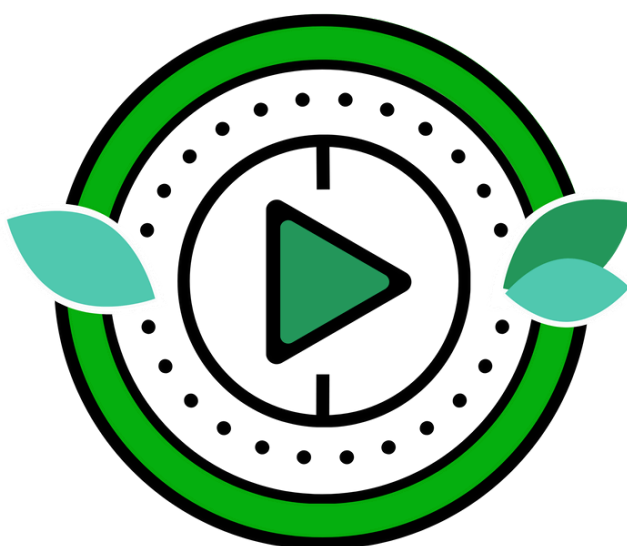


Media4Change

Survey's results



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Introduction

Presentation of the study

This survey was conducted in the frame of Media4Change, a 2-year project co-funded by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union.

The project is led by Solidarités Jeunesses (France) alongside its partner organisations : Agareso (Spain), IBG (Germany), Pi Youth Association (Türkiye), ReBike Altermobility (Italy), EstYes (Estonia) and Inex SDA (Czech Republic).

The project's goal is to train youth workers and young people in participatory media, an innovative method that allows everyone to make their voices heard through media (film, podcast, photography...) in a collaborative manner. Through this method, we will tackle the topic of sustainable development in Europe.

The survey's goal was to know more about how young people in Europe view sustainable development before we dive more into the topic during our international trainings. It was led by all 7 participating organisations, using 8 different surveys (one in every national language and one in English). We gathered 499 answers from our main target groups (people residing in Europe, aged 18-30) and 153 answers from our second target groups (people residing in Europe, aged below 18 and above 30).

Disclaimer about the survey's biases

Most of the responses are from people our 7 organisations' work with (our target groups), meaning that they are mostly from people living in urban areas from 7 countries. It was more complicated to reach out to people outside of our direct target groups (e.g. people from rural areas...), and our respondents might be people with already high levels of environmental interest, knowledge or concern for this topic. Therefore, there can be issues generalising the results outside of the target.

We also take into consideration the fact that people tend to respond in order to give a positive image of themselves (social desirability bias). Even though we expressed some of our questions in a "reverse format" to mitigate this bias, it should be kept in mind when reading the results.

When analyzing our surveys' results, we also reported other potential biases :

- Most of the respondents are probably quite financially secure, as 48.3% of them are students and only 1,8% are students and working at the same time. Having access to financial resources impacts one's environmental habits.
- For certain categories, very few people responded (e.g. : non-binary people, certain countries...). Their answers cannot be considered representative of their categories.
- Among the respondents, there are more women than men, as it is often the case with online surveys (1). This leads to other consequences :
 - Women generally tend to be more aware of environmental issues and are more likely to adopt a pro-environmental attitude than men, which is explained by the fact that women also tend to be more affected by climate change than men (2).
 - Women generally tend to underestimate what they do, while men tend to overestimate what they do, which translates into surveys' responses (3).

Main findings

We found out that our target group has a high level of interest for environmental issues, with 79.6% of respondents aged 18-30 being either "fairly" or "very" interested in this topic, and most of them have a rather strong "pro-environmental" orientation. They are also quite knowledgeable on the topic : for example, 53.9% said that they felt able to give a definition of "sustainable development".

The area in which our respondents are the most "active" in order to reduce their environmental impact is Consumption, meaning that they try to reduce their use of non-essential items, avoid single-use plastics and buy second-hand products. The area where our respondents are less "active" in mitigating their environmental impact is Transportation.

The main factors that shift our target group's attitude towards environmental issues are gender, living area (urban/peri-urban/rural) and level of education (4).

I - The respondents' profile

Important facts and figures

The main target group of our survey were people aged 18-30 years old, currently residing in a European country. The age distribution of respondents was almost equal, with 38.1% respondents aged 18-22, 35.5% aged 22-26 and 26.5% aged 26-30.

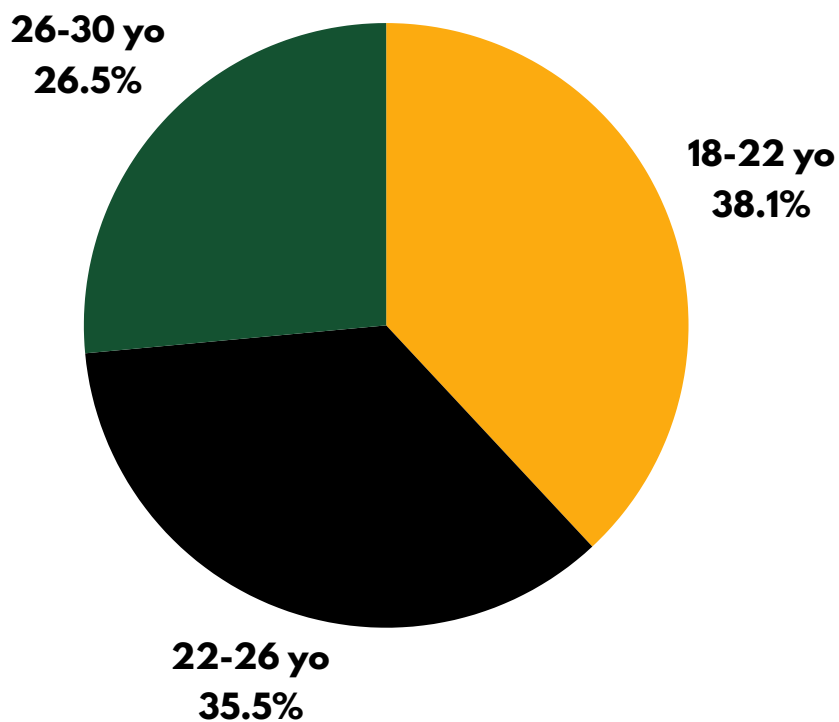
A majority of the respondents identified as female (69.7%).

The countries of residence were mostly the countries where the project's partners are located, meaning that we received most answers from the Czech Republic, Spain, Germany, Türkiye, Italy, Estonia and France (93.6% of the respondents are residing in these countries). However, thanks to the dissemination of an English version of the survey, we were able to gather some answers from other countries as well.

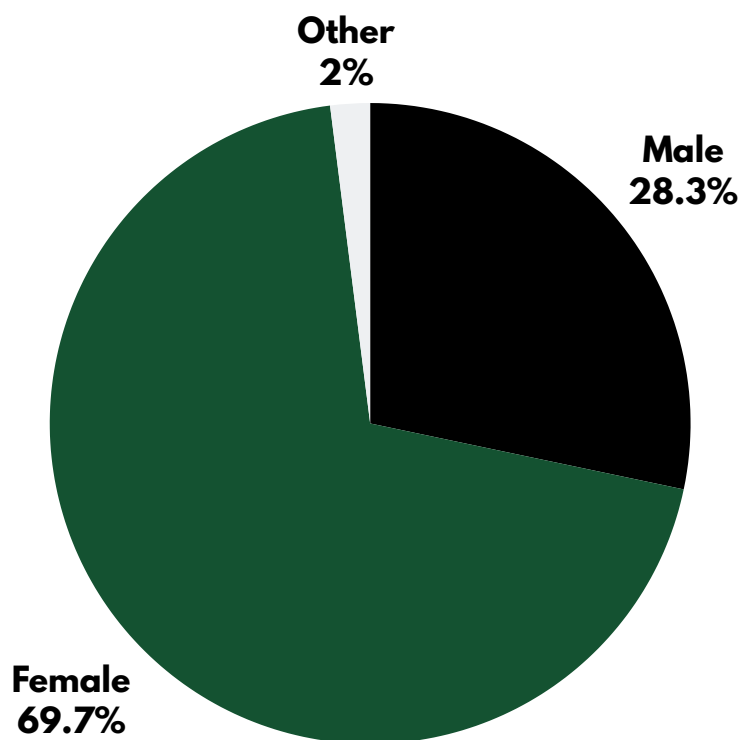
Most respondents were living in a urban area (76%), which is similar to EU-led statistics (around 75% of the EU population lives in a city or town) (5).

61,3% of the respondents graduated or were graduating from a university (either with a bachelor or a master degree), and 48.3% were students.

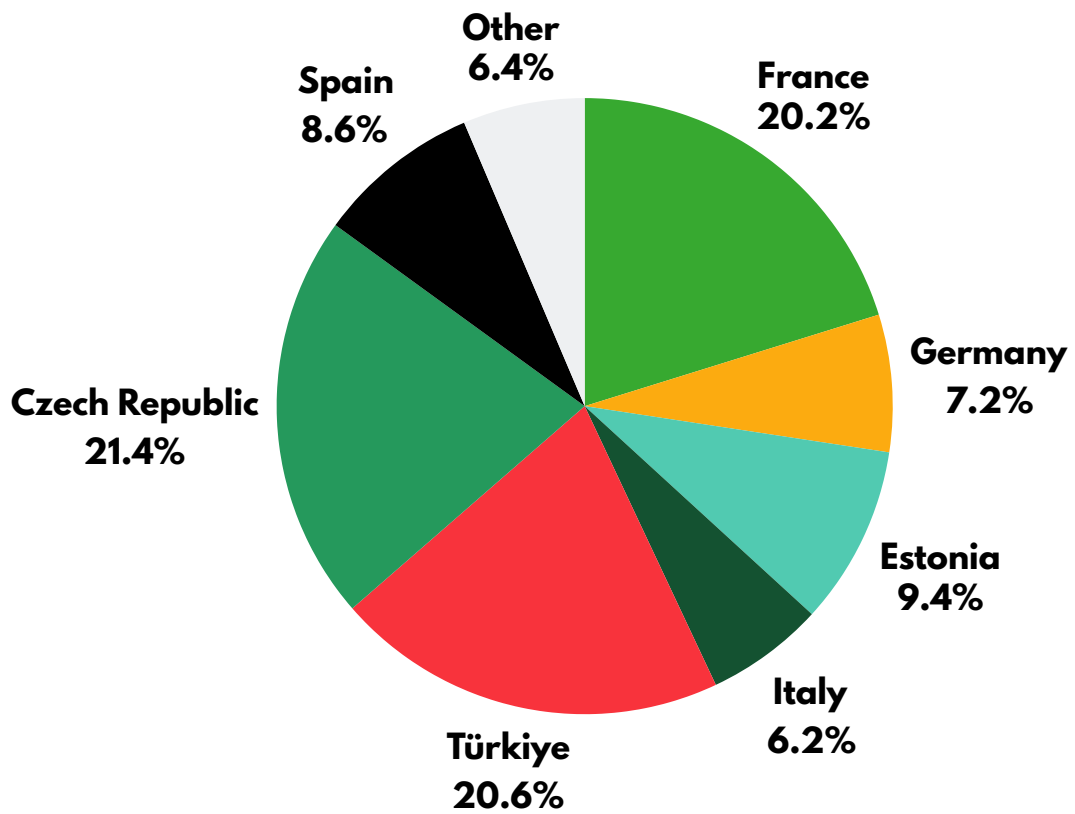
Age of respondents (main target group)



