

# **Surveying the Netherlands: Public Views on Climate Information Integrity and the Fossil Fuel Ad Ban**

## Fossil Fuel Ad Ban Is Effective, Majority of The Netherlands Believes

Survey results also show nearly 80% of the Netherlands think holding Big Tech legally accountable would effectively reduce spread of climate disinformation

In 2025, The Hague became the first local jurisdiction in the world to ban the [advertising of fossil fuels](#) and high-carbon emission activities by law, [winning praise from scientists](#), also in [Nature Climate Change](#), for protecting its citizens from the corrosive and corrupting influence of misleading climate disinformation and anti-environmental advertising.

There's two ways ads from high carbon industries can amount to disinformation. First, it's advertising that is meant to shape beliefs (often referred to as greenwashing) and second, there's advertising that is meant to sell more fossil fuel products and services (like air travel and cruise travel). These ads do more than just sell polluting products, they also confirm values and norms held by society that it's normal and desirable to have high carbon lifestyles. This is also disinformation, as the harm of these products and services is systematically left out.

To better understand the views of people in the Netherlands regarding information integrity efforts like this and other policies to address climate disinformation, a survey of 1,000 people was conducted on February 4, 2025, amongst a crowd of different ages and political views.

The results show that a vast majority of the Dutch public thinks information integrity policies would be effective, and 71% believe that a ban on misleading ads or those for harmful behaviours (like high carbon travel) would reduce climate disinformation. These findings are equally spread amongst people who vote left and right wing.

Three quarters of those surveyed in the Netherlands believe that stopping climate disinformation is an effective way to protect freedom of speech and public discourse (from being crowded out by climate lies) and nearly 8 in 10 believed it would be effective to legally require social media companies to stop the amplification of harmful false content about climate change.

When it comes to the perceived effectiveness of different measures against disinformation, the data show little variation in attitudes, though one pattern is clear: older people are more likely to believe that different information integrity measures can be effective than younger people.

While 79% believed, when asked, that legally forcing Big Tech to clean up digital climate disinfo would be effective, only half of those surveyed (49%) were previously aware of the possibility that social media companies should be legally required to prevent the amplification of climate misinformation.

The finding that fewer people were already aware of these potential policy solutions to address climate disinformation, combined with findings that the younger people more exposed to digital disinformation are less likely to view laws addressing those platforms as effective, demonstrates how fossil fuel advertisements and digital disinformation are used to narrow the public's perception of what's needed and possible in terms of addressing climate change.

To address the climate crisis, we need to stop the spread of climate disinformation. Efforts to improve information integrity, like the Hague's fossil fuel advertising ban, are widely believed to be an effective way to do so in The Netherlands.

## Fossil Fuel Ads, Free Speech, and Integrity: Dutch Public Views

Perceived Efficacy of Information Integrity measures show The Dutch people support regulatory action to safeguard information integrity

A substantial majority of the public believes in solutions to climate disinformation. The survey found between 68% and 79% of the public believed in the efficacy of the different information integrity efforts.

A large majority of the public (71%) report that companies being prevented from using advertising to spread misleading information or promoting harmful behaviors would be an effective means of preventing climate disinformation. The remaining 30% of the public reports the opposite.

In total, 79% of the public believes that legally obligating social media companies to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms would be effective at preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change. By comparison, only 21% report that this would be ineffective.

Three quarters of the public (76%) report that national and local governments investing into public awareness campaigns to combat climate disinformation would be effective, compared to a quarter (24%) who believe these measures would be ineffective.

