

# **Iberian Blackout Polling: Spanish and UK Exposure to Big Tech-Spread Conspiracy Theories**

## Introduction

A major power blackout occurred across the Iberian Peninsula on April 28, 2025, mainly affecting mainland Portugal and peninsular Spain. Electric power was interrupted for about ten hours in most of the Peninsula and longer in some specific areas, disrupting public transport, businesses, telecommunication, emergency services, and other critical infrastructure. The blackout was quickly exploited by those who spread disinformation for political and promotional purposes, who falsely alleged a Russian cyberattack, a rare atmospheric phenomenon caused by extreme temperature variations, the integration of renewable energy, and an experiment from the Spanish authorities.

The way that some social media platforms incentivize the spread of false content about blackouts on social media platforms is becoming increasingly harmful in the years since the [2021 outage in Texas, USA](#). While the Climate Action Against Disinformation coalition [documented the spread](#) of rumors and conspiracy theories around the Iberian blackout, this polling was commissioned in order to determine the extent to which digital disinformation is shaping public opinion, and what the public believes would be effective policy responses.

## Executive Summary

Over 80% of Spanish and UK respondents correctly acknowledged that humans are changing the climate, but seven in 10 Spanish people and six in 10 in the UK fell for at least one false narrative about the blackout causes. The most commonly believed was that the reliance on renewables was at fault, an excuse particularly popular among far-right voters who deny climate science.

But also commonly believed among over 70% of respondents in Spain and the UK is that anti-disinformation measures are effective and important for protecting free speech from corporate lies and partisan propaganda. Two-thirds of Spanish respondents, and three-fifths of those in the UK, said requiring social media companies to stop spreading climate disinformation and banning fossil fuel advertising would be effective policies.

## On climate change

- A majority of people in Spain (88%) and the UK (82%) attribute climate change to human causes.
- In Spain, only 11% do not believe climate change is driven by humans or happening at all, while 14% of the UK public reports the same.
- In Spain, climate denialism is more common among Vox voters.
- In the UK, climate denialism is particularly common among Reform UK voters.

## On disinformation beliefs related to Iberian blackout causes

- Respondents are most likely to believe that the Iberian blackout was caused by the grid system not having enough dynamic voltage capacity, especially in Spain (43%), but also in the UK (30%).
- Nevertheless, 70% percent (Spain) or 60% (UK) of respondents believes at least one of the false narratives about the blackout causes, and ‘the power grid’s over-reliance on renewable energy’ is the most commonly believed one, particularly among far-right voters.
- One third of UK respondents indicate that they don’t know what has caused the blackout, whereas this share is lower in Spain (8%).

## General attitudes towards energy sources

- The majority of people in both countries agree that the world needs to rapidly de-carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050.
- About half of the respondents think that net zero and climate policies will increase energy dependence and that renewable energy significantly reduces emissions (with a lower percentage, around 20–30% disagreeing), but the same percentage believe that abandoning oil and gas production completely would condemn poor people to hardship and block their right to modern livelihoods.
- People are more divided on the truth of the following statements: ‘we can produce fossil fuels in a safe way that doesn’t damage the planet’, ‘fossil fuels are becoming more efficient and are a bridge towards a low carbon economy’, and

‘an electricity grid that relies on renewable energy will always be too unreliable’, with slightly more people agreeing than disagreeing.

- In Spain, only one third thinks that renewable energy is more expensive than energy produced from fossil fuels, whereas about half of the people believe this disinformation to be true in the UK.
- In both countries, climate change beliefs and partisanship are the main drivers of differences in attitudes. People intending to vote for far-right parties and climate change rejectors hold less climate-friendly opinions.
- In Spain, older people generally have more accurate views, whereas in the UK, younger and highly educated people are more likely to have accurate views of climate related issues.

## On combatting disinformation

- In total, approximately two thirds in Spain and three in five in the UK believe that all of the measures asked about on the survey would be effective in efforts to prevent the spread of climate disinformation.
- Large majorities of the public in both countries report that it is necessary to prevent the spread of climate disinformation to ensure freedom of speech and an informed discourse.

## Full questions and responses

This report assesses the scale of misinformation about the causes of the Iberian blackout in April 2025. It does so by addressing the following research questions:

- To what extent do people claim to believe in common false narratives about the causes of the Iberian blackout?
- To what extent do people believe misinformation related to energy sources more generally?
- To what extent are specific actions aimed at preventing the spread of climate change misinformation perceived as effective?

In addition to these three main questions, current beliefs about climate change were assessed via a survey conducted in Spain and the UK (N=1200 in each country, with a margin of error of  $\pm 2.83\%$ ) on the Pollfish platform, which was conducted on July 15.

This section of the study provides an overview of the surveys' findings. It first describes climate change beliefs. Next, the report describes public beliefs about the causes of the Iberian blackout, including true and false narratives. Afterwards, it looks at attitudes towards energy sources. The section finishes with data on what measures the public believe would be effective at combatting climate disinformation.

## Climate change beliefs

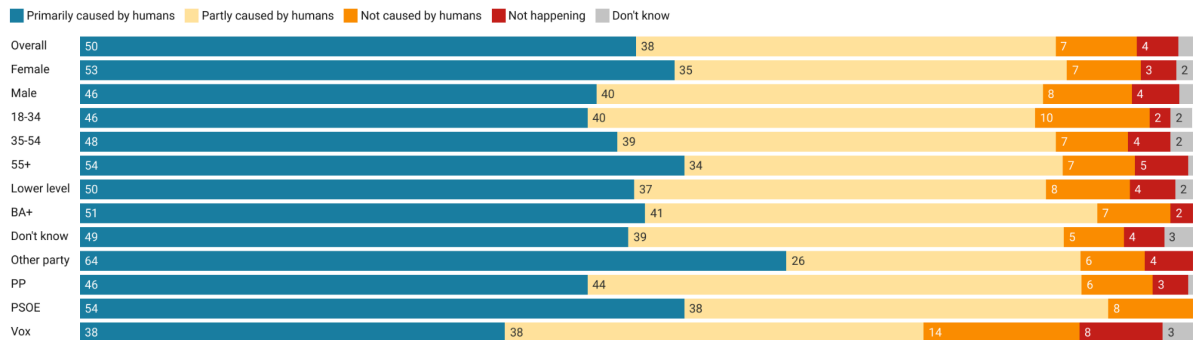
To understand the overall level of awareness and belief in climate change, respondents to the survey were asked whether they believed that climate change was primarily, partly, or not caused by humans, or was not happening at all. Overall, very large majorities in both countries reported acceptance that the climate is changing, and humans are causing at least part of it. Only a small minority responded that they don't know, the climate isn't changing, or it is not caused by human activity.

**Which of the following is most accurate? Please pick only one. (%)**



When the data is broken down in Spain, it shows that attitudes towards climate change vary by gender, age, and partisanship. Women are more likely to report that climate change is primarily caused by humans than men. Older people (55+) are more likely to believe in anthropogenic climate change than 18-34-year-olds. Vox supporters are substantially more likely to report that climate change is not caused by humans or that it is not happening. Supporters of smaller parties and the PSOE are more likely to report that climate change is anthropogenic. PP supporters are less likely than PSOE supporters and more likely than Vox supporters to report that climate change is caused by humans. Even still, a majority of Vox supporters responded that climate change is primarily or partly caused by humans, while only 22% denied it's happening or human-caused.

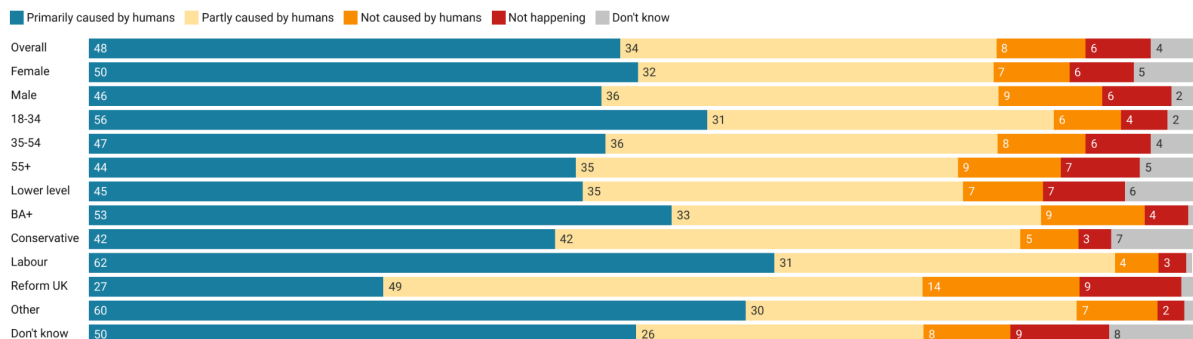
**Which of the following is most accurate? Please pick only one. (% , Spain)**



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When the data is broken down in the UK, it shows that attitudes vary by age, education level, and partisanship. Overall, younger people are more likely to believe that climate change is anthropogenic than people 35 and older. Labour supporters and those who voted for smaller parties are more likely to report they believe in anthropogenic climate change, while Reform UK voters are unlikely to believe that climate change is driven by humans. Conservative party voters are somewhere in between. Undecided voters lean towards belief in climate change.