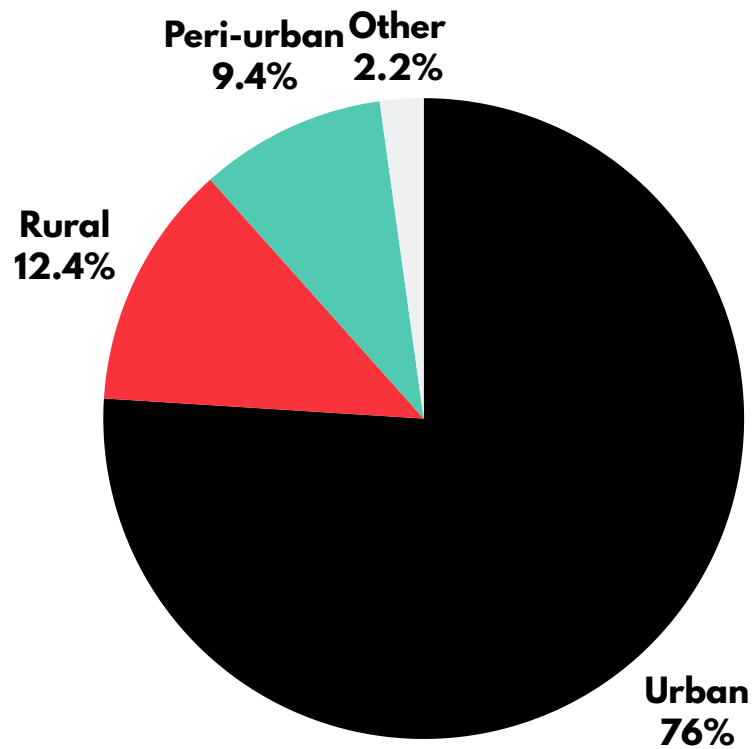
Gender of respondents (main target group)



