

A young man and woman, both wearing bright green t-shirts and blue jeans, are kneeling in a forest. They are focused on planting a small evergreen tree into the ground. The woman is on the right, smiling as she works, and the man is on the left, looking down at the tree. The background is a lush green forest with sunlight filtering through the trees. The image is partially obscured by a large, light-colored curved shape that frames the text on the left.

Reflecting Ireland

An insight into consumer
behavioural change in Ireland

Climate Change Focus

October 2025

ptsb

Altogether more human

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Reflecting the Nation

Methodology

Executive Summary

The findings in this latest edition of Reflecting Ireland point to a nation navigating a variety of concerns in respect of climate change. While most adults in Ireland acknowledge the urgency of environmental action, increasing financial pressures and a sense of apprehension about the future may be eroding confidence in their own ability to make a difference. Many say they are “doing all they can” to reduce their carbon footprint, yet acknowledge that we are at a crucial point for the future of the environment. This tension between intention and capacity reflects a wider mood of anxiety, which risks slowing progress on sustainability just when momentum is needed most.

This edition also reveals a distinct difference in the views of young adults aged 18 to 24, and those in older age groups, with under 25s demonstrating a greater willingness to make hard choices to tackle climate change.

Climate Change Perceptions

- Concern about the effects of climate change has risen among 18-24 year olds (68% to 73%) versus 2023, but declined among older age groups (75% to 68% among those aged 55+).
- 3 in 10 believe we are on the brink of irreversible climate change, a slight increase compared to 2023.
- Those concerned about climate change are most worried about increased extreme weather events (21% vs 12% not concerned).
- More people are doing all they can to reduce their carbon impact compared to 2023 (26% in 2025 vs 22% in 2023), and this is mainly motivated by a desire to reduce energy costs.
- Almost 1 in 2 (47%) believe the airline industry has the most negative impact on climate change, with data centres now seen as the second largest contributor at 34%, a significant increase from 22% in 2021.

Climate Change Behaviours

- Since 2021, we have seen a rise in Irish adults saying their household is doing all it can to reduce their carbon footprint (68% 2025 vs 66% 2023 vs 63% 2021).
- While 1 in 5 believe we must take personal responsibility for addressing climate change, more than twice that (41%) feel their personal actions will not really make any difference toward climate change (41% 2025 vs 39% 2023 vs 34% 2021). This increases to 52% for those under 25.
- Under 25s are the most supportive of implementing policy measures to tackle climate change, including increased carbon taxes (53% of this age group versus 37% for society as a whole), and surcharges on high-carbon emitting food products (46% of this age group versus 35% for society as a whole).

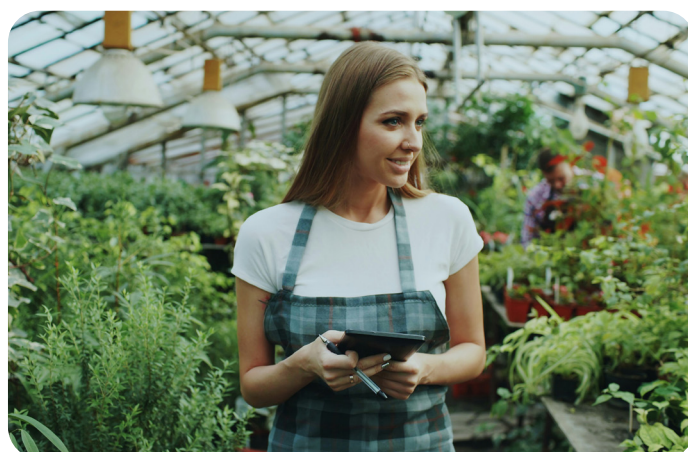
- Compared to older age groups, younger age groups are significantly more likely to change their diet to tackle climate change, and less likely to believe they are doing all they can to reduce carbon footprint.
- Solar energy is seen as the best way to tackle climate change, followed by the promotion of a more circular economy. Installing solar panels, buying a hybrid electric vehicle and retrofitting your home are the domestic-related behaviours that people in Ireland are most likely to do, driven more by cost-saving intentions rather than environmental concern.

Homeowners and Sustainability

- 6 in 10 would retrofit their house with government assistance, with just 1 in 4 willing to retrofit at their own expense.
- Just under half are aware of their Building Energy Rating (BER), and just under 3 in 10 are unaware of loans or grants available to homeowners.
- 33% of homeowners said they would consider retrofitting their home to increase their BER, and a third of these would consider a full retrofit.

Inclusivity and Community

- We are seeing a decline in the number of people who are reporting making one-off or recurring donations to charities, with 18% and 15% respectively citing they do less when compared to last year.
- Nearly four in ten (36%) say they never volunteer or do charity work, and 12% say they are volunteering less, or doing less charity work, compared with last year.
- Those under 25 are the most likely to say they want to give back to charity (financially or by giving their time).
- When asked about whether or not they feel like they live in an inclusive society, less than 2 in 5 agreed. Older age groups and those living in Dublin were the most likely to agree.
- Half say they are more likely to choose a business or service that is inclusive and has a positive social impact. This is particularly true for younger age groups.

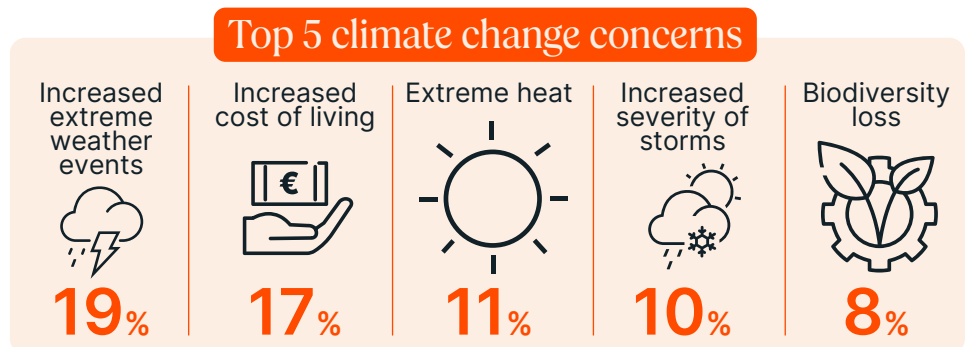


Climate change concern in context

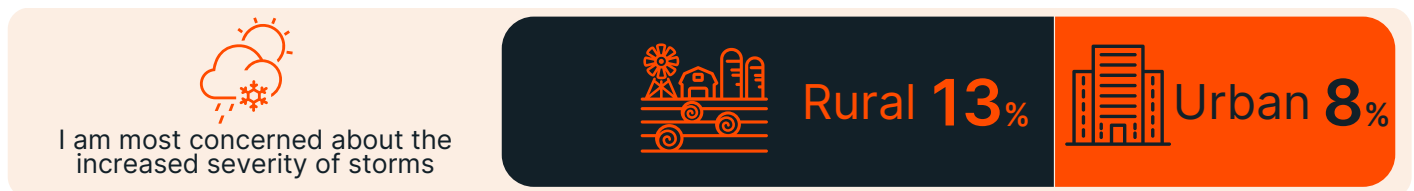
1. Seven in ten concerned about the effects of climate change

The overall level of concern about the effects of climate change, at 68%, remains virtually unchanged since 2021. So too does the number of people that are very concerned at one in four or 26%. Only 16% feel unconcerned, higher among men at 20% vs. women at 13%.