**Which of the following is most accurate? Please pick only one. (% , UK)**



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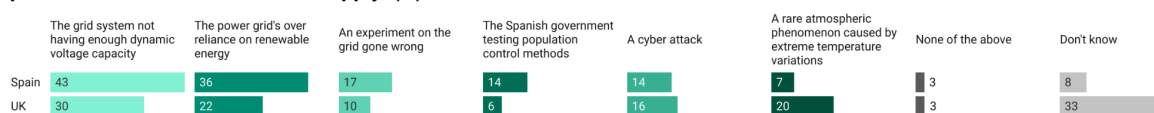
In the following part, responses are sometimes categorised based on climate change beliefs. Here, 'Rejectors' consists of those responding 'The climate is changing, not caused by human actions', 'The climate is not changing', and 'Don't know', including those who are unsure or unconvinced of human-made climate change or climate change altogether. The other group, 'Acceptors', combines response categories 'The climate is changing, mainly caused by human actions' and 'The climate is changing, partly caused by human actions'.

## Misinformation belief related to Iberian blackout causes

The survey asked respondents which factors they believe have contributed to the Iberian blackout on April 28. Respondents could select as many factors as they wanted from a list, or indicate 'none of the above' or 'don't know'.

The data indicate that respondents are most likely to believe that the Iberian blackout was caused by the grid system not having enough dynamic voltage capacity, especially in Spain (43%), but also in the UK (30%). Nevertheless, 70% percent (Spain) or 60% (UK) of respondents believes at least one of the false narratives about the blackout causes. Among those false narratives, 'the power grid's over-reliance on renewable energy' is the most commonly believed piece of disinformation (36% in Spain and 22% in the UK). The narratives of 'an experiment on the grid gone wrong' and 'a cyber attack' are also believed by a fair share of the people (10–20%) in both countries. People in Spain (14%) are more likely than in the UK (6%) to believe in the role of the Spanish government testing out population control methods. In the UK, 20% of respondents believe 'a rare atmospheric phenomenon' to be a cause of the blackout, whereas this figure stood at only 7% in Spain. One third of UK respondents indicate that they don't know what has caused the blackout, whereas this share is lower in Spain (8%).

**Which of the factors below do you think has/have contributed to the blackout on April 28, 2025 across the Iberian peninsula? Please select all that apply. (%)**

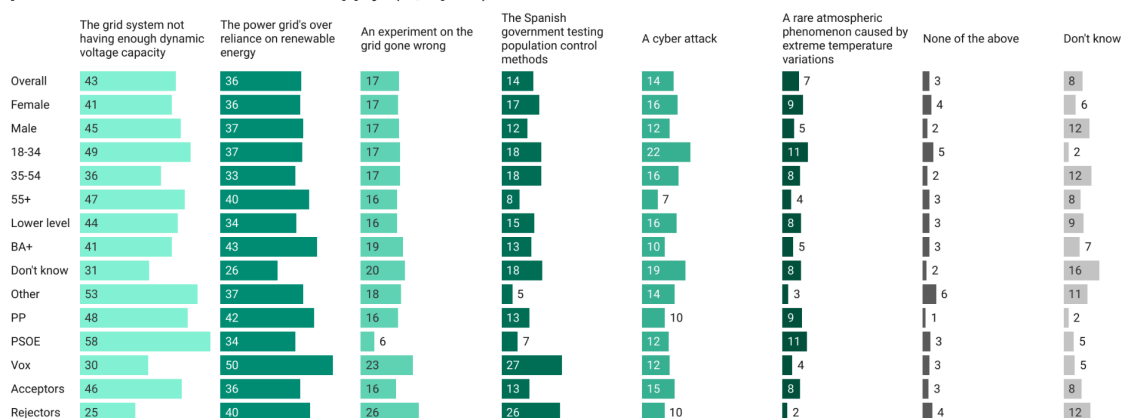


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Who is more likely to believe false narratives about the blackout? Those intending to vote for far-right parties are more likely to believe in the grids' over-reliance on renewable energy: half of Vox voters believes this to be true and 38% of Reform UK voters. Vox voters are also more likely to believe in 'the Spanish government testing out population control methods' (27%) and 'an experiment with the grid gone wrong' (23%), but this pattern is not observed in Reform UK voters. In both countries, but especially in Spain, climate change acceptors are more likely than climate change rejectors to believe the voltage capacity explanation (i.e., the alleged cause). However, in the UK, climate change acceptors are also more likely to believe in false narratives of the role of a rare atmospheric

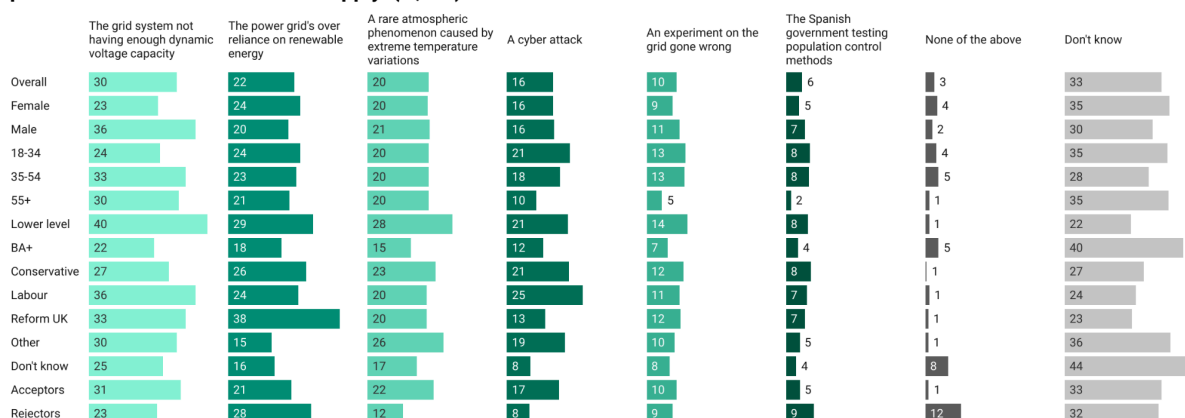
phenomenon and a cyber attack, whereas the opposite pattern emerges in Spain, where climate change acceptors are less likely to believe these false narratives.

**Which of the factors below do you think has/have contributed to the blackout on April 28, 2025 across the Iberian peninsula? Please select all that apply. (% , Spain)**



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**Which of the factors below do you think has/have contributed to the blackout on April 28, 2025 across the Iberian peninsula? Please select all that apply. (% , UK)**



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## General attitudes related to energy sources

To assess attitudes related to energy sources more broadly, the survey asked respondents to indicate whether they believed each one of eight statements to be true, false, or whether they are unsure. The current report labels each of these statements as being false or factual using the sources listed in the three following paragraphs.



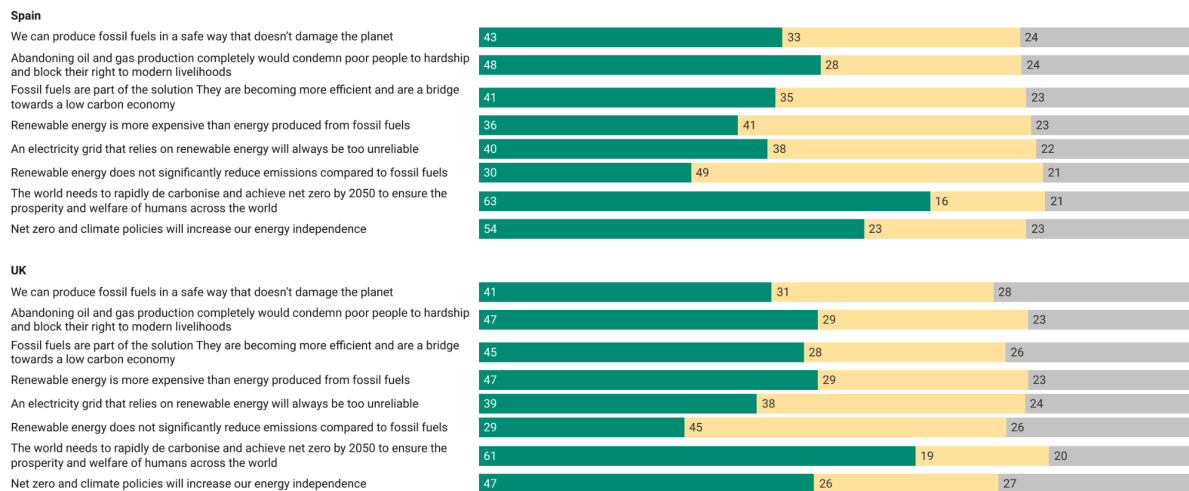
The data suggest that the majority of people in both countries (>60%) [correctly report it is true](#) that the world needs to rapidly de-carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050 to ensure prosperity and welfare of humans across the world, whereas less than 20% reports this statement is false and around 20% is unsure. In addition, about half of the respondents (54% in Spain; 47% in the UK) [wrongly think](#) that net zero and climate policies will increase energy dependence, whereas around 25% think this is false and around 25% are unsure.

