

Special Eurobarometer 492

Summary

Europeans' attitudes on EU energy policy

Fieldwork

May 2019

Publication

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Survey requested by the European Commission,
Directorate-General for Energy
and co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission.
The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

Special Eurobarometer 492 – Wave EB91.4 – Kantar

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(DG COMM "Media monitoring and Eurobarometer" Unit)

Project title

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“Europeans’ attitudes on EU energy policy”
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EN

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INTRODUCTION

One of the main priorities for Jean-Claude Juncker when he became President of the European Commission was to establish an Energy Union which ensures the clean, secure and affordable supply of energy to all Europeans.

In the course of its 5-year mandate, the Juncker Commission has initiated a range of changes to EU energy policy to build this Energy Union and address the challenge of global warming. Having helped to negotiate the **Paris Agreement** in December 2015, many of the subsequent policy changes have been aimed at enabling the EU to deliver on its Paris Agreement commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and more broadly on accelerating the clean energy transition. In particular, the **Clean energy for all Europeans package**¹ establishes a new rulebook for EU energy policy which includes new, binding 2030 targets for energy efficiency and renewables and requires each Member State to establish its own integrated National Energy & Climate Plan for 2021–2030, outlining how it intends to fulfil its contributions to the EU-wide effort.

In this context of growing awareness of climate and energy issues among EU citizens, the European Commission is keen to develop a better understanding of attitudes towards EU energy policy. Whereas there have been regular Eurobarometer reports since 2008 looking at the evolution of citizens attitudes to climate change² – including Special Eurobarometer 490³ published in parallel with this report – there is no recent survey dedicated to what the European public thinks about the priorities for EU energy policy. Coming at a moment when the new legislative framework enters into force, this detailed poll provides a useful benchmark on public opinion. And it may serve to help the new Commission College, which is scheduled to take office in November 2019, to identify its priorities for the coming 5 years.

At the same time, new **EU energy label and ecodesign** rules are due for adoption in the course of 2019, and a new, rescaled energy label will apply at the point of sale from March 2021. With the only available figures for the recognition of this important EU instrument dating back to a 2014 study⁴, it is high time to have more precise insight into how widely the EU energy label is known. Since we need to improve energy efficiency in the coming years and given the important role of consumers, these detailed statistics on the recognition of the EU energy label will be important for our communication efforts on the changes ahead.

In this context, this survey seeks to gauge, for the first time, EU citizens' opinions about aspects of EU energy policy in order to:

- Review what citizens think EU energy policy is about currently and what it should aim to achieve;
- Assess awareness of and effectiveness of current energy efficiency labelling;
- Investigate what citizens believe the EU's priorities for energy policy should be in the next decade.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy-and-energy-union/clean-energy-all-europeans>

² See https://ec.europa.eu/clima/citizens/support_en#tab-0-1

³ See <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/special/surveyky/2212>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/impact_of_energy_labels_on_consumer_behaviour_en.pdf

This survey was carried out by the Kantar network in the 28 EU Member States between 9 and 25 May 2019. Some 27,438 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed face-to-face at home in their mother tongue. The survey was commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate General for Energy (DG ENER).

The methodology used is that of the Standard Eurobarometer surveys carried out by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Media monitoring and Eurobarometer" Unit)⁵. It is the same for all countries and territories covered in the survey. A technical note on the manner in which interviews were conducted is appended as an annex to this report. Also included are the interview methods and confidence interval⁶.

Note: In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

| | | | |
|--|------|-----------------|------|
| Belgium | BE | Lithuania | LT |
| Bulgaria | BG | Luxembourg | LU |
| Czechia | CZ | Hungary | HU |
| Denmark | DK | Malta | MT |
| Germany | DE | The Netherlands | NL |
| Estonia | EE | Austria | AT |
| Ireland | IE | Poland | PL |
| Greece | EL | Portugal | PT |
| Spain | ES | Romania | RO |
| France | FR | Slovenia | SI |
| Croatia | HR | Slovakia | SK |
| Italy | IT | Finland | FI |
| Republic of Cyprus | CY * | Sweden | SE |
| Latvia | LV | United Kingdom | UK |
| European Union – weighted average for the 28 Member States | | | EU28 |

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 28 European Union Member States. However, the 'acquis communautaire' has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category and in the EU28 average.

We wish to thank the people throughout the European Union

who have given their time to take part in this survey.

Without their active participation, this study would not have been possible.

⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion>

⁶ The results tables are annexed. It should be noted that the total of the percentages indicated in the tables in this report may exceed 100% when the respondent was able to choose several answers to the same question.

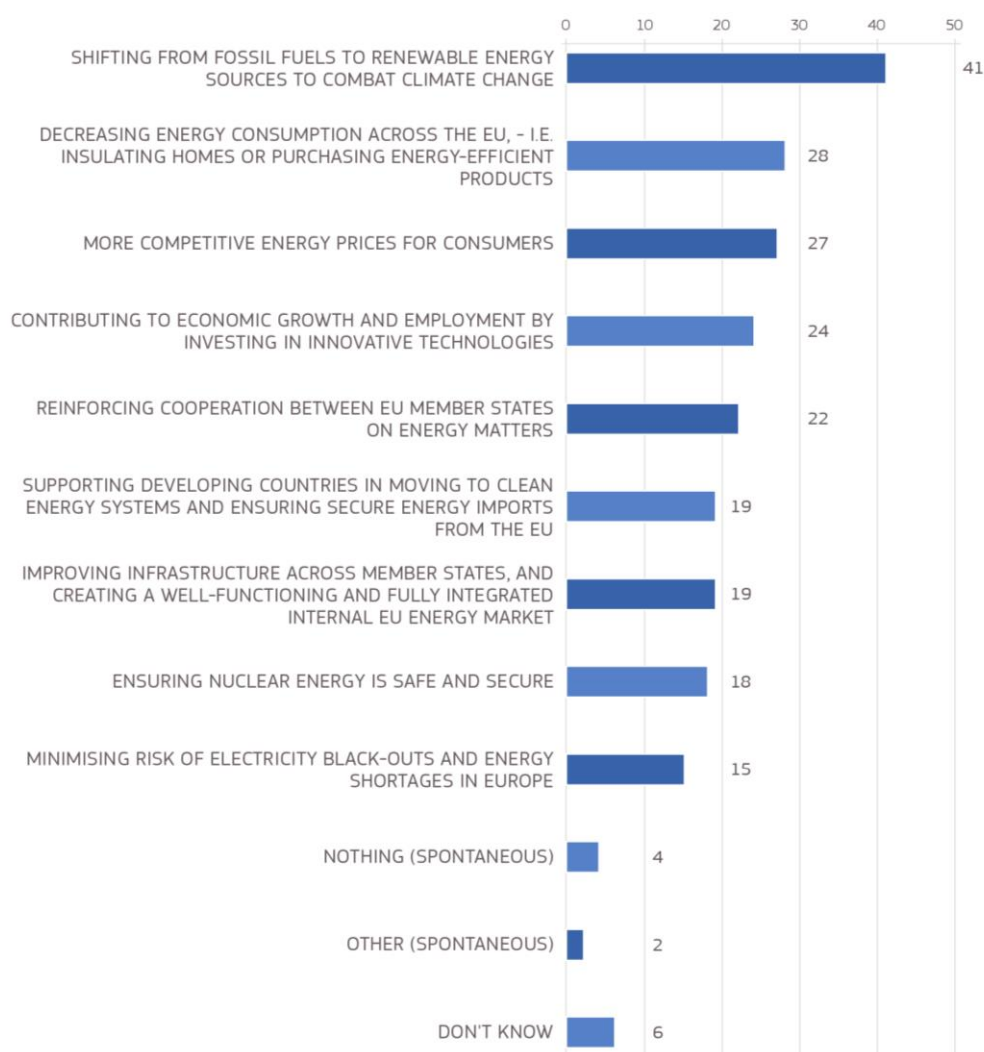
I. PERCEPTIONS OF THE EU ENERGY POLICY

EU energy policy is about moving away from fossil fuels, decreasing consumption and lowering energy prices

Firstly, a definition of fossil fuels was read to respondents⁷. After this definition was read, respondents were asked what EU energy policy means to them⁸. Four in ten (41%) respondents say it means **shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources to combat climate change**, this being the most given answer among them. Over a quarter of respondents say they think it means **decreasing energy consumption across the EU** (28%) and **more competitive energy prices for consumers** (27%)

Less than one in 20 respondents say **nothing** (4%), while just 2% say **other** and 6% say they **don't know**.

