



ANALYSIS NO. 02/2020

DEMOCRACY AND CLIMATE ENGAGEMENT IN THE NORDIC REGION: SAME DIRECTION, DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS

Almost 5,000 Nordic citizens have answered a wide range of questions relating to Nordic co-operation, climate change and democratic engagement. The results show that Nordic citizens are concerned about the trends and believe that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation for the Nordic region. There is also a lot of variation in what citizens think the best measures are and in the extent to which they believe that politicians can solve the climate crisis. The report highlights both challenges and opportunities for the Nordic democracies in their work for the climate and environment of the future.



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It is high time to use the strength of the Nordic region to benefit the climate and to give this issue the highest priority

Preface

COVID-19 has dominated the political agenda during the spring of 2020, and will continue to do so for a long time to come. Nevertheless, it is important to not lose focus on the long-term issues that will determine our prosperity and the future of our planet.

The issue of climate change requires renewed efforts and ambitious policies. The situation is serious, and for us to move forward, reforms that aim to reduce emissions and that contribute to carbon neutrality are required.

In the Nordic region, we have demonstrated time and time again that we are stronger together. The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement show the way, but we need to be even more ambitious and really pick up the pace. Through knowledge development and experience sharing, we can find new and innovative Nordic solutions. We achieve results by involving people, organisations and companies – in other words, ourselves.

The Nordic Council of Ministers has a new vision for Nordic co-operation that sees the Nordic region becoming the world's most sustainable and integrated region by 2030. We will share our resources to help shape the future into something even better. We have focused on climate change in particular. It is high time to use the strength of the Nordic region to benefit the climate and to give this issue the highest priority.

We can change our lifestyles, production and consumption, and strike a balance between the use and protection of natural resources both onshore and offshore to achieve sustainable development in the future. At the same time, we need to guarantee democracy, inclusion, integration and mobility. The solutions exist – they are right in front of us. Carbon-neutral energy production and transport, green investments, circular and biobased economies. The green economy is based on innovation; it creates jobs and ensures competitiveness.

In this report, we have investigated how Nordic citizens – in Denmark, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Åland – perceive the issue of climate change and some factors affecting climate policy. Perhaps the most significant finding is that Nordic citizens believe that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation for the Nordic countries.

The report was written by Andrea Skjold Frøshaug and Ulf Andreasson at the Policy Analysis and Statistics Unit of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Secretariat. The report is part of the Policy Analysis and Statistics Unit's series of reports intended to highlight relevant topics that are important from a Nordic perspective. The report was financed by the Nordic Expert Group for Sustainable Development and the Nordic Committee for Children and Young People (NORDBUK). The survey itself was carried out by Novus on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Norstat conducted interviews in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Åland. In Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, it was Gallup, DMA and HS Analysis respectively that conducted the interviews, as subcontractors of Novus/Norstat.

Copenhagen, May 2020

Paula Lehtomäki
Secretary General, Nordic Council of Ministers



Summary

The Nordic region is in a generally favourable position to tackle the issue of climate change in a constructive manner. In countries with a well-developed welfare system, there is generally more support among the population for a more far-reaching climate policy. In addition, populations in countries that use a large proportion of renewable energy in energy production tend to support continued investments in this area.

For the climate transition to succeed, we must take social sustainability into account. If welfare and climate change issues are to be reconciled, it is important to understand what drives attitudes and to design appropriate political strategies based on this. The green transition can be expected to have different effects on different social groups. There is a risk that inequalities and conflicts may arise as a result of changes in production and consumption patterns, making it necessary to design a welfare policy that creates synergies for environmental issues that citizens consider reasonable and fair.

The Nordic Council of Ministers has therefore conducted a survey of almost 5,000 people in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as in the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. The data is weighted according to the age and gender of the populations of the different countries. We were particularly interested in young people (16–25 years), which is why this age group is overrepresented in the interviews. However, young people have temporarily been given a lower weighting so that they correspond proportionately to the population of each country.

The study can be summarised in the following key points:

Climate change and the environment on the agenda

- Eight out of ten Nordic citizens say that they are concerned about climate change. This is generally the same for all countries.
- In addition, eight out of ten think that the Nordic region should be a climate action pioneer. 53 per cent say that the measures should be aimed at helping to reduce emissions outside the Nordic region, while 41 per cent say that they would rather reduce emissions in the Nordic region.
- The proportion that think that climate change and the environment is the most important area of Nordic co-operation has more than doubled compared to when the same question was asked in 2017. This represents a marked increase in just two years. Defence and security issues, which topped the list in 2017, are now number two.

Confidence in the political system

- Half of citizens have great or fairly great general confidence in the political system in their country. At the same time, the survey shows less confidence in politicians being able to take the measures necessary to combat climate change. Many people are worried that the political system is ill-suited to work at the speed required by the issue of climate change.

What is the Nordic population currently doing to combat climate change, and what are we willing to do from now on?

- Over the past year, 90 per cent of the respondents in the Nordic region have sorted their recycling by source material, and 65 per cent say that they have bought fewer items of clothing and other consumables, and that they have bought more second-hand items for the sake of the climate. Just over half say that they have eaten more vegan/vegetarian food and used environmentally friendly transport. In the past year, fewer people have been involved in an environmental organisation (11 per cent), participated in a demonstration (11 per cent) or joined a political party (seven per cent).
- When the respondents were asked what they can see themselves doing for the climate in the future, many areas saw no major changes. For example, around the same number of people can see themselves continuing to recycle and buy less clothing. More people can see themselves using environmentally friendly transport (a rise from 54 to 67 per cent) and switching to renewable energy in their homes (a rise from 30 to 48 per cent). There are also many people in the Nordic region who say that they can do more for the climate by becoming more politically active, by joining an environmental organisation (+13 percentage points) or by participating in a demonstration (+16 percentage points).

Underlying factors

- Demographics make a difference to the responses in certain areas, but the overall impression is that gender, education and age have no significant bearing, meaning that the groups generally have quite similar opinions. However, there are nuances.
- Women are more concerned about climate change, and a greater proportion of women than men say that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation.
- Educational background has little bearing on attitudes towards climate change, but has a significant bearing on general confidence in politicians.

Those with a higher level of education express greater confidence in the political system.

- Geographical location (categorised as "major capitals", "greater metropolitan areas", "other cities", "mid-sized towns", "smaller capitals" and "rural areas") generally has a bearing on what Nordic citizens think. Among other things, there are more people in the major capitals and big cities who are concerned about climate change – 89 and 82 per cent respectively, compared to 74 per cent in rural areas. Those in the major capitals (50 per cent) and greater metropolitan areas (55 per cent) perceive climate change and the environment to be the most important area of co-operation to a greater degree than those in rural areas (42 per cent). In both major and smaller capitals, respondents think that the focus should be on cutting emissions in the Nordic region – 53 and 58 per cent respectively, compared to rural areas where 37 per cent want to cut emissions in the Nordic region.

Young people (16–25 years)

- As previously mentioned, in the survey we were particularly interested in the views of young people on climate change. It turned out that all age groups are equally concerned about climate change – this is an area where young people are no different than other age categories.
- But significantly more young people have been politically active for the sake of the environment: 11 per cent have engaged in civil disobedience, compared to two per cent in the older age groups; 19 per cent have participated in demonstrations, compared to seven per cent of those over the age of 45; and 17 per cent of young people have been involved in an environmental organisation, compared to around 10 per cent of the older age groups.
- Young people stand out because they to a greater extent want to do more for the climate in the future than they have done in the past year there is an increase of 34 percentage points among young people compared to two percentage points among people over the age of 66 who are prepared to switch to renewable energy in their homes. There is an increase of 23 percentage points among young people who say that they could see themselves joining an environmental organisation compared to an increase of four percentage points among people over the age of 66. A significantly larger proportion of young people also say that they are willing to engage in civil disobedience compared to all the other age groups.
- Younger women are far more prepared to engage in environmental politics in the future compared to their male peers and the respondents in other age groups.

Introduction

Based on the reforms that a green transition will require, it has been recognised that the Nordic societies and their populations must prepare for significant changes. This report provides insight into how the issue of climate change in particular is perceived in the Nordic region. It is based on a telephone survey that was conducted of almost 5,000 citizens of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, and of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

Attitudes towards the climate transition are also put into a wider perspective, such as general confidence in the political system and in politicians being able to take necessary measures. Another thing we did with the questions was to try and ascertain what individual respondents are doing for the climate today and what they can see themselves doing in the future. The particularly Nordic dimension is also captured. It is traditional in the Nordic countries to co-operate on both minor and major political reforms. Which issues do the population currently think it is important to co-operate on? This question can also be compared to a similar question that was asked almost three years ago, and we can see major changes in a relatively short space of time.

In the report, the issues are presented at a total level, i.e. a Nordic level, but the situation in each of the Nordic countries will also be described. How do they differ? The responses are also presented based on age, gender, geographical context and educational background.

From a political perspective, the purpose of this report can be described as follows: the green transition can be expected to have different effects on different social groups. Differences and conflicts may arise as a result of changes in production and consumption patterns, making it necessary to design a welfare policy that creates synergies for climate issues that citizens consider reasonable and fair. If welfare and climate change issues are to be reconciled, it is important to understand what drives attitudes and to design appropriate political strategies based on this.