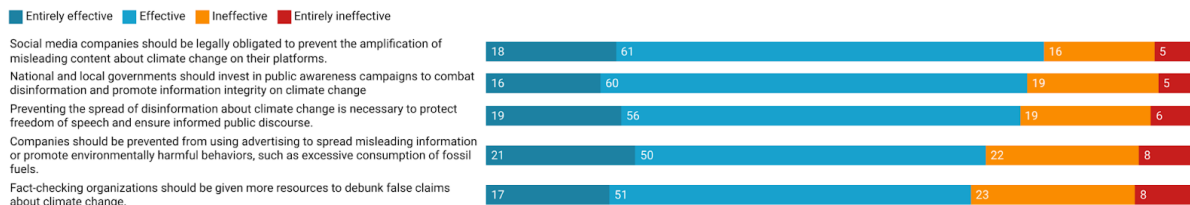
Providing fact checking organizations with more resources was believed to be effective by approximately two thirds of the public (68%). In contrast 31% reported that this action would be ineffective.

## The Netherlands Knows: Fighting Disinformation Supports Freedom of Speech

Three quarters of the public (75%) also report believing that preventing the spread of climate disinformation is an effective way to protect freedom of speech and the public discourse. In contrast, a quarter (25%) report the opposite.

These overwhelming majorities demonstrate that the Dutch public largely believes information integrity efforts to be effective at preventing the spread of climate disinformation, an important requirement for building sufficient political will to face the climate challenge.

**For each of the cases asked about previously, how effective or ineffective do you believe that action would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

## Public Awareness: Anti-Disinformation Efforts in the Netherlands

Overall, more of the public tended to be aware of the different anti-disinformation efforts asked about on the survey. Yet, the public was less aware of giving more funds to fact checking organizations to enable their work, with only one in three being aware of this. Generally speaking, younger people, those with tertiary education and men self-reported a higher level of awareness of the different measures asked about.

Overall, similar shares report being aware of various anti-disinformation efforts and not, for most of the types asked about on the survey.

Half the public (49%) reports being aware of the idea that social media companies should be legally required to prevent the amplification of climate misinformation. By

contrast, 38% report being unaware of this idea and the remaining 13% report being uncertain about whether they have heard about this action.

A similar share of the public (48%) has heard of the idea that preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change is necessary to protect freedom of speech and ensure accurate public discourse. Nearly two in five (39%) report not being aware of this idea, and one in eight (12%) report being uncertain.

In total, 45% of the public reported being aware of the idea that companies should be prevented from spreading disinformation via advertising and promoting environmentally harmful behaviours through advertising. A similar share, 41%, reported they had not heard of this idea. The remaining 14% were uncertain about whether they had heard of this idea.

Overall, 44% of the public reported being familiar with the idea that national and local governments should invest in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation. A similar share, 42%, reported being unaware of this idea. A further 15% were not certain whether they had heard of this idea.

The idea which the public was least aware of was the idea that fact checking organizations should be given more resources, which only 30% of the public reported having heard of. Approximately half the public (49%) reported they had not heard of this idea, and 21% was uncertain.

While the Dutch public may be split on awareness of information integrity efforts, they're overwhelming in support of them once made aware of the possibilities for stopping the spread of harmful false content.

## APPENDIX:

### Methodology

The survey was conducted on February 4, with Pollfish fielding the polling of 1000 Dutch respondents, with a margin of error of 3.1%. For breakdowns of the survey's results by age group, gender, and education level, the margin of error is higher, given that fewer respondents are in each of these groups. The study's results are weighted using post-stratification weights. Results of the study may not sum to 100% due to rounding error.

The data included at least 100 voters who voted for PVV, GL/PvdA and VVD. All other respondents who supported a party are grouped into the other category on the charts below. Respondents who were uncertain about their vote, uncertain who they would vote for, and did not want to report who they would vote for are grouped into unlikely voters on the charts below.

### Demographic Breakdowns of Perceived Effectiveness of Information Integrity Efforts

With regard to the belief that social media companies should be legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms would be an effective action against climate disinformation, young people, women, and people in the North tend to agree that this step would be effective more often than other groups. GL/PvdA supporters are most positive about the efficacy of this measure, but it is still seen as effective by a large majority of partisans across the political spectrum.