QB1 What does EU energy policy mean to you? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)
(% - EU)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

⁷ "fossil fuels are natural fuels such as coal, oil or gas, formed in the geological past from the remains of living organisms. Their combustion by humans is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions."

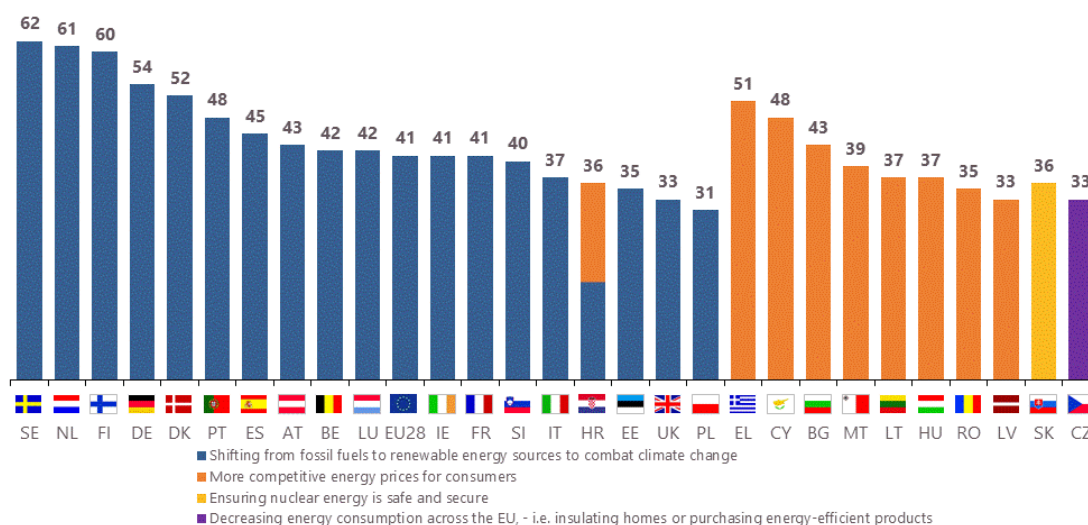
⁸ What does EU energy policy mean to you?

At a national level, **shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources to combat climate change** is the most-given answer in 17 of the EU's 28 Member States and the joint most popular response in one other: Croatia (36%). At least six in ten respondents give this answer in Sweden (62%), the Netherlands (61%) and Finland (60%) and a majority in Germany (54%) and Denmark (52%) also say this.

In eight of the EU's Member States, **more competitive energy prices for consumers** is the most given response to this question and it is the joint top answer in Croatia (36%). A majority of respondents in Greece (51%) say this and at least a third of those surveyed in the other countries in which it is the top answer agree.

Two other responses are among the most-mentioned. The top response among respondents in Slovakia is **ensuring nuclear energy is safe and secure** (36%), while the most given answer in Czechia is **decreasing energy consumption across the EU** (33%).

QB1 What does EU energy policy mean to you? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)
(% - THE MOST MENTIONED ANSWER BY COUNTRY)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

The socio-demographic analysis for this question reveals some interesting differences and similarities:

- Age of respondents does not appear to be much of a determining factor, though those aged 55+ are the most likely to mention **more competitive energy prices for consumers** (29%), while those aged 15-24 are the most likely to mention **shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources to combat climate change** (45%).
- Those respondents whose education finished below the age of 15 are the most likely to mention **more competitive energy prices for consumers** (34%), while those still studying and those whose education finished after the age of 20 are the most likely to give **shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources to combat climate change** as their response (both 49%)
- Managers (28%) are the most likely to give **reinforcing cooperation between EU Member States on energy matters** as their answer, while the unemployed are the least likely (18%). Meanwhile, house persons (33%) are the most likely professional socio-demographic group to give **more competitive energy prices for consumers** as their answer, while managers (18%) are the least likely.
- The respondents who say they have difficulties paying their bills most of the time are the most likely to give **more competitive energy prices for consumers** (33%) as their answer.

II. THE EU ENERGY PRIORITIES

Over nine in ten respondents agree the EU must secure access to energy to all EU citizens

Respondents were asked how far they agree with four different statements about energy in the EU⁹. Over nine in ten respondents (92%) say they agree **the EU must secure access to energy to all EU citizens**. Less than one in ten respondents say they disagree with this statement (5%).

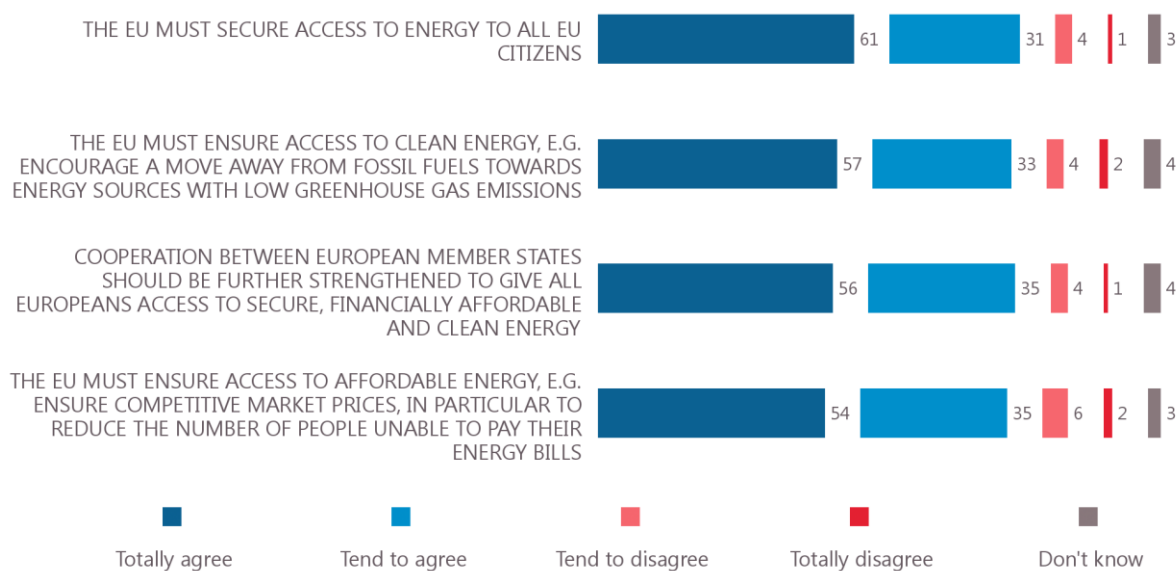
Nine in ten respondents (90%) say they agree **the EU must ensure access to clean energy, e.g. encourage a move away from fossil fuels towards energy sources with low greenhouse gas emissions**. Less than one in ten respondents say they disagree with this (6%).

Over nine in ten respondents also agree **cooperation between European Member States should be further strengthened to give all Europeans access to secure, financially affordable and clean energy** (91%), while only 5% disagree.

Finally, just under nine in ten respondents (89%) say they agree **the EU must ensure access to affordable energy, e.g. ensure competitive market prices, in particular to reduce the number of people unable to pay their energy bills**. Just under a tenth of respondents (8%) disagree with this statement.

In all categories, no more than 4% of the respondents say they **don't know**.