The following findings are observed when it comes to misperceptions on fossil fuels. About half of the respondents (48% in Spain; 47% in the UK) think that abandoning oil and gas production would completely condemn poor people to hardship and block their right to modern livelihoods, a narrative that has been included in campaigns of the fossil fuel [industry](#), with around 30% reporting this statement to be false and 25% being unsure. Furthermore, around 40% of respondents think that the following statements are true: 'we can produce fossil fuels in a safe way that doesn't damage the planet' (43% in Spain; 41% in the UK) and 'fossil fuels are becoming more efficient and are a bridge towards a low carbon economy' (41% in Spain; 45% in the UK), with around 30% accurately reporting these [disinformation](#) narratives as [false](#).

Finally, when looking at the attitudes towards renewable energy, the data suggest that 40% believe the false narrative that an electricity grid that relies on renewable energy will always be too unreliable, whereas 38% think this is false, and a little over 20% is unsure. In fact, a recent study shows that [more renewables make a grid more resilient](#). A minority of respondents (30%) thinks that renewable energy does not significantly reduce emissions compared to fossil fuels, whereas over half of the respondents (45% in Spain; 49% in the UK) correctly [report this statement to be false](#). One third (36%) in Spain and almost half in the UK (47%) think that renewable energy is more expensive than energy produced from fossil fuels, [while a recent report shows that around 90% of renewables are](#) more cost-effective for electricity generation than fossil fuels.

**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. (%)**

■ True ■ False ■ Don't know

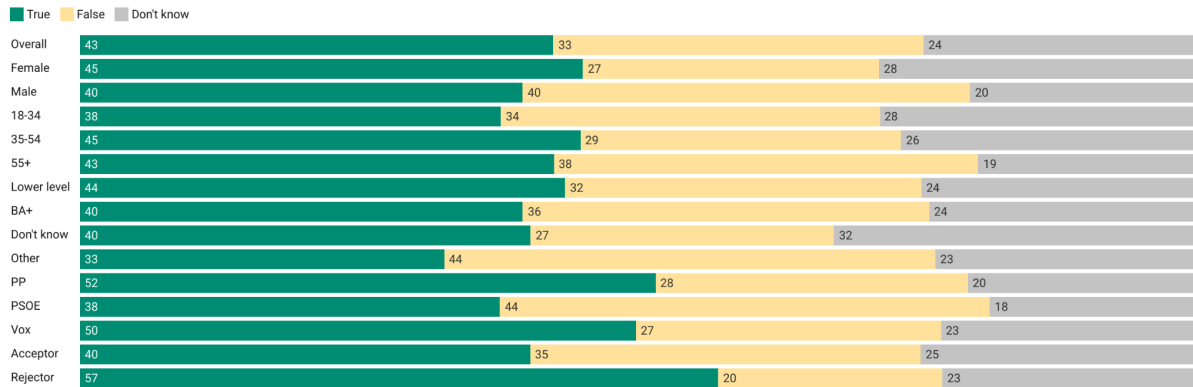


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Which demographic factors are associated with beliefs related to energy sources? Most notably, in both countries, all statements show a strong division between climate change acceptors versus rejectors and right versus centre/centre-left voters. People intending to vote for Partido Popular (PP) and Vox consistently hold less accurate views on energy sources. The same is true of those intending to vote for Reform UK or the Conservatives.

Additional demographic differences appear, depending on which statement is looked at. In Spain, women and older people (35+) are more likely to agree with the false statement that we can produce fossil fuels in a safe way that does not damage the planet. Those who don't know whether they would vote are more likely to believe this statement than those voting for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) or smaller parties ('Other').

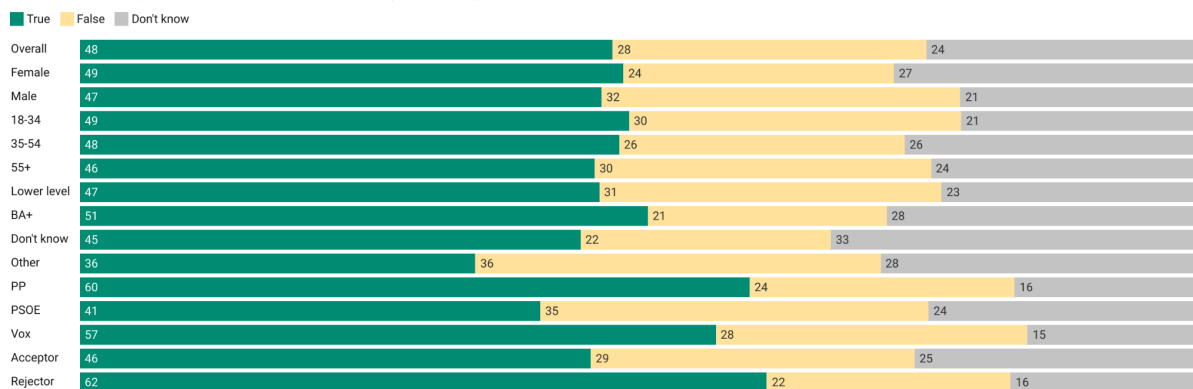
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - We can produce fossil fuels in a safe way that doesn't damage the planet (% , Spain)**



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Apart from partisanship, there are no clear demographic differences in attitudes towards the effects of abandoning oil and gas production on poor people.

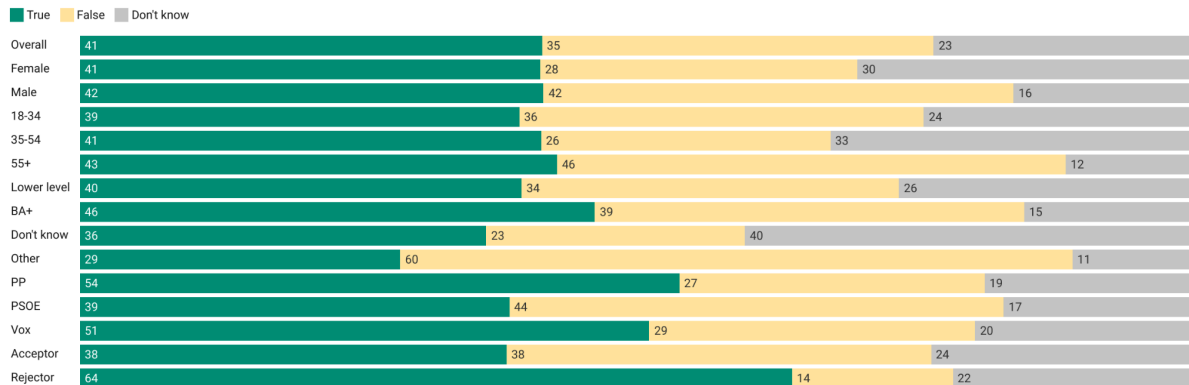
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Abandoning oil and gas production completely would condemn poor people to hardship and block their right to modern livelihoods (% , Spain)**



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Highly educated people are more likely to agree with greenwashing claims that fossil fuels are becoming more efficient and are a bridge towards a low carbon economy. Those who don't know whether they would vote are more likely to believe this statement is true than those voting for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) or smaller parties ('Other').

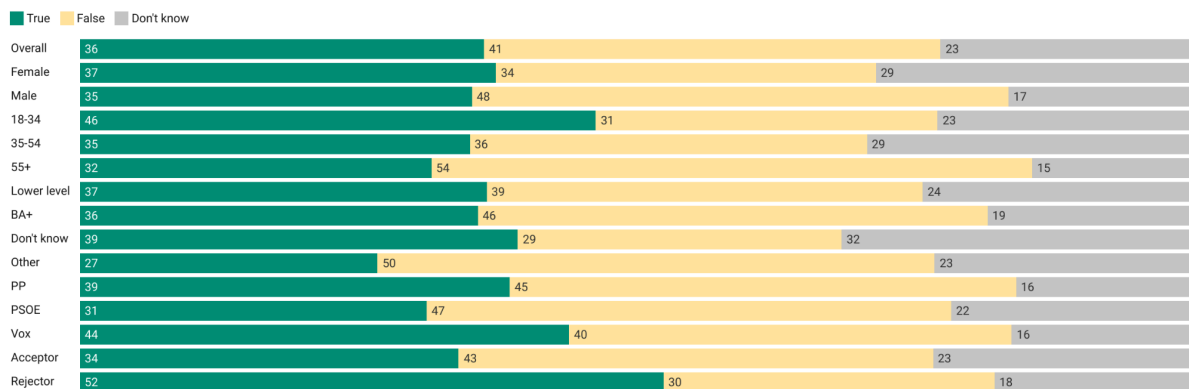
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Fossil fuels are part of the solution. They are becoming more efficient and are a bridge towards a low carbon economy (% , Spain)**



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Younger people (18-34) in Spain are more likely to falsely think that renewable energy is more expensive than energy from fossil fuels. Those who don't know whether they would vote are more likely to believe this statement than those voting for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) or smaller parties ('Other').

