



PRESS RELEASE

Earth Day 2022: Global attitudes to climate change

More to do to persuade public to make high impact environmentally friendly changes, with few able to identify which are best at cutting carbon emissions

London, 22nd April 2022 — New research by Ipsos shows people around the world are not very likely to make environmentally friendly changes that would have the most impact on cutting carbon emissions. Less than half say they are likely to make changes such as eating fewer dairy products (41%), eating less meat (44%), changing their household heating system to a low carbon system (44%), despite these being some of the most effective ways in cutting carbon emissions.

The global country average shows that people are most likely to try to cut their emissions by avoiding products which have a lot of packaging (58%). Those in China (76%), South Korea (72%) and Malaysia (68%) are most likely to make this change. Avoiding buying new goods (54%), saving water at home (52%) and saving energy at home (52%) are also slightly more popular options.

Half (49%) say they are likely to walk/cycle/use public transport rather than driving a car or motorbike. According to this study* by Diana Ivanova et al published by Environmental Research, living car-free is the number one way to reduce carbon emissions, followed by switching to BEVs (battery electric vehicles) and taking one less flight. 46% said they are likely to not fly in the next year, or to replace some flights with train or bus journeys.

Around the world, few can correctly identify actions which would have the most impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Of the list given, people are most likely to say recycling is the best way to reduce emissions (49%). In reality, according to the study mentioned above this is considered the 60th most impactful action.

Among the top 5 actions chosen by the public, only 2 are in the actual top 10 most impactful actions to take:

- Switching to purchasing renewable electricity (30%) - actual rank is no.4
- Less packaging (28%) – actual rank is no.38
- Buying fewer items or more durable items (22%) – actual rank is no. 46
- Shift to public transport (22%) – actual rank is no. 5

The most impactful action, 'living car-free' which ranks no.1 was only selected by 15% of people.





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Despite being the most impactful action people can take to reduce their own emissions, and shifting to public transport being another important action, people around the world are split on walking, cycling or using public transport more instead of driving. Those in China (72%), India (65%) and Peru (65%) are most likely to walk, cycle or use public transport more, rather than use a car, while those in the US (33%), Canada (34%) and Sweden (34%) are least likely to make this change to cut carbon emissions.

Dr. Pippa Bailey, Head of UK Climate Change & Sustainability Practice, Ipsos said: “It is evident that there is still a sizeable gap between what people believe to be true and what is reality in terms of the actions that we as citizens can make to reduce our own carbon footprint. So there is an ongoing role for education and putting more focus on those issues which are going to have a significant positive impact. Some of the tougher life choices, such as people moving away from personal transportation to the use of public transport, walking or cycling is going to be more challenging, particularly in developed economies. However, there is clear awareness of the need by global citizens to transition to renewables and so there is likely to be limited resistance to changes in this area.”

*Source: Ivanova *et al*, 2020. Quantifying the potential for climate change mitigation of consumption options. Available here: <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab8589/pdf>





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Methodology

Ipsos interviewed a representative sample of 23,577 adults aged 16-74 in 30 different countries globally and 16-99 in Norway. Interviews were conducted using the Ipsos online panel system between 18 February – 4 March 2022. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population of this audience. All polls are subject to a wide range of potential sources of error.

The countries reporting herein are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, mainland China, Chile, Colombia, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

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