Citizens of countries with a well-developed welfare system are generally more supportive of a more far-reaching climate policy.

It must be noted that the starting point for the Nordic region is generally favourable. Previous studies have shown that in countries with a well-developed welfare system, the population is generally more supportive of a far-reaching climate policy. In addition, populations in countries that use a high proportion of renewable energy in energy production tend to support continued investments in this area. At the same time, the populations of countries with higher levels of fossil energy sources are less likely to want to invest in renewable energy because they are concerned about the socio-economic consequences of a green transition in the energy sector.¹

¹ Fritz M. & Koch M., Public Support for Sustainable Welfare Compared: Links between Attitudes towards Climate and Welfare Policies, Sustainability (2019).

Method

The survey was conducted between December 2019 and February 2020 and had a total of 4,734 respondents across the entire Nordic region. All interviews were conducted by telephone. Around 800 interviews were conducted per country for Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Around 530 interviews were conducted for Iceland, and around 300 each for the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

The data is weighted by the actual population of the countries by age and gender. The countries are also weighted so that Sweden, which has the biggest population, has a weighting in the overall result equivalent to 37.1 per cent, while Åland at the other end of the scale has a weighting corresponding to 0.1 per cent.

Most of the respondents are young people, as we focused on the attitudes of young people towards climate change. However, young people have been given a lower weighting so that they correspond proportionally to the section of the population in each country in this survey.

The margin of error at total level is calculated based on two outcomes: an outcome of 20/80, where the margin of error is calculated as 1.1 per cent, and an outcome of 50/50, where the margin of error is calculated as 1.4 per cent.

The margin of error increases with each breakdown. Based on 300 interviewees, the margin of error is 4.5 per cent for the outcome 20/80 and 5.7 per cent for the outcome 50/50.



The attitudes of the Nordic population towards climate change and the environment

In recent years, the issue of climate change has shot up the political agenda. At the same time, there are common opinions in the Nordic region about how climate change should be combatted. Some of the main questions of the survey touch on this.

What issue do Nordic citizens think it is most important to co-operate on? What are the attitudes towards climate change and democratic engagement in the Nordic region? What are Nordic citizens currently doing for the climate, and what are they willing to do more of from now on? The survey covers a wide range of issues related to climate change, the environment and engagement. In this chapter, we look at the Nordic region as a whole and at the overall results of the survey.

Climate change and the environment in focus

In the Nordic region, eight out of ten respondents say that they are concerned about climate change. Nationally, there are no major differences, but the Danes express the most concern and the Faroese the least. Similarly, eight out of ten people say that the Nordic region should be a pioneer when it comes to taking measures to combat climate change. Nationally, Greenland has the highest proportion of people who think that the Nordic region should be a role model, but overall, the differences are minor.

When asked where the negative climate impact should be reduced, 53 per cent of respondents think that the focus should be on helping reduce emissions outside the Nordic region, while 41 per cent think that we must first and foremost reduce emissions within the Nordic region. The Finns are the most positive when it comes to environmental measures outside our own region (65 per cent), while the survey shows that the Faroe Islands and Iceland have the greatest support for measures at home. If emissions are to be reduced in the Nordic region, 36 per cent of the respondents say that this should take place within industry and manufacturing, 28 per cent cite transport and travel, and 14 per cent answer energy and power. These sectors are the top three in all the Nordic countries, but the ranking varies.

53 per cent of Nordic citizens think that we should reduce emissions outside of our region.

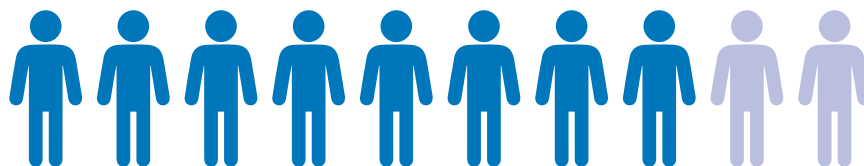


Figure 1

Eight out of ten Nordic citizens are concerned about climate change and think that the Nordic region should be a pioneer when it comes to taking measures to combat climate change.

The number of respondents who say that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region has more than doubled since Nordic citizens were asked the same question in 2017.

According to the survey, climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region. This means that the proportion of respondents who think that climate change and the environment is the most important area has doubled compared to 2017. At that time, the Nordic population was asked the same question in a survey where defence and security issues were perceived as the most important area, while climate change and the environment was ranked number four. The statistics now show a response of 44 per cent – almost twice as many as for defence and security issues, which currently comes in at number two (see Figure 2).

In all the Nordic countries apart from the Faroe Islands and Greenland, respondents have said that climate change and the environment is one of the most important areas of co-operation (ranking at either number one or two). In the Faroe Islands and Greenland, most respondents rank education as most important. Finland is the only country in the Nordic region where defence and security issues are still at number one, but even here 41 per cent responded climate change (see Figure 7).

Confidence in the political system

To implement reforms supporting a green transition in the Nordic societies, it is a prerequisite that citizens have confidence in the political system and in the ability of politicians to tackle the climate issue.

In the survey, citizens were asked how much general confidence they have in the political system in their country. In total, half of citizens say that they have confidence, while around a quarter say that they have little or no confidence in the authorities.

The responses show that there is more scepticism about the political system among the 21 per cent who are not concerned about climate change. Compared to the average in the Nordic region of 51 per cent, only 34 per cent in this group say that they have great or fairly great confidence.

When asked whether they think that politicians can take the measures necessary to combat climate change, more respondents say they have little or no confidence (37 per cent) than great or fairly great confidence (30 per cent) in this (see Figure 4).

A minority of Nordic citizens are confident that politicians can take measures to combat climate change.

Those who said that they had little confidence in the ability of politicians to take measures to combat climate change were also asked to give a reason for their doubts. Here, a third says that the political system takes too long to get anything done, a quarter thinks that politicians do not follow the policy that they want, while a fifth thinks that politicians do not work in citizens' best interests. As we can see from Figure 4, there is also a small minority (two per cent) that thinks that politicians do not need to do anything about the climate issue. This may be because they do not accept that there are issues, or because they think that it is not possible to prevent climate change

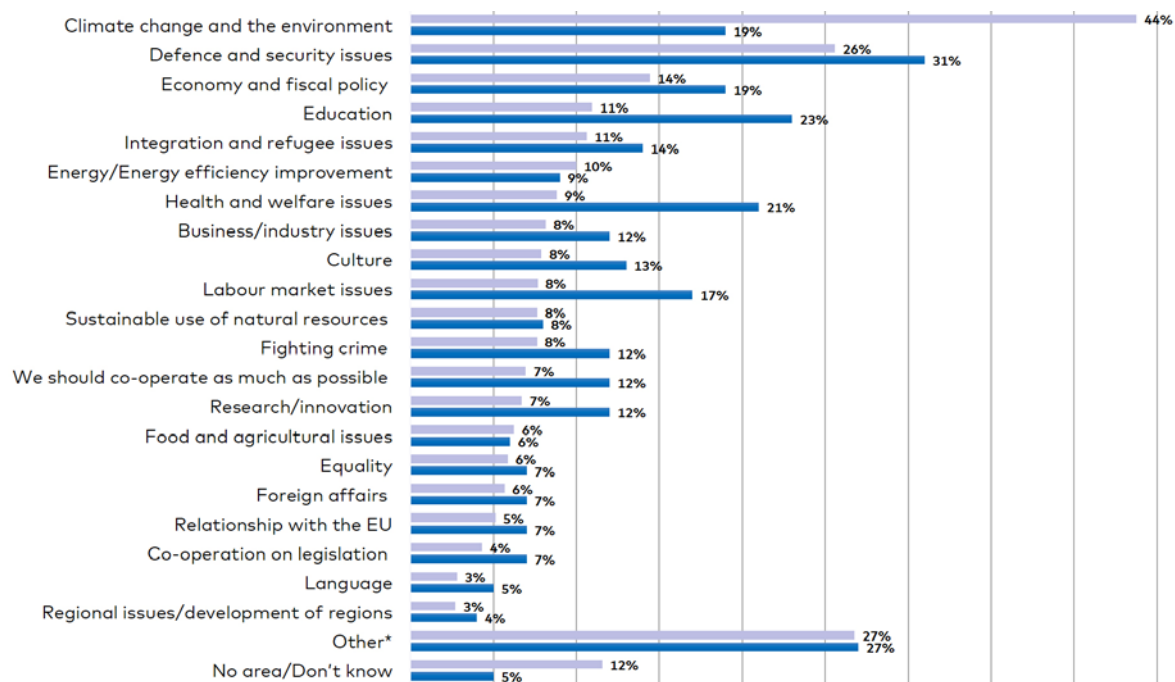


Figure 2: If you think about all the different areas of co-operation in the Nordic region, which do you think is the most important?