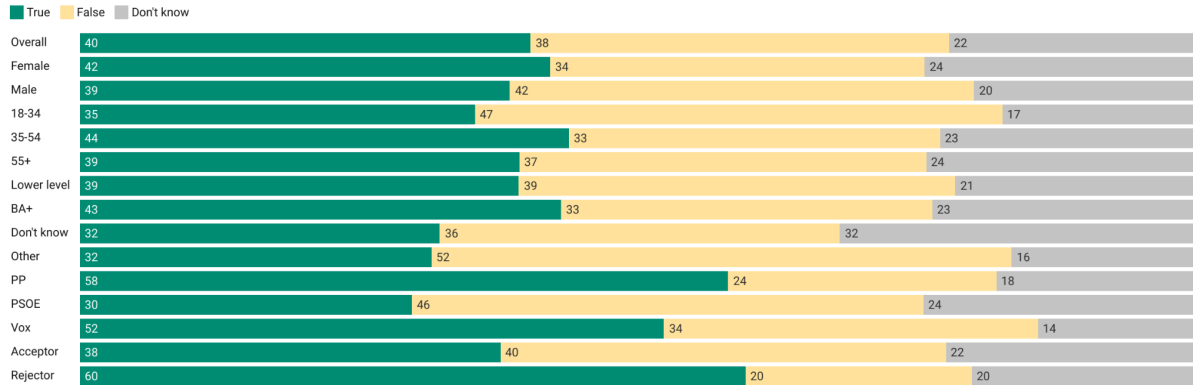
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Renewable energy is more expensive than energy produced from fossil fuels (% , Spain)**



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In Spain, people between 35 and 54 years old are more likely to wrongly think that an electricity grid that relies on renewable energy will always be too unreliable than younger people (18-34).

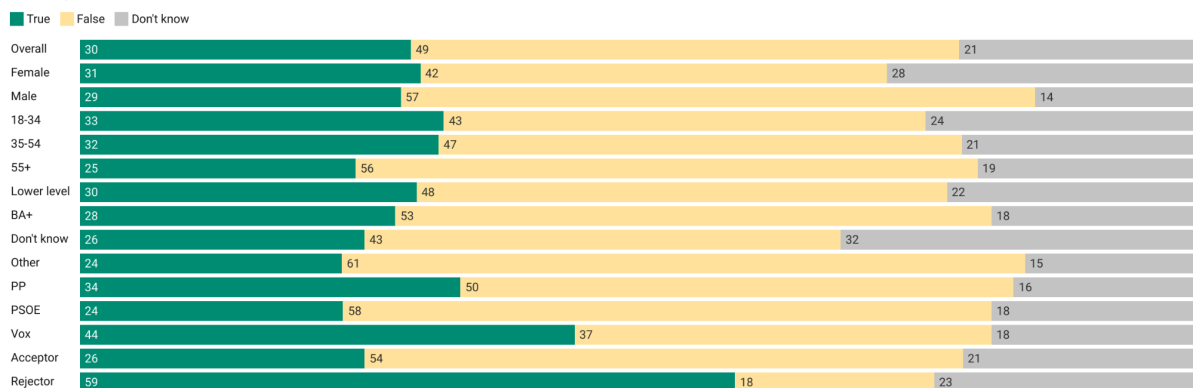
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - An electricity grid that relies on renewable energy will always be too unreliable (% , Spain)**



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In Spain, younger people (below 55) are more likely to correctly think that renewable energy significantly reduces emissions compared to fossil fuels.

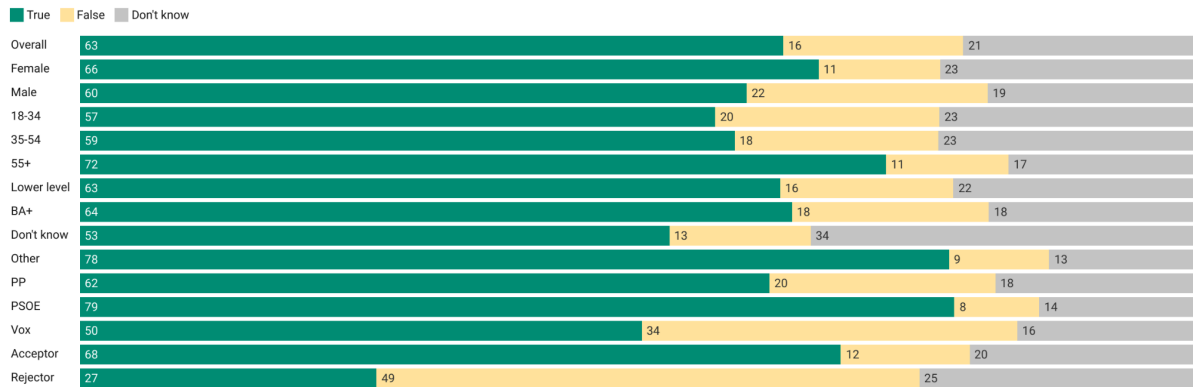
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Renewable energy does not significantly reduce emissions compared to fossil fuels (% , Spain)**



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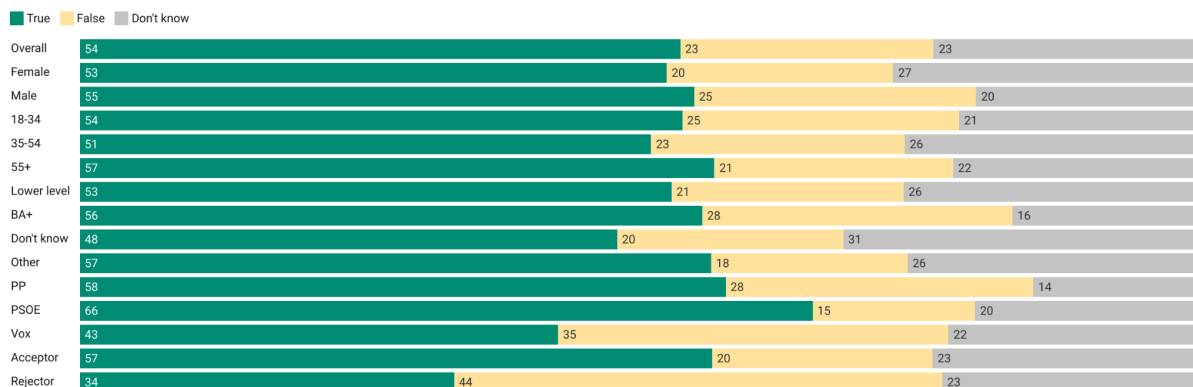
Women and older people (55+) in Spain are more likely to understand that the world needs to rapidly de-carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050. Those who don't know whether they would vote are less likely to agree with this statement than those voting for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) or smaller parties ('Other').

**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - The world needs to rapidly de carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050 to ensure the prosperity and welfare of humans across the world (% , Spain)**



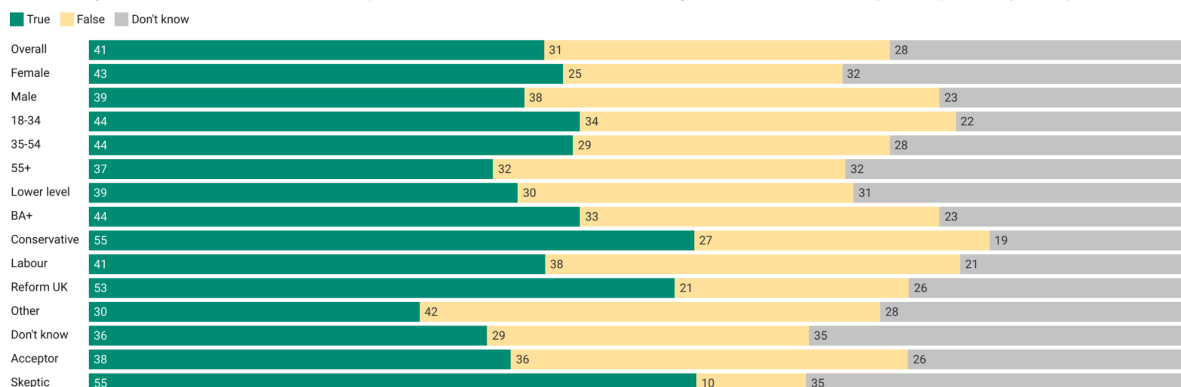
Older people (55+) and those voting for PSOE are more likely to think that the statement net zero and climate policies will increase our energy independence in Spain is true.