QB2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(% - EU)

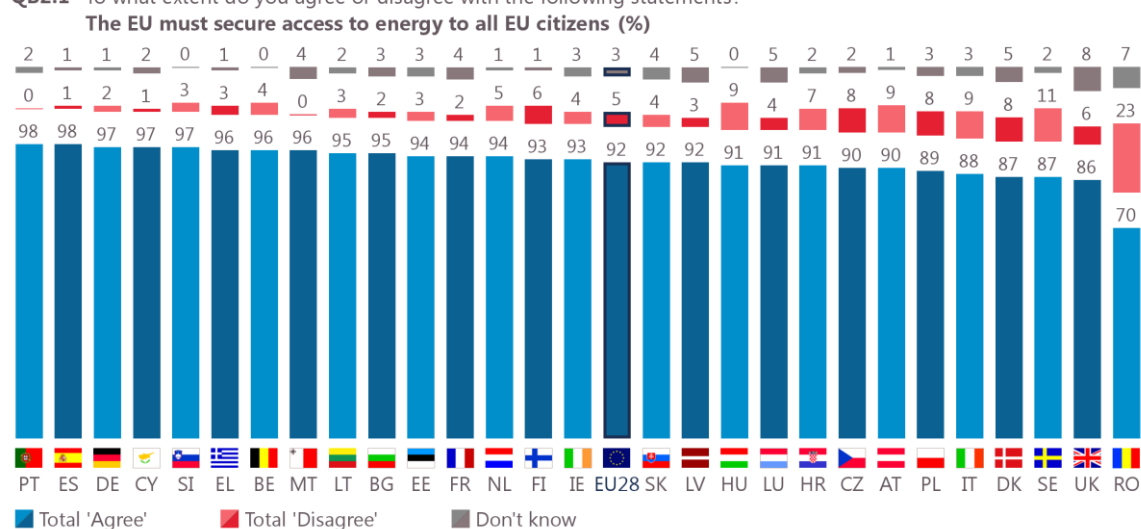


Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

⁹To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

At a national level, results are broadly similar in terms of the proportion of respondents who agree with the statement '**the EU must secure access to energy to all EU citizens**'. The exception is Romania, where just seven in ten agree (70%). Nearly a quarter of respondents there (23%) disagree with the statement.

QB2.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



The socio-demographic analysis reveals few variations among the different groups:

- Age of respondents appears to have little bearing on the responses they give, with **just two percentage points** separating the highest and lowest proportions of those surveyed agreeing with each statement.
- Respondents whose education finished below the age of 15 are the **least likely** to agree with any of the statements, while those still studying are the **most likely** to agree with all of them.
- **Students** are the most likely to agree with each of the statements, while **house persons** are the least likely, though the proportions of respondents agreeing are all very high.
- Respondents who say they have difficulties paying bills **most of the time** are the least likely group to agree with each statement, while those who **almost never or never** have difficulties are the most likely to agree with them.

1 Ensuring access to secure energy in the EU

Respondents say cooperation is essential to ensure a secure energy supply

Respondents were then asked how far they agree with a number of statements regarding energy security¹⁰. Nearly nine in ten respondents say they agree it is necessary **to have a well-connected energy network across the EU** to ensure access to secure energy (89%). Just over one in 20 respondents say they disagree with that statement (6%).

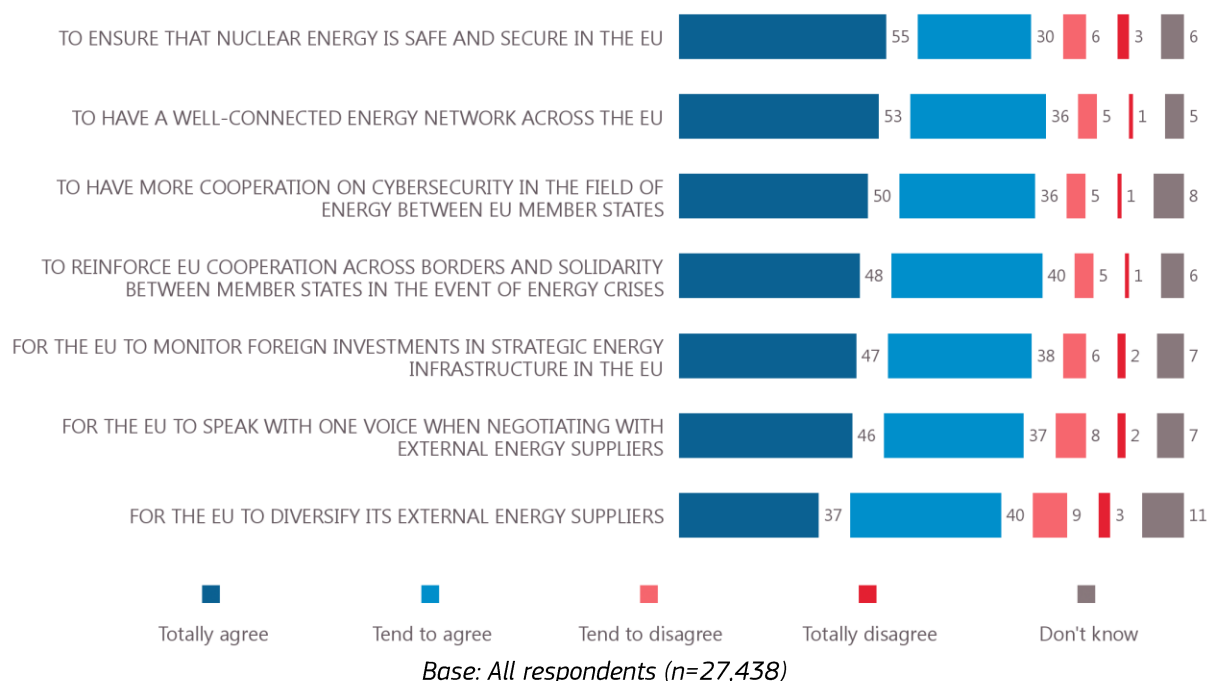
Almost nine in ten respondents (88%) also agree it's necessary to **reinforce EU cooperation across borders and solidarity between Member States in the event of energy crises** to ensure access to secure energy, and 6% say they disagree.

To ensure access to secure energy, it is necessary **to have more cooperation on cybersecurity in the field of energy between Member States** is a statement over eight in ten respondents (86%) say they agree with. 6% say they disagree with this.

Finally, three quarters of respondents (77%) agree it is necessary **for the EU to diversify its external energy suppliers** to ensure access to secure energy. Just over a tenth say they disagree with this (12%), while almost the same proportion say they 'don't know' (11%).

In all categories, no more than 7% of respondents say they **don't know**, with the exception of the EU diversifying its external suppliers (11%).

QB3 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? In order to ensure access to secure energy, it is necessary...
(% - EU)

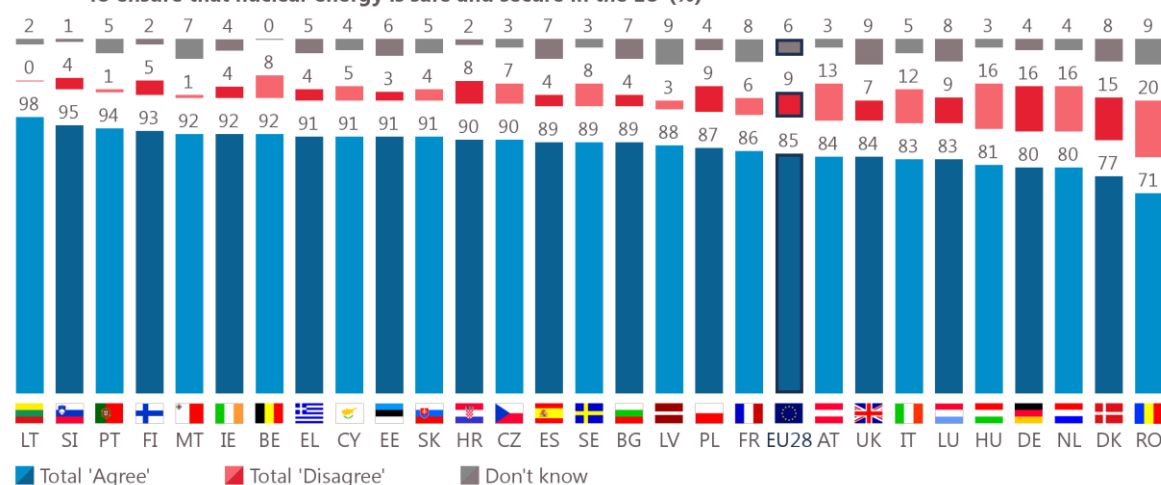


¹⁰ To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? In order to ensure access to secure energy, it is necessary...

At a country level, there are variations in the results across the EU for each of the statements. Nearly all respondents in Lithuania (98%) and at least nine in ten of those surveyed in 12 other Member States say they agree it's necessary **to ensure that nuclear energy is safe and secure in the EU** to ensure access to secure energy. At the other end of the scale, just over seven in ten of those polled in Romania (71%), three quarters of those in Denmark (77%) and eight in ten respondents in the Netherlands and Germany (both 80%) agree.

QB3.6 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? In order to ensure access to secure energy, it is necessary...