**For each of the cases asked about previously, how effective or ineffective do you believe that action would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - "Social media companies should be legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

With regard to government sponsorship of awareness campaigns, older people (55+) and women view them as more effective than younger people and men. Otherwise, there was little variation in attitudes on this response. As with attitudes towards the previous measure, GL/PvdA supporters are most positive about national and local government investment in campaigns, though a large majority supports this no matter which party they prefer.

**For each of the cases asked about previously, how effective or ineffective do you believe that action would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - "National and local governments should invest in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation and promote information integrity on climate change." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

When it comes to the perceived effectiveness of preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change as necessary to protect freedom of speech and ensuring informed public discourse, the data shows older people believe this would be a relatively more



effective measure than younger people. Men agree more strongly that this measure would be effective than women. The data shows the perceived effectiveness is high across the political spectrum, with the highest rate of perceived effectiveness among GL/PvdA supporters.

**For each of the cases asked about previously, how effective or ineffective do you believe that action would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - "Preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change is necessary to protect freedom of speech and ensure informed public discourse." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

With regard to banning companies from spreading misleading information or promoting environmentally harmful behaviors like fossil fuel consumption, older people again are most likely to believe in the effectiveness of this measure. There is little other variation in attitudes. Views of effectiveness are particularly positive among GL/PvdA supporters, though attitudes about effectiveness are positive across the political spectrum.

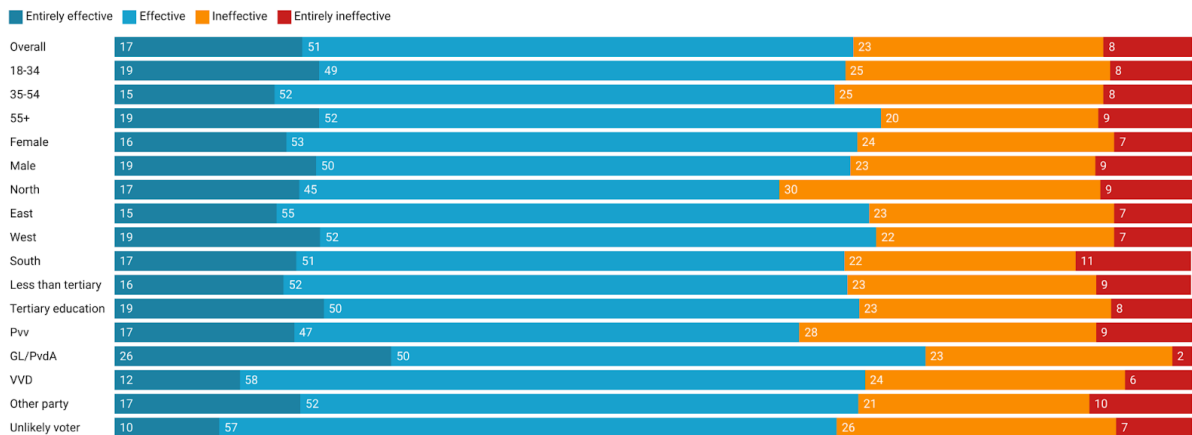
**For each of the cases asked about previously, how effective or ineffective do you believe that action would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - "Companies should be prevented from using advertising to spread misleading information or promote environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels" (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

The perceived efficacy of providing more resources to fact checking organizations is relatively high among older people. People in the North view this measure as relatively less effective compared to people in other regions of the country. As with previous measures, GL/PvdA voters are more likely to report a high degree of effectiveness of providing more resources. However, perceptions of effectiveness remains high across the political spectrum.

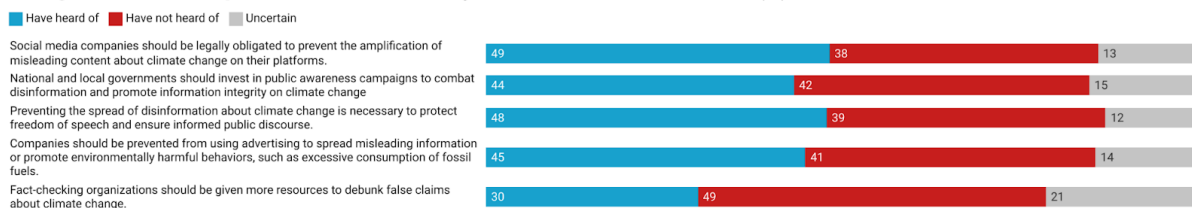
**For each of the cases asked about previously, how effective or ineffective do you believe that action would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - "Fact-checking organizations should be given more resources to debunk false claims about climate change." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