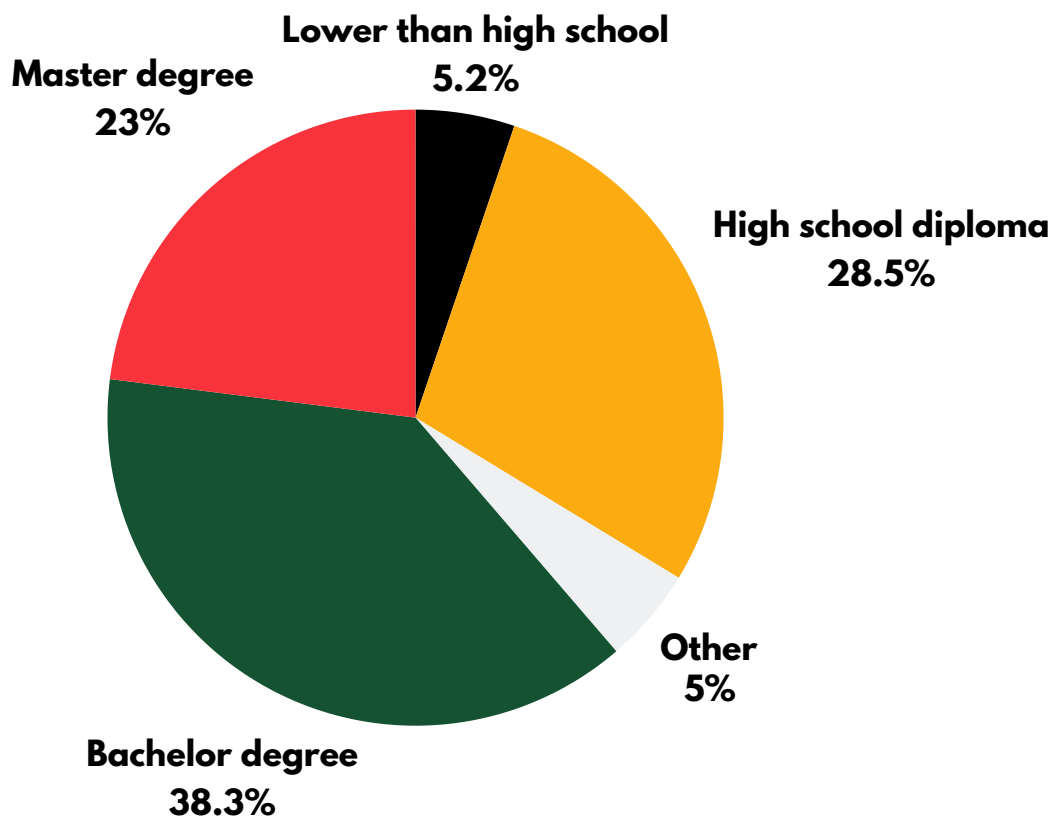
Country of residence



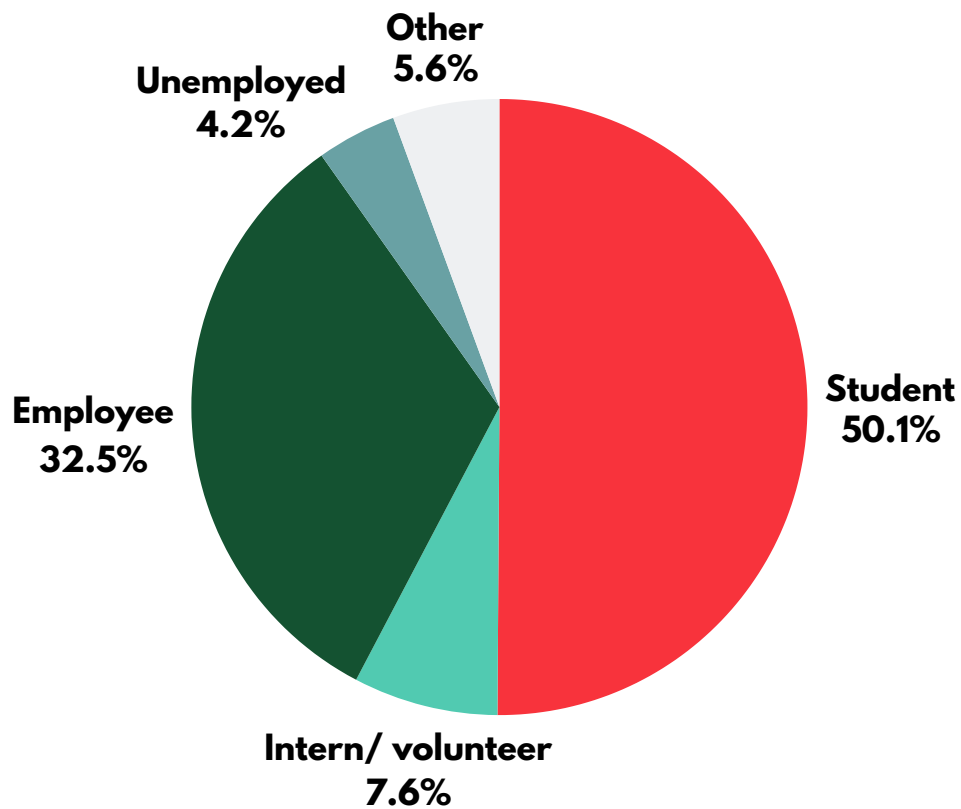
Residence area



Level of formal education



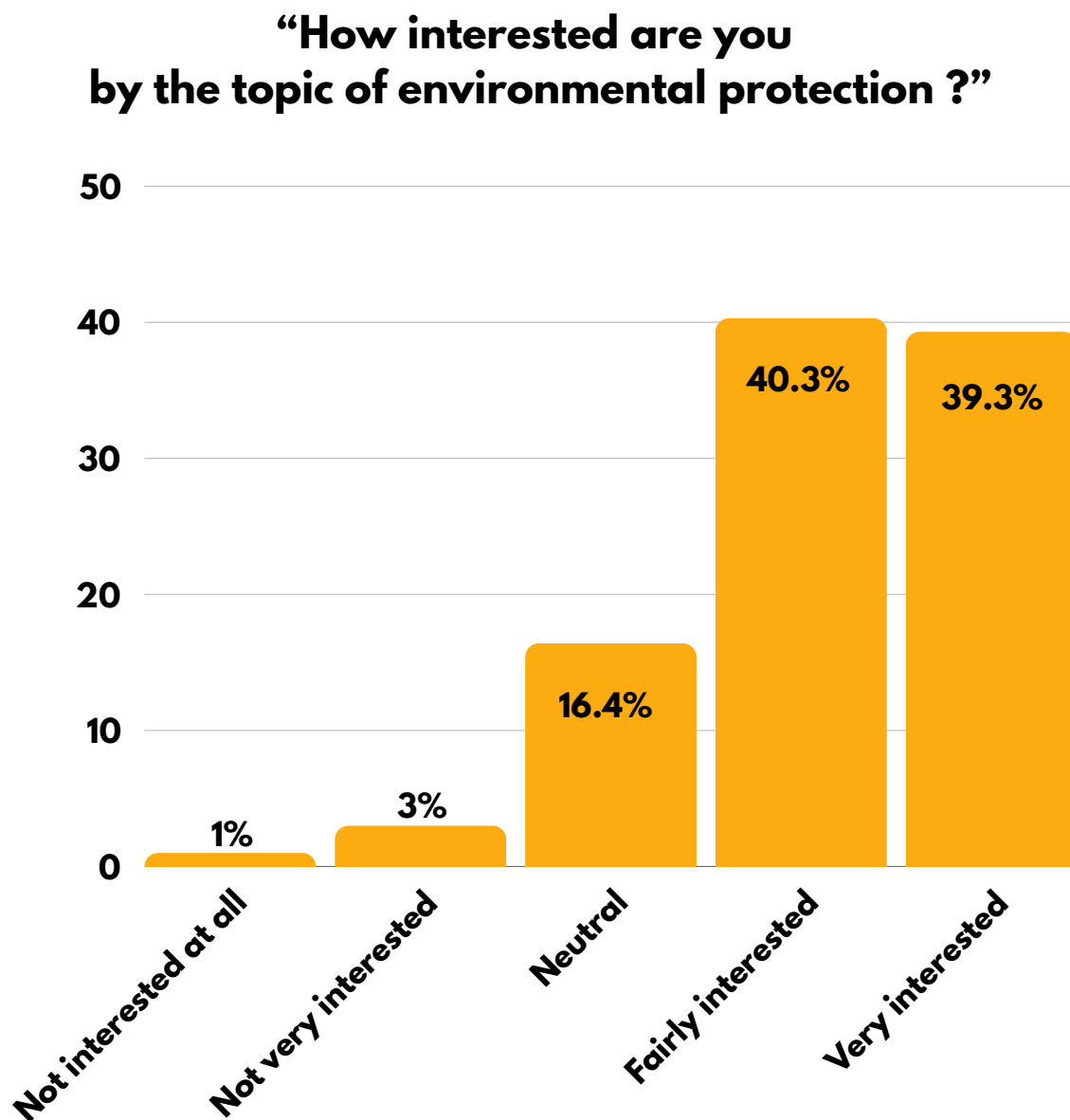
Current occupation



II - The level of concern for environmental issues

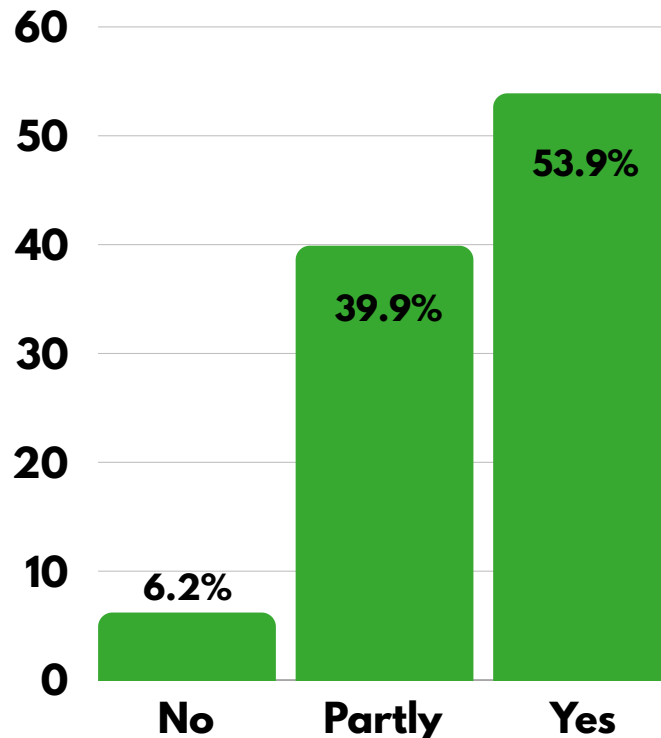
Important facts and figures

Our survey showed that the respondents were very interested in the topic of environmental protection, with 79.6% of them describing themselves as “quite interested” or “very interested” in this topic.

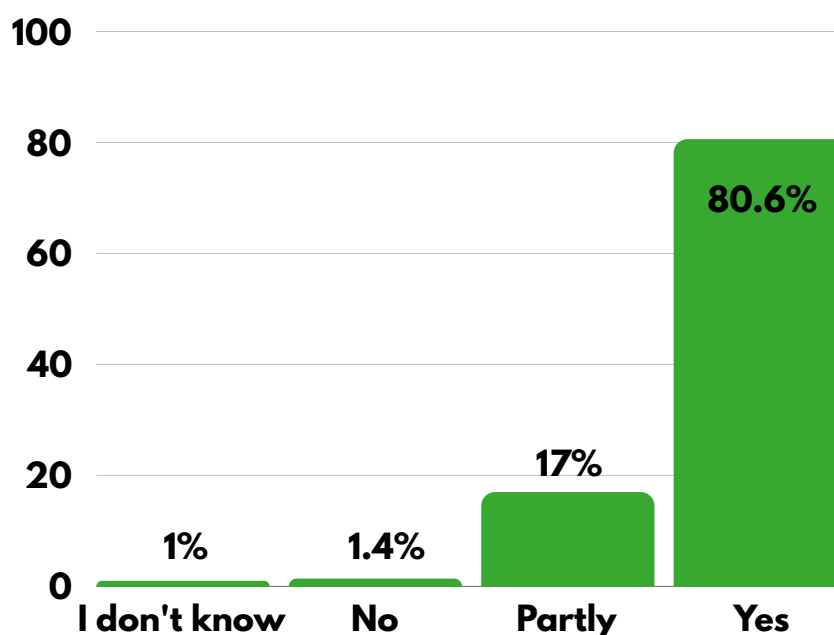


The survey also showed that the respondents mostly had a good knowledge of the topic, since 53.9% said that they felt able to give a definition of “sustainable development” and 39.9% said they were “partly” able to do so. 80.6% of the respondents also believe that climate change is caused by human action, which is similar to findings from other surveys : the last European Social Survey report found that only 9% of Europeans think that climate change is caused mainly or entirely by natural processes (6). Similarly, according to a 2024 study led by the European Commission, 78% of Europeans agree that environmental issues have a direct effect on their daily life and their health (7).

“Do you feel you would be able to give a definition of sustainable development?”



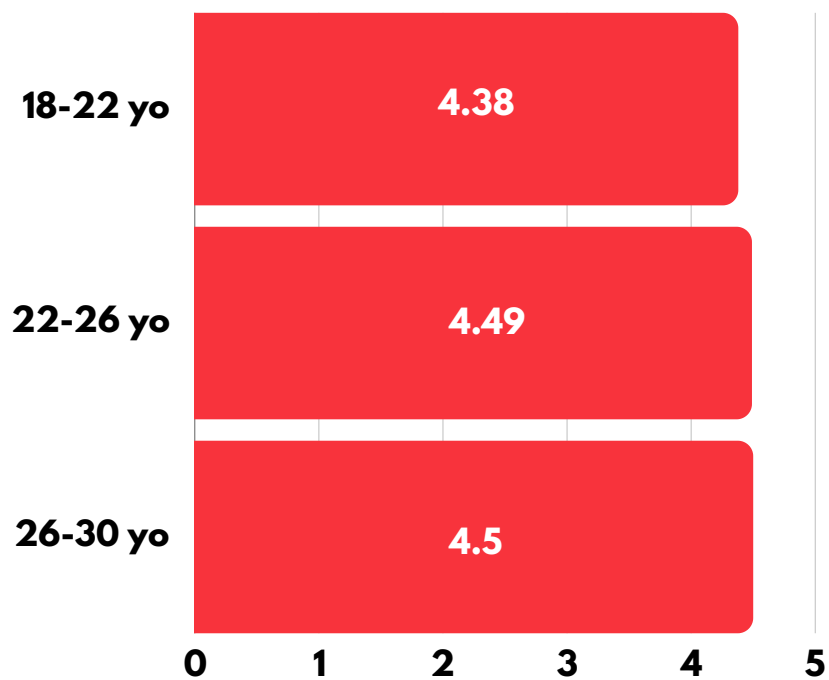
“Do you think that climate change is caused by human action ?”



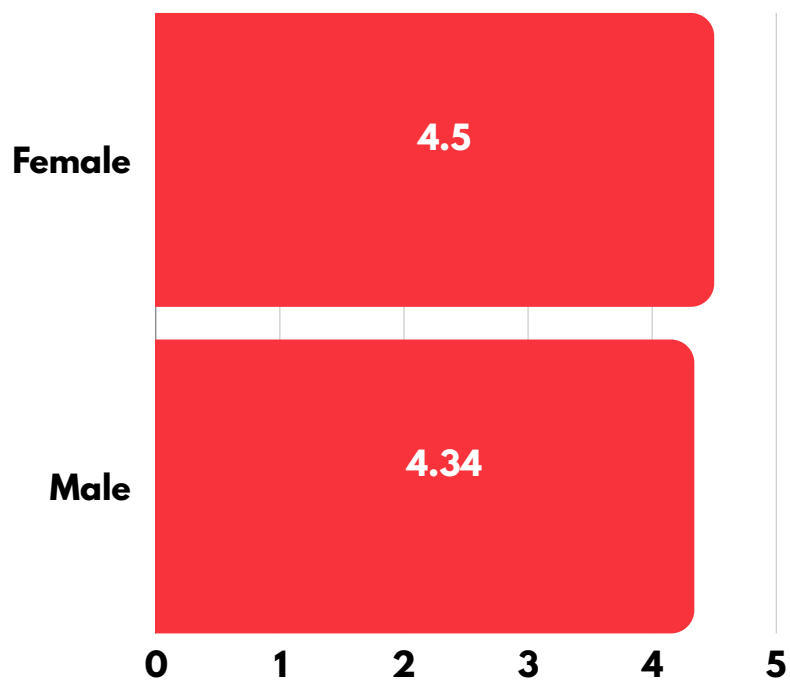
We also looked into the level of concern of young Europeans by using the New Environmental Paradigm scale: it is usually used to measure environmental concern and understand people's pro-environmental orientation (Dunlap. et al., 2000). Respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed with 3 specific sentences, that are specifically designed to study the level of concern, **from 1 ("I do not agree at all") to 5 ("I completely agree")**. The average answer for all three questions from all respondents is 4.45 out of 5. For this, we draw the conclusion that our respondents are rather concerned by environmental issues and have a strong "pro-environmental" orientation. This conclusion also matches those of other surveys, such as the last European Social Survey, according to which 76% of Europeans are at least somewhat worried over climate change (8). This can be related to the fact that 80% of EU respondents (89% in southern European countries) to the last EIB survey have experienced at least one extreme weather event in the last five years (9).

We see however that younger respondents are slightly less concerned than older respondents and that people with higher education levels seem to be more concerned by environmental issues. People living in urban or peri-urban area, as well as people identifying as females, are also more likely to feel concerned.