To ensure that nuclear energy is safe and secure in the EU (%)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

Variations and similarities are revealed on examination of the socio-demographic analysis:

- Men are marginally more likely than women to agree with all the statements, most notably **'the EU must diversify its external energy suppliers'** (78% vs 75%).
- Respondents aged 55 and more are the least likely group to agree with any of the statements, with the exception of **'the EU to speak with one voice when negotiating with external energy suppliers'**, which those aged 15-24 are least likely to agree with (81%).
- The longer respondents have stayed in education, the more likely they are to agree with all the statements. Those whose education finished after the age of 20 are the **most likely group** to agree with all of the statements, while those surveyed whose education finished before they were 15 are the **least likely to agree** with them.
- In general, managers are the most likely to agree with the statements, with the exception of one: **'to ensure that nuclear energy is safe and secure in the EU'** (84%); other white collar workers (87%) are the most likely to agree with this.
- The easier respondents find it to pay their bills, the more likely they are to agree with each of the statements. Those surveyed who almost never or never have difficulties paying bills are the **most likely to agree** with all the statements, whereas those who struggle most of the time are the **least likely**. This is particularly true of the statement **'to have more cooperation on cybersecurity in the field of energy among EU Member States'**, where there is a gap of 10 percentage points between those who almost never or never have difficulties (88%) and those who have difficulties most of the time (78%).

2 Ensuring access to clean energy in the EU

Access to clean energy requires EU investment in research and technology

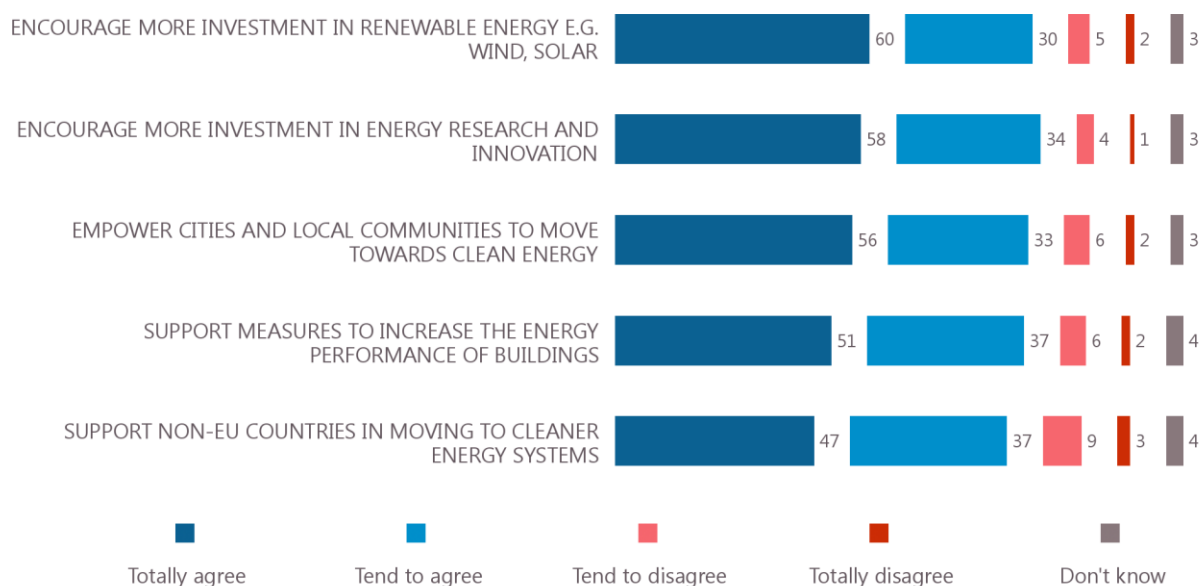
Respondents were asked how far they agree with a range of statements concerning access to clean energy¹¹. The statement the highest proportion of respondents agree with is that it is the EU's responsibility to 'encourage **more investment in energy research and innovation**' to ensure access to clean energy. Nine in ten respondents (92%) agree with this. Under one in 20 respondents say they tend to disagree (4%) with this, while just 1% say they totally disagree.

Nine in ten of those surveyed (90%) say they agree the EU should 'encourage **more investment in renewable energy, e.g. wind, solar**' to secure access to clean energy. Only one in 20 say they tend to disagree with it (5%), while only 2% say they totally disagree.

Finally, that the EU should '**support non-EU countries in moving to cleaner energy systems**' to secure access to clean energy is the least popular statement, though over eight in ten respondents say they agree with it (84%). Under a tenth say they tend to disagree (9%) and just 3% say they totally disagree.

In all the categories, no more than 4% of the respondents say they **don't know**.

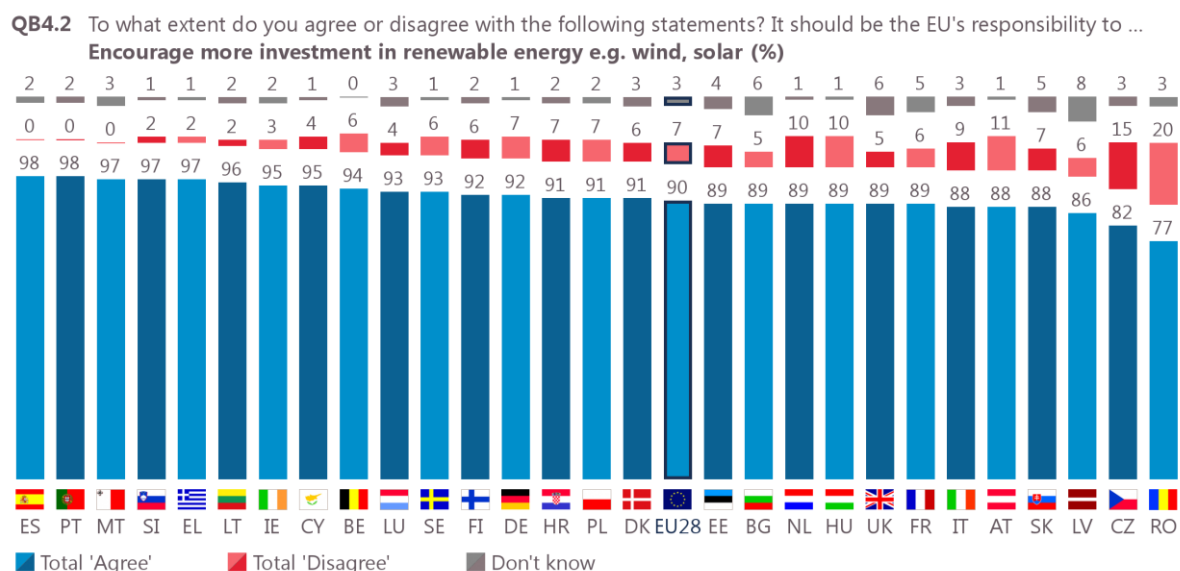
QB4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? It should be the EU's responsibility to ...
(% - EU)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

¹¹ To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

At a national level, there are some significant variations in the results for this question. Almost all those surveyed in Portugal and Spain (both 98%) agree the EU should **'encourage more investment in renewable energy, e.g. wind, solar'**. Just over three quarters of respondents in Romania (77%) agree with it, followed by just over eight in ten of those surveyed in Czechia (82%). The highest level of disagreement is in Romania, where a fifth of the respondents take this position (20%). At the other end of the scale, no respondents in Spain, Portugal or Malta disagree.



The socio-demographic analysis looks at the results for those who agree with each statement and reveals the following variations and similarities, which follow a similar pattern to the results for previous questions:

- Education seems to have a slight influence on respondents' likelihood to agree with the statements, with those who are still studying or have spent longer in education the most likely to agree and those whose education finished before they were 15 least likely to agree. This is particularly true when it comes to the statement **'encourage more investment in energy research and innovation'**, which only 86% of the less educated group agree with as opposed to over nine in ten of those still studying or whose education finished after the age of 20 (both 94%).
- Retired respondents are the least likely to agree with any of the statements.
- Though there is not much difference, those who have difficulties paying their bills most of the time are the least likely to agree with all the statements, while those who almost never or never have difficulties are the most likely to agree with them.

3 Ensuring financially affordable energy

To ensure financially affordable energy, the highest priority is that the EU addresses energy poverty and ensures a fair energy transition

Respondents were asked how far they agree with four statements about access to affordable energy in the EU¹². The statement the highest proportion of respondents agrees with is that it should be the EU's responsibility to **'address energy poverty and ensure a fair energy transition so that no citizen or region is left behind'**. Nine in ten respondents agree (90%). Only one respondent in 20 say they tend to disagree (5%) and just 1% say they totally disagree.