Regarding people's top climate change concerns, almost one in five are most concerned about the increase in **extreme weather events**, and almost as many worry about the cost of living associated with climate change.



Those in rural areas are more concerned about the increasing severity of storms than those in urban areas.



2. Climate change in the round

While there is evident concern about the effects of climate change, when taken in the round, it comes far down the list of priority issues. It ranks 8th after the cost of living, the price of housing, healthcare, homelessness, immigration, affordable rents and crime.

Among those who say they are unconcerned about the effects of climate change, the possible increase in the cost of living to adapt to it worries one in three (32%) of them. Relatively fewer of those concerned about climate change worry about the cost of dealing with it (13%).

Top issue facing the country



Climate Change

4% Ranked as Number 1 Issue

15% Ranked as one of top 3 issues



Climate Action - Where we think responsibility lies

Who is responsible for addressing climate change

There are different perspectives on where the main responsibility for addressing climate change sits. Most believe it's with our own Government (27%), others that it sits with each of us as individuals (20%) and others that it's with industry (19%).

Government:

People would like to see the Government play a stronger role in regulation and investing in infrastructure. Seven in ten (69%) feel more should be done by regulators to check the green credentials of products and services. A similar percentage (68%) feel the government should provide better infrastructure for electric vehicles.

Individuals:

One in five (20%) feel it's our own personal responsibility to take action to address climate change. A higher number, almost one in two (48%), would be prepared to change what they eat to help tackle climate change. This rises to 60% among 18-24s and declines to 45% among those aged 55+.

Despite one in five believing we must each take personal responsibility, there are twice as many (41%) who feel their personal actions realistically won't make any difference. This feeling is stronger again among younger age groups, at 52% of under 25s.



Being realistic, my personal actions are not really going to make any difference towards climate change - % agree:

18 - 24

52%

25 - 34

44%

35 - 44

45%

45 - 54

41%

55+

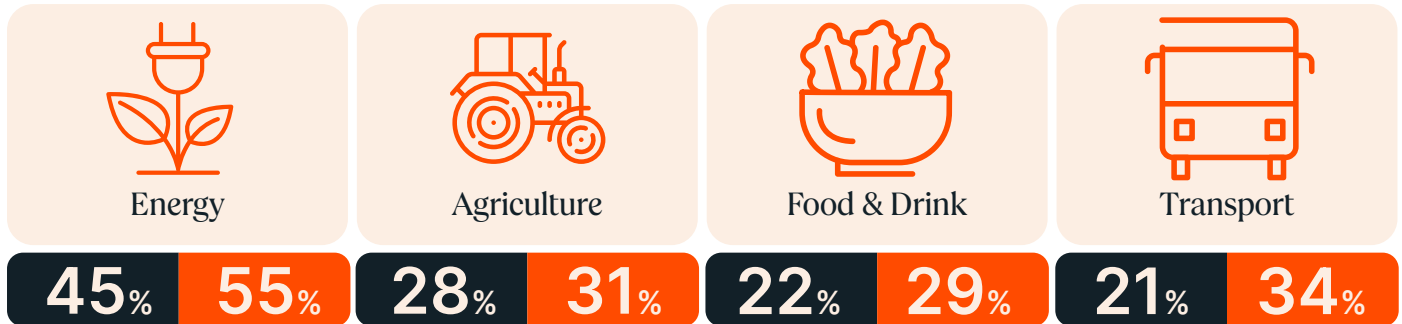
35%

Industry:

The industries that are seen to be doing their bit to address climate change are energy companies, agriculture, food & drink, and transport. Since 2021 however, there has been a decline across the board in the perception that industries are doing what they can to tackle climate change. This is most notable in transport, down from 34% to 21%, and energy, down from 55% to 45%.

Industries doing their bit to address climate change

● 2025 ● 2021

**2. Weighing up the cost of progress**

Industries drive economic growth. Transport infrastructure and data centres help maintain our competitiveness. As pressure to meet our sustainability targets increases, we have become more aware of the difficult trade-offs at play.

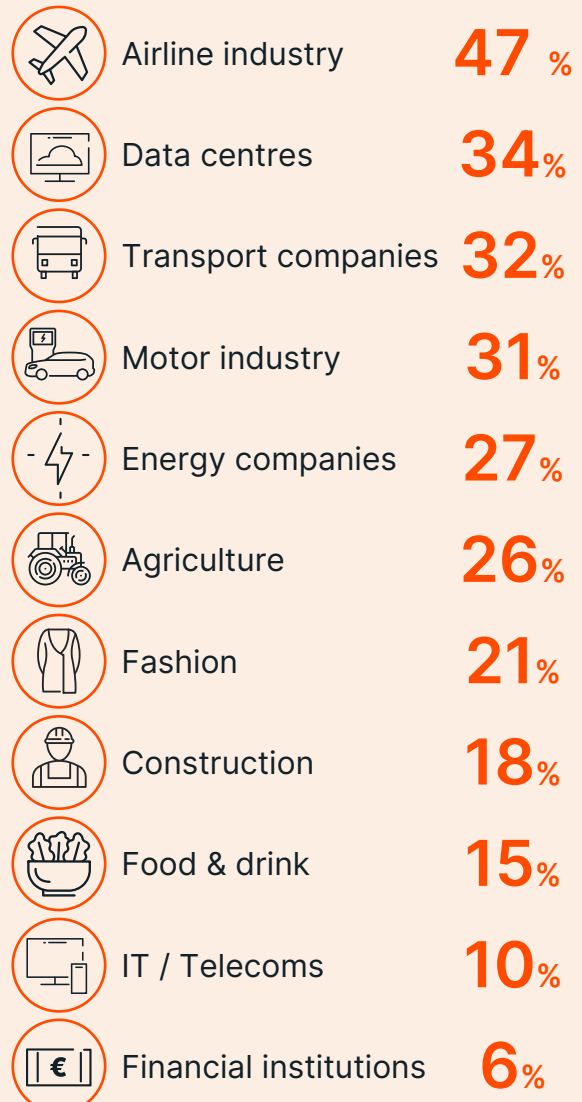
Industries seen more negatively since 2021 in terms of their impact on climate change include the airline industry, data centres and the fashion industry.