## Demographic Breakdowns of Awareness of Information Integrity Efforts

**Below are some statements about actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In each case, please indicate whether you have heard of that action. (%)**

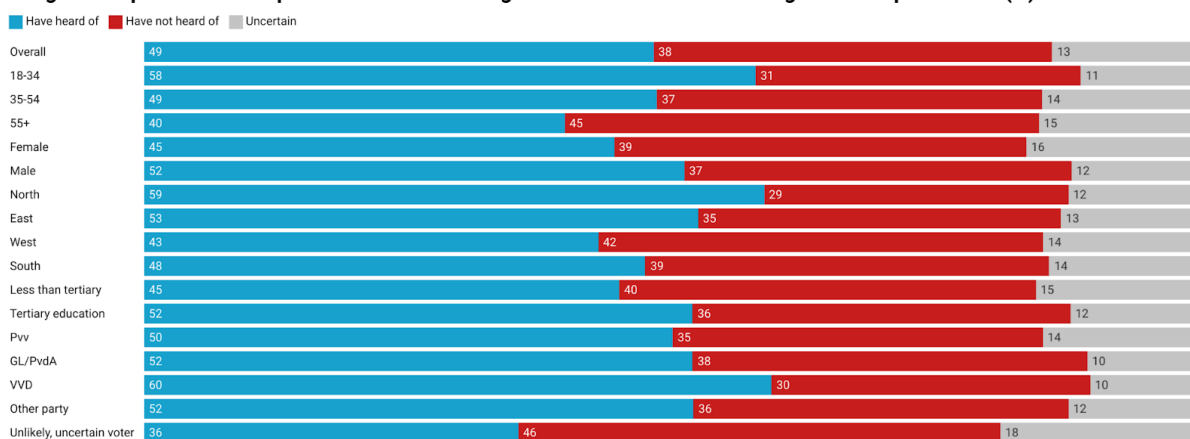


Created with Datawrapper

The data in this section suggests that younger people, those with higher education, and men report greater awareness while older people, those without tertiary education, and women are less aware of the different ideas asked about on the survey.

Overall, younger people, men, people in the north of the country, and those with higher education were more likely to report being aware of the idea that social media platforms should prevent the spread of climate disinformation. In contrast, older people, women, people in the West of the country and those without tertiary education reported lower levels of awareness. Respondents which support a political party are more likely to report being aware of this idea than those that are unlikely voters. Among partisans, VVD supporters report the highest level of awareness.

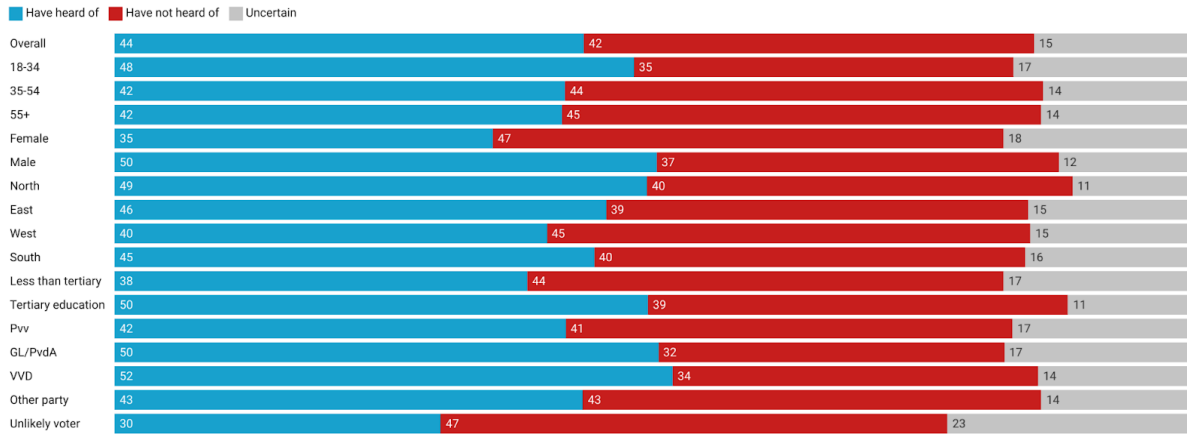
**Below are some statements about actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In each case, please indicate whether you have heard of that action. - "Social media companies should be legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