**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Net zero and climate policies will increase our energy independence (% , Spain)**



In the UK, those with lower levels of education and voting for smaller parties ('Other') are less likely to think that we can produce fossil fuels in a safe way that does not damage the planet.

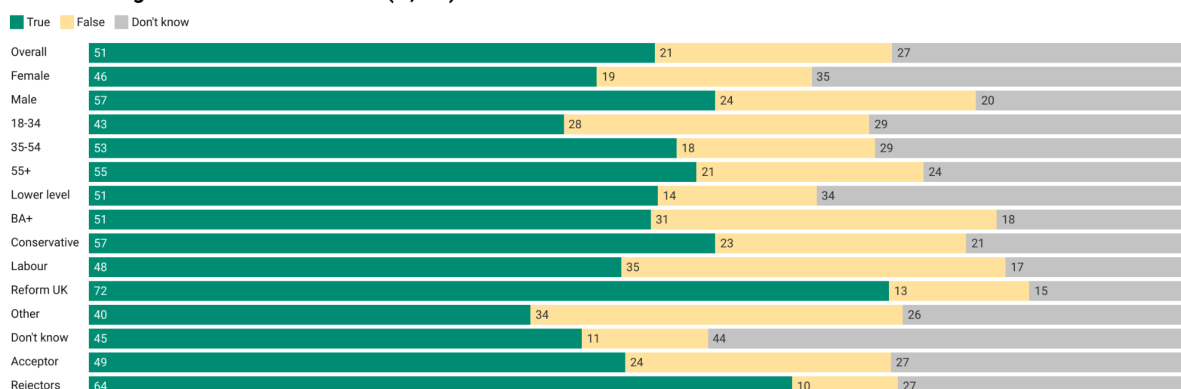
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - We can produce fossil fuels in a safe way that doesn't damage the planet (% , UK)**



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Women, younger people (18-34), and those voting for smaller parties ('Other') or who are unsure whether they will vote are less likely to falsely believe that abandoning oil and gas production completely would condemn poor people to hardship and block their right to modern livelihoods in the UK.

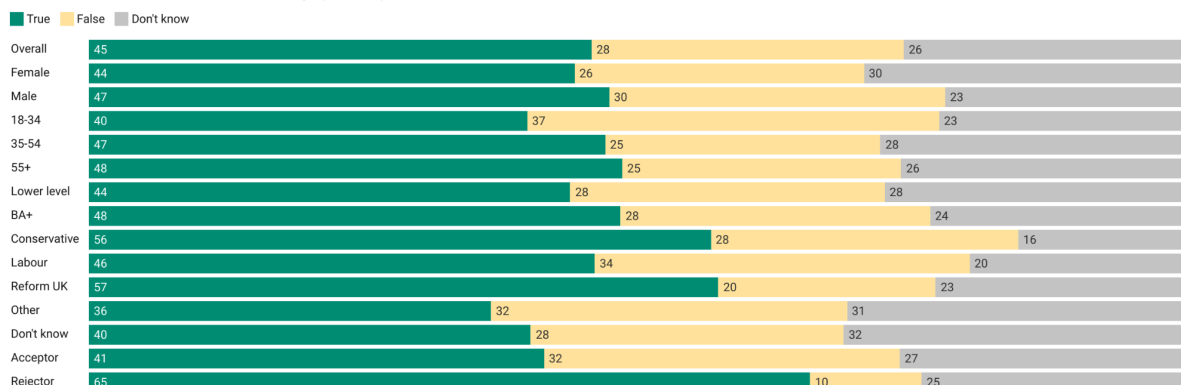
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Abandoning oil and gas production completely would condemn poor people to hardship and block their right to modern livelihoods (% , UK)**



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In the UK, younger people (18-34), those without higher education, and those voting for smaller parties ('Other') or who are unsure whether they will vote are less likely to believe that fossil fuels are becoming more efficient and are a bridge towards a low carbon economy.

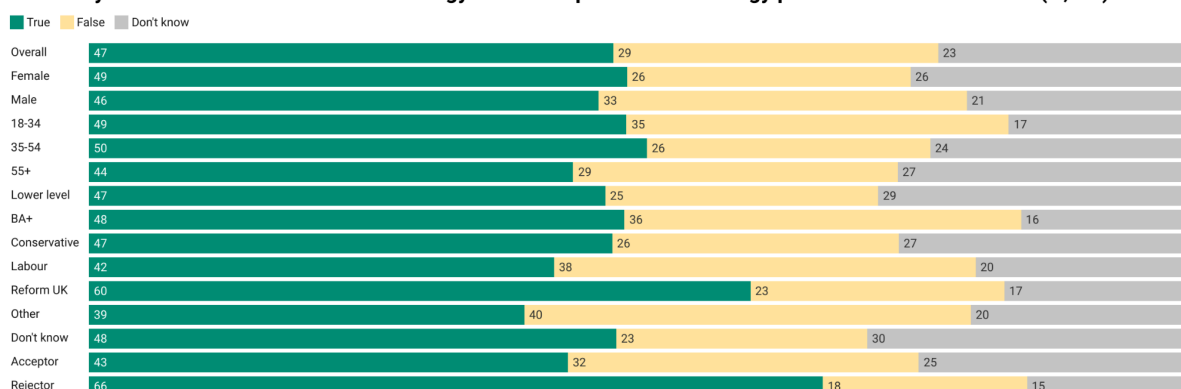
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Fossil fuels are part of the solution. They are becoming more efficient and are a bridge towards a low carbon economy (% , UK)**



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Apart from the differences based on partisanship and climate change attitudes highlighted above, there are no clear demographic differences when asked about renewable energy being more expensive than energy produced from fossil fuels in the UK.

**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Renewable energy is more expensive than energy produced from fossil fuels (% , UK)**

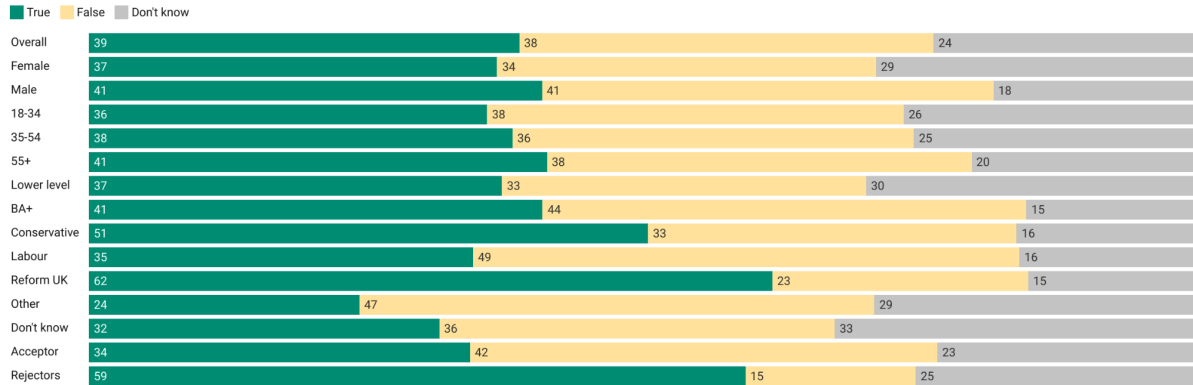


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In the UK, those voting for smaller parties ('Other') are less likely to think that an electricity grid that relies on renewable energy will always be too unreliable.



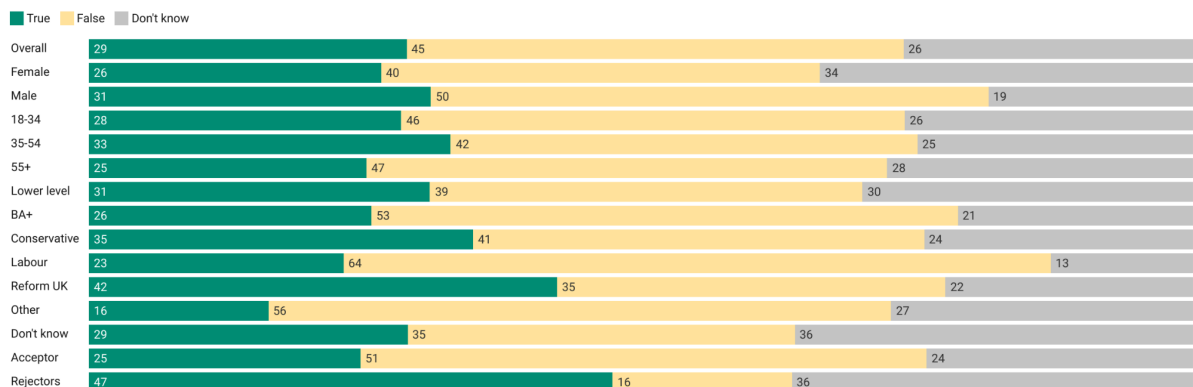
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - An electricity grid that relies on renewable energy will always be too unreliable (% , UK)**



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In the UK, those voting for smaller parties ('Other') and highly educated people are more likely to think that renewable energy reduces emissions compared to fossil fuels. Women, climate change rejectors, and those unsure who they will vote for, are more likely to be unsure about this statement.