■ 2019/2020 ■ 2017

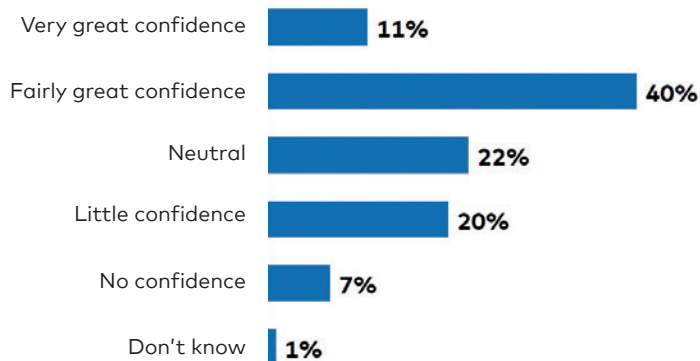


Figure 3

How much confidence do you have in the political system in your country?



Figure 4

To what extent are you confident that the politicians in the Nordic region will take the measures needed to combat climate change?

What is the Nordic population currently doing to combat climate change, and what are we willing to do from now on?

Nine out of ten Nordic citizens say that they have already sorted their recycling by source material for the sake of the climate in the past year. This is probably a result of a well-developed system and culture for this in the Nordic countries. Two out of three say that they have bought fewer items of clothing and other products for the sake of the climate, and that they have bought more second-hand items. The responses show an environmental awareness and an attitude where citizens want more efficient use of resources, and may reflect a fundamental willingness among the Nordic population to contribute to change. This may also reflect the growing focus on the sharing and circular economy that we see in society, particularly among businesses and politicians.

In addition to this, just over half say that they have eaten more vegan/vegetarian food (55 per cent) and used environmentally friendly transport (54 per cent) for the sake of the climate.

Compared to the other response options, there are fewer who say that they have been politically active for the sake of the climate. 11 per cent say that they have been involved in an environmental organisation and 11 per cent say that they have participated in a climate change demonstration.

While 30 per cent say that they have switched to renewable energy in their homes in the past year, 48 per cent can see themselves doing so in the future.

But what does the Nordic population say that they are willing to do for the climate from now on? We obtain the same overall picture from these responses: People want to continue recycling and purchasing fewer products and items of clothing. Figure 6 illustrates that there is a marginal increase in almost all response areas compared to what is being done today. However, many people are determined to start using more environmentally friendly transport, with an increase from 54 to 67 per cent, and to switch to renewable energy in their homes, an increase from 30 to 48 per cent. There is also interest in increased political activism for the sake of the climate. There is an increase of 17 percentage points (up from 11 to 28 per cent) in people who say that they would consider participating in demonstrations in the future, while the increase is 13 percentage points (up from 11 to 24 per cent) among those who say they want to join an environmental organisation.

Today, getting involved in an environmental organisation is most common in Iceland, Norway and Sweden. It is primarily Icelanders, Ålanders and Swedes who can see themselves doing more of this in the future.

The survey shows that the potential for a shift to renewable energy in homes and for using more environmentally friendly transport is greatest in Iceland. Here, there is an increase of 30 percentage points in people who say that they can see themselves switching to renewable energy in their homes in the future instead of what they use today, while it is 34 percentage points for those who say that they will use more environmentally friendly transport in the future. A fair number of respondents in Denmark and Åland also say that they could see themselves using more environmentally friendly transport in the future, i.e. 23 and 22 per cent respectively. However, respondents from Norway and Greenland say that they do not want to do more in this area than they are already doing today.

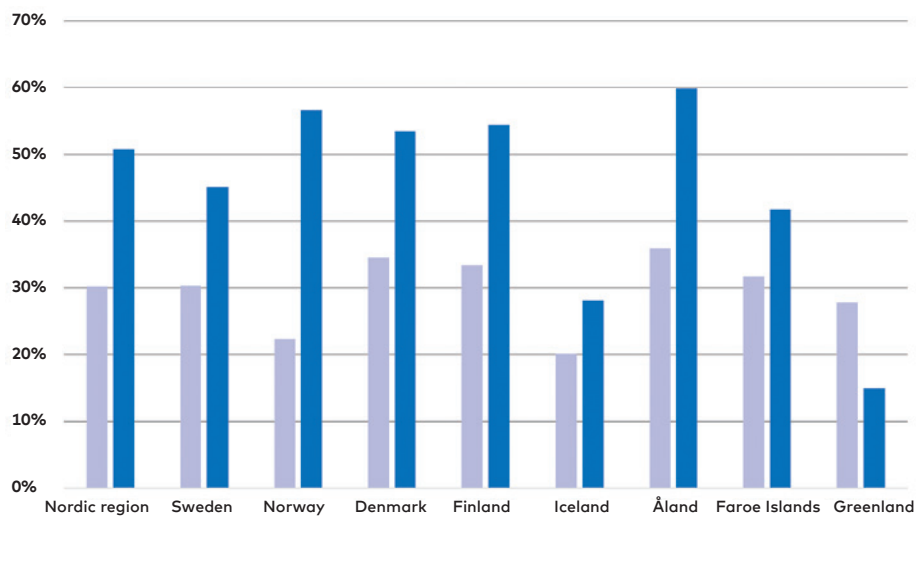


Figure 5

The bar chart shows the general confidence in politicians compared to confidence in politicians being able to take measures to combat climate change in each of the Nordic countries.

■ Confidence in politicians being able to take measures to combat climate change
■ General confidence in the authorities

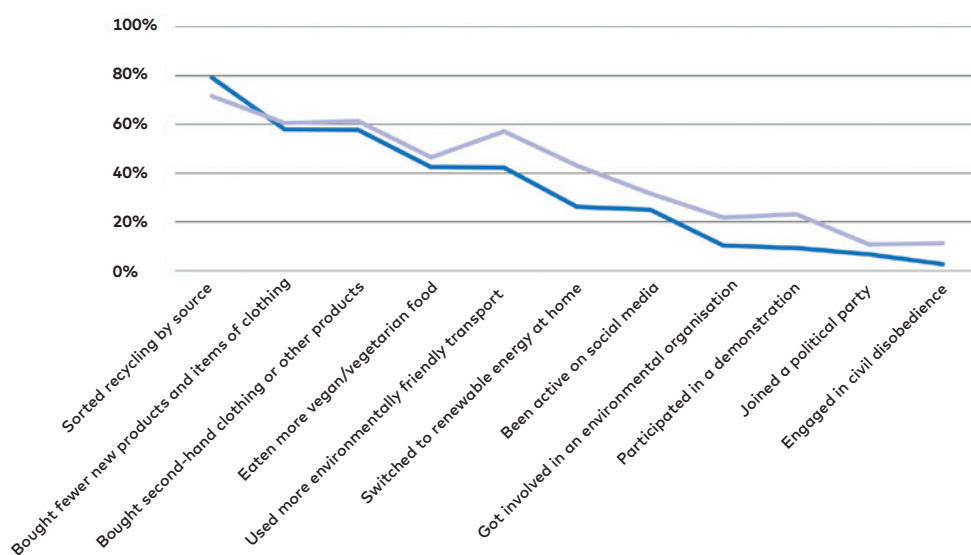


Figure 6

Gap analysis – now vs in the future

Question: Have you done any of the following for the sake of the climate in the past year?

Question: Which of the following do you think you would be able to do to help combat climate change from now on?

■ In the future
■ Today

National differences

It is at a national/regional level that we see the biggest differences between responses. In this section, we will focus more on each country individually, and particularly on where the Nordic countries differ from each other.

When we compare the responses from the different countries to the average in the Nordic region, it is important to remember that the largest countries' results have the greatest bearing on the overall result. The opposite is also true: a small population has less of an effect on the overall result. Among other things, this means that Sweden's result will be closer to the Nordic average, as the population of Sweden accounts for 37 per cent of the Nordic population. However, where results from the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Åland differ, this has little impact on the results for the Nordic region as a whole. In other words, the responses from Sweden affect the overall result the most.

Denmark

The three most important areas of co-operation for Danish citizens are all linked to climate and sustainability.

In the Nordic region, Denmark has the highest proportion of respondents who say that climate change and the environment is an important area for co-operation between the Nordic countries (see Figure 7), followed by energy and energy efficiency improvement, and sustainable use of resources, in which respect they differ from the rest of the Nordic region. Denmark is also the country where the highest proportion of people are concerned about climate change (82 per cent).

The Danes differ further from other Nordic citizens in that more people want to reduce emissions from energy/power (23 per cent compared to 14 per cent) and in the agricultural and forestry sector (11 per cent compared to six per cent). When asked what they have done for the climate in recent years, a lower proportion of respondents in Denmark say that they have sorted their recycling by source material (76 per cent) for the sake of the climate compared to the rest of the Nordic region (90 per cent).

Denmark has somewhat greater confidence (35 per cent) in the ability of politicians to take measures to combat climate change than the Nordic average (30 per cent).

Finland

The most important Nordic area of co-operation for the respondents in Finland is defence and security issues, as was also the case in 2017. Climate change and the environment is in second place, but has tripled in importance since 2017 (see Figure 7). The Finnish respondents are also the most divided when it comes to the question of the most important area that the Nordic region should be co-operating on, where we see that the responses are to a greater degree evenly distributed between different areas.

