

Climate Change in the Irish Mind

Development and next steps

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



YALE PROGRAM ON
Climate Change
Communication



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Presentation contents

- Climate Change in the Irish Mind
- Climate Change's Four Irelands
- Climate Opinion maps
- Discussion of progress challenges and next steps



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EPA Climate Change Behavioural Insights Unit

- Provide the evidence base for who to engage and how best to target activation, engagement and behavioural change on climate action
- Develop Hub for understanding attitudes, policy preferences, behaviours, and underlying psychological & cultural factors that influence the public
- Be a resource and provide an advisory service to national, regional and local stakeholders
- Provide data, tools and techniques that allow for effective public engagement over time
- Support national coordination, networking and capacity building
- Establish a process for ongoing monitoring and reporting



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Climate Change in the Irish Mind

A study of Irish attitudes and behaviours on climate change

- Aims to develop a better understanding of the Irish population's climate change beliefs, risk perceptions, policy preferences, and behaviour of the Irish public towards climate change
- Three key outputs:
 - 1) Climate Change in the Irish Mind top level reports
 - 2) Climate Change's four Irelands: Segmentation reports
 - 3) An online interactive map tool
- Undertaken by EPA and the Yale University Program on Climate Change Communication
- In support of Ireland's [National Dialogue on Climate Action](#)



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Climate Change in the Irish Mind

Survey development

- Designed by Yale Programme on Climate Change Communication with input from EPA Climate Services Team.
- Based on established methodology of the “Climate Change in the American Mind”, analysis conducted by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and the George Mason University Centre for Climate Change Communication.
- Tailored to meet Ireland’s particular socio/economic context.
- Supported by EPA commissioned (University College Cork) literature review of the social, political, economic, and cultural context for understanding Irish attitudes and behaviours to climate change.
- Care was taken to ensure the questions within the survey questionnaire were appropriate to the Irish context and the language used was culturally relevant.



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Methodology

- **Survey design**
 - 56 questions-10 topics (including demographics-age, gender, region, socio-economic status, education, ethnic, religious and cultural background, political affiliation)
- **Field study**-conducted by the survey company Behaviour & Attitudes - July 2021
 - Fresh sample of Irish adults aged 18+
 - Quota controlled sampling- based on
 - Age: 18-35/35-54/ 55+
 - Gender
 - Work status (at work/not at work)
 - Region (Dublin; Rest of Leinster; Munster; Connacht/ Ulster)
 - 4030 interviews completed by telephone (random digit dial-CATI)-25 min interviews
 - Survey data analysed by Yale team and refined by EPA climate services team



Climate Change in the Irish Mind (1st Report)

Section 1: Climate Change Beliefs and Attitudes

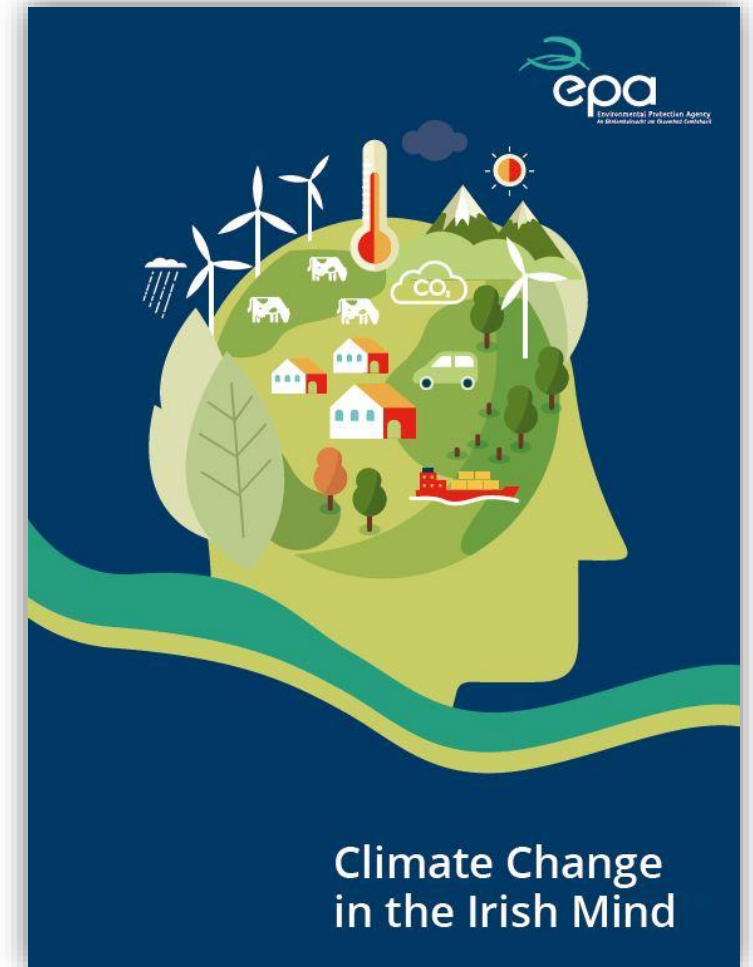
- what the research tells us about the beliefs and attitudes of the Irish population

Section 2: Climate Policies

- what the research tells us about public support for government action on climate change