With regard to national and local governments investing in awareness campaigns, the data suggest younger people, men, and people in the North were more aware of the idea. In contrast, people 35 and older, women, people in the West, and those without tertiary education were less likely to be aware of this idea. Political partisans tend to report greater awareness than those who do not report they will support a specific party in future elections. VVD supporters are most aware of this particular measure.

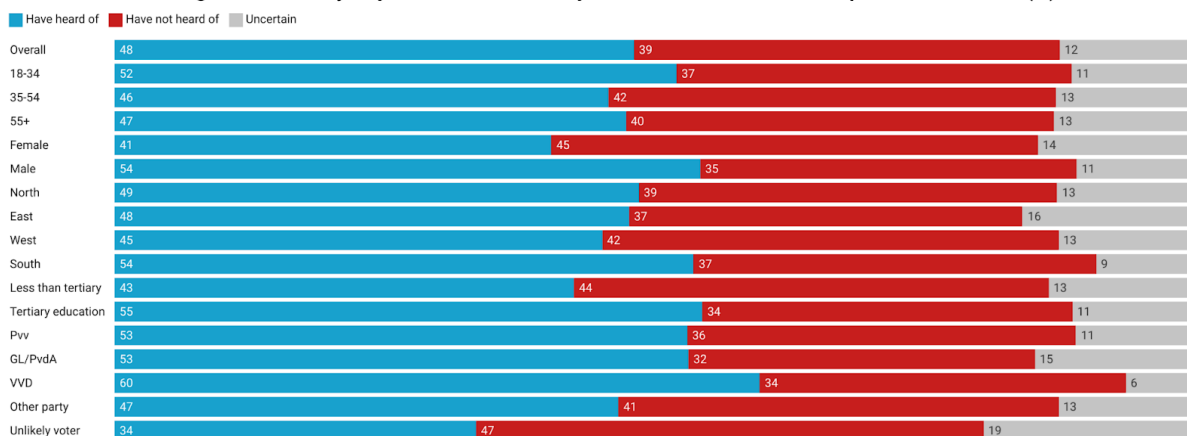
**Below are some statements about actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In each case, please indicate whether you have heard of that action. - "National and local governments should invest in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation and promote information integrity on climate change" (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

A similar pattern is present with the data on the idea that preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change is necessary to protect freedom of speech and ensure informed public discourse. Younger people, men, and those with tertiary education are more likely to report having heard this idea. People in the south of the country are more likely than people from other regions to report having heard of this idea. Partisans report greater awareness of this idea relative to unlikely voters. Supporters of VVD are most aware of this measure.