Finland has the greatest proportion (23 per cent) who say that the Nordic region should not be a climate action pioneer. The proportion in Finland who think that

Figure 7

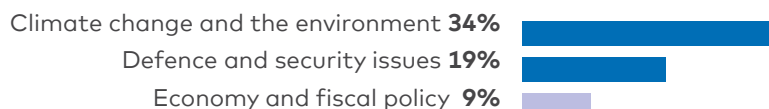
If you think about all the different areas of co-operation in the Nordic region, which do you think is the most important? (Top three per country/region)



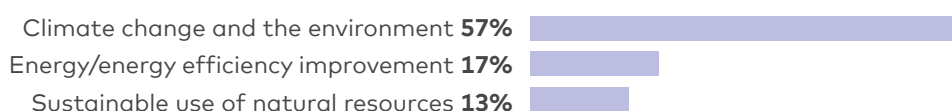
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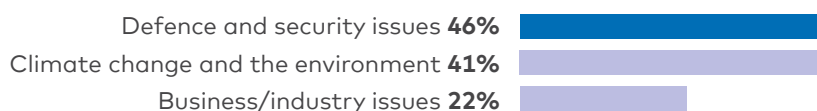
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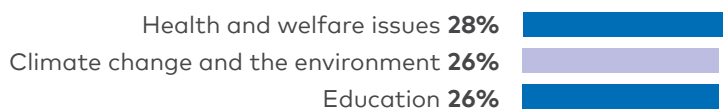
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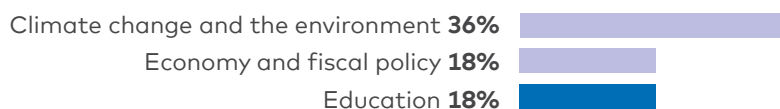
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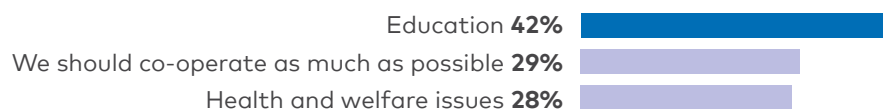
ÅLAND



FAROE ISLANDS



GREENLAND



■ Highlighting shows new areas in each country's/region's top three compared to 2017

the Nordic region should be a pioneer (74 per cent) is also correspondingly lower than the average for the Nordic region (80 per cent). This is still a significant majority. A greater proportion (65 per cent) think that the focus on reducing emissions should be outside the Nordic region, significantly higher than the average of 53 per cent.

In Finland, interest in engaging in environmental politics is low both now and in terms of what people can see themselves doing in the future compared to the rest of the Nordic region. While the proportion that has got involved in an environmental organisation and participated in a demonstration is four and five per cent respectively in Finland, the average in the Nordic region is 11 per cent. In the future, even though the response proportion in Finland is considerably lower than in the rest of the Nordic region, there is potential for more engagement for the sake of the environment within the country. 17 per cent say that they can see themselves joining an environmental organisation or participating in a climate change demonstration, which is considerably more than at present.

Faroe Islands

In the Faroe Islands, respondents have prioritised education as the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region. Unlike most Nordic countries, climate change and the environment does not feature in their top three (see Figure 7). Compared to the Nordic average (78 per cent), the Faroe Islands have the lowest number of respondents (60 per cent) who say that they are concerned about climate change, and almost twice as many as the Nordic average who say that they are not concerned – 39 per cent compared to 21 per cent.

Of all the Nordic countries, the Faroe Islands, closely followed by Iceland, have the highest proportion of respondents who think that emissions should be reduced in the Nordic region rather than elsewhere.

A higher proportion of respondents in the Faroe Islands than in the other Nordic countries say that the focus should be on reducing the emissions within the Nordic region (63 per cent) rather than outside of it (31 per cent). A greater proportion of Faroese respondents say that there should be cuts within energy/power rather than in industry/manufacturing, which ranks highest in the Nordic region overall.

The Faroe Islands also stand out in that fewer respondents say that they as individuals are willing to do something for the sake of the climate. This applies to both what they have done in the past year and what they can see themselves doing in the future, but we are seeing potential for measures within environmentally friendly transport and renewable energy in homes.

Greenland

The respondents from Greenland have many of the same characteristics as those from the Faroe Islands. Education is considered the most important Nordic area of co-operation, and no areas from the typical Nordic top three are emphasised (see Figure 7). That said, many areas are mentioned, which indicates that Greenlanders want to see a lot of co-operation.

Compared to most other Nordic countries, fewer people are concerned about climate change (although 67 per cent are concerned), but on the other hand,

more than nine out of ten people say that the Nordic region should be a climate action pioneer. This is the highest proportion in the Nordic region that thinks this (the Nordic average is 80 per cent). 60 per cent of Greenland's respondents say that the Nordic region's focus should be on reducing emissions outside of the Nordic region, which is somewhat higher than the average in the Nordic region of 53 per cent.

Individual efforts are lower than in the other Nordic countries – one in three of the respondents in Greenland says that they have not done anything for the climate in the past year. 45 per cent say that they have done something other than the options given in the survey. Almost everyone says that they have stopped buying plastic bags. The majority say that they cannot see themselves doing more in the future than they already doing today.

Iceland

Iceland is the only country surveyed to choose health and welfare issues (28 per cent) as the most important area in which the Nordic region should co-operate, closely followed by climate change and the environment (26 per cent) and education (26 per cent) (see Figure 7).

The majority (61 per cent) point out that the focus should be on reducing emissions in the Nordic region. This is 20 percentage points more than the average for the Nordic region. A slightly greater proportion in Iceland than in the other Nordic countries thinks that emissions should primarily be reduced within industry/manufacturing (46 per cent, compared to 36 per cent).

Only 28 per cent say they have confidence in the political system, compared to 51 per cent in the rest of the Nordic region. The Icelandic respondents also have the lowest confidence in the ability of politicians to take measures to combat climate change. 20 per cent say that they have confidence, compared to the Nordic average of 30 per cent.

However, Icelandic respondents come out on top when asked whether they are currently doing anything for the climate. They also demonstrate the greatest future potential of all the countries, particularly with regard to environmentally friendly transport (from 48 to 82 per cent) and renewable energy in homes (from 26 to 56 per cent). Even when it comes to political activism for the sake of the environment (joining organisations or demonstrating), Iceland is at the forefront today and could also be in the future.

Among the Nordic countries, Iceland has the greatest proportion of respondents who say that they have done something for the climate the last year, closely followed by Sweden.

Norway

While climate change and the environment tops the Norwegian list of most important areas of co-operation in the Nordic region, the proportion in the survey who give this response (34 per cent) is significantly lower than in the other larger nations (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) (see Figure 7).

One out of four of the Norwegian respondents say that they are not anxious about climate change, and only Greenland and the Faroe Islands have a larger proportion who are unconcerned.

Norway and Åland tie for the Nordic country with the greatest confidence in its political system (57 per cent). At the same time, few Norwegians (22 per cent) have great confidence in the ability of politicians to take the measures necessary to combat climate change compared to the average for the Nordic region of 30 per cent. 37 per cent have little confidence, which is the same as the average for the Nordic region.

Unlike the other Nordic countries (apart from the Faroe Islands), Norwegians prioritise transport/travel as the sector where most people think that emissions should be reduced within the region. Otherwise, a fairly large proportion of the Norwegian respondents think that they have made an effort to combat climate change, but their ambitions for the future are relatively low compared to the rest of the Nordic region.

Sweden

The proportion of Swedes who think that climate change and the environment should be the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region has doubled since 2017.

Since 2017, the proportion of respondents from Sweden who say that climate change and the environment is an important area of co-operation in the Nordic region has doubled (see Figure 7). This has moved the issue of climate change from second to clear first place in just two years (from 21 to 43 per cent).

When it comes to the ability of politicians to take the necessary measures to combat climate change, there are more Swedish respondents who have no or little confidence (40 per cent) than have great confidence (30 per cent) in this. Swedes generally have little confidence in their politicians compared to the other larger Nordic countries. Less than half have great confidence in the political system (45 per cent) – this is around 10 percentage points lower than in Denmark, Finland and Norway.

Sweden and Iceland are the countries where the highest proportion of people say that they have done something for the climate in the past year, and that they are prepared to do even more in the future – above all to participate in demonstrations (from 12 to 34 per cent) and to switch to renewable energy in their homes (from 32 to 53 per cent).

Åland

The proportion of Ålanders who say that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation has doubled since 2017, with that sector now at the top (see Figure 7). This has increased from 18 per cent in 2017 to 36 per cent.

Åland is one of the regions with the greatest proportion who think that the Nordic region should be a climate action pioneer – 89 per cent, compared to the average for the Nordic region of 80 per cent. Ålanders also come out on top when it comes to climate action in the past year, and many indicate that they can also see themselves doing more in the future. The potential primarily lies in environmentally friendly transport (+22 percentage points), renewable energy in homes (+21 percentage points) and increased political activism for the sake of the environment.



Underlying factors

In addition to the overall trend, it is interesting to see whether there are any demographic, social and geographical characteristics in the Nordic population in relation to the survey questions. We were interested in recording any significant differences between gender, educational level, location and age, and how these affect the responses. In the survey, particular emphasis was placed on young people (i.e. those aged between 16 and 25) and their attitudes towards climate change and democratic engagement. In the survey, young people are therefore overrepresented in the selection and described in more detail in the report.