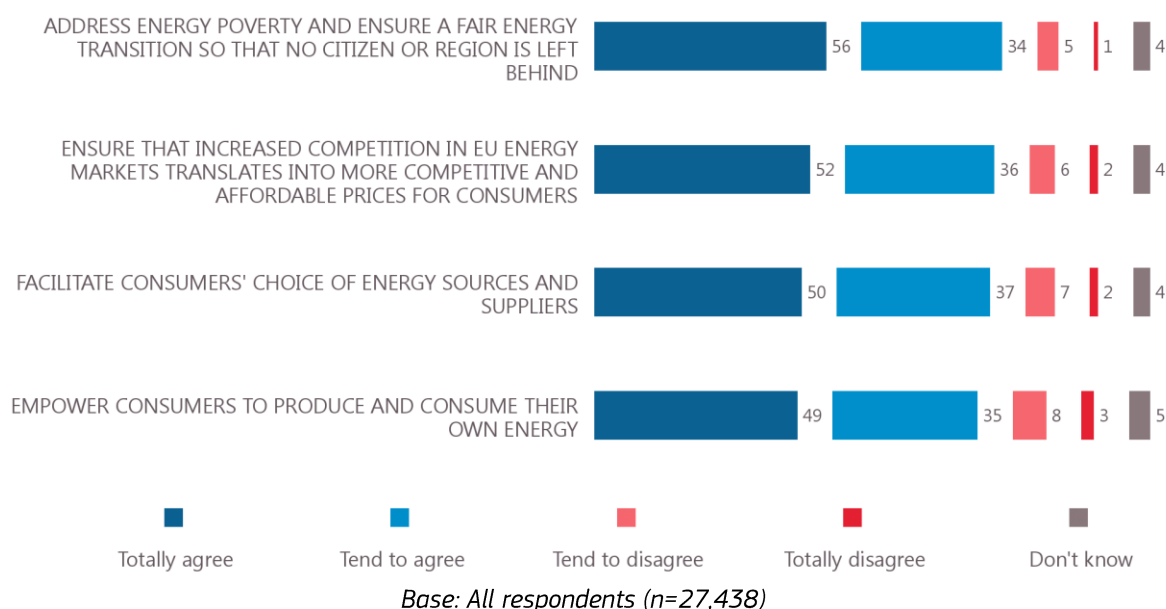
Almost nine in ten respondents (88%) agree the EU should **'ensure that increased competition in EU energy markets translates into more competitive and affordable prices for consumers'**. Over one in 20 say they tend to disagree (6%) and only 2% say they totally disagree.

The third highest level of agreement was for the statement that it should be the EU's responsibility to **'facilitate consumers' choice of energy sources and suppliers'**, which nearly nine in ten respondents say they agree with (87%). Over one in 20 say they tend to disagree (7%) and only 2% say they totally disagree.

Finally, the lowest level of agreement is with the statement the EU should **'empower consumers to produce and consume their own energy'**, though it is still a high proportion – over eight in ten respondents (84%) – who hold this position. Over a tenth say they disagree with the statement (11%), with nearly a tenth saying they tend to disagree (8%) and under one in 20 saying they totally disagree (3%).

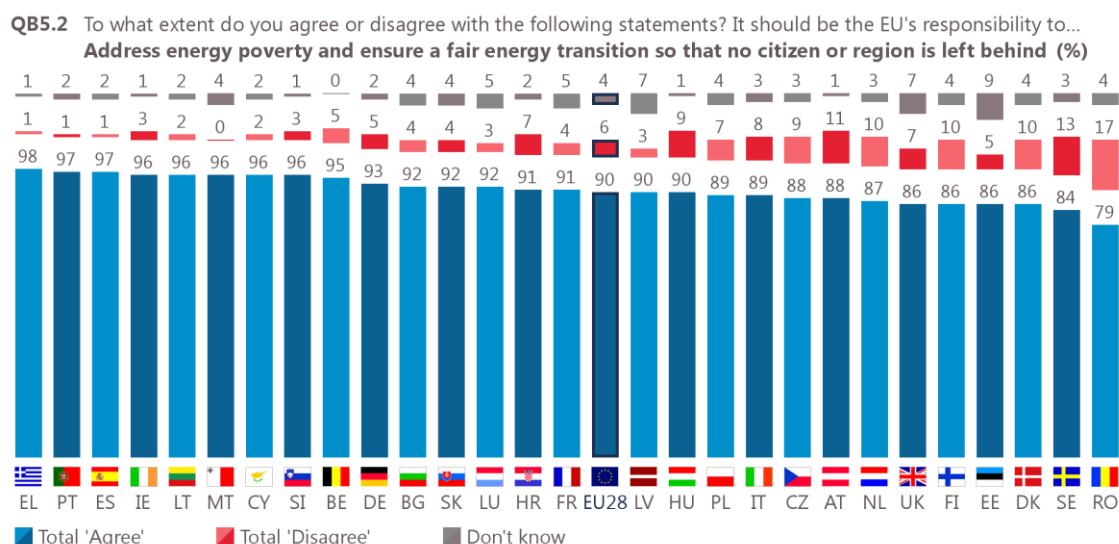
In all the categories, no more than 5% of the respondents say they **don't know**.

QB5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? It should be the EU's responsibility to...
(% - EU)



¹²To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Again, there are national-level variations that appear to follow a similar pattern to those of previous questions. In 17 of the EU's 28 Member States, at least nine in ten respondents agree it is the EU's responsibility to **address energy poverty and ensure a fair energy transition so that no citizen or region is left behind**. This feeling is held most strongly in Greece (98%), Portugal and Spain (both 97%) and least strongly in Romania (79%) and Sweden (84%).



Once again, the socio-demographic analysis focuses on the results for respondents who agree with each of the statements. It reveals:

- Age does not appear to be a determining factor in the results, with the exception being for the statement '**empower consumers to produce and consume their own energy**'. Those aged 40-54 are the most likely to agree with this (87%), while those aged 55 and more are the least likely (82%).
- Education is not much of a determining factor with results being broadly similar. The largest gap is for agreement with the statement the EU should '**address energy poverty and ensure a fair energy transition so that no citizen or region is left behind**' – those still studying (93%) are the most likely to agree with this, while those whose education finished before they were 15 are the least likely (88%).

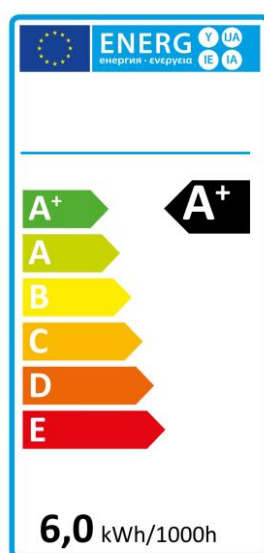
III. KNOWLEDGE AND IMPACT OF THE ENERGY LABELLING

A high majority of respondents say they recognise energy labelling and know what it stands for

Respondents were asked whether they recognised or not the following energy label¹³.

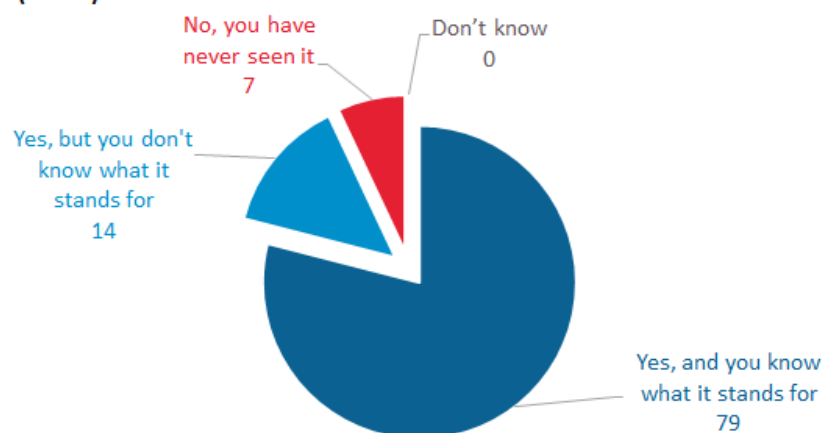
Nearly eight in ten respondents say they **recognise the label and know what it stands for** (79%), while over a tenth of those polled say they recognise the label but do not know what it stands for (14%). In contrast, only just over one in 20 of those surveyed say they **have never seen the label** (7%).