The **airline industry** is seen as the top contributor to climate change, with almost half agreeing (47%), higher among those aged 55+ (52%).

There is a growing awareness of **data centres** and an increasing consciousness of their impact on climate. They are now seen as the second largest contributor to climate change at 34%, a significant increase from 22% in 2021 when they were ranked 6th. Men and older adults are most likely to be critical of their impact. While six in ten (58%) agree to some extent that there should be restrictions on data centres, four in ten (42%) either disagree or feel neutral about it.

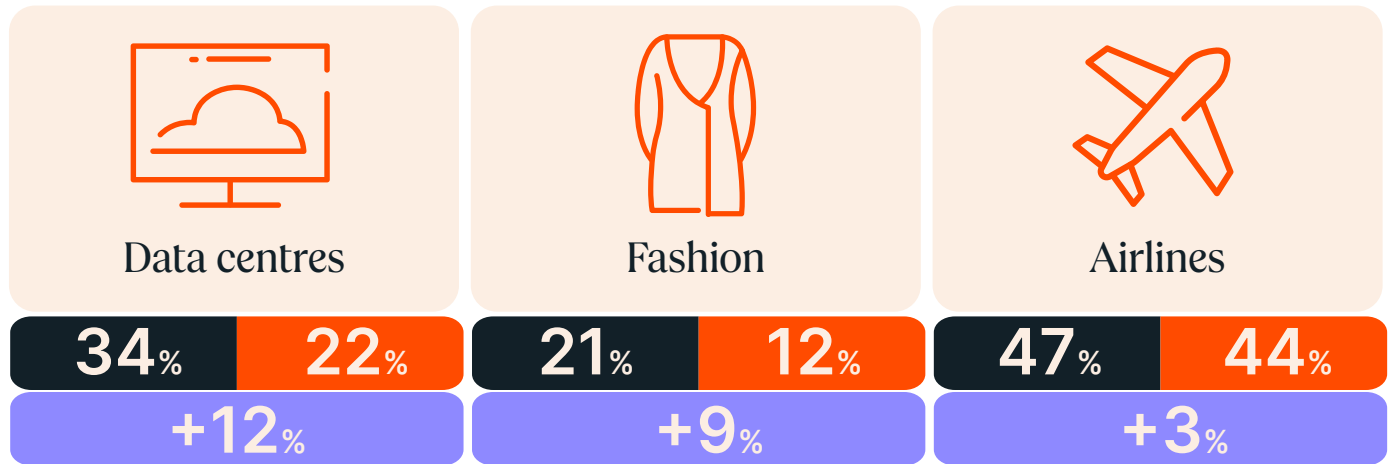
There is also a growing consciousness of the negative impacts of the fashion industry, potentially due to fast fashion. One in five (21%) flag the fashion industry's negative impact on climate change, up from 12% in 2021. Women and those aged under 35 are the most critical, and also the most likely to be targeted by fast fashion brands.

Other industries, although still associated with negative climate impacts, have seen a decline in that perception since 2021. These include transport, energy and agriculture. Men are more likely to see agriculture as a negative contributor at 32% than women (21%).

Industries that have the most negative impact on climate change – ranked

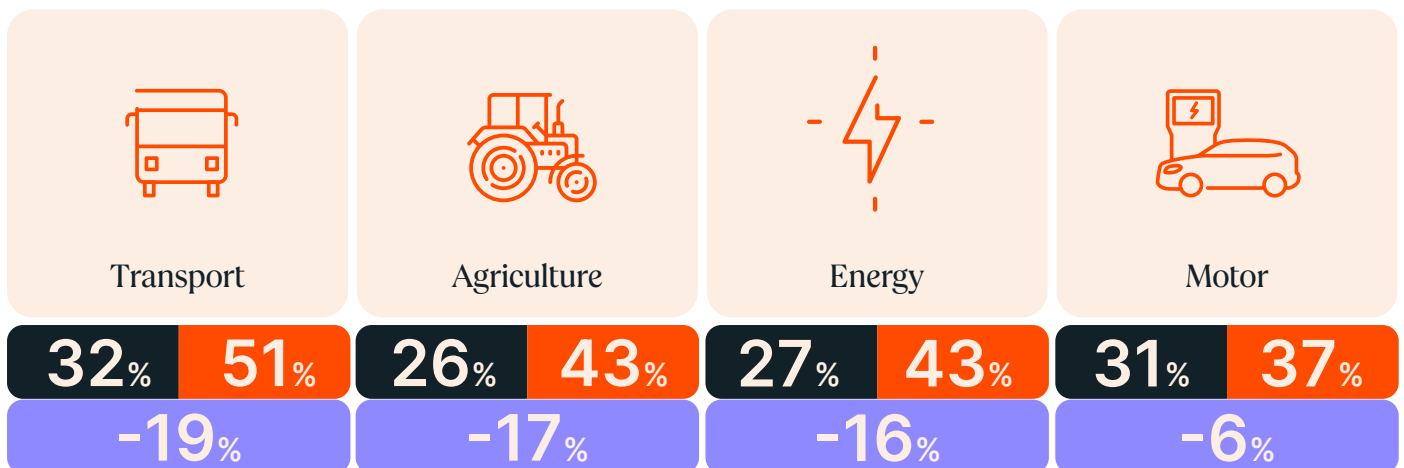
● 2025 ● 2021 ● Difference

Industries seen more negatively since 2021 in terms of climate change impact



● 2025 ● 2021 ● Difference

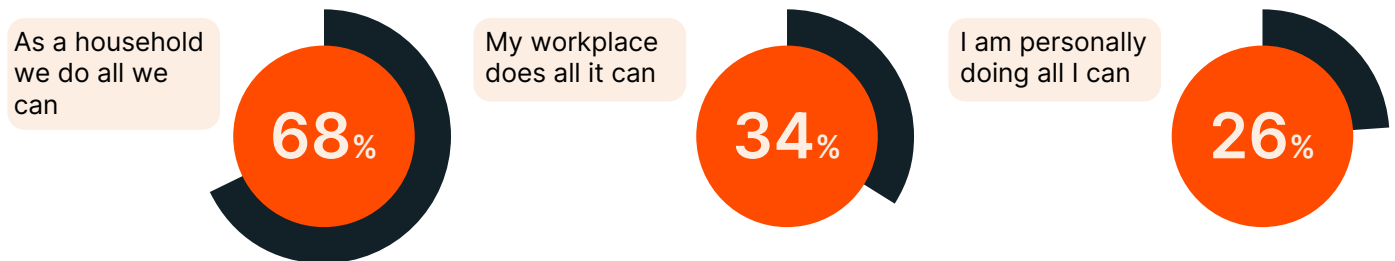
Industries seen less negatively since 2021 in terms of climate change impact