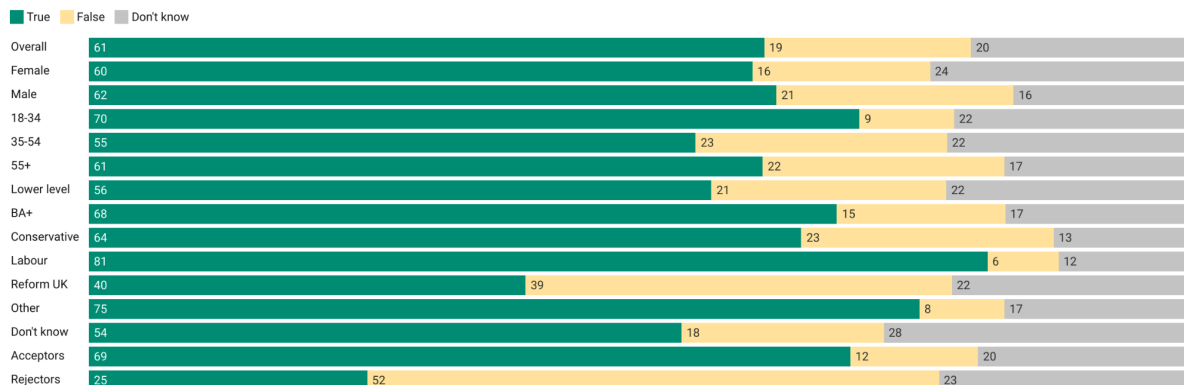
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Renewable energy does not significantly reduce emissions compared to fossil fuels (% , UK)**



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In the UK, younger and highly educated people are more likely to agree that the world needs to rapidly de- carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050.

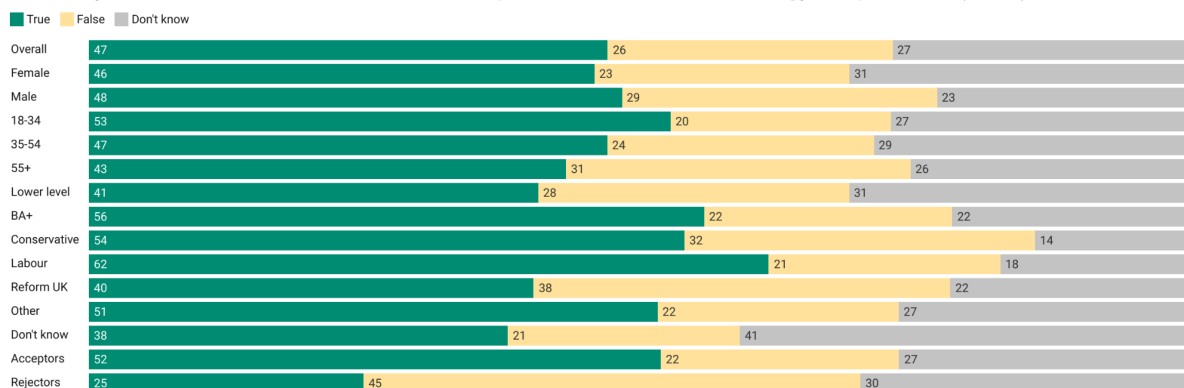
**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - The world needs to rapidly de carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050 to ensure the prosperity and welfare of humans across the world (% , UK)**



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In the UK, younger and highly educated people are more likely to think that net zero and climate policies will increase our energy independence. Those intending to vote for Reform UK or are unsure whether they will vote are less likely to believe this.

**Below are statements relating to energy sources. Please indicate whether you believe the statements are true, false, or whether you are uncertain. - Net zero and climate policies will increase our energy independence (% , UK)**



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## Combatting disinformation

The survey also asked respondents whether they believed that a number of different steps around combating climate disinformation would be effective or ineffective, as well as the importance of combatting misinformation for freedom of speech. In both Spain and the UK, the public tends to believe that the various measures asked about would be effective and that preventing the spread of climate disinformation is important for informed discourse and free speech..

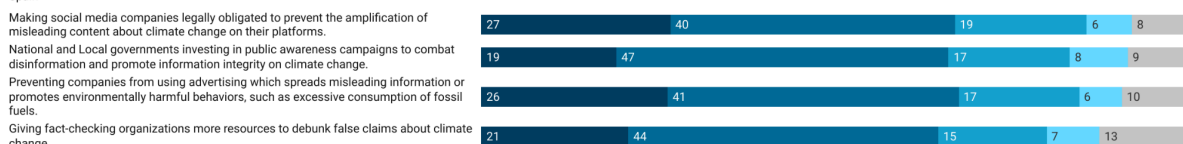
The data indicates that overall respondents are more likely than not to believe that the different measures asked about on the survey would be effective. Generally speaking respondents are more uncertain about measure effectiveness in the UK compared to Spain. The share of respondents who believe the different measures would be effective does not vary substantially, with around two thirds of respondents in Spain and three in five in the UK believing that the measures would be effective.

More specifically, the data suggest that two thirds of respondents in Spain, and three in five in the UK, think that it would be effective to require social media companies to stop the spread of misleading information about climate change on their platforms. Similar numbers, two thirds in Spain and three in five in the UK, think that public awareness campaigns by national and local governments would be effective in combatting disinformation and promoting accurate climate information. Two thirds of respondents in Spain, and three in five in the UK, think that it would be effective to ban advertising that spreads false information or promotes environmentally harmful behavior, like overconsuming fossil fuels. In both countries, 65% think that it would be effective or entirely effective to provide more support to fact-checking organizations so they can better address false claims about climate change.

#### How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? (%)

■ Entirely effective ■ Effective ■ Ineffective ■ Entirely ineffective ■ Don't know

##### Spain



##### UK

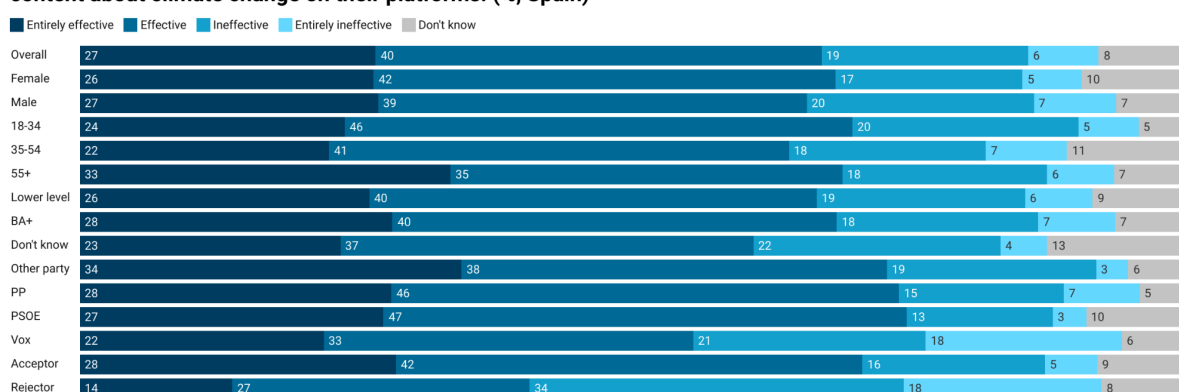


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When the data is broken down in Spain, older people, supporters of smaller parties, and those that believe climate change is anthropogenic are more likely to believe that making social media companies legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms would be entirely effective. By comparison, people under 55, supporters of larger parties and non-voters, and climate

change rejectors are less likely to believe that this intervention would be entirely effective. Notably, Vox voters are particularly likely to report that this measure would be ineffective.

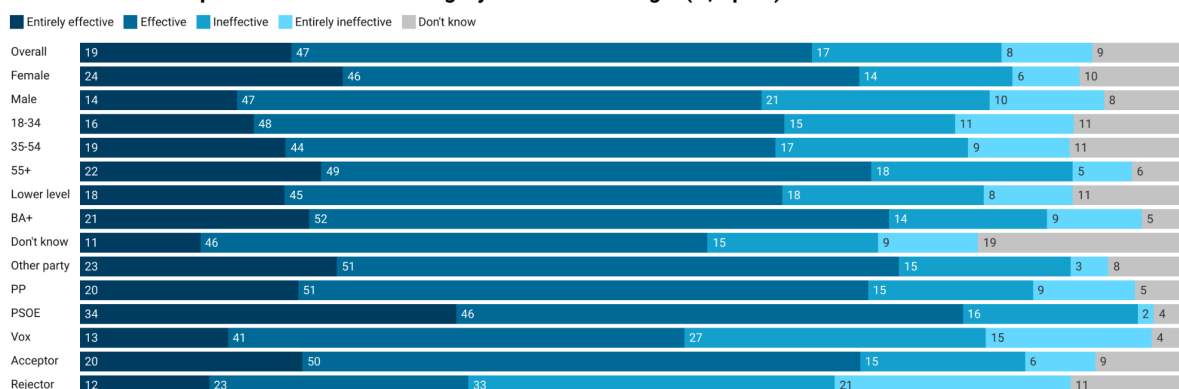
**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - Making social media companies legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms. (% , Spain)**



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With regard to national and local governments investing in public awareness campaigns, the data shows that women, older people, PSOE voters, and those who report climate change is anthropogenic are more likely to report this measure would be entirely effective. By contrast, men, people aged 18-34, Vox voters, and climate change rejectors are less likely to believe this measure would be entirely effective. Notably, a large share of Vox voters report this measure would not be effective.