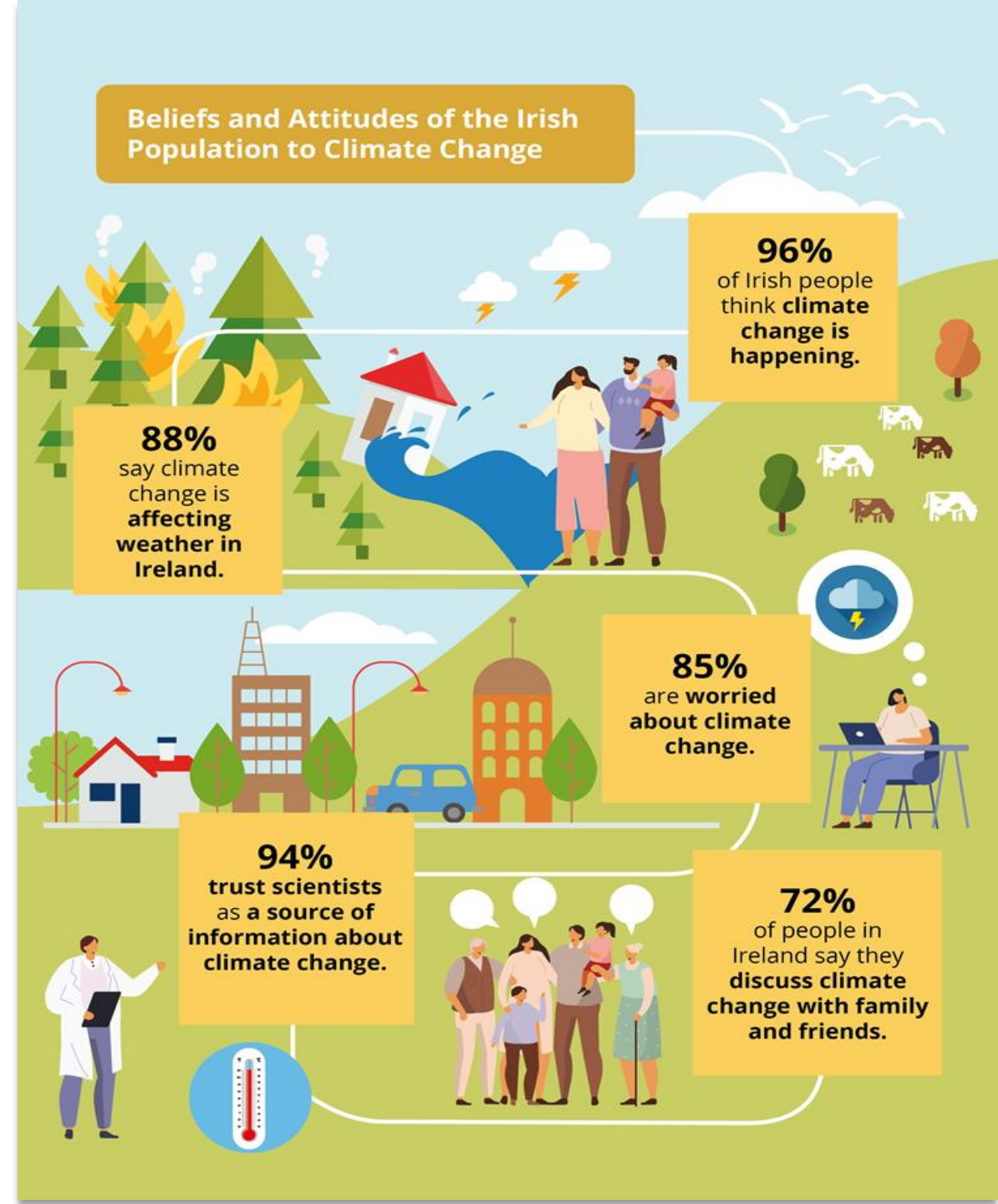
Section 3: Climate-Related Behaviours

- What the research tells us about the actions and changes that people are willing to take to address climate change



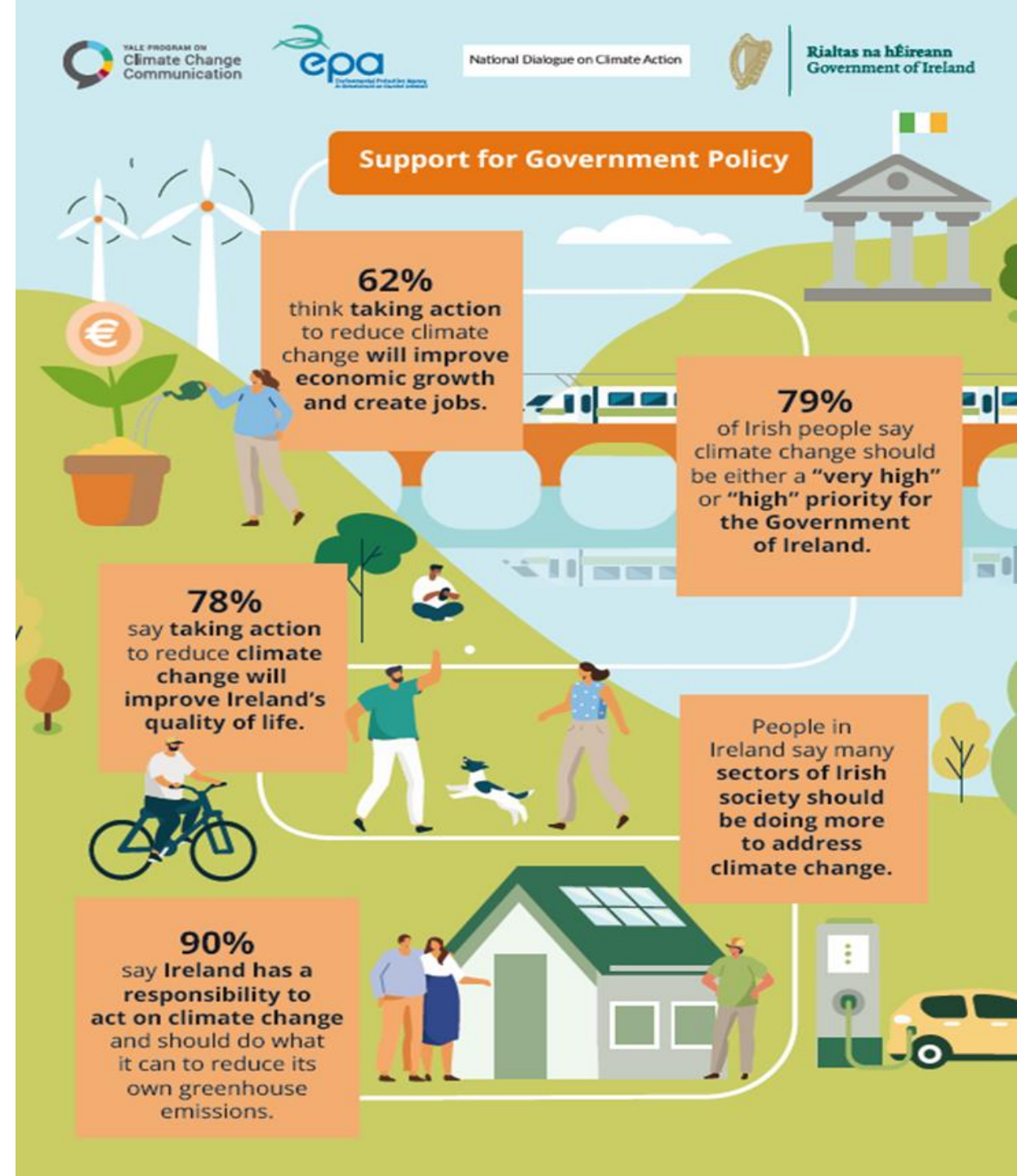
Climate Change Beliefs and Attitudes

- Climate Change Beliefs
- Perceived Risks of Climate Change
- Emotional Responses to Climate Change
- Trusted Sources of Information
- Personal and Social Engagement with Climate Change