Gender

We cannot see any marked differences between the genders when it comes to confidence in politicians or confidence in politicians being able to take measures to combat climate change. Measured against the average in the Nordic region, there are no significant differences as to where the Nordic region's focus should be when it comes to reducing emissions within or outside the Nordic region. But there are some differences between how women and men responded to the issue of climate change. Among other things, women are more concerned about climate change, with a higher proportion of women than men saying that climate change and the environment is an important area of co-operation.

The issue of climate change and the environment tops the list of what both women and men think is the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region, followed by defence and security issues. However, women put education in third place, while men choose the economy and fiscal policy.

Despite an almost identical top three for men and women, 50 per cent of women say that climate change and the environment is most important, while the figure for men is 38 per cent.

Women are more concerned about climate change than men.

The differences between the genders can possibly be explained by how concerned they are about climate change. Almost nine out of ten women say that they are concerned, compared to seven out of ten men. Furthermore, 29 per cent of the men surveyed say that they are not concerned. This means there are more than twice as many men than women who are not concerned (13 per cent of women are not concerned). If we also filter the data, it seems that men who are not concerned about climate change often live in rural areas, and more than half of them have no education beyond upper secondary school.

13 per cent more women than men say that they support the idea of the Nordic region being a pioneer for ongoing climate action (86 per cent compared to 73 per cent). In general, more women say that they are currently doing something for the climate and that they want to do more for the climate in the future. According to the survey, for example, there are markedly more women who eat vegan food (+19 percentage points) and who buy more second-hand products (+16 percentage points) and fewer new consumables and items of clothing (+14 percentage points).

Age, with a particular focus on young people (16–25 years)

The media has focused on the engagement of young people with the issue of climate change, bolstered by Greta Thunberg's efforts, which led to the global movement Fridays for Future. The survey therefore focused on the attitudes of young people towards climate change and democratic engagement.

However, overall results show that there are no major differences between the age groups in terms of attitudes towards climate change and the environment. All age groups are equally concerned about climate change. Gender affects several of the responses to a significant extent, with the general differences between women and men also applying to young people.

Younger women are most concerned about climate change (91 per cent). This is somewhat higher than the female average of 86 per cent. Young men are less concerned (70 per cent) and do not differ from men in the other age groups in this respect. A greater proportion of young women than young men say that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation (49 per cent compared to 33 per cent).

Respondents of all ages consider climate change and the environment to be the Nordic region's most important area of co-operation, followed by defence and security issues and then the economy and fiscal policy. Young people also stand out in that a smaller proportion say that defence and security issues should be a key area of co-operation. The younger female respondents are the group with the lowest proportion who think that this area is important (nine per cent) compared to both their male peers (18 per cent) and the female average in the Nordic region (23 per cent).

The age groups respond more or less identically to questions about confidence in the political system, confidence in politicians being able to take the measures necessary to combat climate change, concern for the climate and where the Nordic region should reduce emissions. Fewer young people say that they have little confidence in the political system – particularly compared to the oldest age group (people over the age of 66). A greater proportion of young people under the age of 21 think that the Nordic region should be a climate action pioneer (86 per cent). This is particularly true of younger women (91 per cent, compared to 76 per cent of younger men).

In Figure 8, we see that the age groups respond similarly to questions about what they have done for the climate in the past year. None of the age groups differ markedly from the average, but there are some noticeable differences. We see that young people have been more active on social media, and significantly more young people have engaged in civil disobedience – 11 per cent in total, compared to two per cent in the other age groups. Seven per cent of those over the age of 45 have participated in demonstrations, compared to 19 per cent of young people, and more than in the other age groups have been involved in environmental organisations. Young people also buy second-hand clothing more often, they eat more vegan/vegetarian food and they use environmentally friendly transport. This may also be the result of young people having less money than the other age groups. The survey records fewer in this group saying that they have used renewable energy in their homes, which is most likely due to the fact that young people do not tend to own their own homes.

All age groups are concerned about climate change and consider climate change and the environment to be the most important Nordic area of co-operation.

When it comes to what people are doing for the climate today, there are minor variations between the responses of the different age groups, with the exception of responses associated with political activism for the sake of the environment. Several people in the age group 16–25 years say that they have been politically active for the sake of the environment in the past year. See Figure 8.

The biggest differences in responses between age groups can be seen in what respondents can see themselves **doing for the climate from now on**. As we can see from Figure 9, it is young people who are most prepared to engage more than they do today. We can also see that the oldest in some areas want to do less than they have done in the past year, for example when it comes to eating more vegan or vegetarian food and buying fewer products and items of clothing.

The difference between what people are currently doing for the climate and what people can see themselves doing for the climate from now on is the greatest between the youngest (16–25 years) and the oldest (66+ years) age groups. A greater proportion of young people want to do something for climate in the future than the other age groups. See Figure 8.

The biggest difference can be seen between the youngest (16–25 years) and the oldest (66+ years) age groups. This primarily relates to all use of renewable energy in homes as well as involvement in environmental organisations. Figure 9 shows a rise in 34 percentage points in young people who want to switch to renewable energy in their homes, compared to a rise of two percentage points in people over the age of 66. We also note an increase of 23 percentage points in young people who can see themselves joining an environmental organisation in the future, compared to an increase of four percentage points in people over the age of 66. 27 per cent of young people say that they are willing to engage in civil disobedience in the future, a markedly higher figure than in all other age groups (the average is 14 per cent). This may involve obstructing manufacturing operations that have a detrimental effect on the climate or participating in school strikes or other action.

It is primarily younger women who stand out among young people in terms of what they have done and want to do for the climate from now on. 72 per cent of the younger women say that they have eaten vegetarian food in the past year for the sake of the climate. This is 29 percentage points higher than for younger men, and 10 percentage points higher than the average for women. Younger women also stand out in that more of them have been a member of an environmental organisation², participated in a demonstration³ and engaged in civil disobedience⁴. A higher proportion of younger men have also engaged in civil disobedience (nine per cent) compared to the average in the Nordic region (three per cent).

Younger women are more willing to do more for the climate from now on. Particularly when it comes to political activism for the sake of the environment. See Table 1.

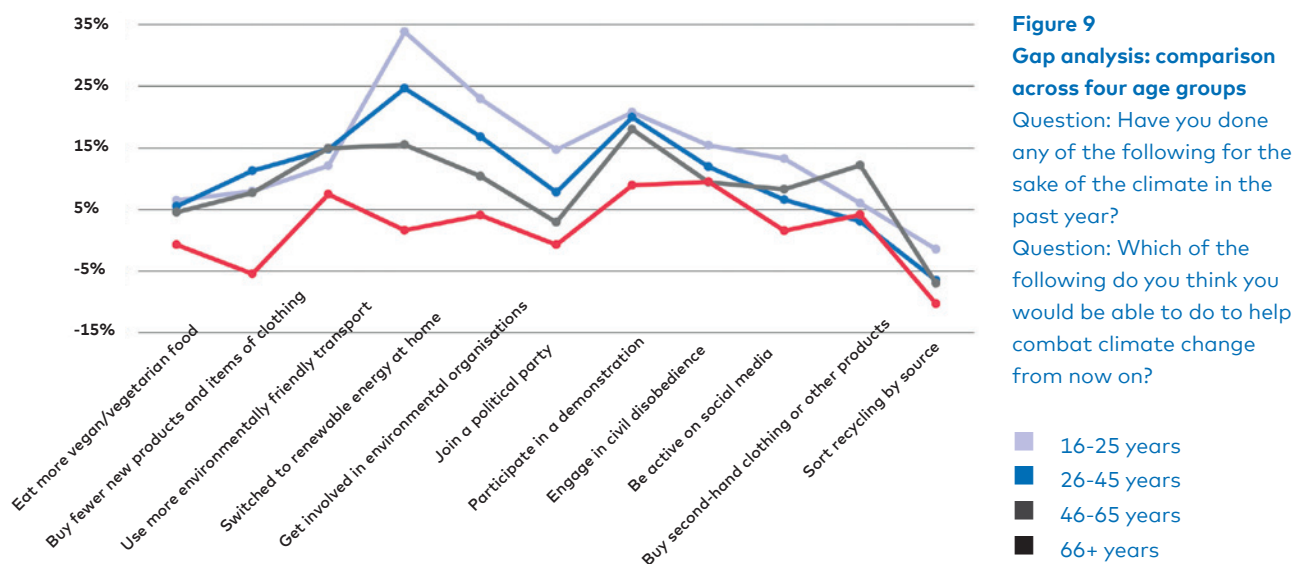
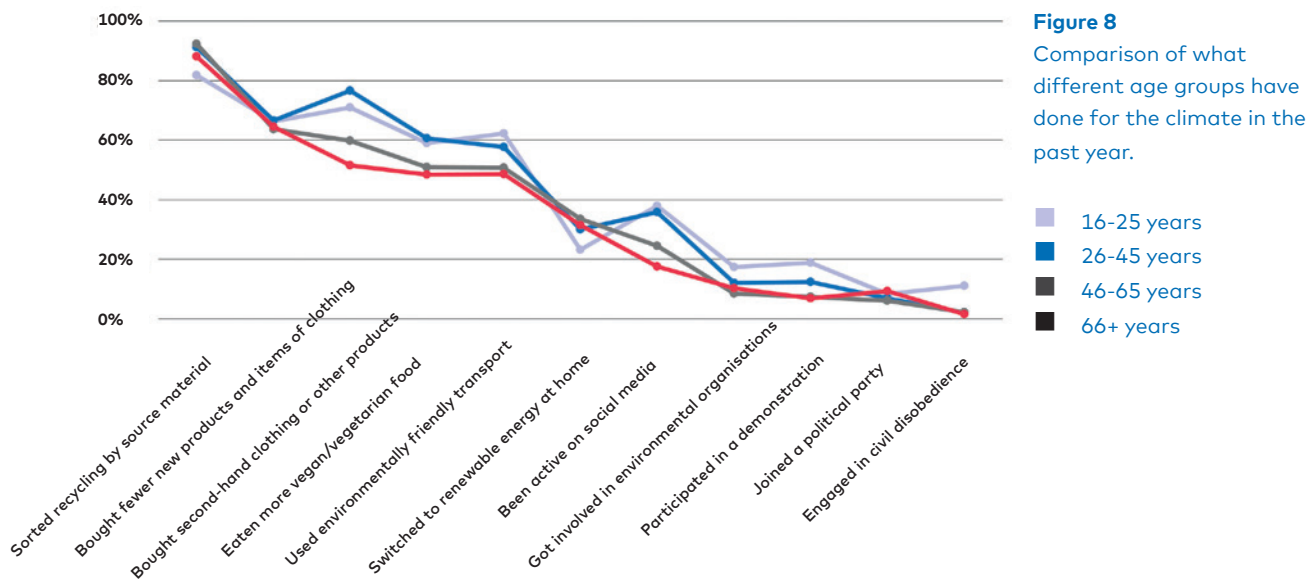
As we can see from Table 1, younger women respond far more radically than other groups when it comes to political activism for the sake of the future of the environment. They are the group that is most likely to engage in civil disobedience, but younger men also stand out when compared to the other age groups. The picture becomes clearer when we look at the age group 16–20 years in isolation, and it comes into even sharper relief when we look at the age group 16–28 years. As we can see, the same picture applies to involvement in environmental organisations and participation in demonstrations. Younger women are also far more active in terms of climate issues on social media than their male peers and women in general. However, both genders say that they can see themselves joining a political party for climate reasons in the future, which is considerably higher than for other age groups.