**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - National and Local governments investing in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation and promote information integrity on climate change. (% , Spain)**

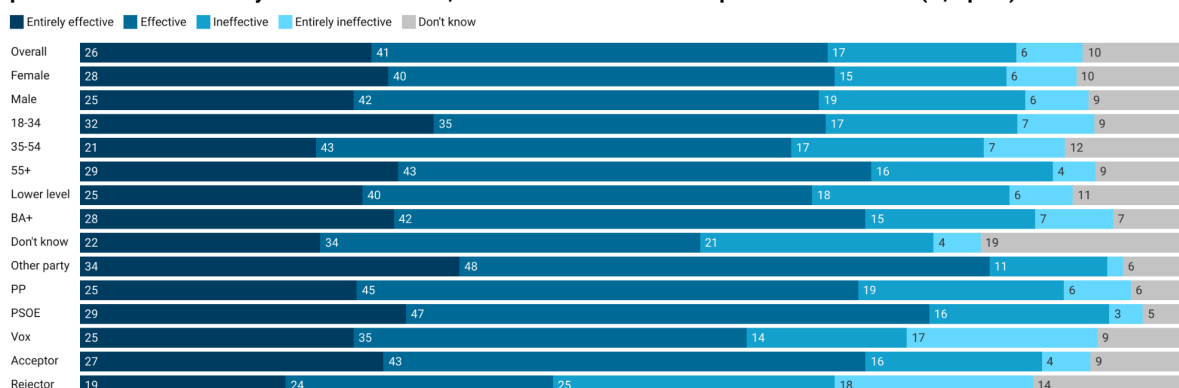


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The belief that it would be entirely effective if companies were prevented from spreading misleading and/or harmful environment information is more common in Spain among younger people and supporters of smaller parties. Climate change rejectors are less likely

to believe this would be entirely effective relative to people who believe in anthropogenic climate change.

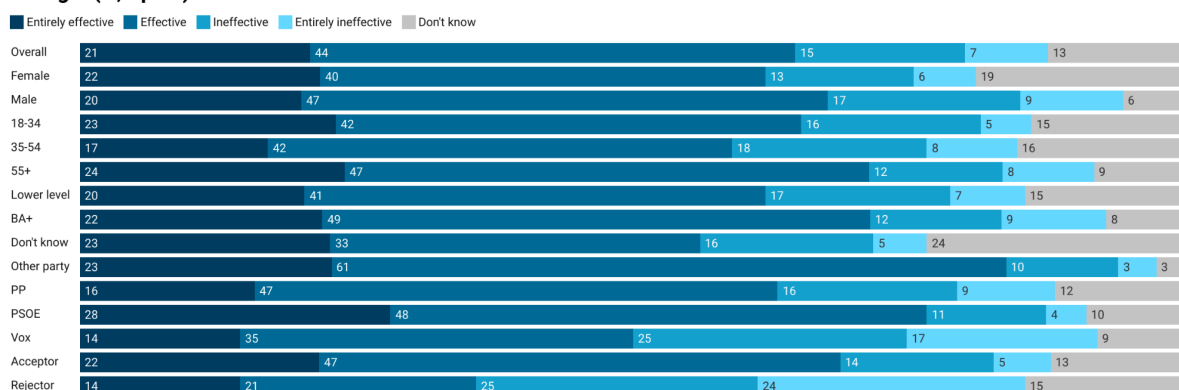
**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - Preventing companies from using advertising which spreads misleading information or promotes environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels. (% , Spain)**



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With regard to giving fact checking organizations additional resources, people 35-54 and climate change rejectors are less likely to believe that this measure would be entirely effective relative to other age groups. Those who intend on voting for the PSOE are also more likely to believe this measure would be entirely effective relative to other voting groups. People who believe in anthropogenic climate change are also more likely to believe this measure would be entirely effective relative to climate change rejectors.

**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - Giving fact-checking organizations more resources to debunk false claims about climate change. (% , Spain)**

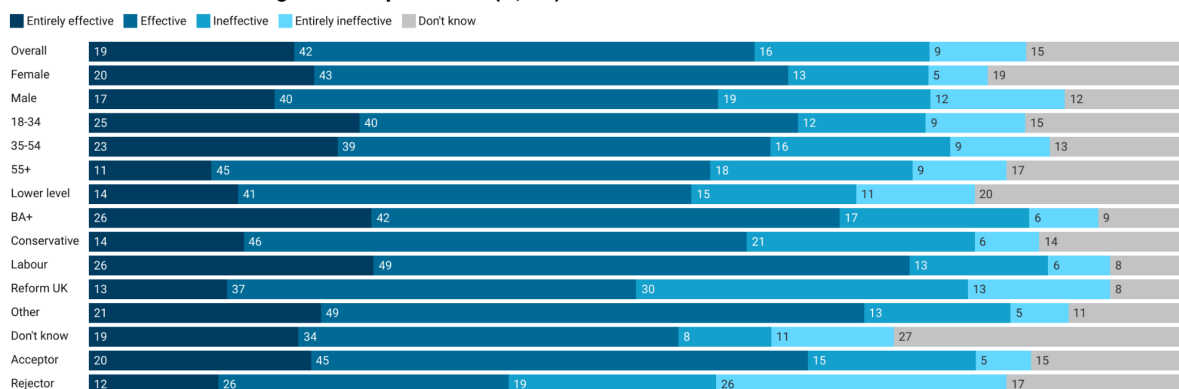


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When the data is broken down in the UK, the data suggests that attitudes vary by age, education, partisanship, and belief in climate change. People under the age of 55 are more likely to believe that making social media companies legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms would be entirely effective relative to older people. People with higher levels of education also

are more likely to report this would be entirely effective. Labour voters are relatively more likely than others to believe that these measures would be entirely effective. Reform UK voters are substantially more likely to believe that this measure would be entirely ineffective. People who accept that climate change is anthropogenic are more likely to believe this measure would be effective than those who do not believe in climate change.

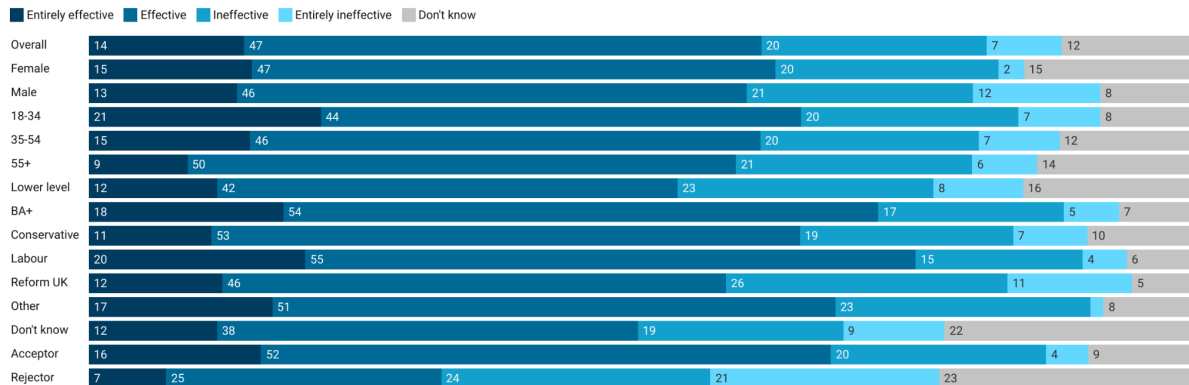
**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - Making social media companies legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms. (% , UK)**



Created with Datawrapper

A similar pattern is present with regard to the perceived effectiveness of national and local governments investing in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation and promote information integrity on climate change in the UK. Younger people, those with higher education, people who believe in climate change, and supporters of Labour are more likely to report this would be an entirely effective measure relative to older people, those without higher education, climate change rejectors, and supporters of the conservative party and Reform UK. However, over half of Reform UK voters still think it would be effective, with climate deniers as the only group for whom less than half of respondents indicated they did not think it would be effective.