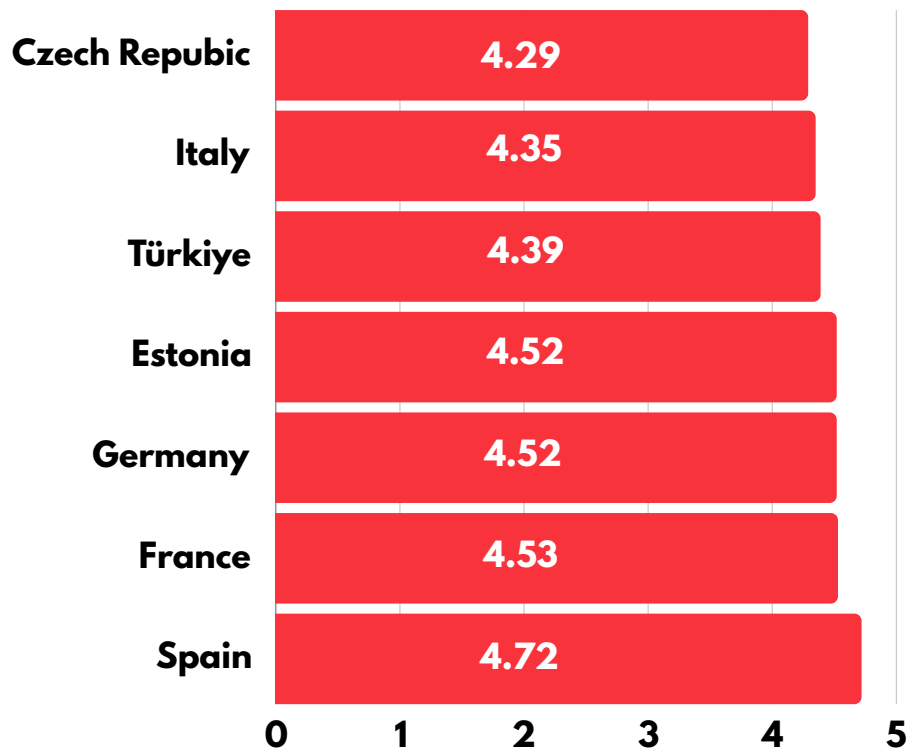
Level of environmental concern in relation to age (1-5)



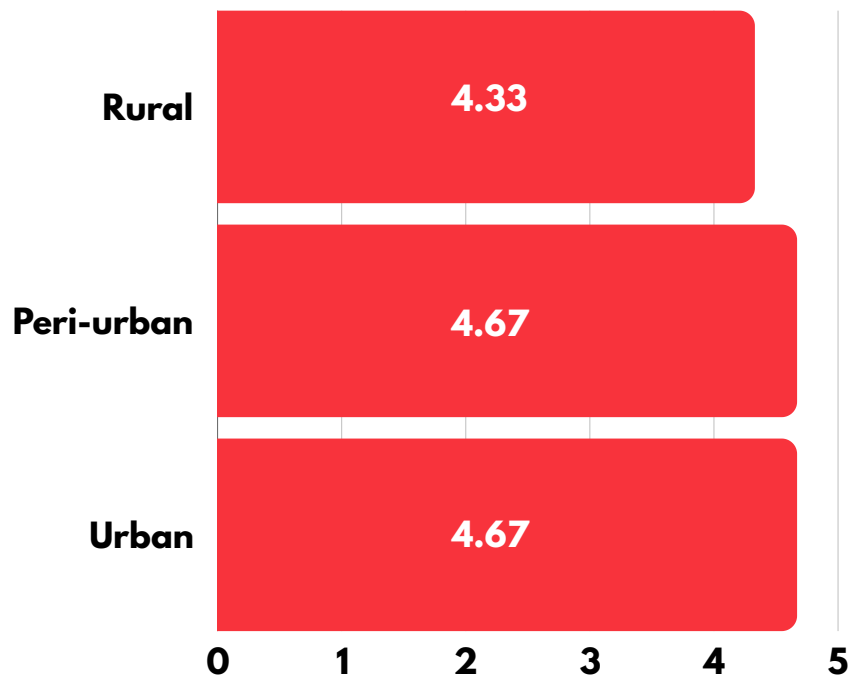
Level of environmental concern in relation to gender (1-5)



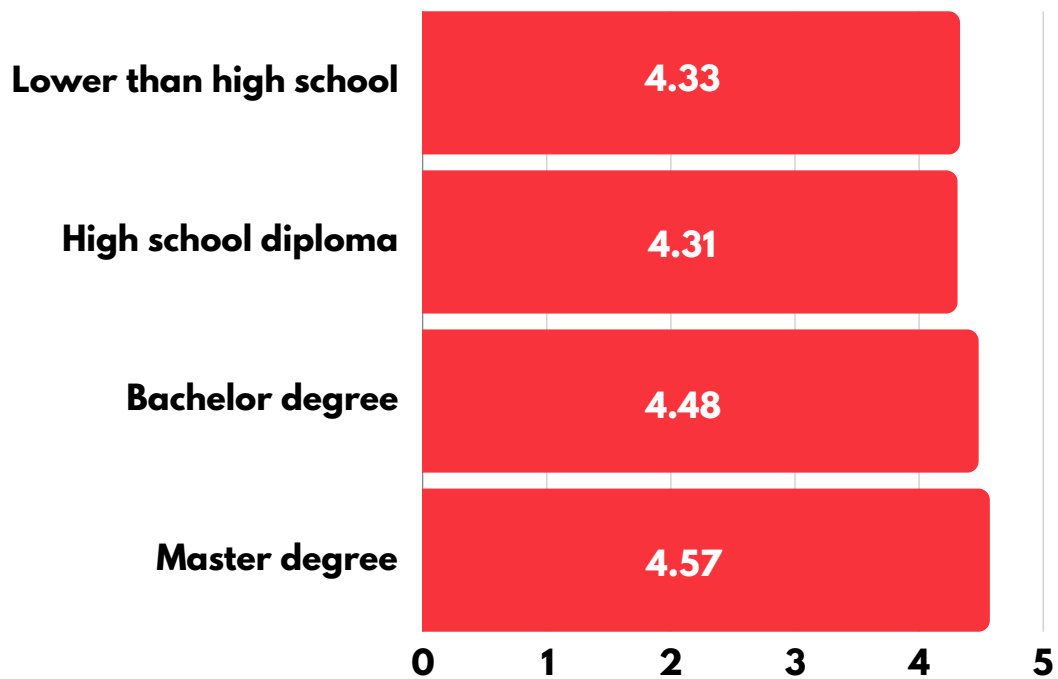
Level of environmental concern in relation to the country of residence (1-5)



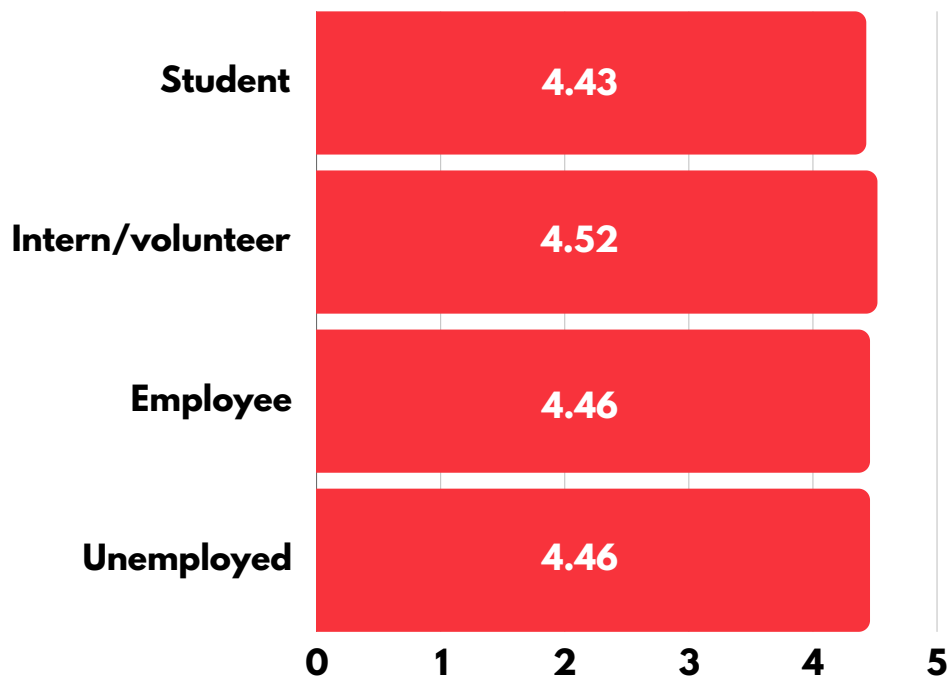
Level of environmental concern in relation to the living area (1-5)



Level of environmental concern in relation to the level of education (1-5)



Level of environmental concern in relation to the current occupation (1-5)



III - The environmental habits areas

Important facts and figures

We studied the main categories of environmental concerns of young Europeans by asking them about their "environmental" habits - actions that they take in order to reduce their environmental impacts. Respondents were asked questions about their habits and had to rate them on a scale **from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always")**.

Environmental topics We divided the areas of concerns into four : Food, Energy, Consumption, Transportation. For each category, respondents were asked three different questions. When analyzing the results, we computed all three answers into a new variable, as the three questions all had a strong correlation and the answers were found to be statistically significant (through the analysis of P-Value and Person's Value).

Questions asked about Food :

- I buy organic or locally grown food, even if they cost more
- I actively try to reduce food waste in my household
- I try to reduce my meat consumption for environmental reasons

Questions asked about Energy :

- I use only renewable energy sources whenever possible (for example, electricity made by solar panels)
- I actively try to reduce my energy consumption by switching the lights off when leaving a room or limiting the use of heating/air conditioning
- I buy energy-efficient appliances in order to lower my environmental impact

Questions asked about Consumption :

- When shopping, I prioritize buying sustainable/ethical products (for example, buying second-hand clothes instead of fast-fashion brands)
- I use reusable items (lunchbox, water flask) to avoid single-use plastic items
- I consciously limit my consumption of non-essential items to reduce waste

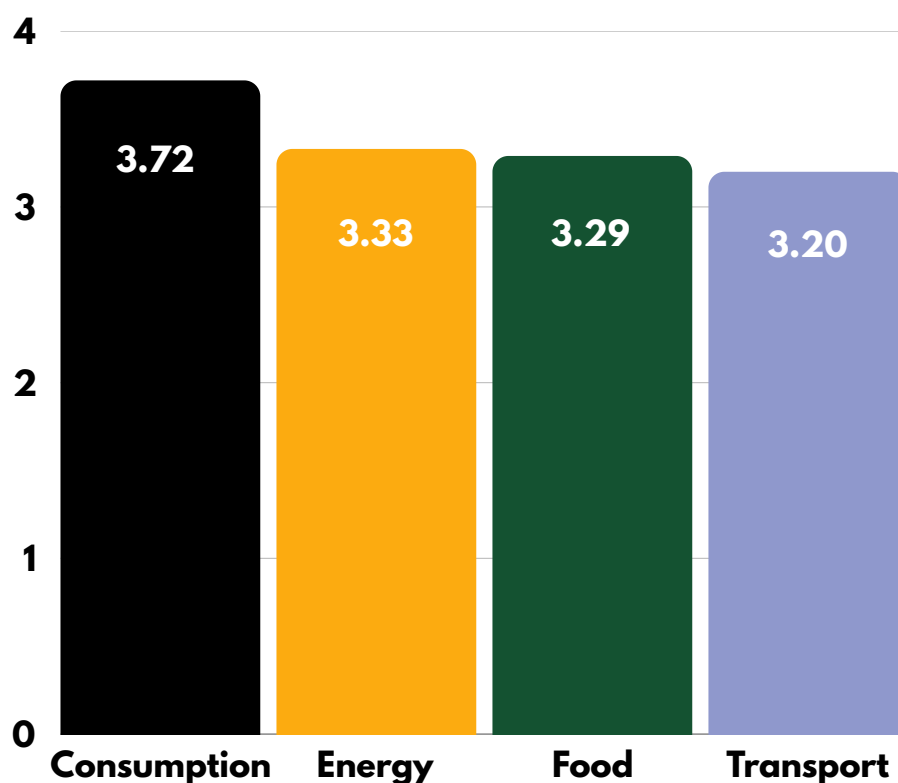
Questions asked about Transportation :