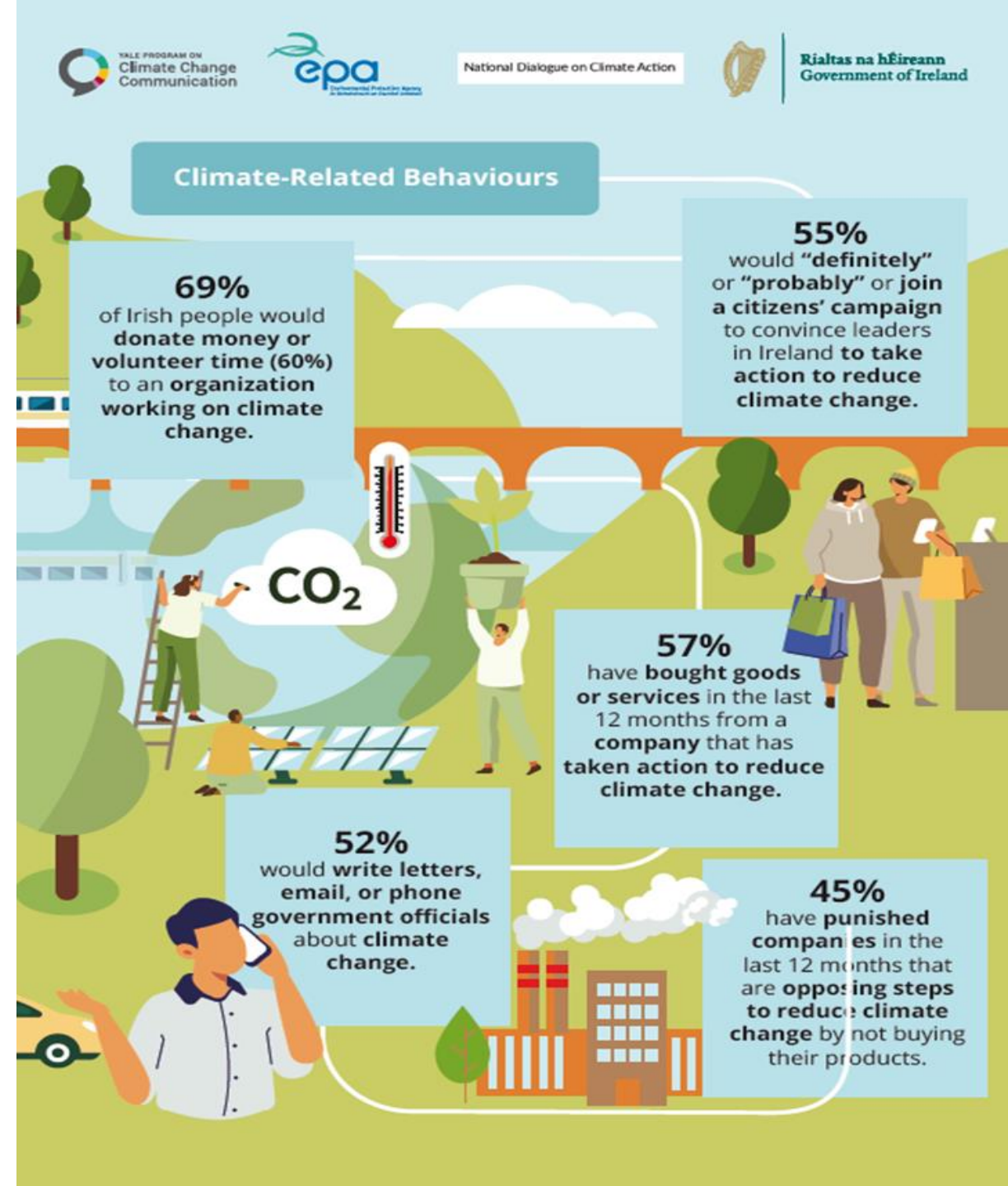
Climate Policies; support for Government policies

- Climate Change as an Economic and Quality of Life Issue
- Climate Change as a Government Priority
- Support for Policies to Reduce Greenhouse Gases
- Responsibility for Action on Climate Change



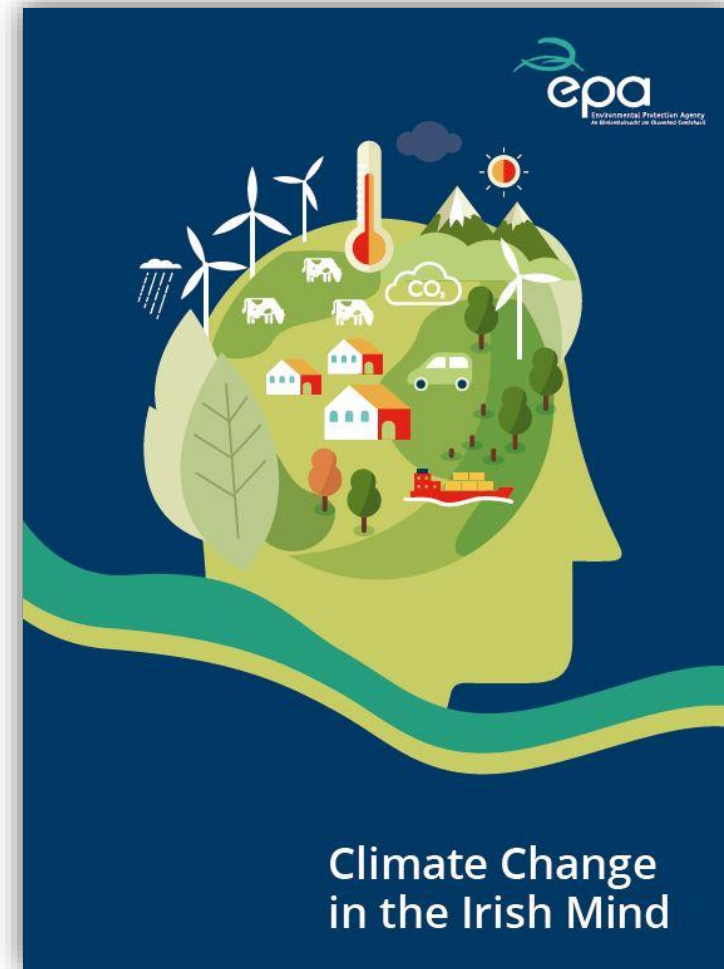
Climate Related Behaviours

- Political behaviours
- Consumption behaviours



Comments and Questions

- Repeated Cross sectional Vs Panel Data
- Similar existing studies for international comparison
- Challenges encountered in larger countries



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Climate Change's Four Irelands: An Audience Segmentation Analysis



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CCIM Segmentation methodology

- Latent class analysis used in segmentation
- Subset of CCIM questionnaire items
- Classification of respondents, grouping them into “audiences” based on similarity of their responses
- NB based on attitudes only, **Not** on demographics, social class, or geography

Question Text	Response Levels
<i>How worried are you about climate change?</i>	<i>“Very worried”, “Somewhat worried”, “Not very worried”, “Not at all worried”</i>
<i>How much do you think climate change will harm you personally?</i>	<i>“A great deal”, “A moderate amount”, “Only a little”, “Not at all”</i>
<i>How much do you think climate change will harm future generations?</i>	<i>“A great deal”, “A moderate amount”, “Only a little”, “Not at all”</i>
<i>How important is the issue of climate change to you personally?</i>	<i>“Extremely important”, “Very important”, “Somewhat important”, “Not too important”, “Not at all important”</i>