No respondents say they **don't know** if they recognise the label.



EU Energy label¹⁴

QB6 Do you recognise the following label?
(% - EU)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

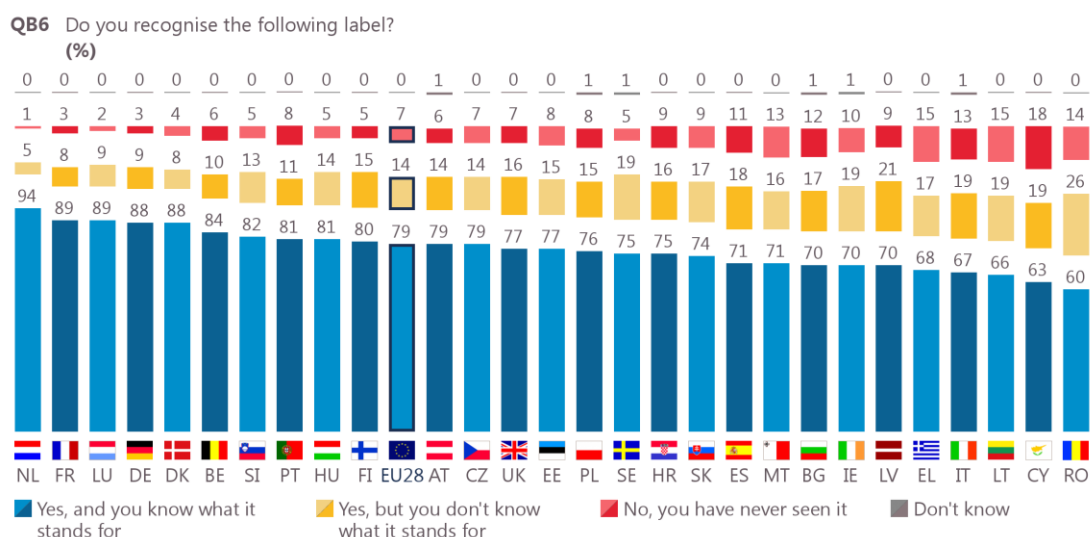
¹³ Do you recognise the following label?

¹⁴ Provided by DG ENER, the same label was shown to all the respondents.

At a country level, there are some relatively significant variations in the results for this question. A majority of respondents in all 28 EU Member States say they **recognise the label and know what it stands for**. 16 of the EU's 28 countries record results below the **EU average of 79%**.

A quarter of respondents in Romania (26%) say they recognise the label but **do not know what it stands for**, while around a fifth say the same in six other countries: Latvia (21%), Cyprus, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania and Sweden (all 19%).

Almost a fifth of respondents in Cyprus (18%) say they **do not recognise the label**, while at least a tenth say the same in eight other countries, most notably in Greece, Lithuania (both 15%) and Romania (14%).



The socio-demographic analysis for this question reveals some interesting similarities and variations, including:

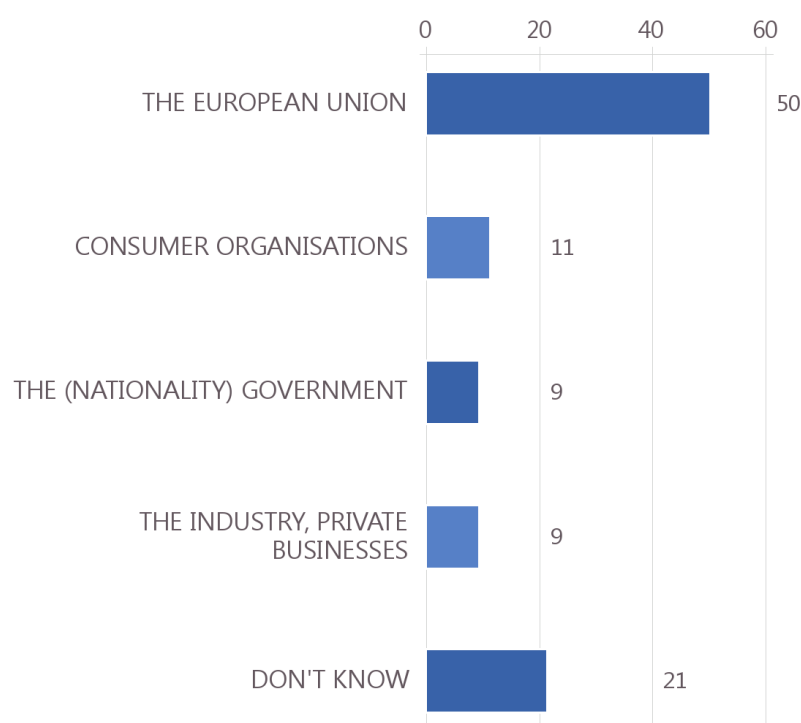
- Men are slightly **more likely than women** to recognise the label (94% vs 92%) and more likely to say they recognise it and know what it stands for (82% vs 75%).
- Respondents aged 25-39 are the most likely to **recognise the label** (97%), though those surveyed aged 40-54 are the most likely to say they recognise it and **know what it stands for** (86%). Respondents aged 15-24 are least likely to say they recognise it and know what it stands for (70%), though those aged over 55 are the **least likely** to say they recognise it overall (88%).
- Respondents whose education finished after the age of 20 are the most likely to recognise the label (97%) and the most likely to know what it stands for as well (88%). Those polled whose education finished before they were 15 are the least likely to recognise it (81%) and least likely to know what it means (63%).
- Nearly all managers** (98%) say they recognise the label and over nine in ten say they know what it means as well (92%). Under nine in ten of those who are retired say they recognise the label (86%) and **only seven in ten** retired respondents, students and house persons say they know what it stands for (all 70%).
- The respondents who **almost never or never** have difficulties paying bills are marginally **the most likely** to recognise the label (94%) but are **much more likely** than their counterparts who sometimes (72%) or frequently struggle to pay bills (70%) to know what it stands for as well (82%).

Half of respondents say the EU is responsible for energy labelling

Respondents were asked if they know who is responsible for energy labelling¹⁵. Half of the respondents (50%) say the **European Union is responsible** for the label, which is by far the most-given answer.

The next most-given answer is '**don't know**': over a fifth of respondents (21%) say this when asked who is responsible for the label.

QB7 Do you know who is responsible for this label?
(% - EU)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

At a national level, the **European Union** is the most-mentioned response in all but one of the EU Member States – Estonia – where it is the second most-given answer (28%). The highest incidences of respondents giving this answer are in Cyprus (71%), Belgium (67%) and Luxembourg (65%), while at least four in ten respondents say this in all the other nations where this is the top answer.

Consumer organisations is the second most-popular answer in 11 countries, most notably Hungary (24%), France, Germany and Sweden (all 17%), while it is the third most given answer in ten EU Member States.

¹⁵ Do you know who is responsible for this label?

Looking at the socio-demographic analysis, some significant variations and similarities are revealed in the results:

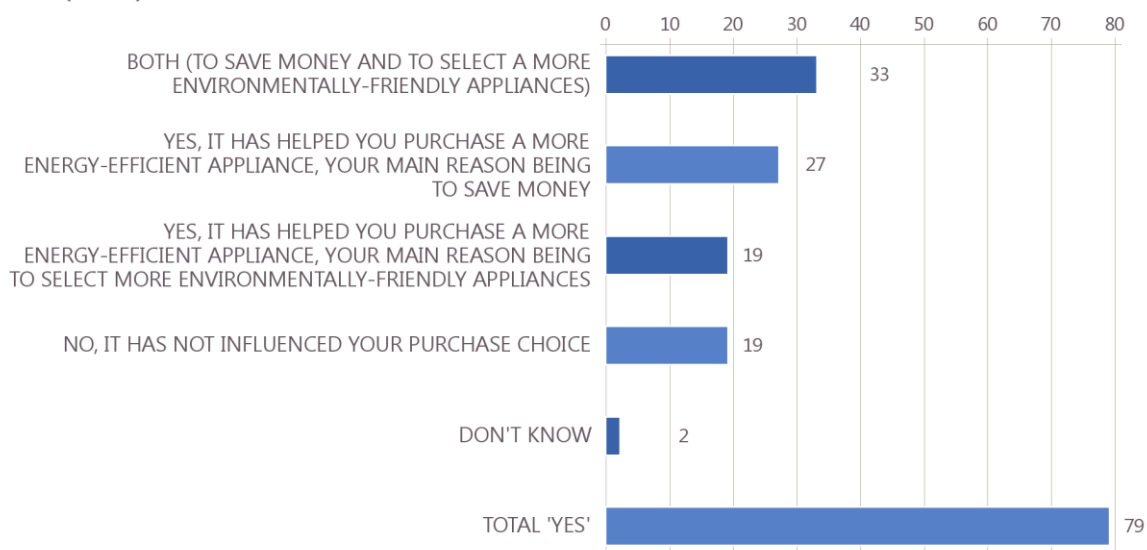
- **Men are more likely** to say the label is the responsibility of the European Union (54%) than women (46%).
- A majority of respondents in all age groups except those aged 55 or more (42%) say the label is the EU's responsibility. Those surveyed **aged 55 and more are also most likely to say they don't know** who is responsible (27%).
- Education appears to be a factor in responses, with those surveyed whose education finished **after the age of 20 most likely** to say the label is the **EU's responsibility** (56%) and those whose education finished **before they were 15 the least likely** (36%). The least educated group is **nearly twice as likely** as the group that has spent the longest time in education to say they don't know who is responsible (34% vs 18%).