- I use public transportation, carpooling or bike/walk whenever for daily movements
- I encourage my relatives to switch to electric vehicles in order to reduce carbon emissions
- For long-distance travels (over 500 kms), flying is my first option

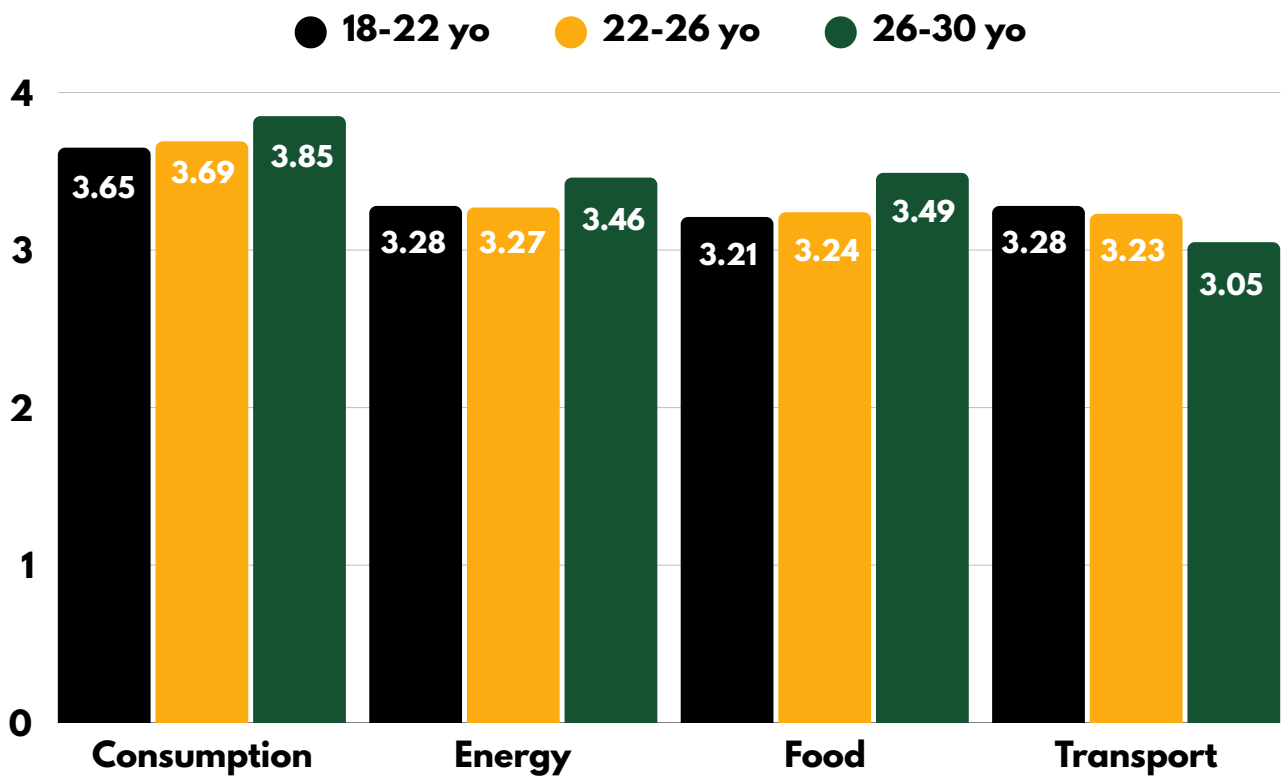
The results show that consumption is the area where our respondents are adopting more eco-friendly habits, by reducing their consumption of non-essential products, their use of single-use plastics and buying second-hand clothes for example. On the contrary, transport is the area where our respondents are less likely to shift into more eco-friendly practices, such as not taking the plane, switching to electric vehicles or using public transportation on a daily basis. Respondents from urban areas are more prone to use green means of transportation than those from rural areas.

Overall, respondents to our survey are quite active in all four categories, even though some factors affect their habits, especially the area they live in (urban/peri-urban and rural). This is related to other findings, most notably from the EIB that found that 72% of EU respondents (81% in southern European countries) recognize that they will have to adapt their lifestyle due to climate change (10).

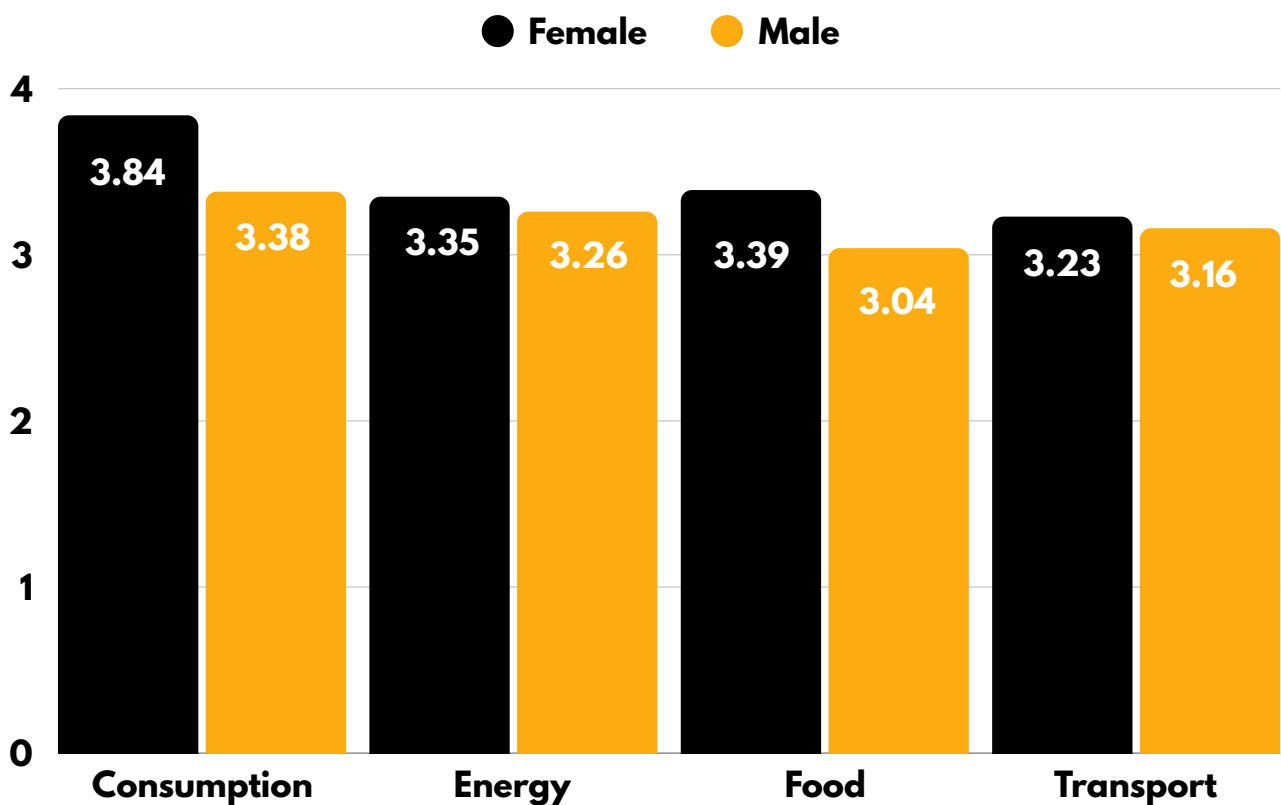
Main areas of environmental habits for all respondents (1-5)



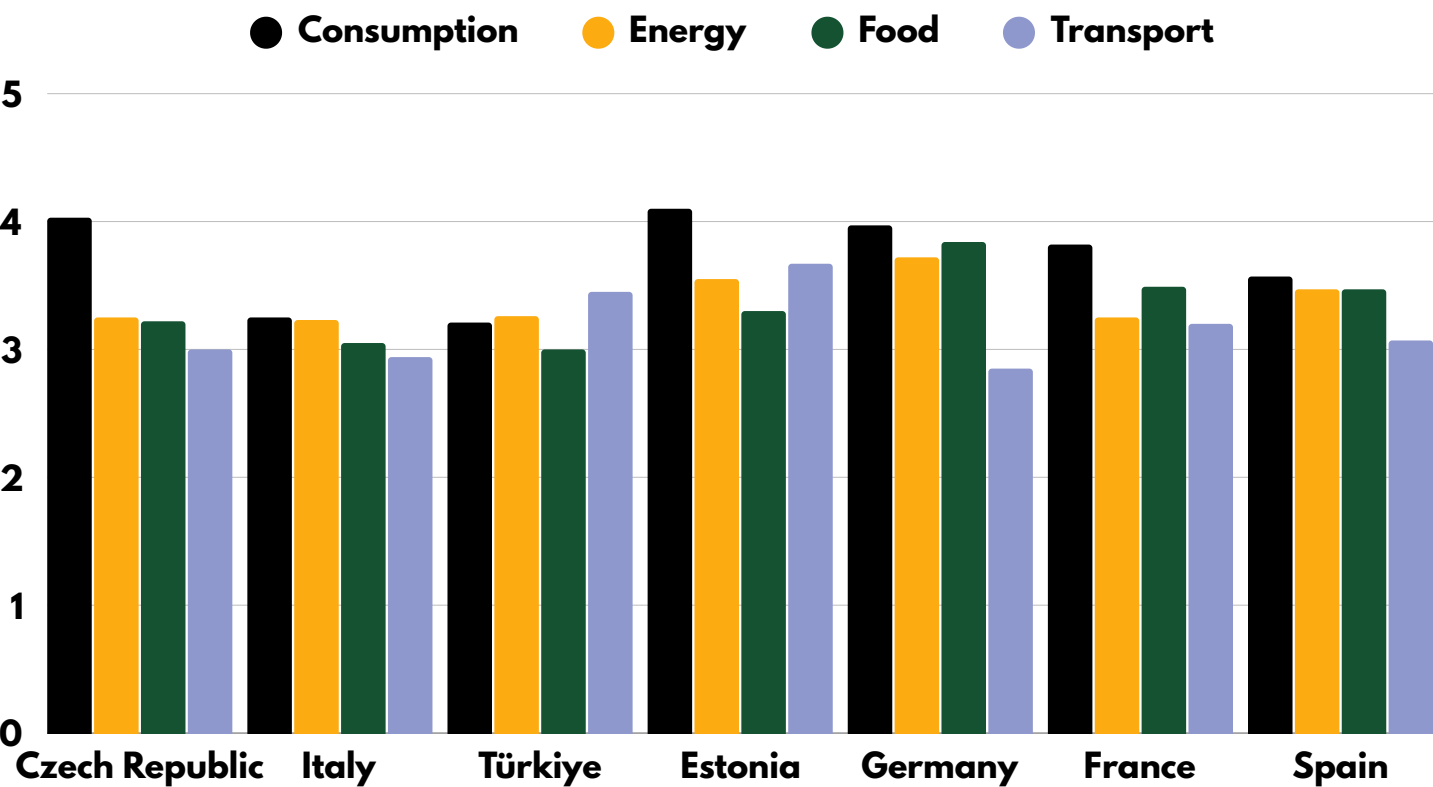
Main areas of environmental habits depending on age (1-5)