3. Doing what we can - in our household, at work, and as individuals

Some believe they are already doing all they can to reduce their carbon footprint. This varies considerably however, if we think about it from the perspective of our household, our workplace or ourselves as individuals. Seven in ten believe they are doing all they can as a household, a third believe their workplace does all it can, but only one in four believe they are doing all they can as individuals. This suggests three in four of us believe **we could do more on a personal level**, and that our workplace or our household as a whole is making more of an effort.

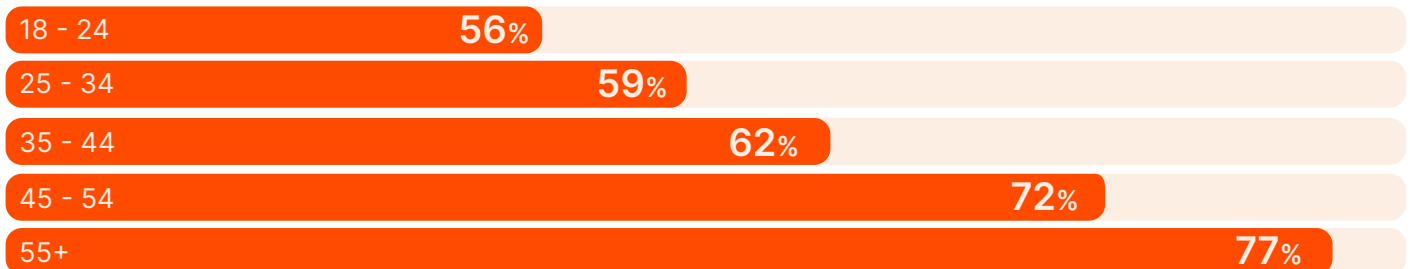
To reduce carbon impact - % agree:



Households:

As many as seven in ten (68%) feel as a household they are doing all they can to reduce their carbon footprint. However, this view is driven by older adults with younger household members less likely to see it this way:

As a household we do all we can - % agree:



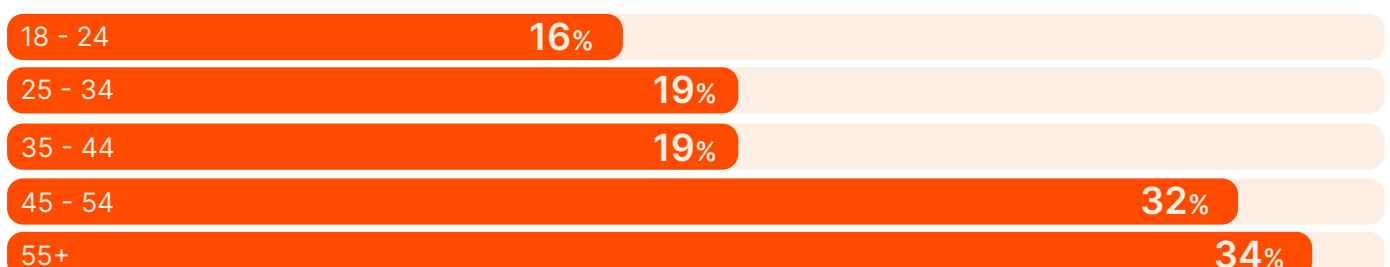
Workplace:

One in three (34%) believe their workplace does all it can to reduce its carbon footprint. A slightly higher number, 38%, are aware of their workplace's carbon impact and climate action plan.

Individuals:

On average, over one in four (26%) believe they are already personally doing all they can to reduce their carbon impact, up from 22% in 2023. The pattern varies by age group with older adults twice as likely as younger to feel this way.

I am personally doing all I can - % agree:

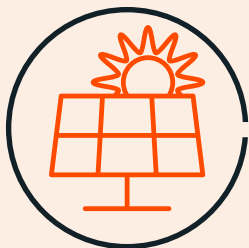


What works to tackle climate change

Increasing solar energy is regarded as the best approach to tackling climate change in Ireland, followed by promoting a more circular economy.



The best way to tackle climate change concerns in Ireland



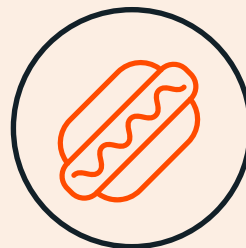
Increased solar energy



Promote a more circular economy



Increased public transport



Reducing food waste



Reducing consumption

1. Solar power

Increasing solar energy is the preferred approach to tackling climate change across the board. Those aged 18-24 in particular express a strong preference for solar power.