When it comes to renewable energy in homes and environmentally friendly

2 Younger women: 21 per cent, younger men: 14 per cent, women in general: 14 per cent.

3 Younger women: 25 per cent, younger men: 13 per cent, women in general: 13 per cent.

4 Younger women: 14 per cent, younger men: 9 per cent, women in general: 4 per cent.



	Nordic region	Men	Women	Young men (16-25 years)	Young women (16-25 years)
Be active on social media	35%	30%	41%	41%	62%
Participate in a demonstration	28%	24%	31%	30%	50%
Get involved in environmental organisations	24%	19%	30%	32%	49%
Get involved in environmental organisations	14%	12%	16%	21%	32%
Join a political party	13%	12%	13%	22%	24%

Table 1
Young people and political activism for the sake of the environment
Which of the following do you think you would be able to do to help combat climate change from now on?

transport, younger men and women are generally at the same level, so in these areas it seems clear that age has a bearing. It is conceivable that involvement in environmental organisations and engaging in civil disobedience is something that is relatively easy to do as a young person, while buying a car and a home is not so relevant at this age, so these intentions are shelved for later.

Education

In the survey, the respondents are divided into three levels of education: compulsory primary and lower secondary school or equivalent, upper secondary school or equivalent, and university/university college or equivalent.

Citizens with a higher level of education have more confidence in the authorities in their country than those with a lower level of education.

Education only has a minor bearing on the assessment of climate change and the environment as the most important area of co-operation. Compared to the average of 44 per cent, a somewhat greater proportion of those who attended university/university college think that climate change and the environment is the most important area (49 per cent) compared to those who only completed compulsory primary and lower secondary school (40 per cent) or upper secondary school (38 per cent). This may be due to the fact that a somewhat greater proportion of respondents with a higher level of education say that they are concerned about climate change (83 per cent) compared to those who only completed upper secondary school (72 per cent) or compulsory primary and lower secondary school (77 per cent).

Those with a lower level of education are less anxious about climate change – 22 per cent of those who completed compulsory primary and lower secondary school, 27 per cent of those who completed upper secondary school and 16 per cent of those with a university or university college education say that they are not concerned.

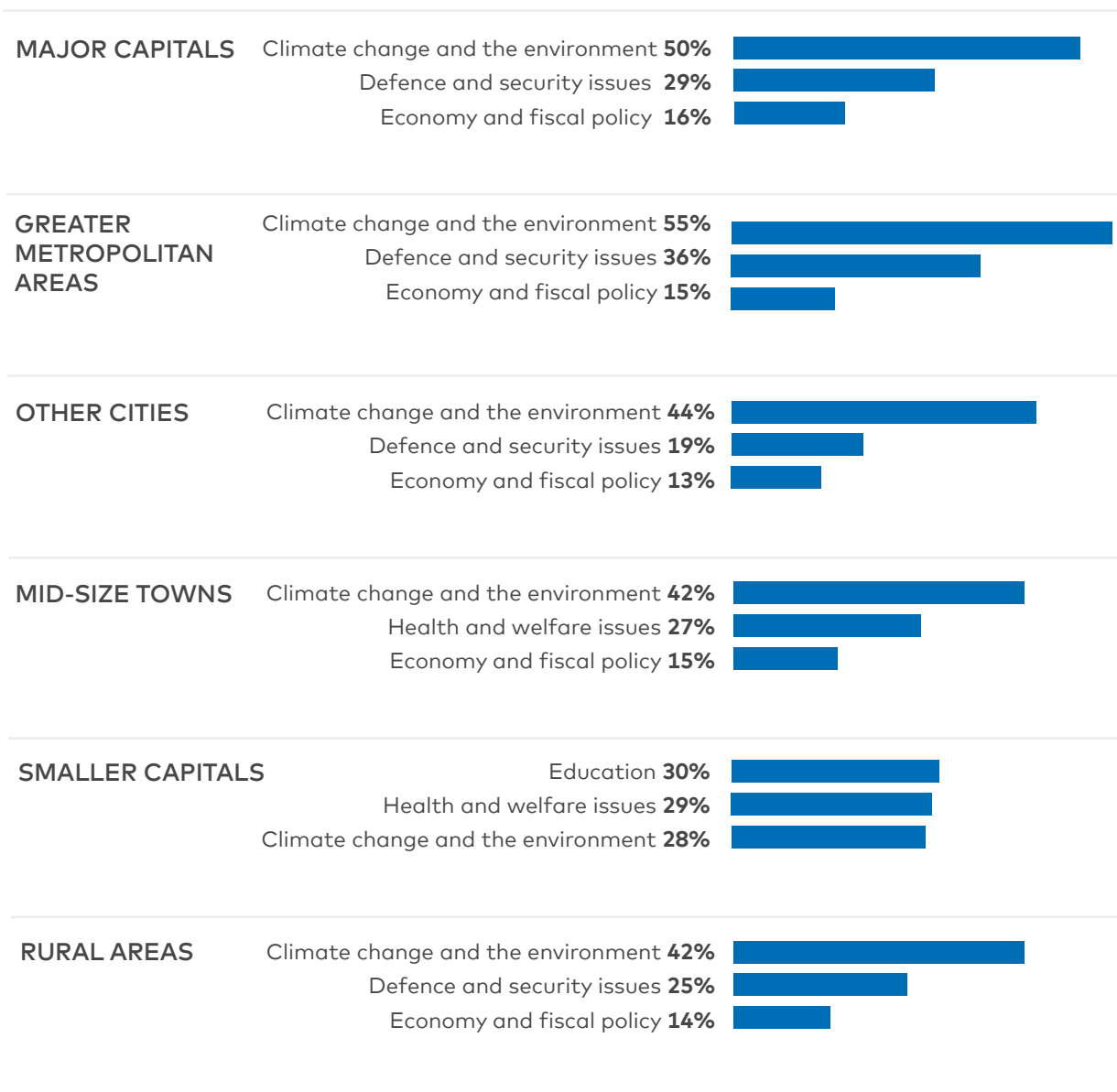
Citizens with a higher level of education have more confidence in the authorities in their country than those with a lower level of education.

Level of education has the greatest bearing on respondents' confidence in the authorities. 61 per cent of those who have attended university, university college or equivalent have confidence in the politicians in their country. This is ten percentage points higher than the average for the Nordic region and 20 percentage points higher than among those with a lower level of education.

A greater proportion of respondents with a higher level of education also say that they have done more for the climate over the past year than those with a lower level of education. All the respondents, regardless of educational background, are willing to do more for the climate from now on. The proportion of people with a high level of education slightly exceeds the proportion of people with a low level of education, but the differences are evened out considerably.

Figure 10

If you think about all the different areas of co-operation in the Nordic region, which do you think is the most important?



The significance of geography

To obtain an overall picture of the geographical differences in the Nordic region, we have grouped the respondents as follows: major capitals, greater metropolitan areas, other cities, mid-sized towns, smaller capitals and rural areas. The smaller capitals are located in the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Åland. The data shows that geography has a bearing on the responses of the Nordic citizens, and in this section we present some of the differences observed.