Segments

USA

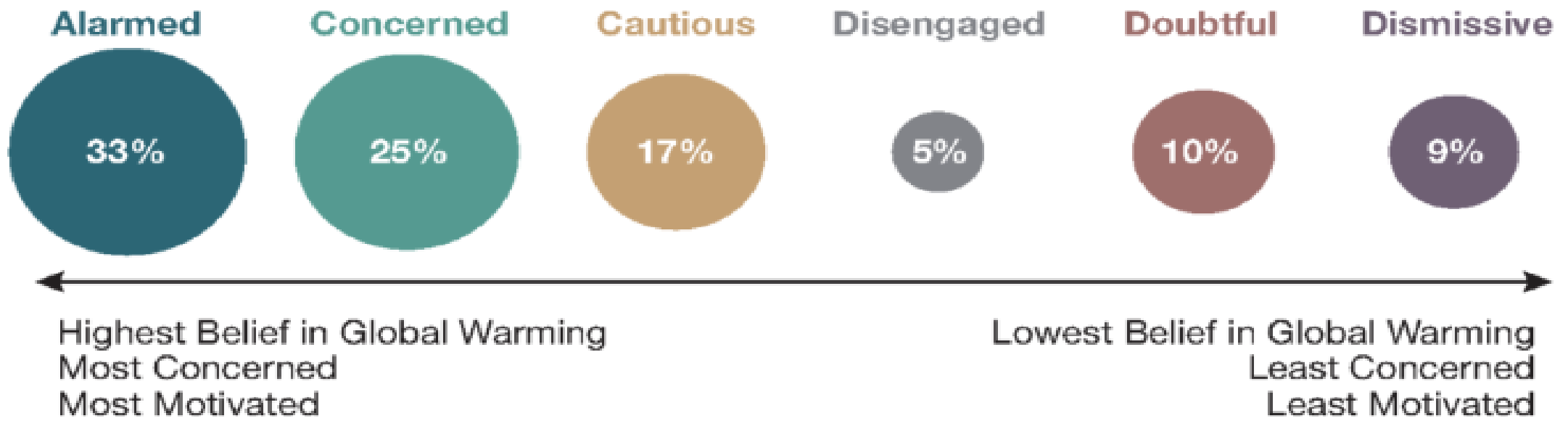
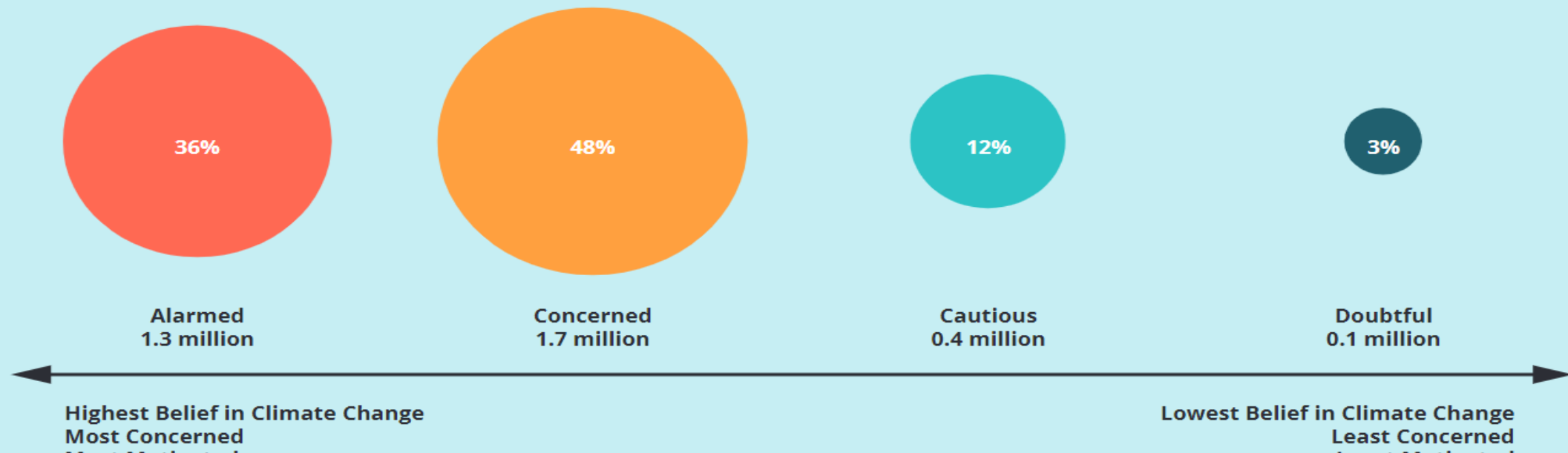


Figure 1: Irish climate change audience proportions based on 2016 census adult population, presented in millions

Ireland





Alarmed 36%



Male **43%**

Female **57%**



Urban **69%**

Rural **31%***



Believe climate change is happening **99%**

Believe govt should make climate action a high/very high priority **94%**

Climate change is very/extremely important to them personally **99%**

Government should provide support for people to buy electric vehicles **97%**

In favour of Government support to install more efficient heating systems **98%**



*National urban/rural population proportions are 69/31% based on CSO 2019 published data.

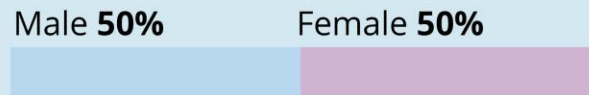


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Concerned 48%



Believe climate change is happening **98%**

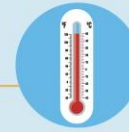


Believe govt should make climate action a high/very high priority **81%**

Climate change is very/extremely important to them personally **49%**

Government should provide support for people to buy electric vehicles **93%**

In favour of Government support to install more efficient heating systems **97%**



*National urban/rural population proportions are 69/31% based on CSO 2019 published data.

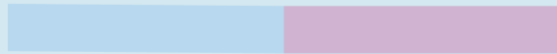


Cautious 12%



Male **58%**

Female **42%**



Urban **62%**

Rural **38%***



Believe climate change is happening **90%**

Believe govt should make climate action a high/very high priority **45%**

Climate change is very/extremely important to them personally **11%**

Government should provide support for people to buy electric vehicles **85%**

In favour of Government support to install more efficient heating systems **93%**



*National urban/rural population proportions are 69/31% based on CSO 2019 published data.



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Doubtful 3%



Believe climate change is happening **51%**

Believe govt should make climate action a high/very high priority **21%**

Climate change is very/extremely important to them personally **9%**

Government should provide support for people to buy electric vehicles **68%**

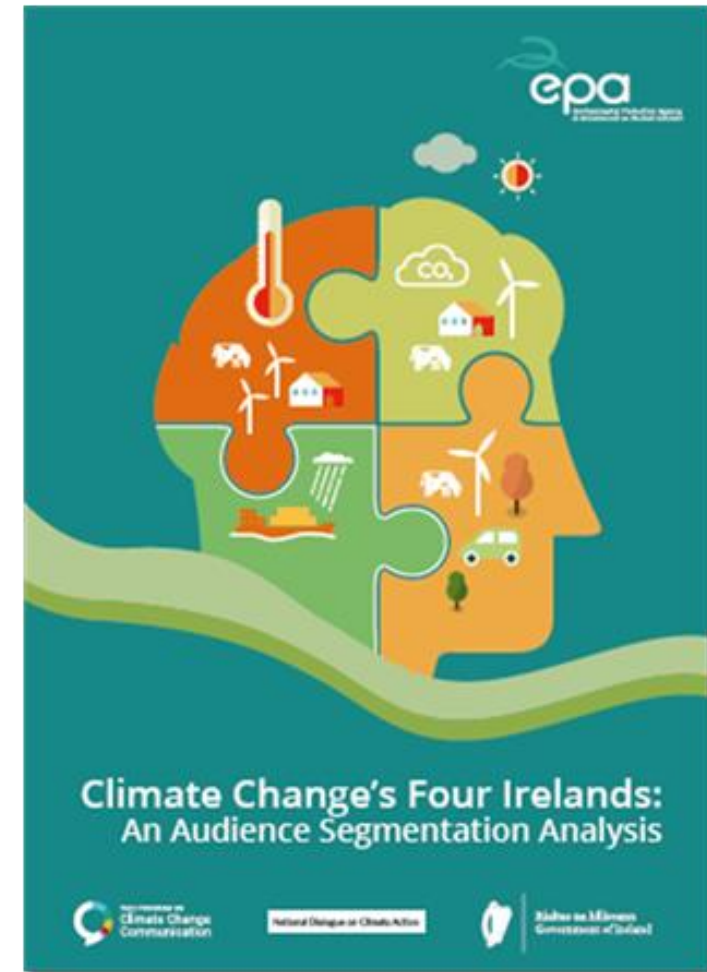
In favour of Government support to install more efficient heating systems **75%**



*National urban/rural population proportions are 69/31% based on CSO 2019 published data.

