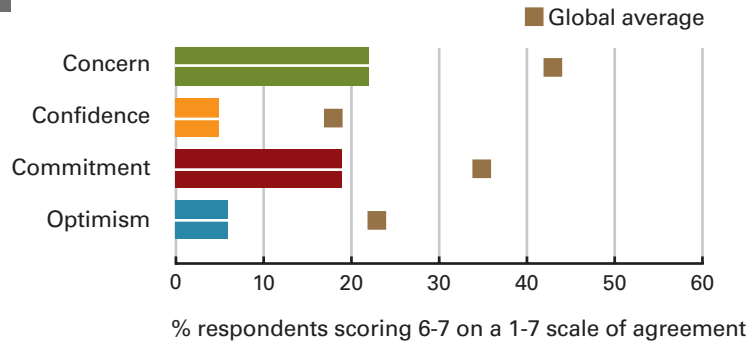


# HSBC Climate Confidence Index 2007: country profile

## UK

The HSBC Climate Confidence Index 2007 shows the UK as the least engaged of any of the economies surveyed. People in the UK have the lowest level of concern, the lowest confidence in what is being done today to address the issue, the lowest level of personal commitment, and nearly the lowest optimism about the outcome. A fatalistic view is prevalent, with significant 'green rejection', especially in younger age groups.

Figure 1  
HSBC Climate Confidence Index: UK



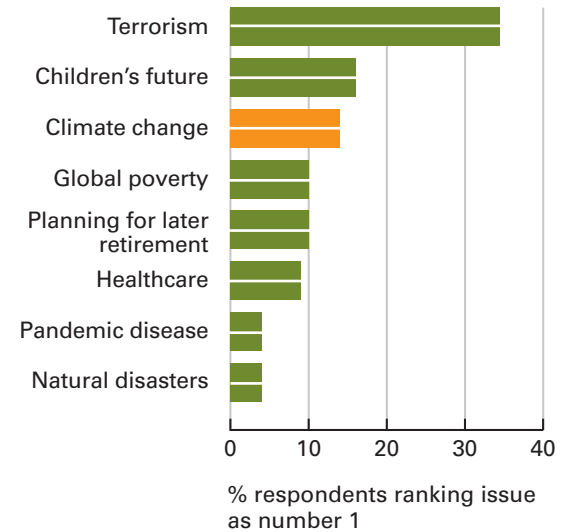
Concern	Confidence	Commitment	Optimism
<i>'Climate change and how we respond to it are among the biggest issues I worry about today.'</i>	<i>'The people and organisations who should be doing something about climate change are doing what is needed.'</i>	<i>'I am personally making a significant effort to help reduce climate change through how I live my life today.'</i>	<i>'I believe we will stop climate change.'</i>

The UK shares with France and Germany the profile of a sceptical pessimist (Figure 1), but has a particularly low level of concern and personal commitment.

Among other world issues tested, climate change is the number three concern in the UK, after terrorism and children's future (Figure 2). But a significant number of

people are not only sceptical, they also reject climate change concerns. One third of people say we should not try to reduce climate change by making either big or small changes to our lifestyles. Within this third, the most common viewpoint – held by more than one in 10 people – is that 'we should adapt to a changing climate, not try to

Figure 2  
Climate change ranks third among world issues in the UK



stop it from happening' (Figure 3).

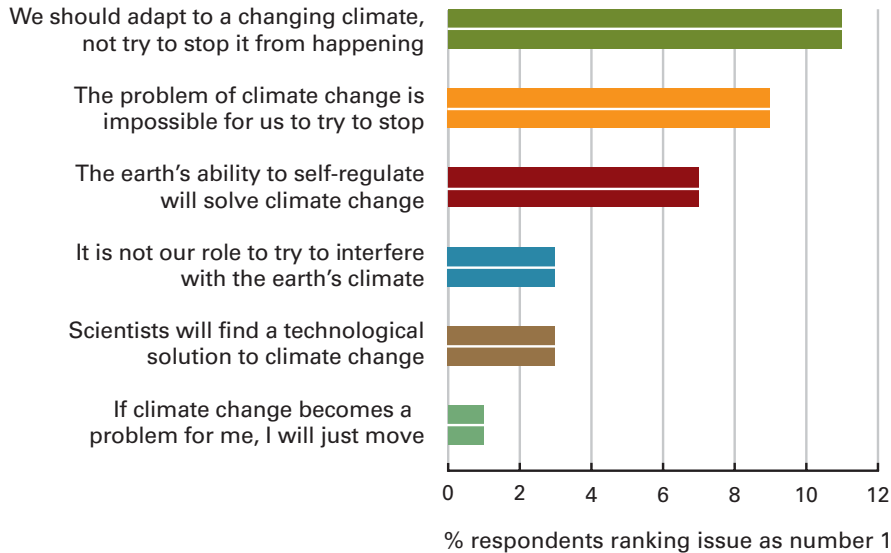
Attitudes to climate change are similar across different income bands, but strikingly different across generations. Engagement with the issue, seen through the level of concern and personal commitment, increases significantly with age, while confidence in what is being

done and optimism about the outcome decrease with age. The over-50s show a big gap between their relatively high engagement and pessimistic view of the outcome (28% concern compared with 5% optimism) while the younger age groups are less convinced about the problem and therefore more optimistic that we are doing, and can do,

Figure 3

**More than one in 10 people say we should adapt, not try to stop, climate change**

'Which best describes your view on how we should respond to climate change?'  
(Only 33% of people choosing 'Don't try' options are shown here)



what is needed (18% concern compared with 10% optimism). In the younger age groups, there are a growing number of people who are confident with their personal interpretation of climate science, comfortable with uncertainty about the future, and suspicious of the motives of both government and companies. Typical unprompted comments from

the 18- to 24-year-old age group are:

- 'It has been proven that [climate change] is natural and is a change the earth must go through. We should stop interfering with the natural course of things.'
- 'The science underlying climate change is manipulated for political purposes and, as a science

student, I believe many of the claims that are made about the causes of climate change are unfounded.'

- 'Carbon makes up only a fraction of the world's atmosphere. It seems to me that the government is playing on the climate thing, to instil fear in the population, thus using it to charge more taxes.'

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