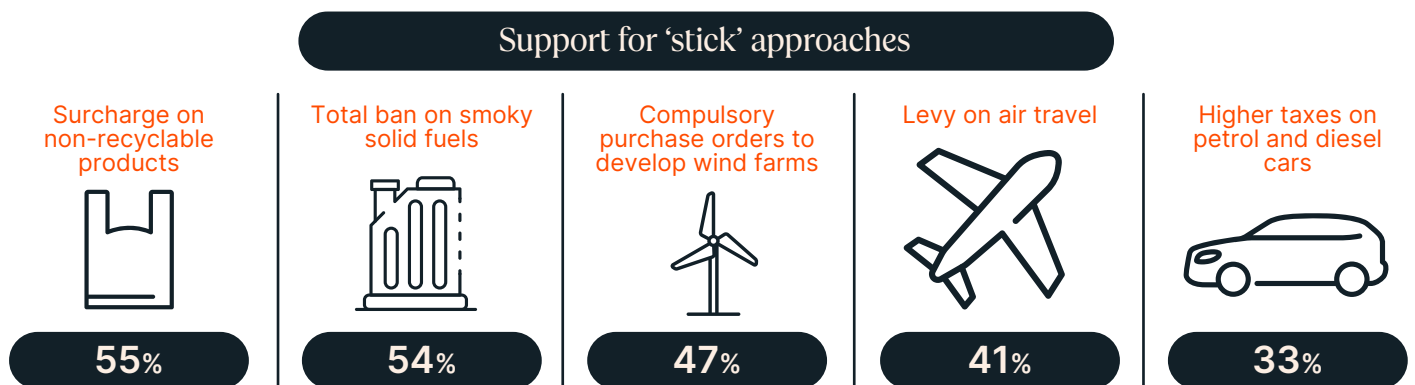
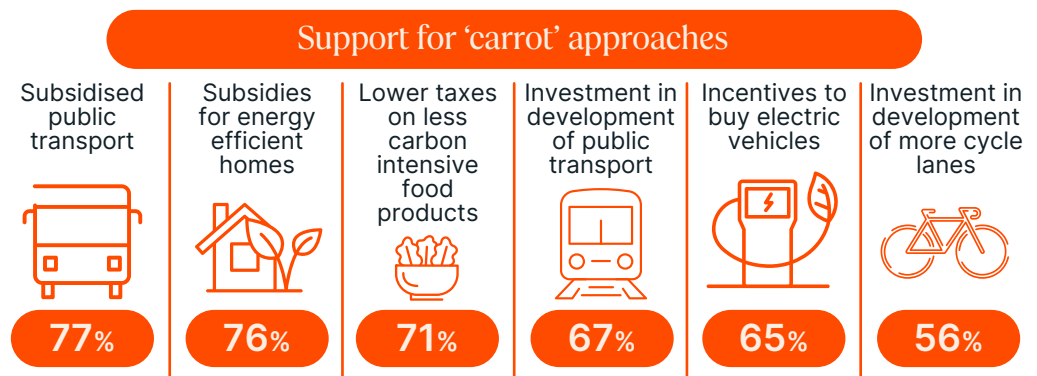
Among homeowners, four in ten (39%) plan to install solar panels over the next 3 years, and one in three (31%) plan to avail of Solar as a Service (SaaS).

2. A circular mindset

Promoting a more circular economy has gained increased support over recent years, particularly among women and the over 55s.

3. Carrot vs. Stick

When shown various measures to reduce the impact of climate change in Ireland, there is a clear preference for approaches that support or reward people financially, including subsidies, incentives, lower taxes and investments.



Support is lower for measures that increase cost or restrict choice including taxes, levies, bans or compulsory purchase orders.

While 71% would support lower taxes on less carbon-intensive food products, only half that number, 35%, support a surcharge on high-emitting food products.

4. Money as a motivator

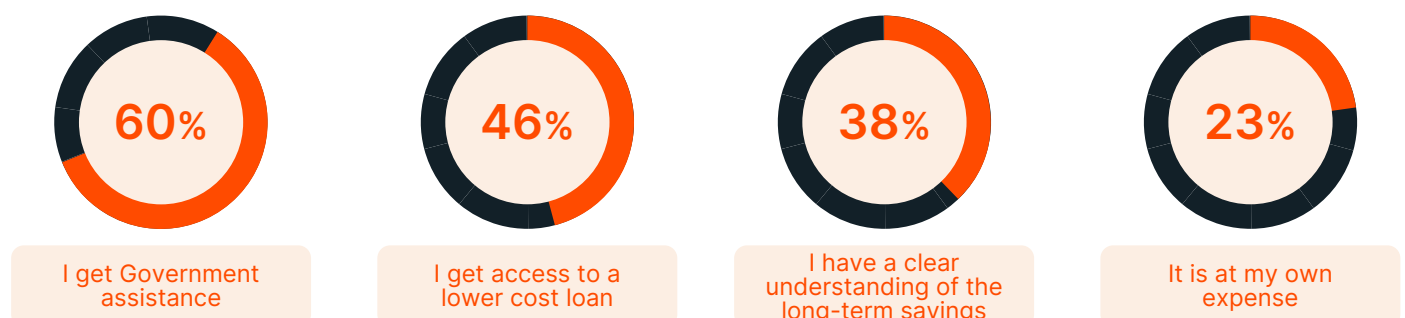
The key motivator behind many green decisions is to save money, rather than to combat climate change.

Homeowners:

For homeowners, the main barrier to retrofitting their home is the availability of finance. While almost one in four (23%) are prepared to retrofit their home at their own expense, more than twice as many are not willing to (48%). The preferred route to finance is the SBCI Home Energy Upgrade Loan Scheme.

Willingness to retrofit homes among homeowners almost triples when government assistance is factored in, and doubles with the possibility of access to lower cost loans:

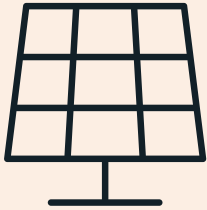
% homeowners agree - I am prepared to retrofit my house if:



For over one in four homeowners (27%), being unaware of government retrofitting and energy-efficiency grants is a stumbling block. A further 23% have enquired about grants but haven't followed through to avail of them. Saving money rather than combatting climate change is consistently the key motivator behind many planned climate-friendly enhancements to homes over the next 3 years, particularly installation of solar panels and heat pumps.

Homeowner intentions over the next 3 years

Install solar panels



39%

Main Motivation

42%

17%

25%

Retrofit to achieve a higher BER



33%

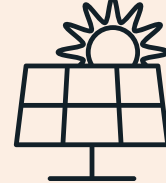
Main Motivation

38%

21%

17%

Consider Solar as a Service (SaaS)



31%

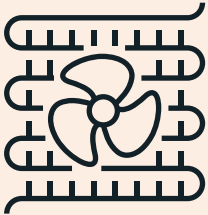
Main Motivation

39%

25%

14%

Install a heat pump



24%

Main Motivation

33%

23%

20%

Purchase a property with a high BER



21%

Main Motivation

36%

26%

10%

Take out / change to a green mortgage



20%

Main Motivation

39%

28%

11%

● Save money ● Combat climate change ● Difference





Community engagement – feeling included and giving back

On average, four in ten people feel the community in which they live feels inclusive. The same proportion feel their community could be more inclusive and two in ten feel neutral about it. Support for initiatives that support inclusion or have a positive social impact is strong, with 1 in 3 feeling they would directly benefit, and more feeling their friends or family would. Whatever the personal benefit, over half like to support businesses that are inclusive or aim to have a positive social impact.

1. The case for inclusion and positive social impact

One in three would directly benefit from inclusion initiatives, more feel friends and family would.