Regardless of geographic location, climate change and the environment comes out on top when it comes to what the population of the Nordic region considers the most important area of co-operation.

In the major capitals, including their greater metropolitan areas, there is a greater proportion of respondents who consider climate change and the environment and defence and security issues to be important areas of co-operation. Smaller Nordic capitals differ in that they prioritise education (see Figure 10).

We can see from Figure 10 that a greater proportion of respondents in the major capitals and greater metropolitan areas consider climate change and the environment to be the most important area of co-operation (50 and 55 per cent respectively) compared to those living in rural areas (42 per cent). However, the responses are roughly the same for rural areas and other cities.

But beyond this, we see that citizens living in capitals and greater metropolitan areas as well as in other cities are most concerned about climate change. 89 per cent of the citizens in the major capitals, 87 per cent in the greater metropolitan areas and 82 per cent in other cities say that they are concerned about climate change, while 74 per cent of citizens in rural areas say that they are concerned. The results also show that there are more people in the capitals (85 per cent) and in other cities (82 per cent) who think that the Nordic region should be a climate pioneer than there are in rural areas (77 per cent).

In all the Nordic capitals, over half of the respondents say that we should focus on reducing emissions in the Nordic region (53 per cent in major capitals and 58 per cent in smaller capitals). This is above the average of 41 per cent. At the same time, 37 per cent of respondents living in rural areas say that they want to reduce emissions in the Nordic region, and here the majority (55 per cent) think that we should focus on reducing emissions outside of the region.

The overall geographic picture also shows that it is the major capitals that have the highest values associated with willingness to make an effort for the climate, while the figures from the smaller capitals express great future potential – particularly when it comes to environmentally friendly transport and renewable energy in homes.





Conclusion and reflection

For this survey, just under 5,000 people in the Nordic region were interviewed to investigate Nordic attitudes towards climate change and democratic engagement. We were particularly interested in recording the views of young people, which is why the age group 16–25 years is overrepresented. Young people are weighted so that they correspond proportionally to the section of the population in each country.

One of the most important conclusions in the report is that eight out of ten Nordic citizens are concerned about climate change. This is roughly the same for all countries. Just as many, eight out of ten, think that the Nordic region should be a pioneer for the issue of climate change. At least half of the respondents think that the focus should be on reducing climate emissions outside of the Nordic region. This is somewhat more than those who think that the measures should be taken within the Nordic region.

Over half of Nordic citizens say that they have confidence in their country's political system, while 27 per cent have little or no confidence. However, in the area of climate change, there are more people who say that they do not believe that politicians can take measures to combat climate change than there are people who say that they do. The survey shows that climate change and the environment is considered the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region. The proportion of respondents who say this has more than doubled since the same question was asked in 2017. This can be seen in the context of eight out of ten inhabitants being concerned about climate change. In all the Nordic countries apart from the Faroe Islands and Greenland, citizens have responded that climate change and the environment should be the prioritised area of co-operation (ranking at either number one or two).

The Nordic population seems to some extent ready to change both its habits and behaviour in order to stop climate change. Nine out of ten are already sorting their recycling by source material, while two out of three have changed their clothing consumption (buying second-hand instead of new). Many Nordic citizens say that in the future they want to use more environmentally friendly transport and switch to renewable energy in their homes. The figures from the survey also show that many people want to be more politically active. 11 per cent say that they have participated in a demonstration in the past year, while 28 per cent say that they could see themselves doing so in the future. 24 per cent of respondents also want to join an environmental organisation in the future, compared to 11 per cent who are currently members of an environmental organisation.

In certain areas, demographic, geographical and social characteristics distinguish the responses from each other, but the overall impression is that gender, education and age have no marked bearing on the results and that the groups generally have fairly similar opinions. This is why the differences must not be exaggerated. However, there are nuances.

A greater proportion of women are concerned about climate change (86 per cent) compared to men (70 per cent). More women also say that climate change and the environment should be the most important area of co-operation in the Nordic region (50 per cent compared to 38 per cent of the men in the survey). This is consistent with other surveys showing that women take environmental issues more seriously.

In this survey, we see that education has the greatest bearing on the respondents' level of confidence in the political system. 61 per cent of those with a higher level of education have great confidence in the politicians in their country. This is 10 percentage points higher than the average for the Nordic region and 20 percentage points more than among those with a lower level of education. On the other hand, education has somewhat less of a bearing on attitudes to climate change and the environment.

We see that gender has a bearing on attitudes towards the issue of climate change, and that level of education has a bearing on citizens' general confidence in politicians. Age, however, has the least bearing on the responses, while location has a somewhat greater bearing across the board.

We might have expected greater diversity in the responses based on age, but the age groups largely respond identically to the survey questions. Nevertheless, there is one thing that stands out, and this is what the respondents can see themselves doing for the sake of the climate in the future. Here we see a marked difference between the youngest (16–25 years) and the oldest (66+ years) age groups, with young people being prepared to do more for the sake of the climate from now on. Among young people, there are also differences between women and men, with younger women being more concerned about climate change and a higher proportion of women than men thinking that climate change and the environment is the most important area of co-operation. However, younger women generally differ significantly from their male peers and women in that they can see themselves engaging more in environmental politics in the future.

It is at a national/regional level that we find the greatest variations, but of the underlying factors, geographical location of respondents has a major impact on how Nordic citizens respond to the survey questions. The biggest difference lies between major capitals and rural areas. Citizens in major capitals and big cities are more concerned about climate change than citizens in rural areas. A greater proportion of respondents in the capitals also think that the Nordic region should be a climate pioneer, and that we should reduce emissions within our own region.

As previously mentioned, these differences must not be exaggerated. The responses from the Nordic citizens generally reflect a similar pattern.

Reflections

The issue of climate change challenges us. The entire Nordic population says that the situation is a cause for concern and requires co-operation and action. This analysis gives an overall picture that we must not ignore: it shows a common regional pattern with subtle differences. Virtually everyone is concerned about climate change and prepared to do more to ensure a better future. There is more that unites us than separates us. We are therefore left with one key message: the Nordic region stands united in the fight against climate change.

It is important to understand these attitudes and to design suitable political strategies based on them. Where Nordic co-operation is concerned, it is clear that the issue of climate change and the environment tops the list of the areas that Nordic citizens consider the most important in terms of co-operation.

It is also worth highlighting that a not insignificant proportion of the respondents say that they have little confidence in politicians being able to take measures to combat climate change, while 30 per cent say that they have confidence in this. Take Norway as an example: it is here that confidence in politicians is greatest among the Nordic countries (57 per cent), but at the same time, few Norwegians

have fairly great or great confidence (22 per cent) in politicians being able to take measures to combat climate change.

The fact that the climate has become significantly more important to the population of the Nordic region, and that eight out of ten respondents are concerned about climate change, indicates a demand for action. On the other hand, it can also be interpreted as a common insight among the citizens that everyone needs to contribute both ideas and solutions. Although we see that there is potential to take greater responsibility for the climate in the future, particularly among young people, it is not a given that words will become action. Facilitating and creating opportunities for citizens to do their part, by making it easier for them to make climate-friendly choices, is an important task.

There are some nuances in the underlying factors of the survey. We see the biggest differences at a national level. At the same time, it is important to note that there are no major differences between the countries. Climate change and the environment is ranked top in most of the countries. And whether male or female, educated to a high or low level, living in a Nordic capital, city, smaller town or in a rural area, we can see that people are concerned about the climate.

Regardless of gender, age, education or geographical location, Nordic citizens are concerned about climate change.

The most important message of the report can therefore be reiterated: the Nordic region stands united in the fight against climate change.

Our Vision 2030

The solutions for how the climate challenge should be tackled vary across the borders in the Nordic region, but neighbouring countries share a common determination and ambition to put a stop to climate change. One of the most important conclusions of the survey is that climate change and the environment is what we should co-operate on in the Nordic region. The proportion who say this has more than doubled since we last asked Nordic citizens this question in 2017. In the space of only two years, climate change and the environment has become the most important sector for Nordic co-operation, and we can interpret this as a rapidly growing trend.

Our Vision 2030 is the Nordic Council of Ministers' contribution to increased co-operation to address our shared sustainability challenges, focusing on the necessary green transition. In August 2019, the Nordic prime ministers met in Reykjavik to discuss sustainability and climate. The vision was adopted at the same meeting, and stresses that the Nordic Council of Ministers is to be an effective instrument for making the Nordic region the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030.

The vision will affect the work of the entire Nordic Council of Ministers. Policy areas will be revised with a view to safeguarding resources for programmes, projects and activities that are in line with the vision. The ambition is to move the co-operation in a direction that makes it even more relevant to Nordic citizens. An active foundation in civil society is therefore also included in this process.

It is clear that it is high time to use the strength of the Nordic region to the benefit of the climate and society, and to give this area the highest priority. The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement show the way, but we need to be even more ambitious and work even more quickly.