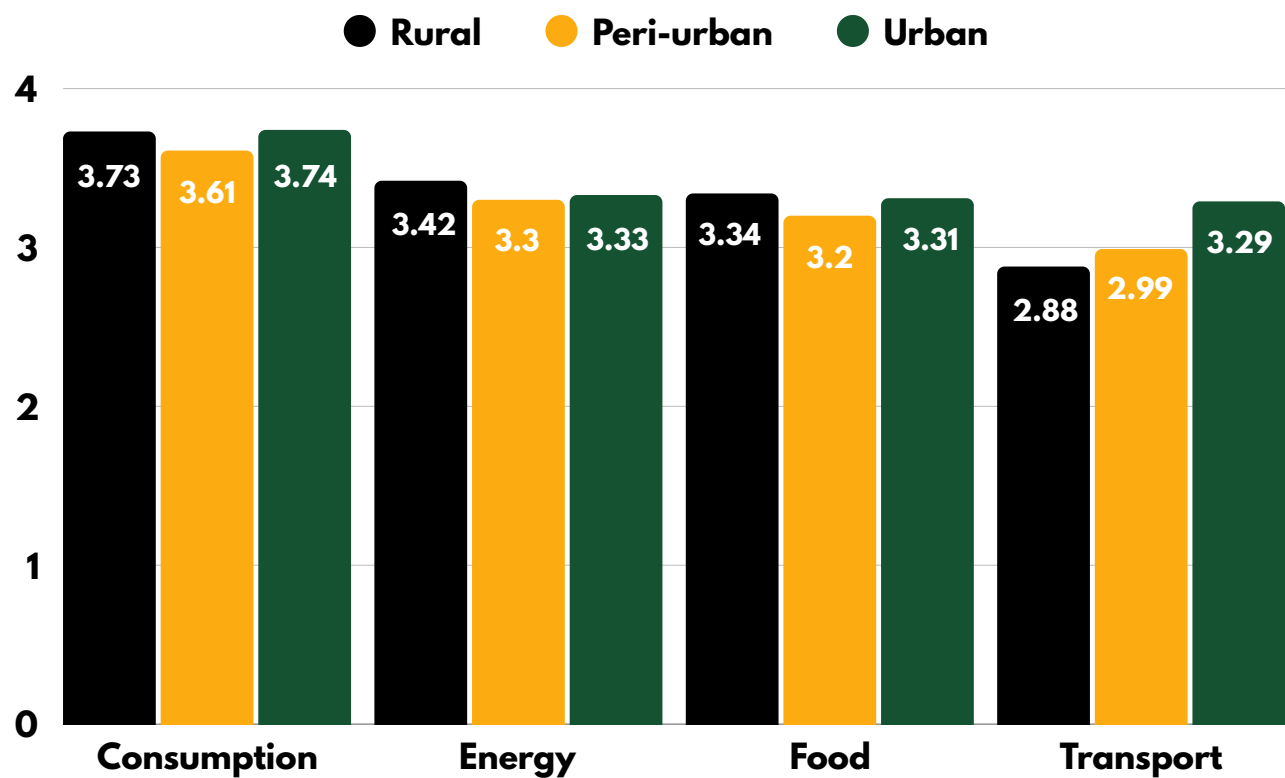
Main areas of environmental habits depending on gender (1-5)



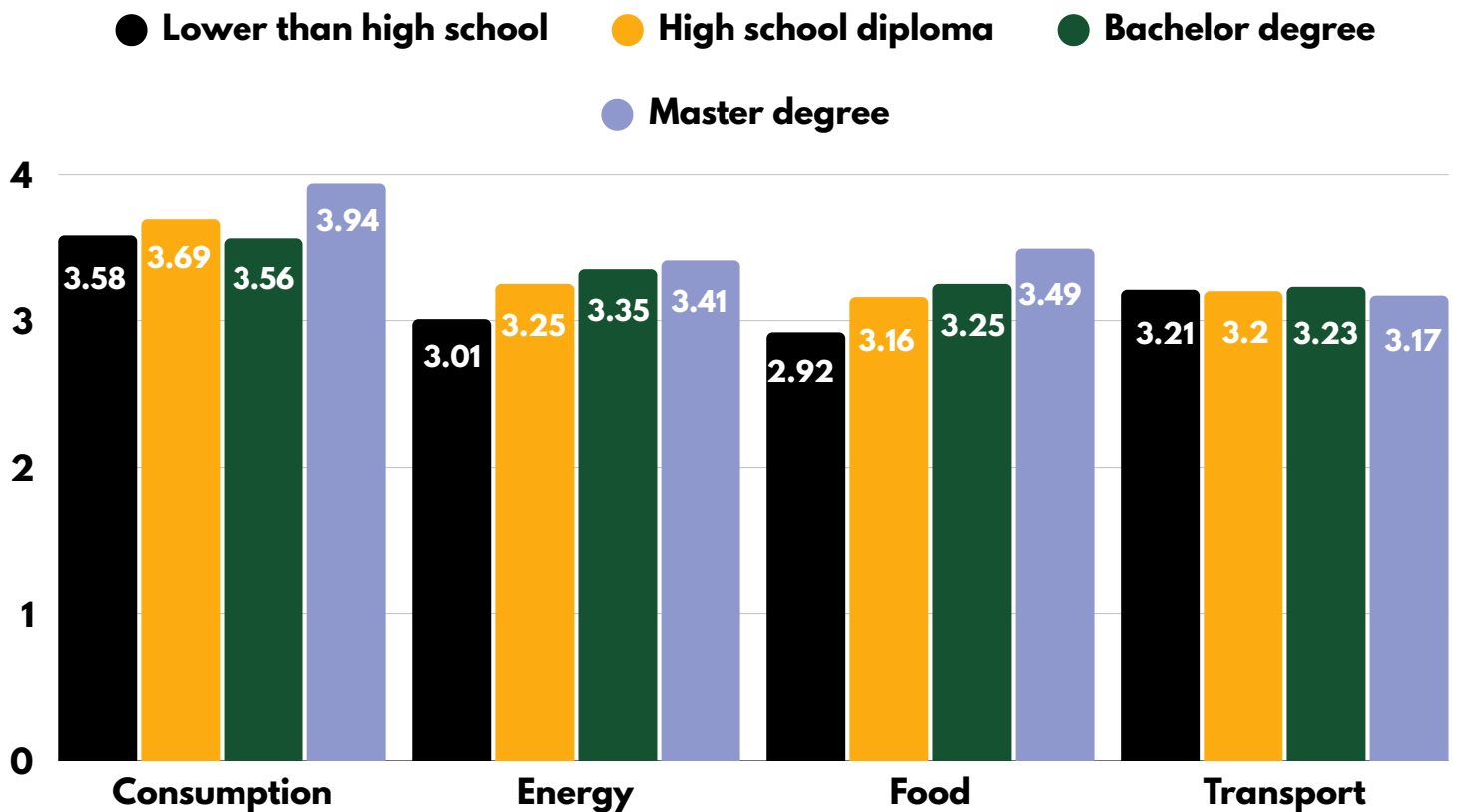
Main areas of environmental habits depending on the country of residence (1-5)



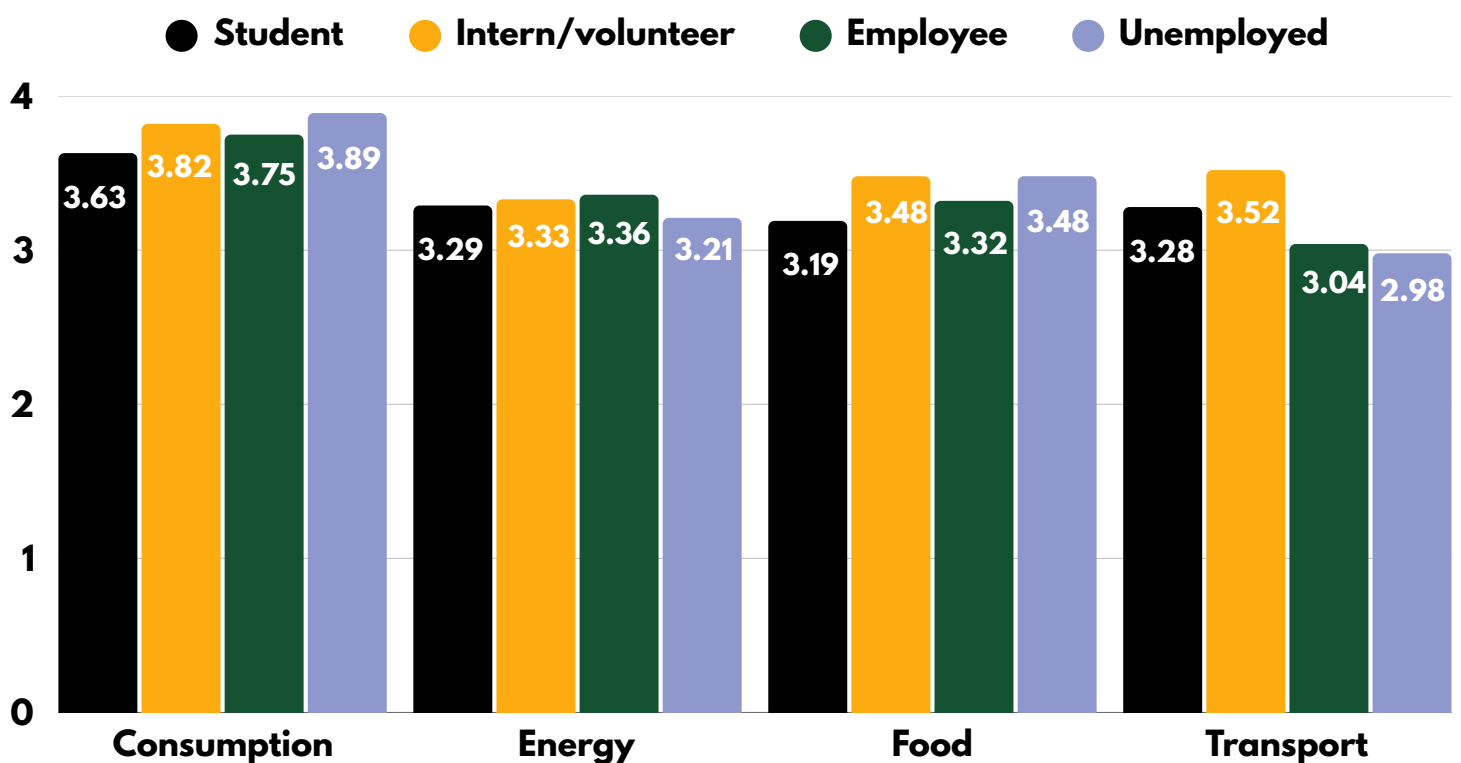
Main areas of environmental habits depending on the living area (1-5)