Comments and Questions

- **Usefulness of segmentation methodologies**
 - Audience profiles for communicators, policy makers
 - Can provide authoritative and timely information on national norms in climate change attitudes
 - Key messages that resonate with audiences, who/how to reach people
- **Issues for further research**
 - Attitudes are only one piece of the puzzle in climate change behaviours
 - “Say-do gap” between intentions and actions
 - System changes support behavioural ones

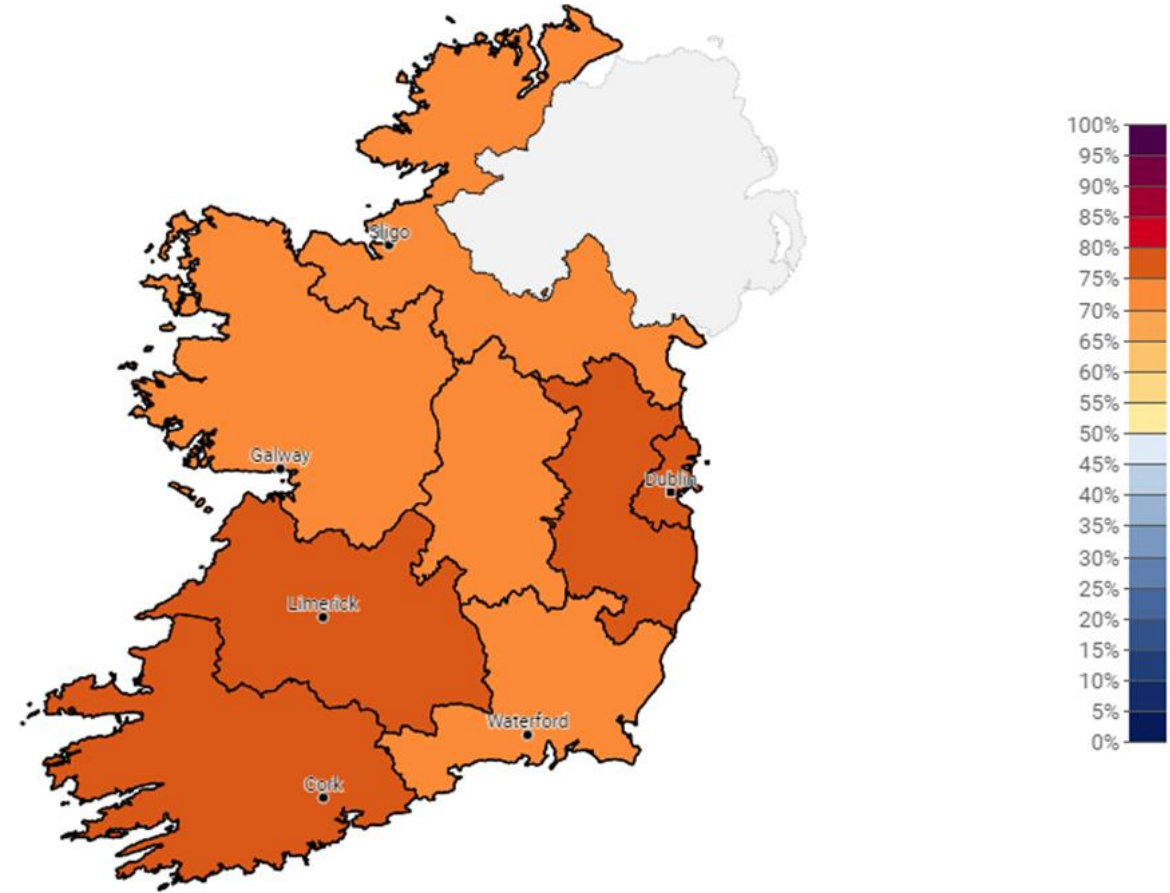


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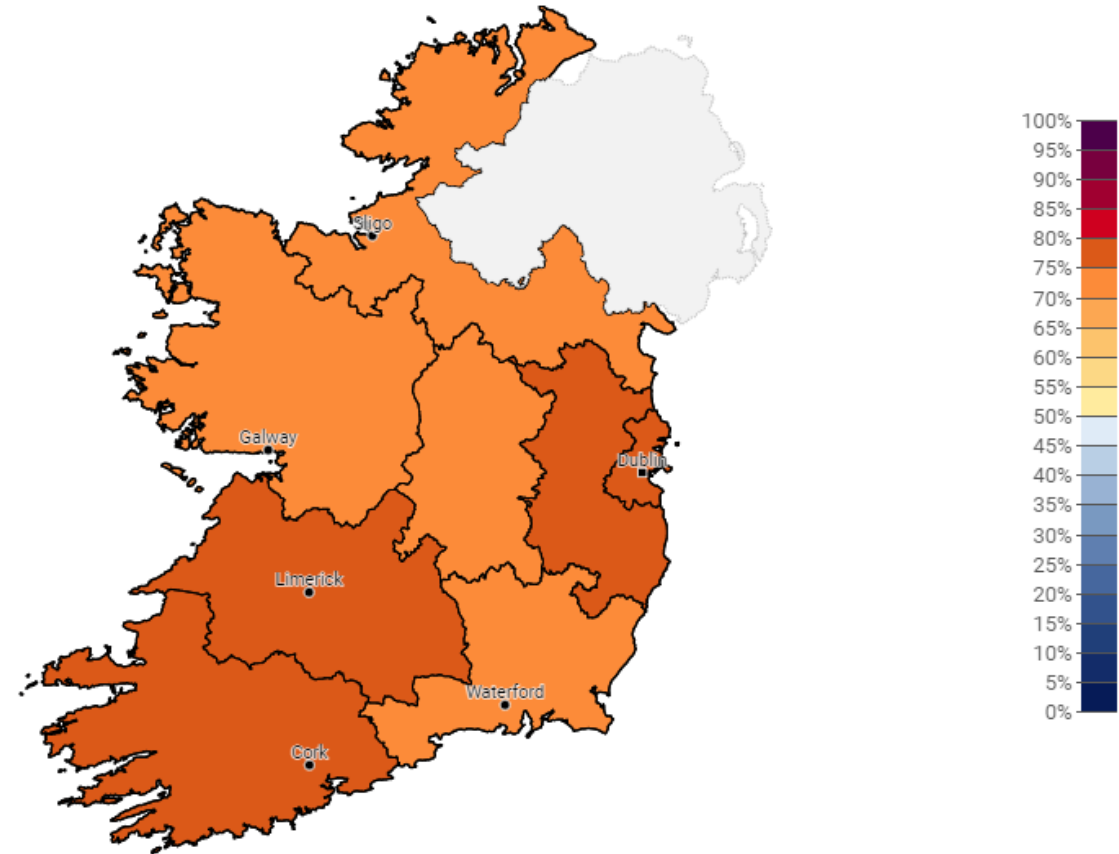
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CCIM Climate Opinion Maps