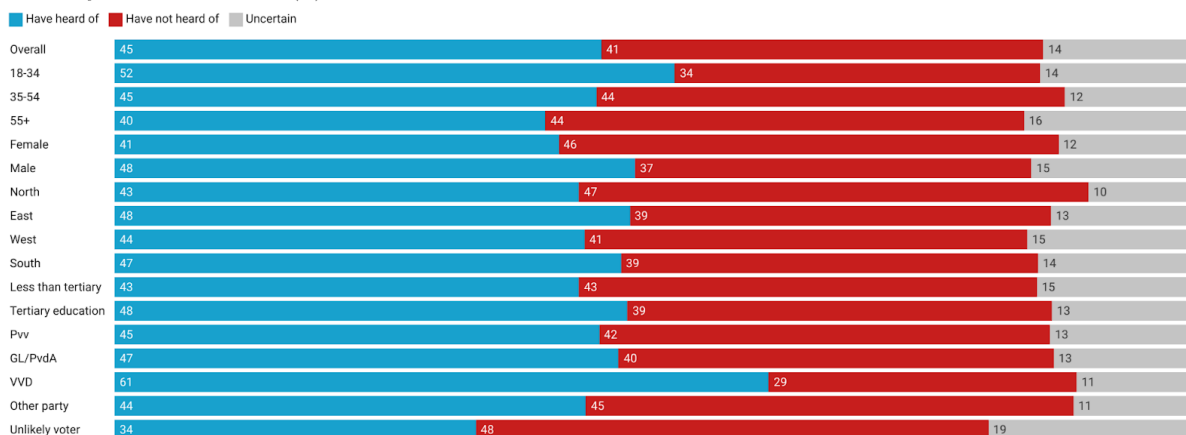
**Below are some statements about actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In each case, please indicate whether you have heard of that action. - "Preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change is necessary to protect freedom of speech and ensure informed public discourse." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

The data show that young people, men, and people with tertiary education are more likely to report they have heard of the idea that companies should be prevented from using advertising to spread misleading information or promote environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels. Older people, those without tertiary education, and women were less likely to report the same. As with previous questions, partisans report a greater awareness of this measure than those that do not report a party they will support in the coming elections and VVD supporters report the greatest level of awareness.

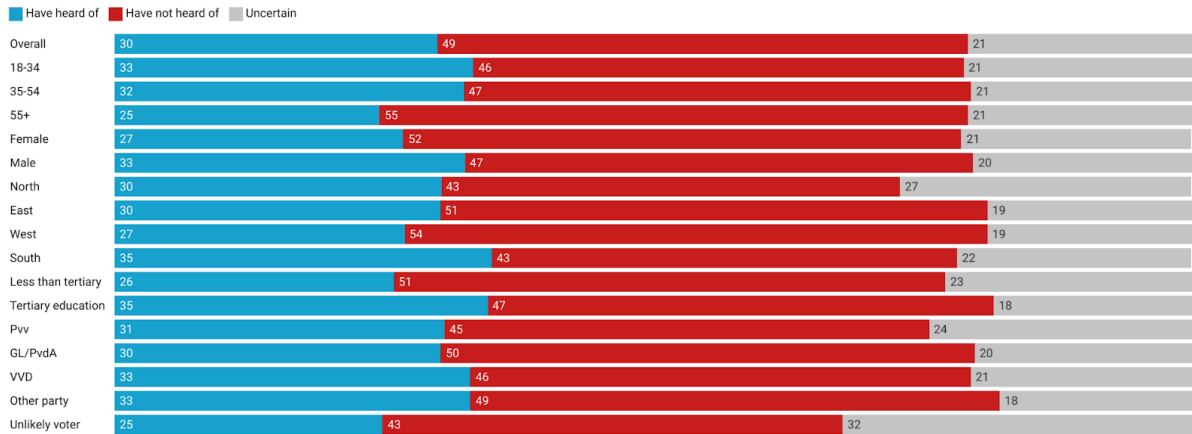
**Below are some statements about actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In each case, please indicate whether you have heard of that action. - "Companies should be prevented from using advertising to spread misleading information or promote environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels." (%)**



Created with Datawrapper

There is more awareness of the idea that fact-checking organizations should be given more resources to debunk false claims about climate change among people 54 and under, men, those with tertiary education, and those in the south of the country. The final measure asked about on the survey also showed a higher level of awareness among partisans, though to a lesser degree than with many previous questions. Partisan differences in awareness are also not present for this question.

Below are some statements about actions that can be taken to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In each case, please indicate whether you have heard of that action. - "Fact-checking organizations should be given more resources to debunk false claims about climate change." (%)



Created with Datawrapper