Almost one in three (30%) believe they would directly benefit from community inclusion activities or charities, while more, 39%, believe family members or friends would benefit, more than two and a half times the number that feel they would not (15%).

Whether they directly benefit or not, at least one in two people (53%) are more likely to choose a business or service that is inclusive (e.g.: autism-friendly, wheelchair accessible) over one that is not. Almost as many (49%) are more likely to choose a business or service that has a positive social impact e.g.: publicly partners with social enterprises or charities, over one that does not.

Almost half (46%) feel that businesses in Ireland have increasingly supported Diversity, Equity and Inclusion over the past 5 years, however a sizable proportion (39%) are concerned that businesses are scaling back their support recently in light of global trends.

2. Giving back

The vast majority support charities and charitable causes, but preferences for how to do this vary, from six in ten who like to sponsor, organise or participate in events, to eight in ten who like to make one-off financial donations.

The pattern of how people like to give back is changing. 36% of respondents say they never volunteer or do charity work, and 12% say they are volunteering less, or doing less charity work, compared with last year.

Spotlight on under 25s – forging a different path

While we all react in different ways to what is going on around us, we see a distinct difference between young adults aged 18 to 24, and older age groups. This generation feels differently about climate change and how to react to it. Their views on some issues are markedly different to the average view, and to those just a little older, aged 25 to 34.

It's not about the money, it's about values

Under 25s are more concerned about climate change, and are more willing to pay to help tackle climate change, such as through higher taxes.

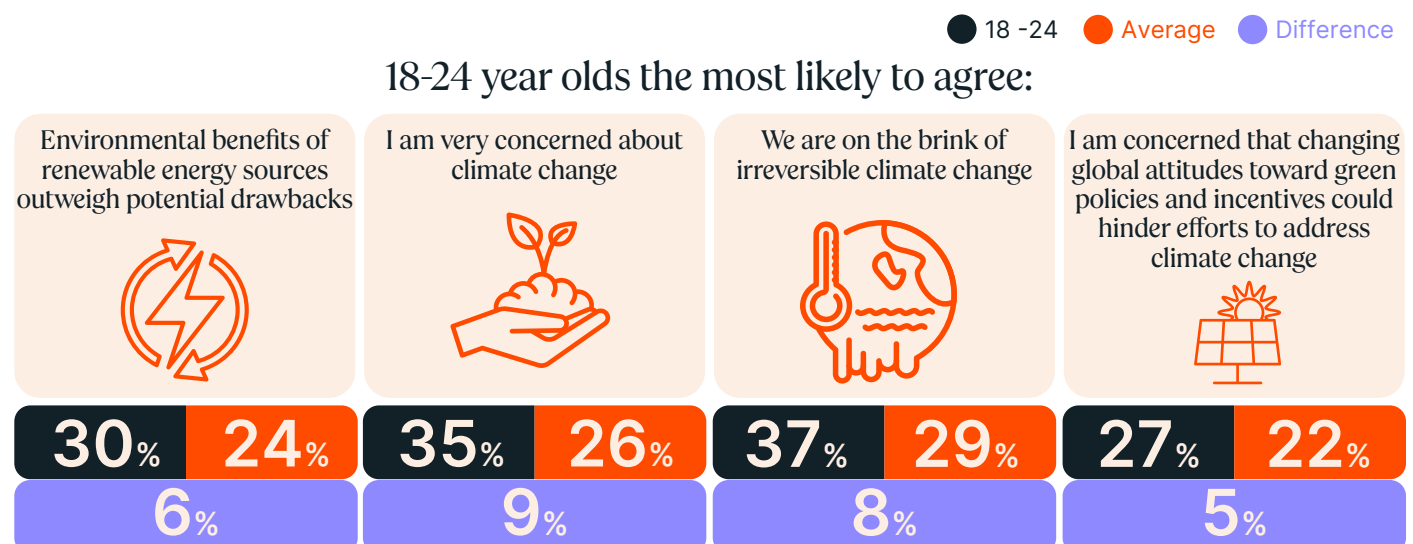
Sustainability, including both environmental and social aspects, and diversity, equity and inclusion really matter to them. They influence decisions about who to work for, which products and services to buy and which initiatives to support. The gap vs. average is sizable at 18 to 21%.

As we approach milestones including the election of a new President on October 24th and COP 30, United Nations Climate Change Conference in November, we look at how the views of the youngest adults in Ireland differ from the mainstream on climate, policy, community, employment and consumption.