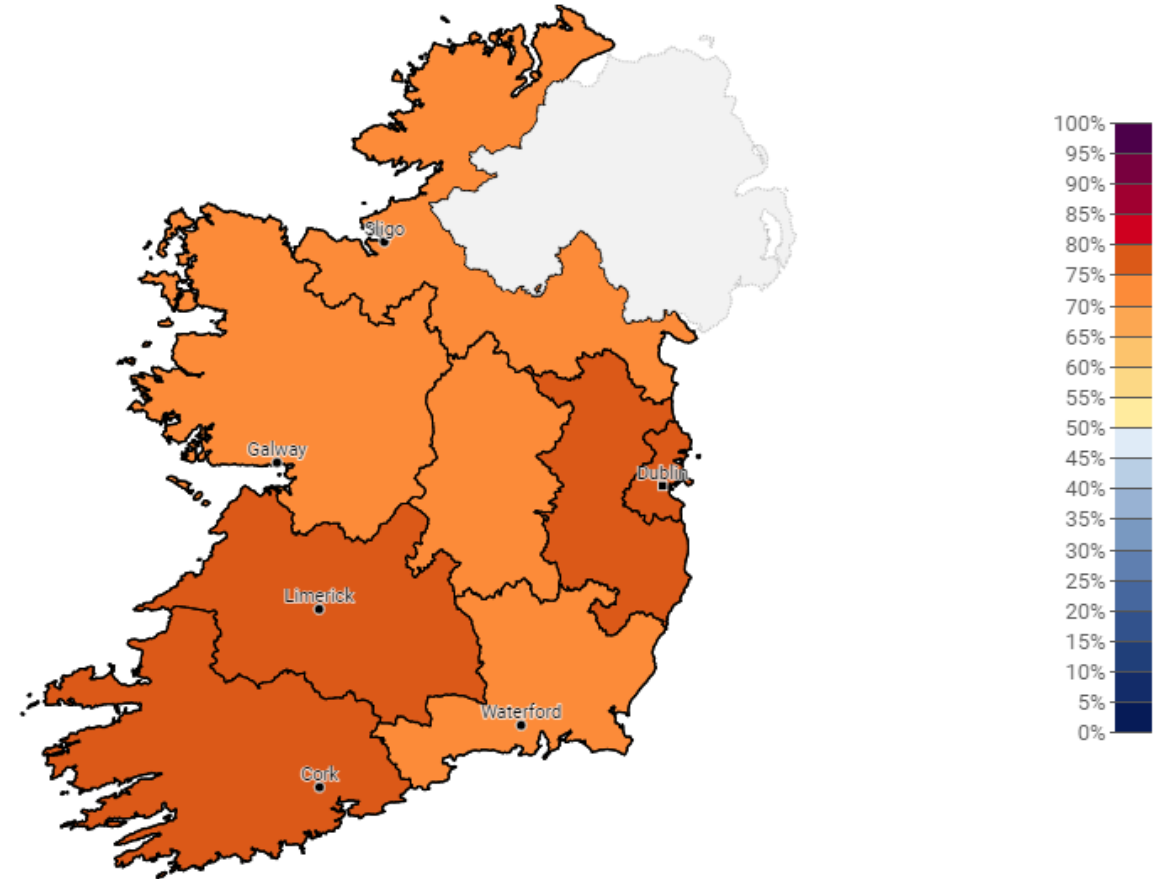
Climate opinion maps

- Climate opinion maps of Ireland show how climate change beliefs, risk perceptions, and policy support vary at the county and regional levels.
- Developed in cooperation between the EPA and Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (YPCCC) using Climate change in the Irish mind 2021 data.
- Intended to become a longitudinal resource tracking shifts in public opinion on climate change over time.



Climate opinion maps

- **Methodology**
- Multilevel regression with post-stratification (MRP)
- Model developed using CCIM survey results (N=4,000) and census data from Central Statistics Office (CSO)
- Provides accurate regional and county level information on attitudes



Climate opinion maps

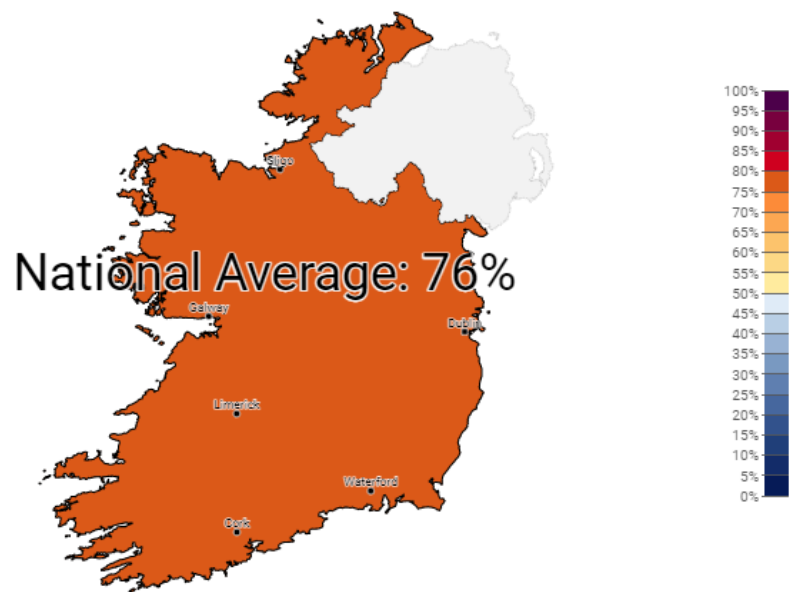
Estimated % of adults who know a lot about climate change (nat'l avg. 76%), 2022

Select Question: Know a lot about climate change

Absolute Value

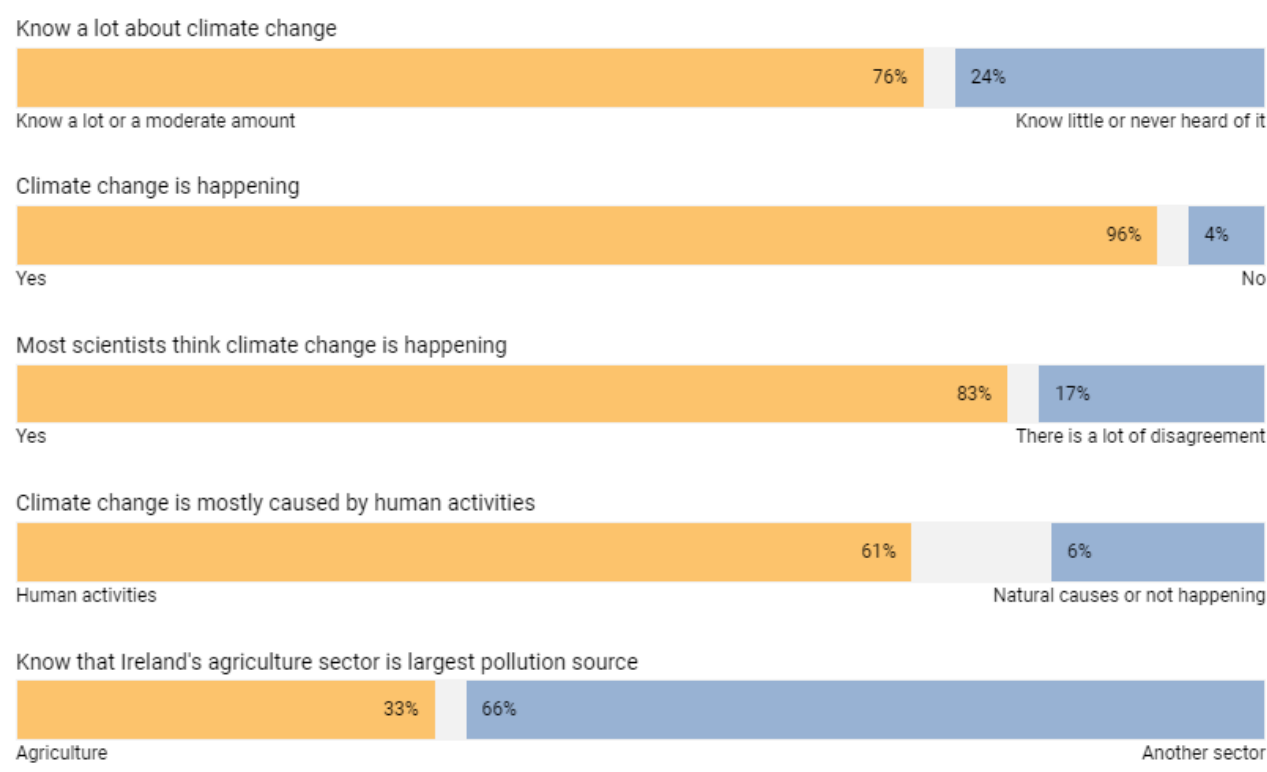
Click on map to select geography, or:

