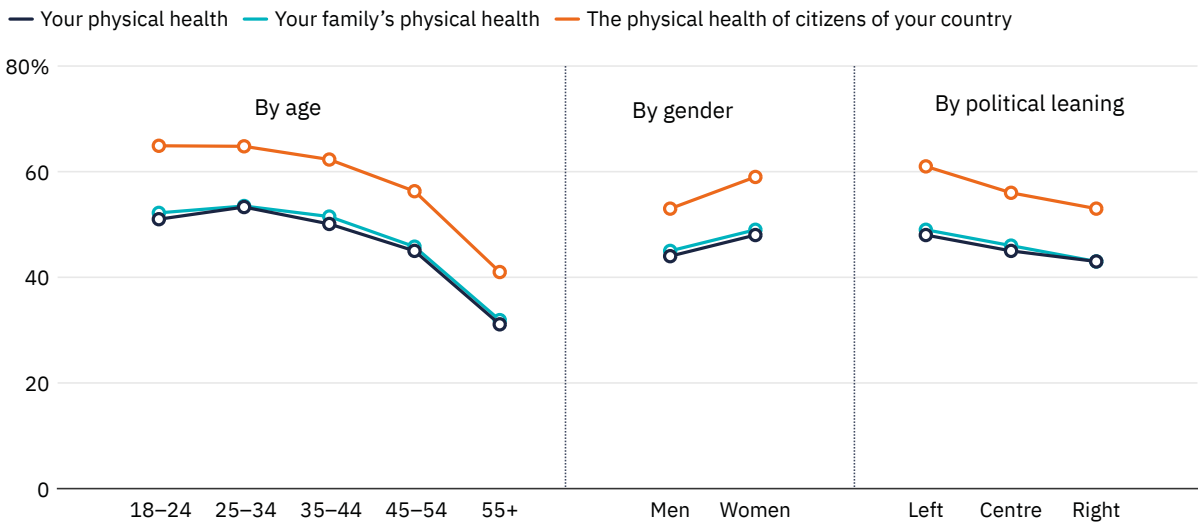
Q34a. How much of an effect, if any, do you think climate change is having on your own physical health, your family's physical health and on the physical health of people in [country]? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

This disparity in estimating the impact of climate change on health is not just evident between countries; it also appears when we categorise the data by age, gender, and political leaning (Figure 25). By age, younger respondents are the most likely to perceive significant health impacts, particularly on citizens' health, with nearly two-thirds (65%) holding this view. In contrast, fewer than a third (31%) of those aged 55 and older recognise large impacts on personal or family health, and only 41% see significant effects on citizens' health. This is particularly striking given that older populations are more vulnerable to climate-related health risks (Romanello et al. 2024). Gender differences also stand out, with women consistently more

likely than men to perceive significant health impacts, suggesting women are more attuned to or concerned about the broader health consequences of climate change.

Figure 25. Proportion who think climate change has large health effects on each of the following

On average across eight countries, younger people, women, and those on the left are more concerned about the impact of climate change on health.



Q34a. How much of an effect, if any, do you think climate change is having on your own physical health, your family's physical health and on the physical health of people in [country]? *Base: All aged 18–24/25–34/35–44/45–54/55+ = 1304/1790/1710/1532/1918, Men/Women = 4049/4176, and Left/Centre/Right = 2043/2553/2332.*

Furthermore, political ideology also shapes these perceptions as respondents on the political left are slightly more likely to perceive large health impacts, with differences between the left and right ranging from 5pp to 8pp across individual, familial, and societal health impacts. This highlights a polarisation of views on such an urgent issue, with ideological divides influencing awareness and concern.