Nearly eight in ten respondents say they have been influenced by the EU energy label

Respondents were asked whether their purchase of electrical appliances have been influenced by the EU energy label¹⁶. Nearly eight in ten respondents say the label **did have an influence on their choice of purchase** of electric appliances (79%), while just under a fifth of those surveyed say it has not influenced their purchase choice (19%). A third of respondents say they were influenced by the label **both to save money and to select a more environmentally-friendly appliance** (33%), while just over a quarter say the label influenced them to **buy a more energy-efficient appliance with the aim of saving money** (27%). Just under a fifth say the label influenced them to **purchase a more energy-efficient appliance in order to have a more environmentally-friendly product** (19%).

Just 2% of respondents say they **don't know** if the label had an influence on the choice of their purchase.

QB8 Did the EU energy label have an influence on the choice of your purchase of electric appliances (fridges, washing machines, dish washers, televisions...)?
(% - EU)



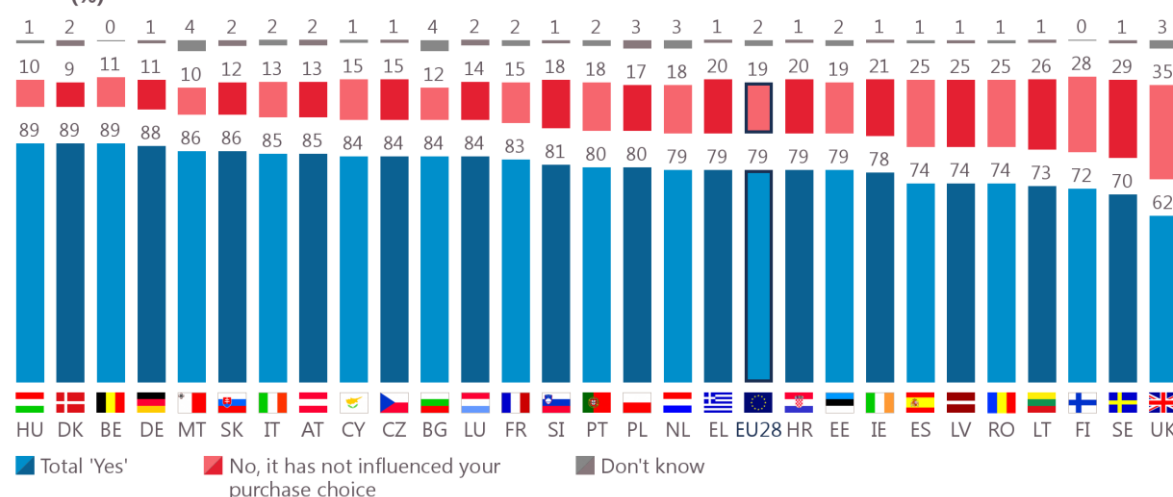
Base: Respondents who recognised the label (n=25,398)

¹⁶ Did the EU energy label have an influence on the choice of your purchase of electric appliances (fridges, washing machines, dish washers, televisions...)?

There are some relatively large country-level variations in the results for the proportion of respondents saying they were influenced or not. At the upper end of the scale, nearly nine in ten of those surveyed in Denmark, Belgium and Hungary (all 89%) say their electrical appliance purchasing decisions **were influenced by the label** and a further 17 countries record results at or above the **EU average of 79%** for this question. At the lower end of the scale, just over six in ten respondents in the United Kingdom (62%) say their purchasing decisions were swayed by the label, while just seven in ten also take this position in Sweden (70%) and Finland (72%).

At least a tenth of respondents in all but one of the EU's 28 Member States say their electrical items purchasing decisions have not been influenced by the label. The exception is Denmark, where just under a tenth of those surveyed say this (9%).

Q88 Did the EU energy label have an influence on the choice of your purchase of electric appliances (fridges, washing machines, dish washers, televisions...)?
(%)



Base: Respondents who recognised the label (n=25,398)

The socio-demographic analysis again reveals some significant variations and similarities among the different groups of respondents, including:

- Respondents aged 15-24 are the **least likely group to be influenced** by the label in their electronic item purchasing decisions (65%) and are the most likely to say they are not influenced (30%).
- Respondents who have stayed in education the longest are the **most likely** to have been influenced by the label (87%), while **those still studying are the least likely** (63%).
- **Students are the least likely** to say they are influenced by the label (63%), while managers (89%) and other white collar workers (88%) are the **most likely**.
- Respondents who say they have **difficulty paying bills** most of the time are the most likely to say their electrical item purchasing decisions have been **influenced by the label in order to save money** (32%), while those who report difficulties occasionally are the most likely to report being influenced overall (81%). Those surveyed who say the **almost never/never have difficulties** are the most likely to report being **influenced by the label to both save money and acquire a more environmentally-friendly appliance** (34%).

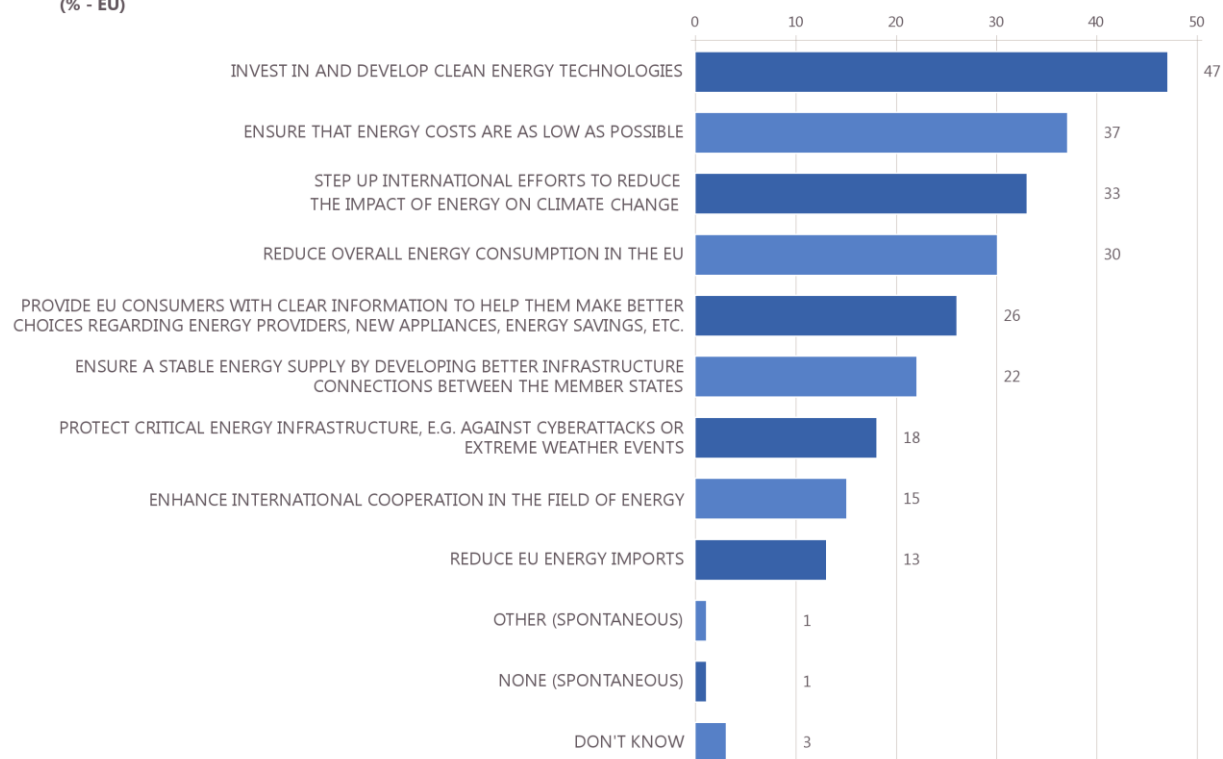
IV. EU ENERGY PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT YEARS

Nearly half of those surveyed say the EU should prioritise clean energy technologies in the next 10 years

Finally, respondents were asked which energy issues the EU should prioritise over the next decade¹⁷. Nearly half of those polled say they think the EU should **invest in and develop clean energy technologies** (47%) in the next ten years, this being the most common answer among the respondents. Just under four in ten respondents say they believe the EU should **ensure energy costs are as low as possible** (37%), while a third say they think it ought to **step up international efforts to reduce the impact of energy on climate change** (33%).