Main areas of environmental habits depending on the level of formal education (1-5)



Main areas of environmental habits depending on the current occupation (1-5)

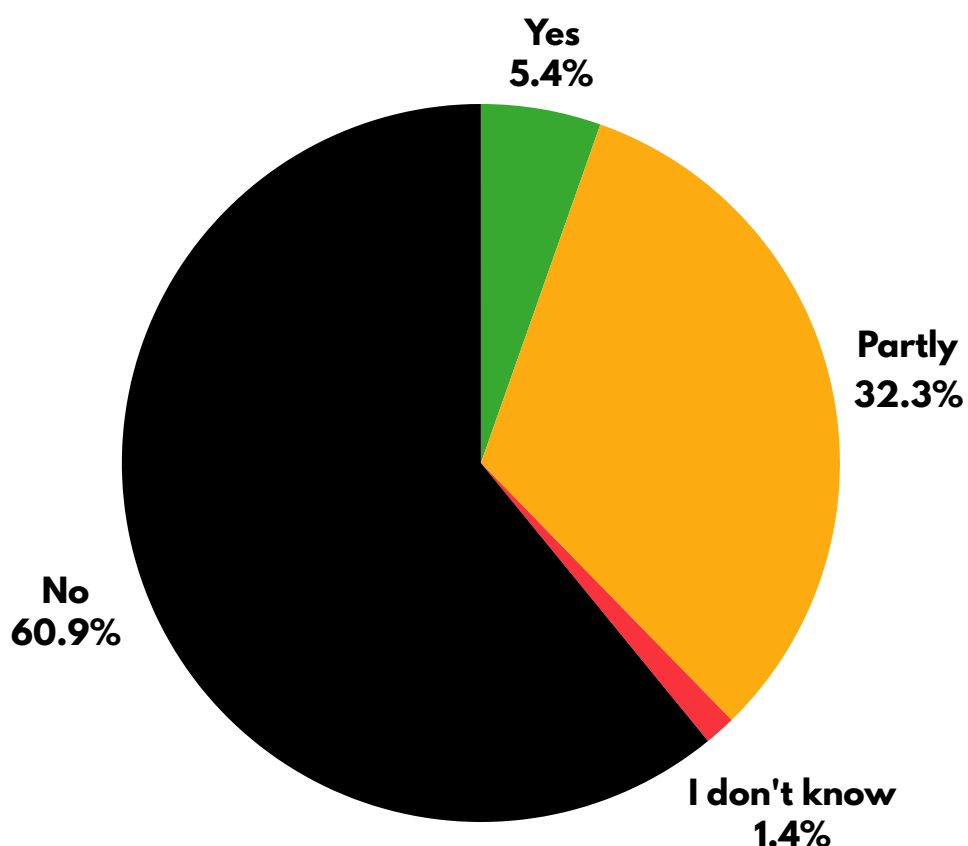


IV - The perception of the environment in the media

Finally, we asked our respondents about the link between environmental topics and media. We first asked them if they thought that environmental topics were sufficiently covered in the media, and 60,9% of the respondents thought that they weren't. Only 5,4% thought that these topics were sufficiently covered.

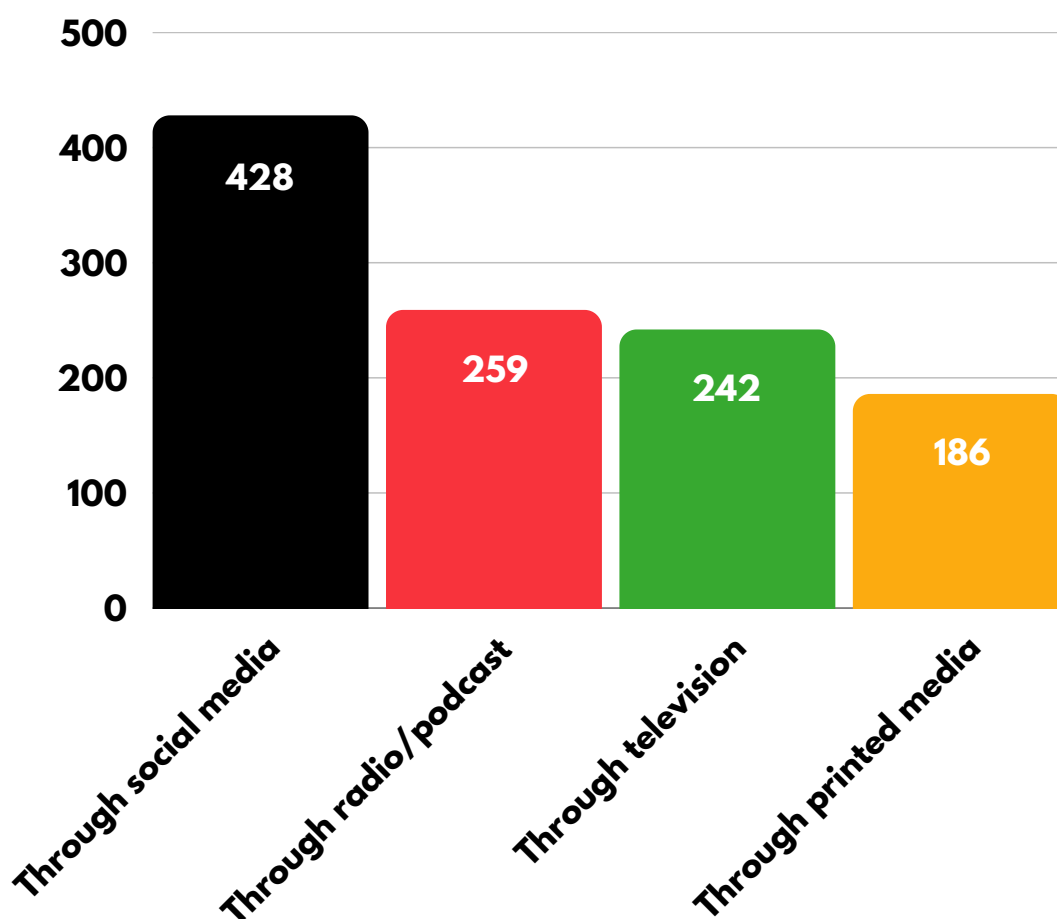
Even though the situation can differ depending on the country, coverage of environmental topics in the media have dropped 16% in 2024 compared to 2023 (11), which may explain the feeling among our respondents.

“Do you think that the topic of the environment is sufficiently covered in the media ?”



We then asked the respondents how they would like to be informed about this topic. A majority of them answered that they would like to be informed through social media, showing the prevalence of these productions in the way citizens are now informed.

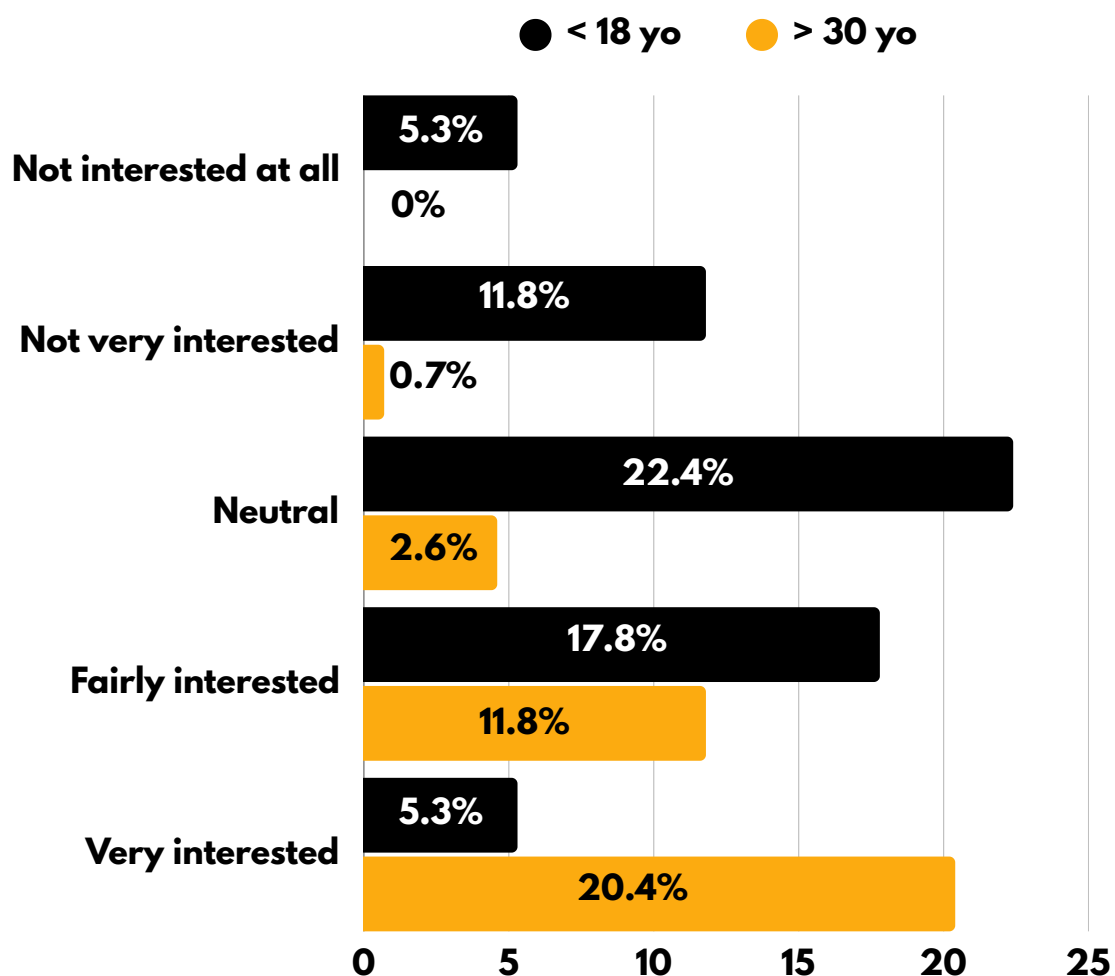
“How would you like to be informed about the topic of the environment ?”