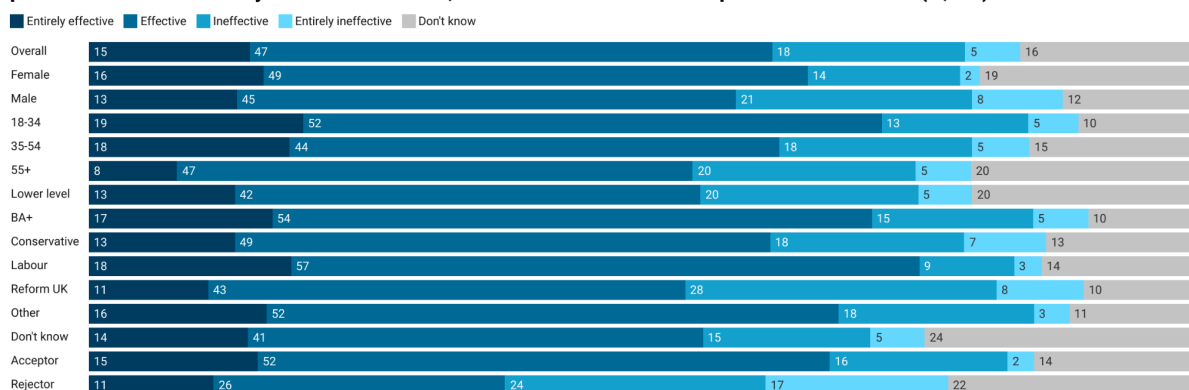
**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - National and Local governments investing in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation and promote information integrity on climate change. (% , UK)**



Created with Datawrapper

Attitudes towards whether preventing companies from using advertising which spreads misleading information or promotes environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels would be effective or not follows a similar pattern broadly. People under the age of 55 believe this measure would be entirely effective more often than older people. Labour supporters are more likely to believe this measure would be entirely effective than supporters of either the Conservatives or Reform UK. Climate change deniers are less likely to believe this measure would be effective.

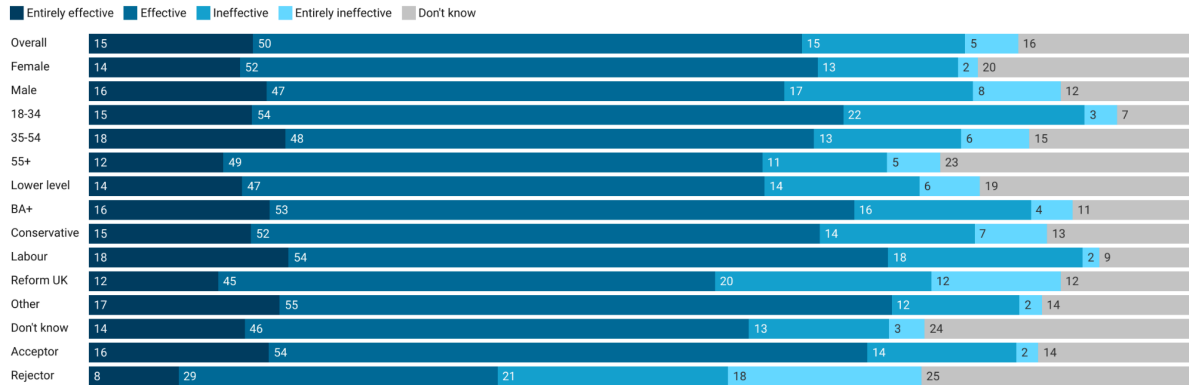
**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - Preventing companies from using advertising which spreads misleading information or promotes environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels. (% , UK)**



Created with Datawrapper

With regard to attitudes towards giving fact-checking organizations more resources to debunk false claims about climate change, there is relatively little variance in terms of how effective different groups believe this measure would be, though Reform UK voters and Labour voters express differing views, with Labour voters more likely to believe this would be entirely effective. Those who believe in climate change are also more likely to believe that this would be entirely effective relative to rejectors.

**How effective or ineffective do you believe the following actions would be in preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change? - Giving fact-checking organizations more resources to debunk false claims about climate change. (% , UK)**



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The final question on the survey found that in both Spain and the UK, large majorities of over 70% agree that to protect freedom of speech and ensure informed public discourse, it is necessary to prevent the spread of disinformation about climate change. In Spain, older people and PSOE voters in particular are more likely to believe this is necessary. People intending to vote for Vox are considerably less likely to think prevention is necessary, yet a majority within this group still supports it. In the UK, women and Conservative party voters are more likely to report this is necessary. When looking at climate change rejectors in both countries, only a minority thinks that prevention is necessary.

**Which of the following statements do you agree with more? - "Preventing the spread of disinformation about climate change is [not] necessary to protect freedom of speech and ensure informed public discourse." (% reporting necessary)**



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## Conclusion

The above data and analysis leads to a wide range of conclusions.

When it comes to belief in climate change broadly speaking, the majority of Spanish and UK respondents acknowledge the climate is changing and humans play a role. In Spain, only 11% do not believe climate change is driven by humans or happening at all, while 14% of the UK public reports the same. In Spain, climate denialism is more common among Vox voters. In the UK, climate denialism is particularly common among Reform UK voters.

Regarding misinformation beliefs related to Iberian blackout causes, respondents are most likely to believe that the Iberian blackout was caused by the grid system not having enough dynamic voltage capacity, especially in Spain (43%), but also in the UK (30%). Nevertheless, 70% percent (Spain) or 60% (UK) of respondents believes at least one of the false narratives about the blackout causes, and ‘the power grid’s over-reliance on renewable energy’ is the most commonly believed one, particularly among far-right voters. One third of UK respondents indicate that they don’t know what has caused the blackout, whereas this share is lower in Spain (8%).

When it comes to general attitudes towards energy sources, the survey results suggest that the majority thinks the world needs to rapidly de-carbonise and achieve net zero by 2050. Furthermore, about half of the respondents think that net zero and climate policies will increase energy dependence and that renewable energy significantly reduces emissions (with a lower percentage, around 20–30% disagreeing), but the same percentage believes that abandoning oil and gas production completely would condemn poor people to hardship and block their right to modern livelihoods.

Which demographic factors influence these attitudes? In both countries, climate change beliefs and partisanship are the main drivers of attitudinal differences. People intending to vote for far-right parties and climate change rejectors hold less climate-friendly opinions. In Spain, older people generally have more accurate views on the survey’s energy statements, whereas in the UK, younger and highly educated people are more likely to have accurate views of climate related issues.

The study asked a number of questions about the perceived effectiveness of anti-climate disinformation measures, including:

- Making social media companies legally obligated to prevent the amplification of misleading content about climate change on their platforms.
- National and Local governments investing in public awareness campaigns to combat disinformation and promote information integrity on climate change.
- Preventing companies from using advertising which spreads misleading information or promotes environmentally harmful behaviors, such as excessive consumption of fossil fuels.
- Giving fact-checking organizations more resources to debunk false claims about climate change.

Across both countries, clear majorities reported these measures would be effective. Approximately two thirds in Spain and three in five in the UK believe that all of the measures asked about on the survey would be effective in efforts to prevent the spread of climate disinformation. Attitudes varied across demographic groups in each country, though to a relatively modest extent. One consistent finding in this regard was that climate change rejectors were more skeptical of all of these measures than those who accepted that humans are at least partly driving climate change.

Aside from asking about these measures to prevent climate disinformation, the survey asked respondents whether they believed it was necessary to prevent climate misinformation to enable an informed debate and protect freedom of speech. Large majorities of the public in both countries (over 70%) report that it is necessary to prevent the spread of climate disinformation to ensure freedom of speech and an informed discourse.

Across the UK and Spain, this survey shows that the general public knows climate change is caused by humans, but the constant bombardment of disinformation has left many confused about impacts and exposed to harmful conspiracy theories and other false content that [warps](#) our perceptions of public opinion.

Policymakers, however, can act in the interest of the public by passing and enforcing information integrity measures that the general public broadly support as effective measure against climate disinformation.

## Methodology

### **Data collection**

Based on the interplay of biased and digital media creating the conditions for large-scale deception, the United Kingdom and Spain were chosen for survey, as initial monitoring detected an insufficient quantity of Portuguese disinformation regarding the blackout.

Surveys were conducted in Spain (Spanish) and the UK (English) via Pollfish on July 15, 2025. The surveys included 1200 respondents in each country, giving a theoretical margin of error of 2.83% when looking at the overall sample within each country.

### **Data analysis**

The sample was weighted to be nationally representative in terms of age, gender, voting behavior during the last general election, and education level.

The findings are presented by country, and further disaggregated by age (18–34, 35–54, 55+), gender (male vs female), education level (higher education vs less than higher education), partisanship (future vote), and climate change beliefs within countries. For partisanship, parties with less than 100 respondents were moved into the ‘other’ category. Individuals that are uncertain or do not intend on voting were grouped together into the don’t know category. For climate change beliefs, ‘Climate change rejectors’ consists of those responding ‘The climate is changing, not caused by human actions’, ‘The climate is not changing’, and ‘Don’t know’ (those unsure or unconvinced of human-made climate change or climate change altogether). The other group, ‘Climate acceptors’, combines response categories ‘The climate is changing, mainly caused by human actions’ and ‘The climate is changing, partly caused by human actions’.