Appendices

The answers from the survey for the Nordic region as a whole and by country

1. If you think about all the different areas of co-operation in the Nordic region, which do you think is the most important?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Climate change and the environment	44%	43%	34%	57%	41%	26%	36%	12%	21%
Defence and security issues	26%	27%	19%	12%	46%	9%	16%	1%	13%
Economy and fiscal policy	14%	16%	9%	11%	20%	7%	18%	5%	14%
Education	11%	10%	7%	9%	17%	26 %	18%	40%	42%
Integration and refugee issues	11%	15%	3%	11%	10%	9%	6%	1%	5%
Energy/energy efficiency improvement	10%	6%	8%	1 %	12%	4%	2%	5%	10%
Health and welfare issues	9%	8%	8%	7%	11%	28%	14%	13%	28%
Business/industry issues	8%	3%	6%	6%	22%	4%	3%	10%	9%
Culture	8%	5%	8%	7%	14%	12%	7%	14%	24%
Labour market issues	8%	9%	4%	6%	10%	4%	11%	5%	8%
Sustainable use of natural resources	8%	4%	6%	13%	12%	4%	1%	1%	15%
Fighting crime across Nordic borders	8%	9%	2%	8%	10%	6%	1%	2%	9%
We should co-operate as much as possible	7%	5%	3%	6%	16%	9%	5%	9%	29%
Research/innovation	7%	4%	5%	8%	11%	4%	2%	1%	17%
Food and agricultural issues	6%	4%	5%	8%	10%	3%	%	3%	6%
Equality	6%	6%	1%	5%	10%	10%	5%	1%	20%
Foreign affairs	6%	3%	2%	6%	13%	5%	1%	3%	7%
Relationship with the EU	5%	4%	2%	6%	10%	3%	1%	2%	4%
Co-operation on legislation	4%	2%	2%	6%	9%	5%	3%	4%	7%
Language	3%	1%	2%	3%	7%	5%	5%	17%	19%
Regional issues/development of regions	3%	1%	1%	3%	8%	2%	%	0%	5%
Other	27%	34%	28%	2 %	14%	22%	26%	10%	14%
Total	236%	220%	164%	240%	332%	208%	183%	161%	328%
No area/Don't know	12%	8%	19%	14%	7%	25%	8%	12%	3%

2. How much confidence do you have in the political system in your country? The “political system” covers key social institutions as well as politicians, elected officials and public servants.

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Very great confidence	11%	11%	14%	10%	10%	3%	12%	3%	2%
Fairly great confidence	40%	34%	43%	44%	44%	25%	48%	39%	13%
Neutral	22%	22%	24%	15%	26%	37%	21%	34%	27 %
Little confidence	20%	24%	12%	23%	15%	27%	14%	17%	34%
No confidence	7%	9%	6%	%	4%	6%	3%	5%	21%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	3%	3%

3. Are you concerned about climate change?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Yes, concerned	78%	79%	73%	82%	78%	77%	78%	60%	67%
No, not concerned	21%	20%	25%	18%	21%	22%	21%	39%	29%
Don't know	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	4%

4. Do you think the Nordic region should be a climate pioneer?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Yes, the Nordic region should be a pioneer	80	81	80	82%	74%	77%	89%	79%	92%
No, the Nordic region does not need to be a pioneer	18%	16%	17%	16%	23%	18%	9%	18%	6%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%

5. What do you think the Nordic region should focus on when it comes to reducing the negative climate impact?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Reducing emissions in the Nordic region	41%	39%	47%	48%	30%	61%	44%	63%	34%
Helping to reduce emissions outside the Nordic region	53%	57%	44%	44%	65%	28%	53%	31%	60%
Emissions do not need to be reduced	3%	1%	3%	4%	3%	4%	1%	1%	5%
Don't know	4%	3%	6%	5%	2%	7%	2%	5%	2%

6. If emissions are reduced in the Nordic region, in which areas do you think this should happen first and foremost?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Industry and manufacturing	36%	40%	29%	31%	41%	46%	33%	16%	38%
Transport/travel	28%	34%	35%	21%	19%	25%	26%	30%	27%
Energy and power	14%	9%	13%	23%	18%	9%	16%	28%	13%
Agriculture and forestry	6%	4%	4%	11%	7%	5%	8%	5%	5%
Construction and property	4%	3%	4%	5%	5%	1%	2%	3%	4%
Other	5%	5%	7%	4%	3%	3%	7%	3%	6%
None of the above	2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	0%	2%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	5%	3%	9%	6%	16%	5%

7. To what extent are you confident that the politicians in the Nordic region will take the measures needed to combat climate change?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Very great confidence	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	1%	1%	4%	4%
Fairly great confidence	26%	27%	19%	31%	29%	19%	35%	27%	24%
Neutral	29%	26%	35%	25%	32%	32%	31%	27%	19%
Little confidence	29%	31%	30%	32%	24%	35%	25%	26%	31%
No confidence	8%	10%	8%	6%	6%	9%	3%	4%	7%
Politicians do not need to take any measures	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%	2%	0%	2%	3%	9%	13%

8. Have you done any of the following for the climate in the past year?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Sorted recycling by source material	90%	94%	92%	76%	94%	97%	97%	71%	14%
Bought fewer new products and items of clothing	65%	65%	65%	64%	68%	72%	74%	46%	10%
Bought second-hand clothing or other products	65%	64%	62%	69%	65%	71%	76%	44%	10%
Eaten more vegan/vegetarian food	55%	60%	46%	47%	63%	44%	57%	18%	5%
Used environmentally friendly transport	54%	58%	59%	47%	52%	48%	48%	20%	7%
Switched to renewable energy at home	30%	3%	29%	30%	31%	2%	34%	1%	8%
Been active on social media	29%	31%	32%	25%	25%	33%	32%	19%	3%
Got involved in environmental organisations	11%	15%	14%	10%	4%	19%	11%	8%	1%
Participated in a demonstration	11%	12%	15%	9%	5%	18%	6%	9%	2%
Other	9%	8%	9%	14%	8%	8%	6%	6%	45%
Joined a political party	7%	9%	11%	5%	2%	11%	7%	7%	0%
Engaged in civil disobedience	3%	3%	%	4%	3%	6%	3%	0%	0%
Total	430%	450%	437%	399%	42%	452%	45%	268%	106%
No, haven't done anything	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	9%	33%

9. Which of the following do you think you would be able to do to help combat climate change from now on?

	Nordic region	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Åland	Faroe Islands	Greenland
Number of interviews	4734	829	825	825	837	533	311	270	304
Sort recycling by source material	83%	83%	78%	78%	92%	82%	84%	60%	16%
Buy second-hand clothing or other products	71%	73%	60%	75%	75%	79%	7 %	38%	12%
Buy fewer new products and items of clothing	71%	72%	63%	71%	76%	80%	74%	36%	12%
Use environmentally friendly transport	67%	69%	60%	70%	68%	82%	70%	32%	7%
Eat more vegan/vegetarian food	59%	61%	44%	57%	70%	55%	62%	17%	5%
Switch to renewable energy at home	48%	53%	35%	51%	5 %	56%	55%	35%	9%
Be active on social media	35%	38%	31%	33%	37%	48%	43%	20%	3%
Participate in a demonstration	28%	34%	24%	29%	17%	38%	28%	11%	4%
Get involved in environmental organisations	24%	33%	20%	20%	17%	44%	33%	8%	0%
Engage in civil disobedience	14%	18%	9%	15%	13%	20%	14%	1%	1%
Join a political party	13%	17%	11%	10%	9%	13%	15%	9%	0%
Other	8%	7%	9%	9%	8%	5%	5%	5%	34%
Total	522%	557%	444%	520%	534%	602%	562%	274%	102%
Nothing	5%	5%	11%	5%	2%	4%	5%	30%	36%

Method

The overall results for the Nordic region are weighted based on the population of the various countries:

Vountry	Proportion
Sweden	37.1%
Norway	19.3%
Denmark	21.4%
Finland	20.4%
Iceland	1.3%
Åland	0.1%
Faroe Islands	0.2%
Greenland	0.2%

Margins for error:

800 interviews	4700 interviews
Using outcome 20/80: $\pm 2.8\%$	Using outcome 20/80: $\pm 1.1\%$
Using outcome 50/50: $\pm 3.5\%$	Using outcome 50/50: $\pm 1.4\%$

Numbers of people interviewed:

Country	Number of interviews
Sweden	829
Norway	825
Denmark	825
Finland	837
Iceland	533
Åland	311
Faroe Islands	270
Greenland	304

Sources

Fritz M. & Koch M., Public Support for Sustainable Welfare Compared: Links between Attitudes towards Climate and Welfare Policies, Sustainability (2019).

**Democracy and climate engagement in the Nordic region:
same direction, different solutions**
Andrea Skjold Frøshaug, Ulf Andreasson

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Nordic co-operation

Nordic co-operation is one of the world's most extensive forms of regional collaboration, involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

Nordic co-operation has firm traditions in politics, the economy and culture. It plays an important role in European and international collaboration, and aims at creating a strong Nordic community in a strong Europe.

Nordic co-operation seeks to safeguard Nordic and regional interests and principles in the global community. Shared Nordic values help the region solidify its position as one of the world's most innovative and competitive.

Nordic Council of Ministers

Nordens Hus
Ved Stranden 18
DK-1061 Copenhagen
www.norden.org

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This report highlights both the challenges and opportunities for the Nordic democracies in their important work for the sake of the climate and environment of the future, both of which form the core of Our Vision 2030, which envisages the Nordic region becoming the most sustainable region in the world.

[Read more about the vision](#)