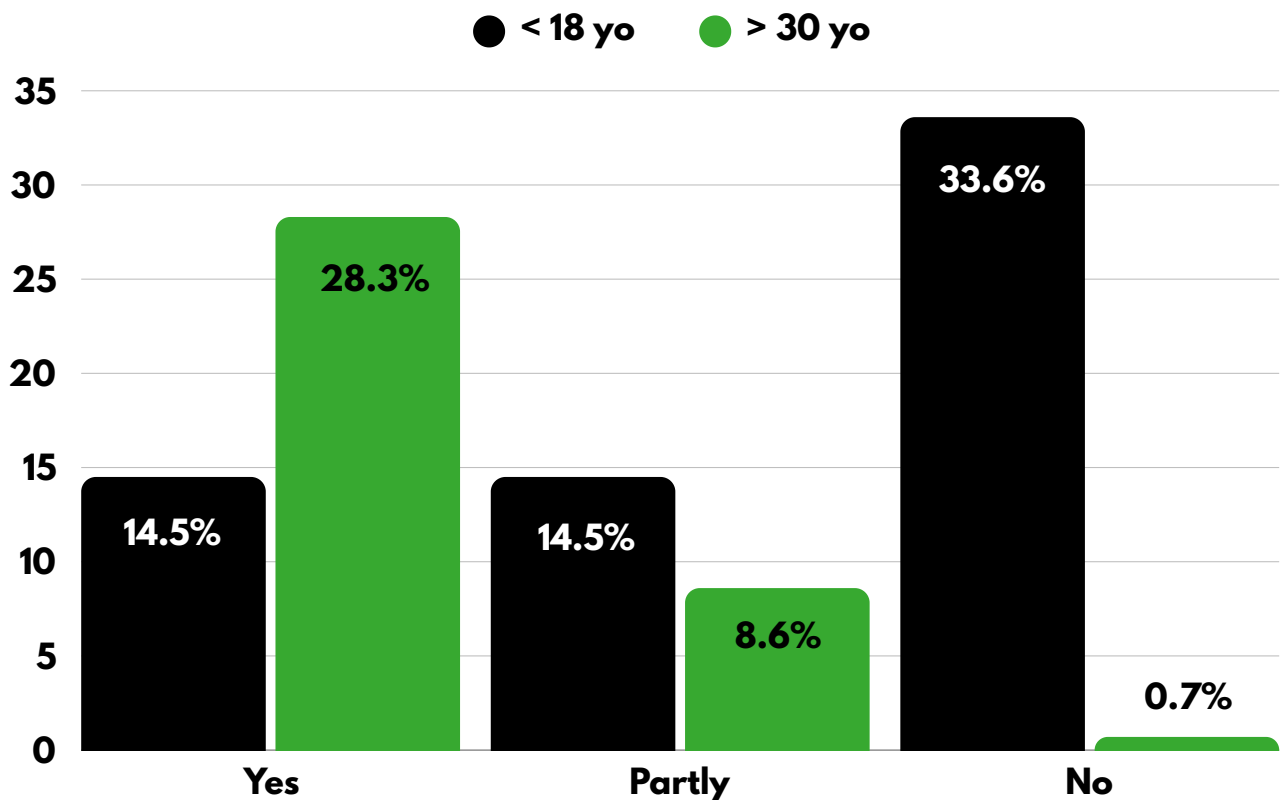
V - Comparison with secondary target groups of respondents

We gathered 153 answers from respondents under 18 or above 30. We found out that younger respondents (under 18) seem to be less interested in the topic and concerned than older respondents (above 30). Younger ones are also less knowledgeable, but they are more certain than other age groups that climate change is caused by human action

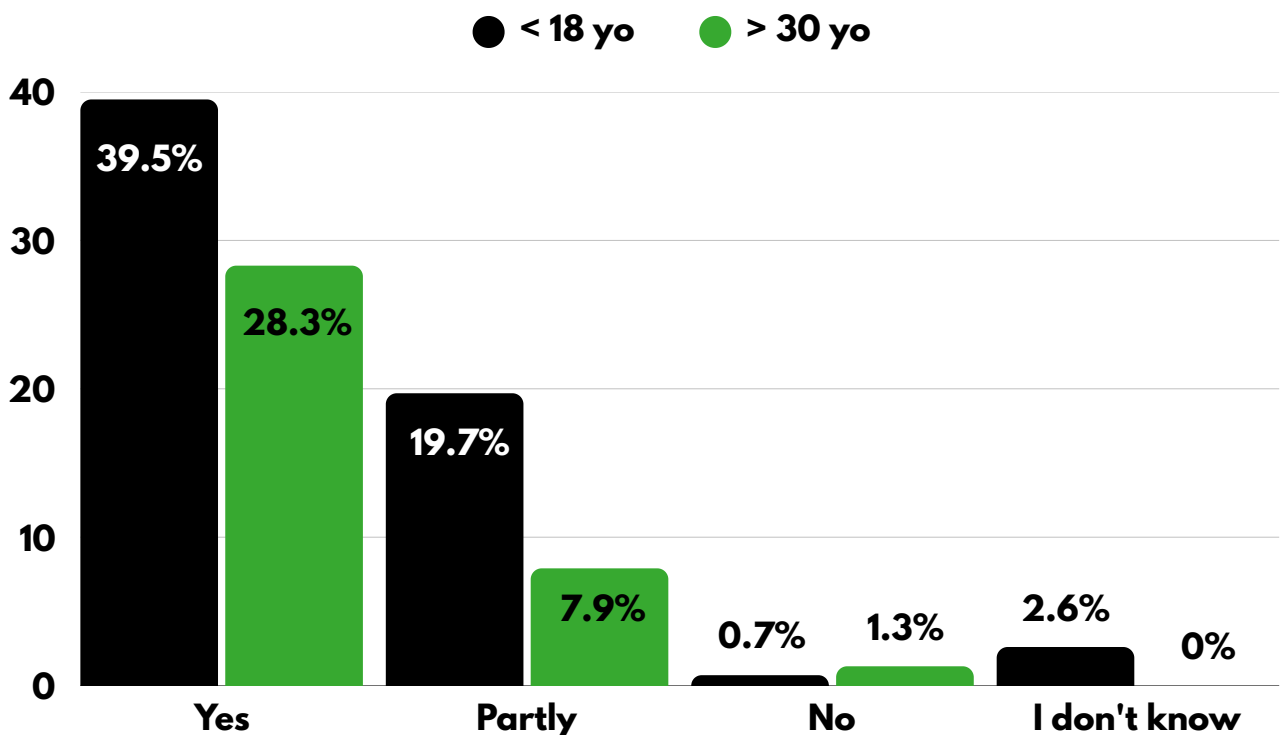
**“How interested are you
by the topic of environmental protection ?”**



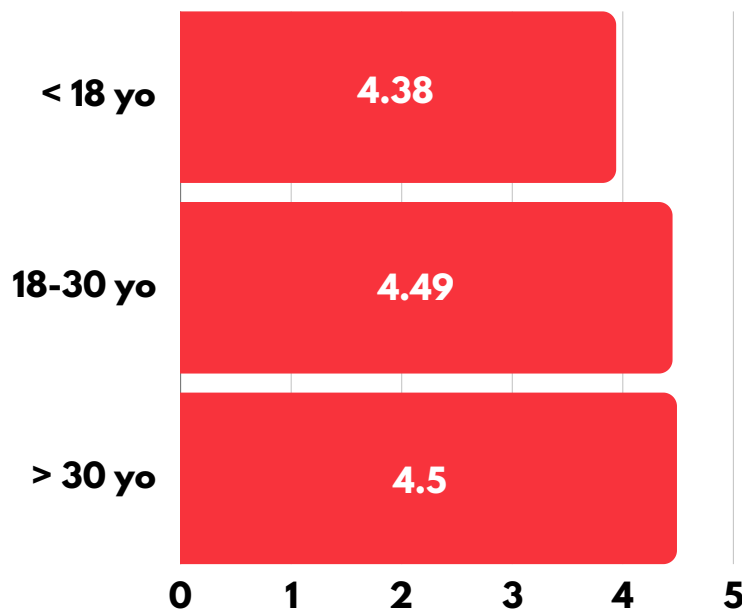
“Do you feel you would be able to give a definition of sustainable development”?



“Do you think that climate change is caused by human action ?”

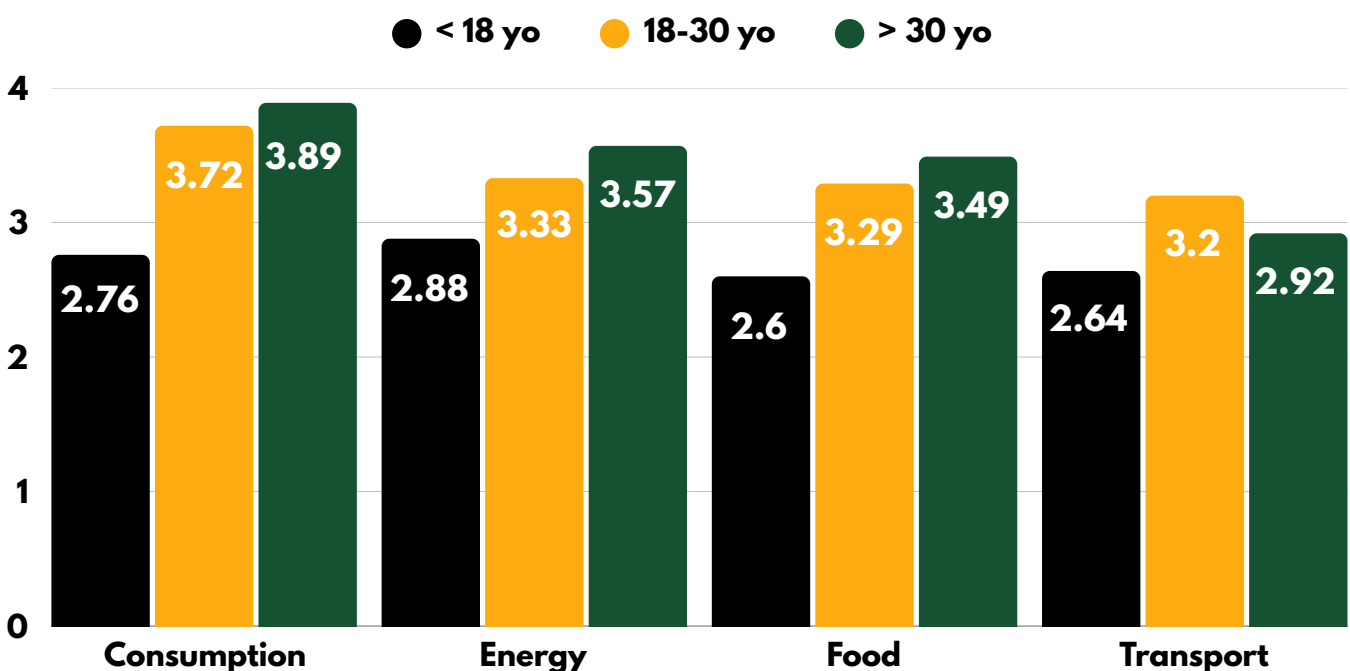


Level of environmental concern depending on age groups (1-5)



People aged above 30 years old tend to be more active in order to reduce their environmental impacts than younger respondents. This can be explained by the fact that older respondents are more likely to have the resources (financial, time, informations, etc) needed to shift their habits into more eco-friendly ones.

Main areas of environmental habits depending on age groups (1-5)



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