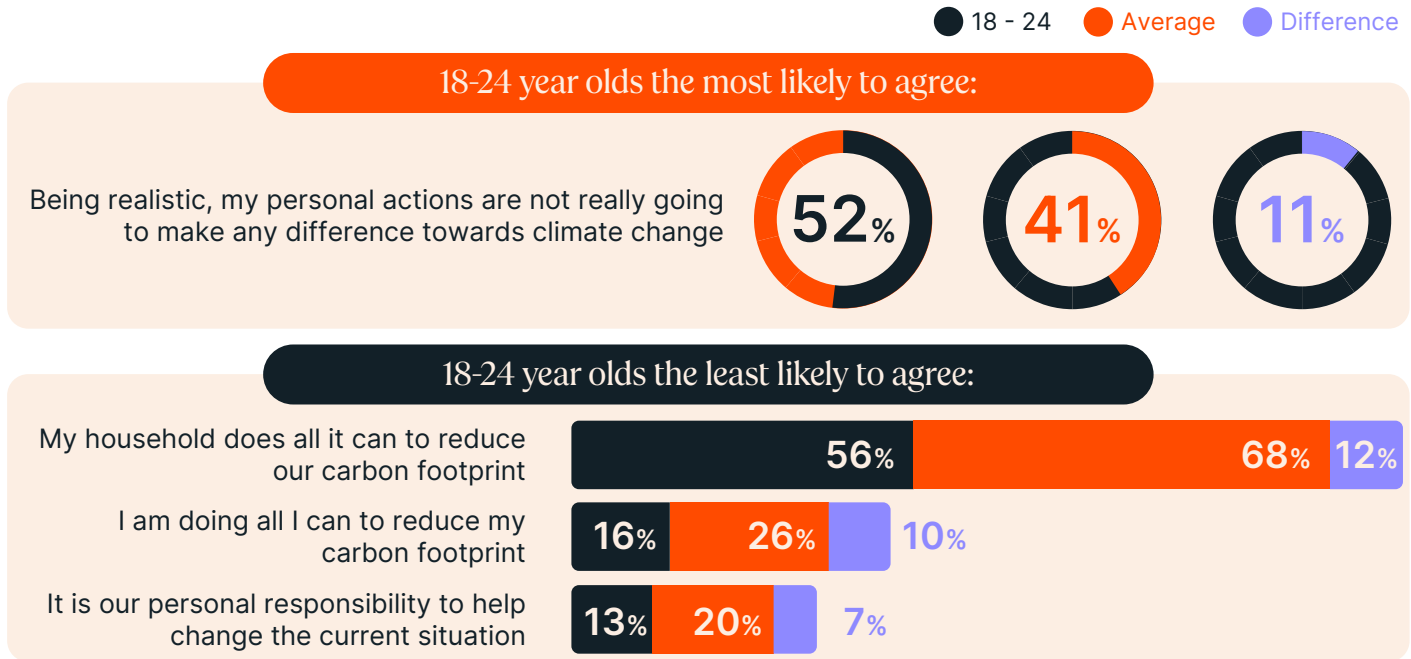


1. Climate

The under 25s are the most likely to be concerned, or very concerned, about climate change and the most likely to feel that we are on the brink of irreversible climate change. In terms of meeting the challenge, they fear that changing global attitudes towards green policies could hinder efforts to address climate change.



Those under 25 are the most likely to believe that their personal actions will not make a difference when it comes to tackling climate change, and they are least likely to believe that it is our personal responsibility to take action. However, they are also the least likely to feel they or their household are doing all they can to reduce their carbon footprint. This suggests they believe there is more they could do, but struggle to motivate themselves to act.



2.Views on climate policy

In terms of Government policy, the under 25s are the most supportive of implementing a range of measures to tackle climate change ranging from lower taxes, incentives and investments to higher taxes and restrictions. They are the most committed to renewable energy sources, seeing the benefits as outweighing the drawbacks.

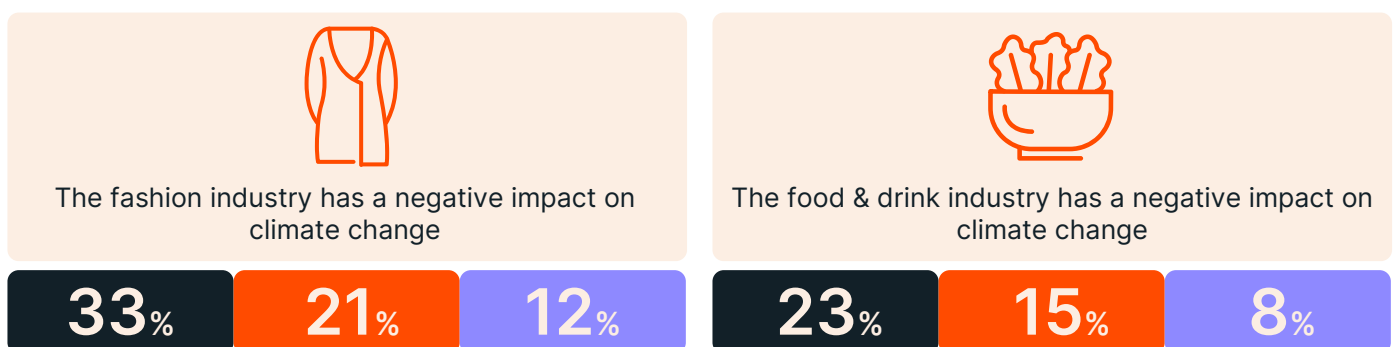
In terms of business policies, while they are the most appreciative of businesses in Ireland having supported Diversity, Equity and Inclusion over the past 5 years, they are also the most concerned, at one in five (21%), that businesses are scaling back on these commitments in light of global trends.

They are the most likely to believe businesses bear responsibility for the current situation, and are particularly critical of the fashion industry for its negative impact on climate change, 33% vs. 21% on average, and the food & drink industry, 23% vs. 15% on average.

They are the most likely to express a growing weariness of corporate sustainability claims, and the most determined that regulators check green credentials of products and services.

18-24 year olds the most likely to agree

● 18 - 24 ● Average ● Difference



18 - 24 year olds the most likely to agree:

18 - 24

Average

Difference

Government Policies			
Increased carbon taxes are necessary to get us to change	53%	37%	16%
There should be a surcharge on high carbon-emitting food products such as meat	46%	35%	11%
We need to move away from our reliance on vehicles that run on petrol or diesel	61%	53%	8%
The environmental benefits of renewable energy sources outweigh their potential drawbacks	30%	24%	6%
Increased solar energy can help tackle climate change in Ireland	20%	15%	5%
Business Policies			
I am concerned that businesses are scaling back their previous commitments regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as a result of changes of attitudes at a global stage	60%	39%	21%
I think the level of support businesses in Ireland employ towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) has increased in the past 5 years	57%	46%	11%
Most likely to believe businesses and services bear responsibility	13%	6%	7%
More should be done by regulators to check the green credentials of products and services	74%	69%	5%
I am growing increasingly weary of corporate sustainability claims	31%	26%	5%

3. Community engagement: A desire for greater inclusion, and actively giving back

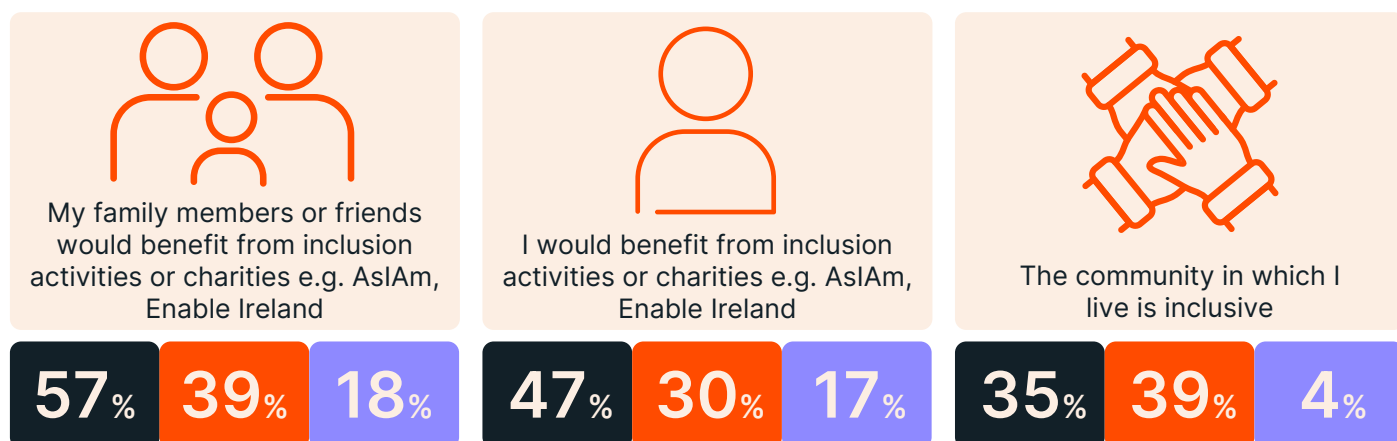
The under 25s are less likely than older age groups to feel the community in which they live is inclusive, but the most likely to feel that they and their friends and family would benefit from inclusion activities or initiatives.