It is also true that, while the risks to physical health are more apparent, there is increasing evidence that points to the mental health impact of climate change. 'Extreme weather events, like hurricanes and floods, can cause psychological distress and trauma. Rising temperatures can lead to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide. Air pollution and infectious diseases, which can be exacerbated by climate change, have mental health impacts.' (Massazza 2023)

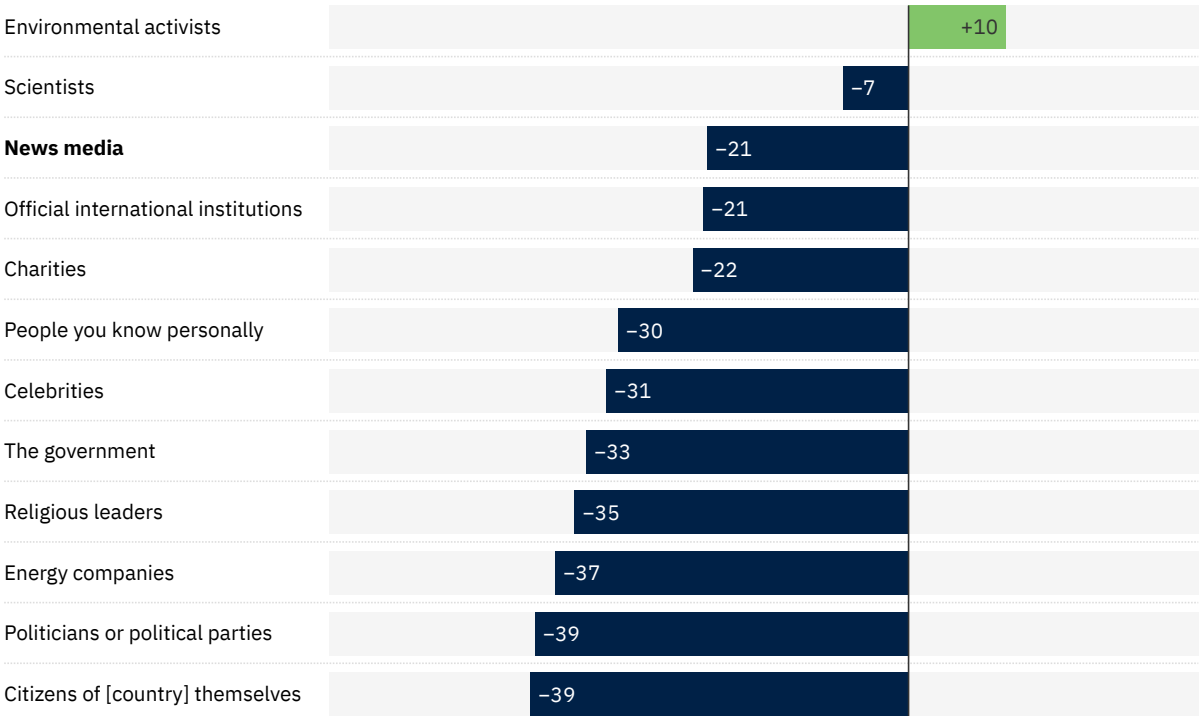
Having explored public concern, immediacy, and the health impacts of climate change, it is also useful to examine how people perceive different stakeholders' efforts – in other words, whether people think different institutions and groups within society are doing too much or too little to address climate change. The net differences in Figure 26, calculated by subtracting the proportion of respondents across eight countries who think each is doing 'too much' from those who think it is doing 'too little', reveal where the public believes responsibility lies and where gaps exist.

Environmental activists stand out as the only group with a positive net score (+10), suggesting that, on balance, people think that they are doing 'too much'. Scientists (−7) are perceived relatively positively, reflecting balanced views of their efforts. The news media is seen more

critically, scoring –21, indicating people expect the news media to do more. But at the same time, it is clear that the public expect much more from other institutions, and that the news media fares relatively well in this regard. At the other extreme, citizens themselves (–39) and politicians or political parties (–39) are viewed as doing too little, highlighting dissatisfaction with the efforts of both individuals and political leadership.