- National
- Regions
- Counties

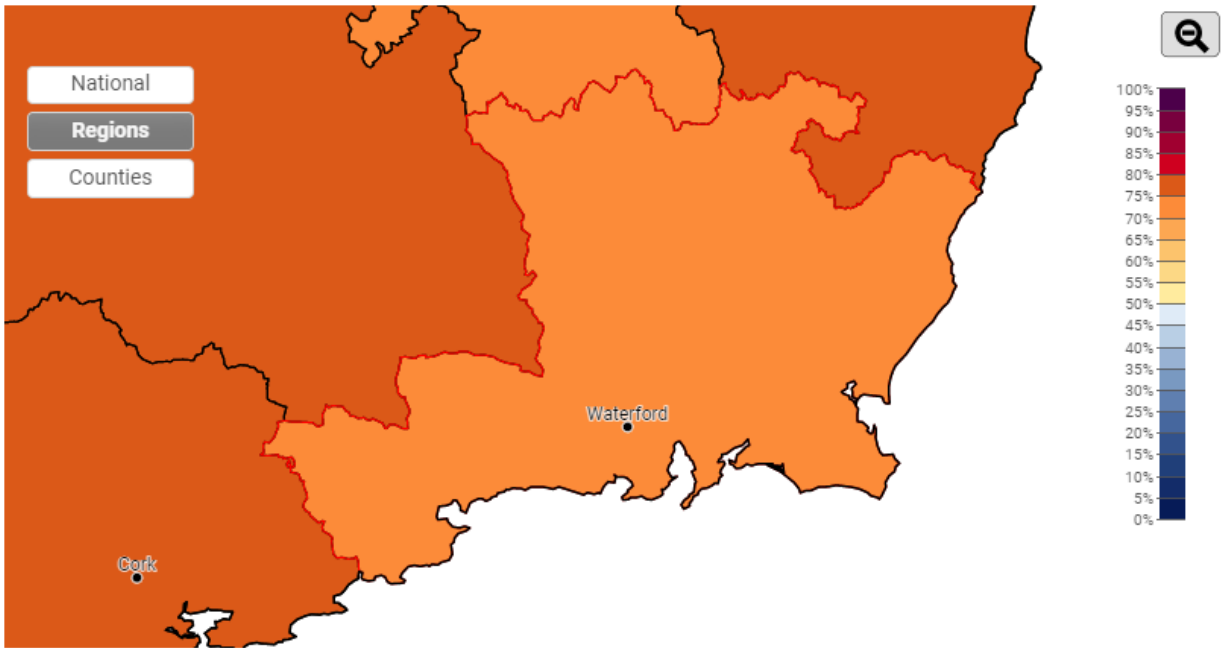


Public Opinion Estimates, Ireland, 2022

Beliefs and Knowledge



Climate opinion maps



Public Opinion Estimates, South-East, 2022

Beliefs and Knowledge



Climate opinion maps

- National attitudes towards climate change issues are closely replicated across regional and county levels.

Estimated % of adults who know a lot about climate change (nat'l avg. 76%), 2022

Select Question: Know a lot about climate change

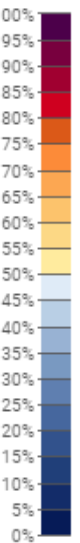
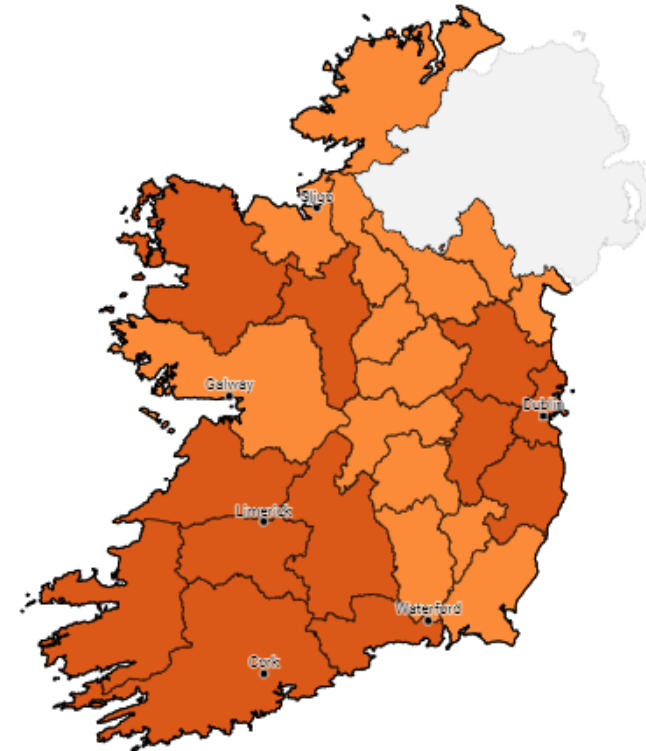
Absolute Value

Click on map to select geography, or: Select a County

National

Regions

Counties



Climate opinion maps

Climate action will improve economy and provide new jobs, difference from national average (62%), 2022

Select Question: Climate action will improve economy and provide new jobs

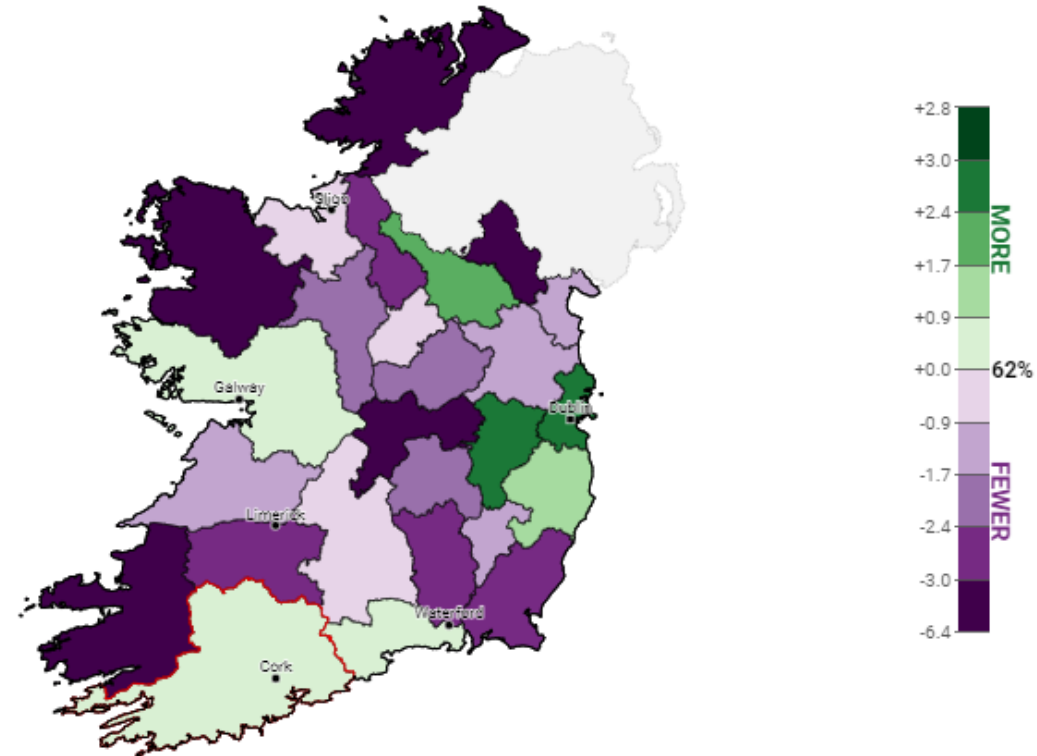
Difference from National Avg.