18-24 year olds the most likely to agree

● 18 - 24

● Average

● Difference



Across all the ways to support charitable initiatives from donating financially to volunteering time, the under 25s feel they are doing more over the past year. One in four are volunteering more of their time or doing more charity work, and over one in five are making more one-off financial donations. Approximately one in six are organising, participating in or sponsoring more projects or campaigns over the past year.



4. Employment - the importance of sustainability and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the workplace

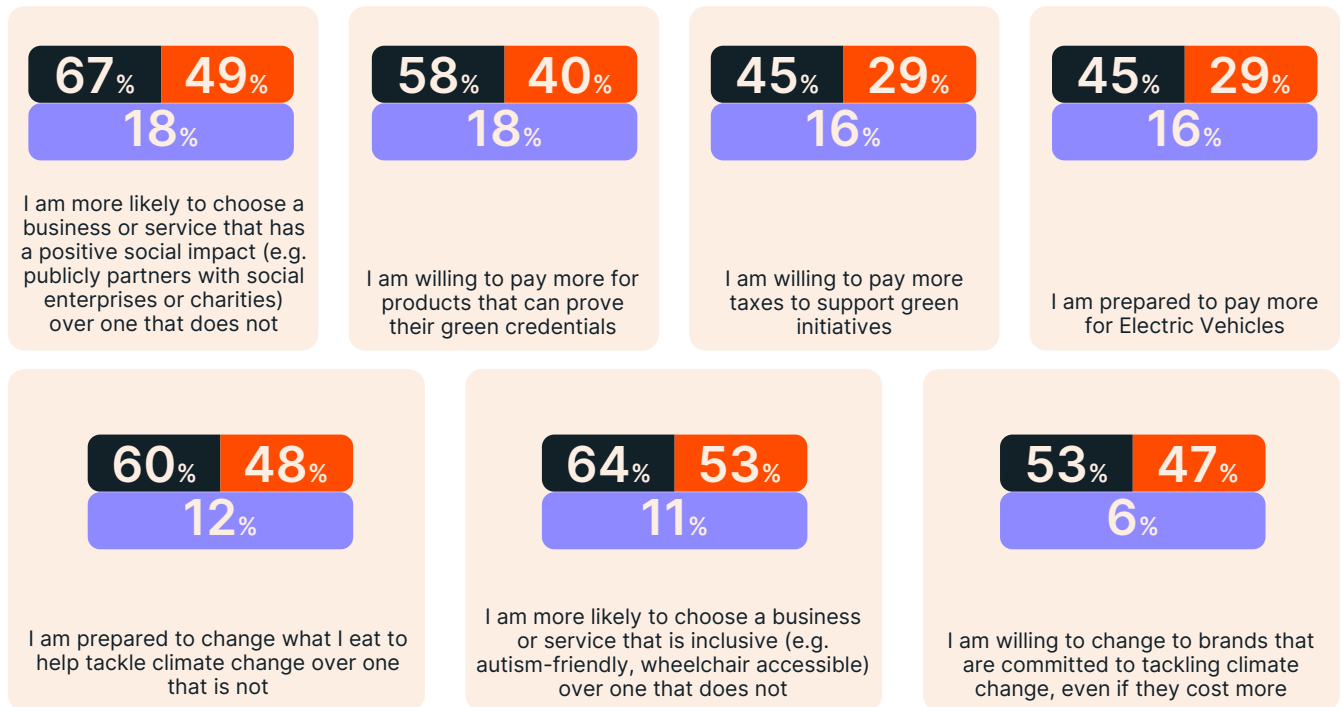
For the under 25s either planning or starting their working lives, the commitment an employer demonstrates to sustainability and to diversity, equity and inclusion, is much more important than it is to older age groups. These factors influence decisions about career for over one in two of those under 25 compared to one in three on average.



5. Consumption - a willingness to pay more for sustainability

Two differences emerge between under 25s and older adults. First, under 25s are **the most willing to pay a little extra** for products and services that can prove their green credentials across multiple categories including food & drink, transport, travel, technology, fashion, and tourism. Secondly, under 25s prefer to support businesses that have a **positive social impact**, and are inclusive.

18-24 year olds the most likely to agree:



● 18 - 24 ● Average ● Difference



Reflecting the Nation



A regional view of how people in Ireland feel about climate change and sustainability

Taking a look at regional differences, people in Dublin (23%) are most likely to say that we are on the brink of irreversible climate change while people living in the rest of Leinster (20%) are least likely to say they adopt energy-saving behaviours at home to reduce their energy bills. Residents in Connaught & Ulster (13%) are least likely to say they are growing increasingly weary of corporate sustainability claims.



Connacht & Ulster

We are on the brink of irreversible climate change **16%**

I adopt energy-saving behaviours at home to reduce my energy bills **22%**

I am growing increasingly weary of corporate sustainability claims **13%**

Dublin

We are on the brink of irreversible climate change **23%**

I adopt energy-saving behaviours at home to reduce my energy bills **25%**

I am growing increasingly weary of corporate sustainability claims **16%**

Rest of Leinster

We are on the brink of irreversible climate change **17%**

I adopt energy-saving behaviours at home to reduce my energy bills **20%**

I am growing increasingly weary of corporate sustainability claims **17%**

Munster

We are on the brink of irreversible climate change **20%**

I adopt energy-saving behaviours at home to reduce my energy bills **24%**

I am growing increasingly weary of corporate sustainability claims **16%**

In the eighteenth edition of Reflecting Ireland, we focus on climate change.

Survey information

- An online survey was conducted of 1,000 adults in the Republic of Ireland
- Sample was nationally representative of the population based on gender, age, social class and region
- Fieldwork was carried out between the 20th and 29th of August 2025.
- The margin of error for this research is +/- 3.02%

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