Figure 26. Net difference between proportion who think each group does too little and too much to address climate change

On average across eight countries, on balance people think that environmental activists are the only group doing 'too much' to address climate change. A majority believe that other groups, such as news media, politicians, energy companies, and citizens themselves, are doing 'too little'.



Q26. For each of the following groups, do you believe they are currently doing too little, too much, or about the right amount to address climate change? *Base: Total sample in each country ≈ 1000.*

We have also tracked the change in the proportion who think each is doing 'too little' to tackle climate change over time (Figure 27). The largest increases are seen for 'charities' and 'people you know personally', both of which experienced a 6pp rise over the three years, reaching 36% and 42%, respectively, in 2024. This highlights the growing expectations for community-level and grassroots action, as well as the role of individuals in addressing climate change. Other notable increases include 'politicians or political parties' and 'citizens', both of which rose by 5pp to 53% and 52%, respectively, by 2024, reflecting frustration with these groups' perceived inaction.

Figure 27. Proportion who think each is doing too little to address climate change

On average across eight countries, those shown in red have seen an increase of 5pp or more in the proportion who think they are doing too little to address climate change since 2022.

Q26. Thinking now about all the ways climate change could be addressed, both through taking actions and through speaking about it. For each of the following groups, do you believe they are currently doing too little, too much, or about the right amount to address climate change? *Base: Total sample in each country-year ≈ 1000.*

Overall, these findings suggest a growing public demand for stronger and more effective climate action across all sectors, with increasing scrutiny of both institutional and individual efforts. The consistent rise in perceptions of inadequate action underscores a heightened urgency among the public for greater accountability and progress on climate change.

Conclusion

In this report we have used online survey data from eight countries (Brazil, France, Germany, India, Japan, Pakistan, the UK, and the USA) to explore how people get news and information about climate change, and how people perceive, experience, and respond to its effects – and the link between the two. The data we collected in November 2024 build on comparable data collected in 2022 and 2023, allowing us to map key trends in behaviour and attitudes.

A key theme in this year's report is what we have called '*climate perception inertia*'. We define this as a stagnation in public views on, attitudes to, and engagement with climate issues and information over time. Although three years is a relatively short window for changes to attitudes and behaviour to unfold, we should remember that on several key measures the climate crisis has deepened over this period. In this sense, people's attitudes and behaviours are becoming increasingly out of step with the changing reality.

One clear manifestation of climate perception inertia can be found in the data on climate change news use – which has changed little from 2022. What's more, this lack of change suggests that COP29, which overlapped with our survey fieldwork, did little to widen access to climate change news and information or change attitudes (even just temporarily).

But this does not mean that climate news and information engagement patterns are set in stone. In the USA, against the backdrop of the presidential election, there was a 16pp fall in climate change news consumption from 2023, leaving it with the lowest levels of all eight countries in our study. It is possible that this fall was at least partly driven by the reduced salience of climate change in the election campaign, but it could also reflect a reduced supply of climate news during that period, as climate reporting gave way to horserace coverage. Although this is concerning, one small silver lining is that it reminds us that people's habits can be shifted, and people do sometimes respond to changes in the agenda set by politicians and the media.

Although this report highlights many causes for concern, there are a handful of positives for the news media. The first overarching positive is that most people are concerned about the worsening climate crisis, and – given that the news media is the most widely used source of climate information – this must surely have been shaped at least in part by the extent and character of the news media's coverage of the issue. The second more specific positive is that people have a generally favourable view of how the news media covers extreme weather events, in that people are more likely to think it does a good job as opposed to a bad job. This is especially true when it comes to providing information in a timely manner – which can mean the difference between life and death in some extreme cases – but also when it comes to motivating people to take preventive actions.

The data also remind us of the importance of personal relevance for today's news audiences. Although people are clearly concerned about the global consequences of climate change, they also say they are particularly interested in news that connects climate change to local events. Is this an opportunity for news organisations to start to engage new audiences for their climate change coverage and, in the process, to start to end climate perception inertia? This is a question we will return to in our 2025 report.

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