Click on map to select geography, or: Cork County Un-Select

National

Regions

Counties



- Minor regional variations in climate change attitudes, policy preferences, and behaviours are typically within or close to the margin of error of the study.

Climate opinion maps

- Weak spatial variations in concerns about the impacts of climate change are aligned to existing environmental hazards, such as severe storms, water pollution, and water shortages.
- The Climate opinions map viewer is an important initial step in developing a longitudinal understanding of regional and local attitudes to climate change in Ireland.

Worried that severe storms will harm local area, difference from national average (64%), 2022

Select Question: Worried that severe storms will harm local area

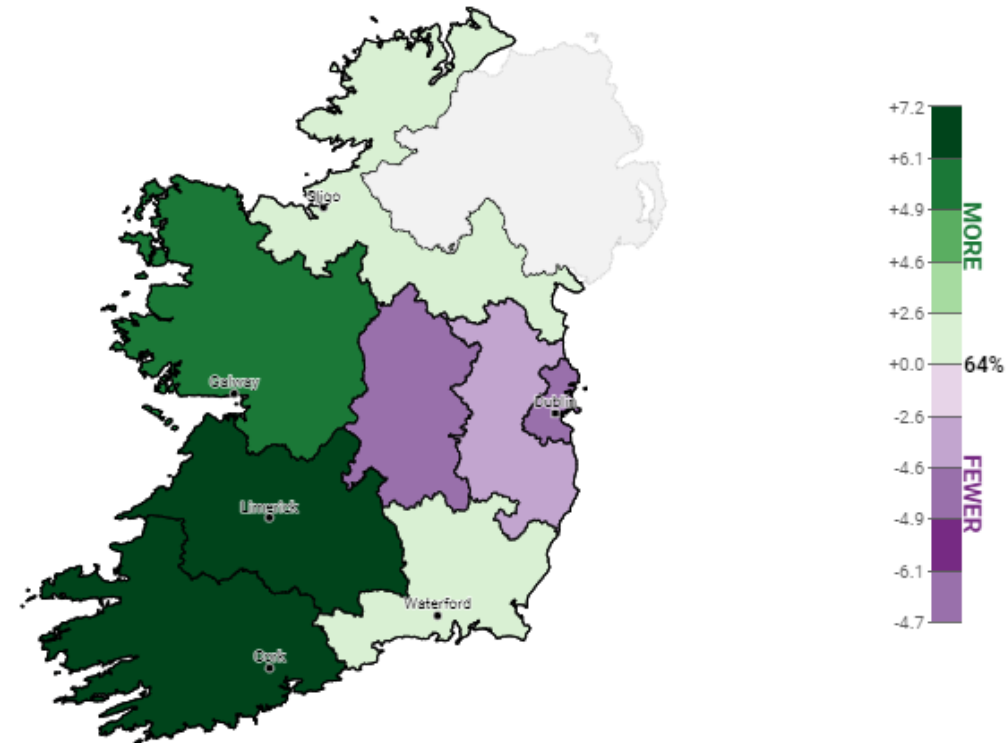
Difference from National Avg.

Click on map to select geography, or: Select a Region

National

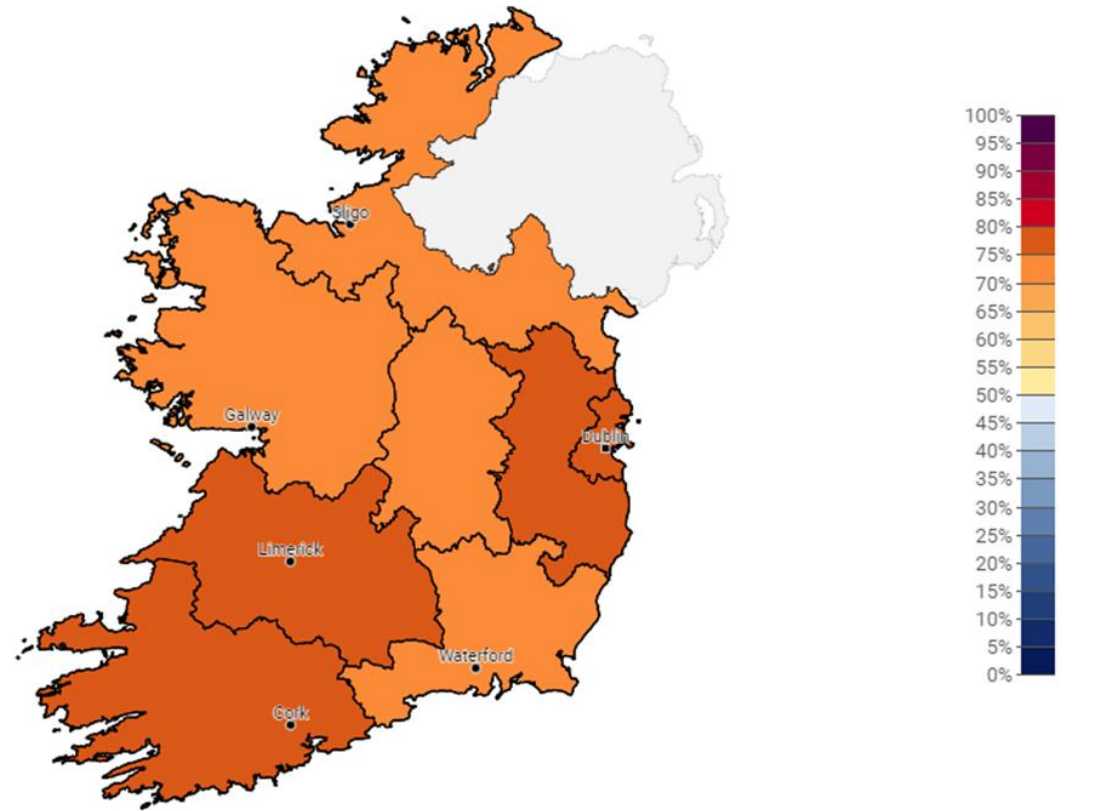
Regions

Counties

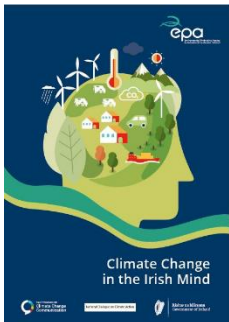


Comments and Questions

- Tools for public engagement
- Longitudinal monitoring in EU
- Scientific communication



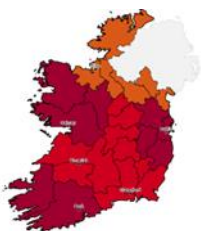
Links to all Climate Change in the Irish Mind reports and tools



Report 1: [Climate change in the Irish mind](#)
[Supporting Infographic](#)



Report 2: [Climate Change's Four Irelands](#)
[Supporting Infographic](#)



Mapping tool: [Climate Opinion Maps](#)



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Thank you

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