Just 1% of the respondents say **other** priorities, while 1% say **none** and 3% say they **don't know**.

QB9 In your opinion, which of the following energy issues should the European Union tackle as a priority over the next 10 years? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)
(% - EU)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

¹⁷ In your opinion, which of the following energy issues should the European Union tackle as a priority over the next 10 years?

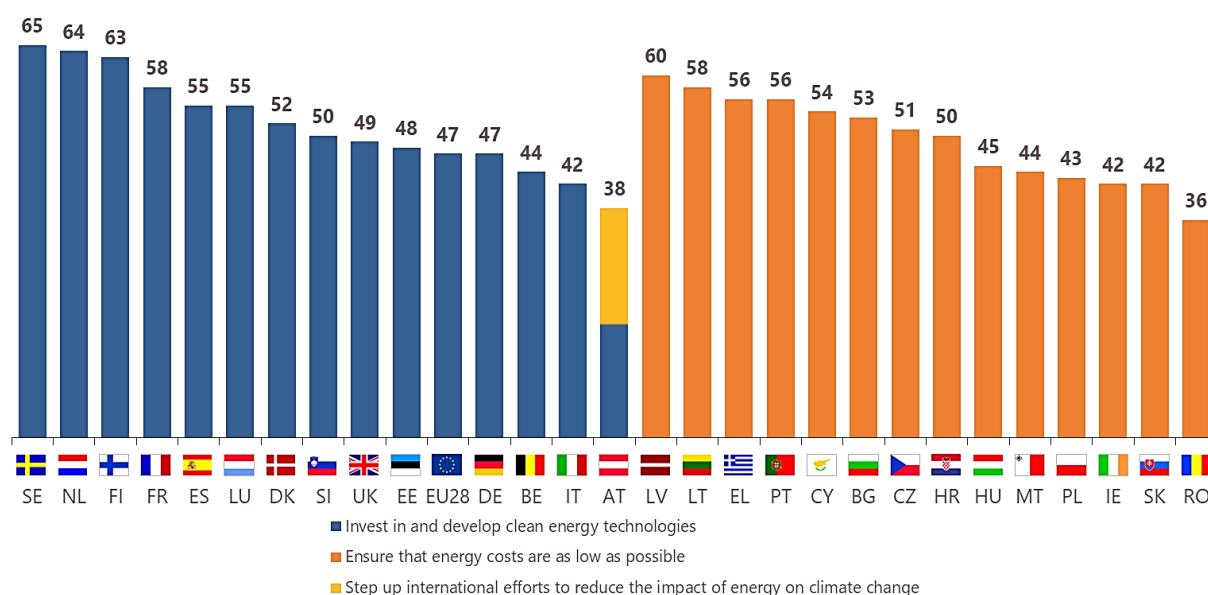
In half of the EU's 28 Member States, the most frequent response is that the EU should **ensure that energy costs are as low as possible** in the next ten years.

The most-mentioned answer in 13 countries and the joint most-given response in one other – Austria – is that the EU should **invest in and develop clean energy technologies** in the next ten years. In Austria, nearly four in ten respondents (38%) give this as their answer, with the same proportion in that country also saying the EU should prioritise **stepping up international efforts to reduce the impact of energy on climate change**.

QB9 In your opinion, which of the following energy issues should the European Union tackle as a priority over the next 10 years?

(MAX. 3 ANSWERS)

(% - THE MOST MENTIONED ANSWER BY COUNTRY)



Base: All respondents (n=27,438)

The socio-demographic analysis reveals a range of similarities and some marked differences, including:

- The results for men and women are broadly similar, with differences of no more than three percentage points for any of the possible responses. Men are more likely than women to say the **EU should invest in and develop clean energy technologies** (48% vs 45%), while women are more likely than men to say the **EU should provide EU consumers with clear information to help them make better choices regarding energy suppliers, new appliances, energy savings, etc.** (28% vs 25%).
- Age does not appear to be much of a determining factor in the responses, though those polled aged 55 and more are the most likely to say the EU should **ensure that energy costs are as low as possible** (40%), while those aged 15-24 are the most likely to say the **EU should invest in and develop clean energy technologies** (50%).
- Perhaps unsurprisingly, respondents who are unemployed (45%) are the most likely to say the EU should **ensure that energy costs are as low as possible**, while managers are the least likely to say this (25%). In contrast, managers are the most likely respondents to say the EU should **step up international efforts to reduce the impact of energy on climate change** (46%), while those who are retired (28%) are the least likely to say this.
- Also unsurprising is the fact respondents who have difficulty paying their bills most of the time (48%) are the most likely to say the EU should **ensure that energy costs are as low as possible**, while those who almost never/never have difficulty paying are the least likely to say this (35%).

CONCLUSION

The results of this Eurobarometer survey on EU citizens' attitudes towards energy and energy policy in the Union show that Europeans believe that the priorities now, and in the future, should be about securing clean, affordable energy.

Over four in ten respondents say current EU policy is about moving away from fossil fuels towards cleaner energy sources, while over a quarter say it's about reducing consumption.

Significantly, over six in ten respondents say the EU has a responsibility to ensure EU citizens have secure access to energy. Moreover, to ensure access to clean energy, a large majority of respondents agree that it should be the EU's responsibility to encourage more investment in renewable energy (e.g. wind, solar) and to encourage more investment in energy research and innovation.

But this needs to be done affordably. A quarter of those polled in this survey say they think EU energy policy is about reducing costs to consumers, while over half say it should be the EU's responsibility to address energy poverty and ensure a fair energy transition so that no citizen or region is left behind. Also, nearly nine in ten respondents say the EU must be responsible for taking action to ensure competitive market prices, in particular to reduce the number of people unable to pay their energy bills.

The good news is that the EU's efforts to promote energy efficiency through its label on electrical appliances is having an effect. Awareness of the label is high: over nine in ten recognise it and nearly eight in ten respondents say they also know what it stands for (79%), while only just over one in 20 respondents say they have never seen it. Of those who recognise the label, just under eight in ten say it had an influence on their electrical items purchasing decisions, whether to save money, to choose more environmentally-friendly appliances or both.

As for the future, nearly half of respondents say the EU's priority over the next ten years should be to invest in and develop clean energy technologies, while a third say it should step up international efforts to reduce the impact of energy on climate change. Just under four in ten respondents say they believe the EU should focus on ensuring energy costs are as low as possible in the next ten years.

In socio-demographic terms, there are some interesting patterns that emerged during the course of the research. Men and women seem to agree on most topics covered by the survey, with only a few exceptions.

In general, the younger, more educated respondents who are managers and seldom struggle to pay bills are more interested in environmental issues connected with energy, while those who are older, less well-educated and report difficulty paying bills are more likely to raise issues associated with affordability.

Occupation also seems to have a bearing on the answers respondents give, with managers displaying similar characteristics to younger, more educated, better-off respondents and the unemployed, retired or house persons perhaps unsurprisingly being more inclined to be concerned about affordability.

Awareness of the energy label, who is responsible for it and whether it has influenced purchases seems to have a bearing on respondents' answers as well. Generally speaking, the greater the awareness, the more likely the respondent is to focus on environmental issues, while lower levels of recognition are associated with more interest in reducing energy costs.

