

Environmental issues in the run-up to the European elections: the French are in FAVOUR, and see environmental conservation and energy transition as a potential new economic model

Key figures

- ❖ **57%** - the percentage of French people who would like to see the European Union take greater steps to protect the environment. Conversely, only 5% believe that the EU should do less;
- ❖ **75%** of French people consider that it “should be a priority” to establish a European development model that will protect natural resources in Europe and around the world;
- ❖ **90%** of the French population say they are in favour of developing an energy mix based on renewable energy and energy efficiency (41% “completely” agree with this idea);
- ❖ Over three-quarters of the French population (**77%**) think that Europe-wide energy transition and environmental conservation can be factors in economic growth and job creation;
- ❖ Lastly, **55%** of French people think energy transition and environmental conservation should be an important issue in the European elections.

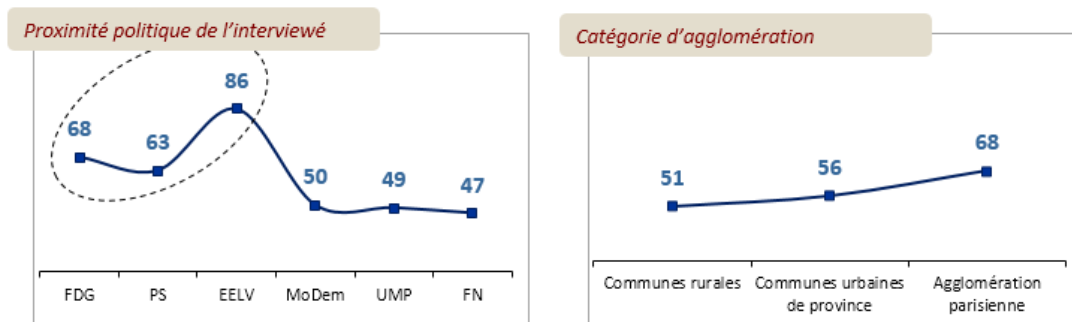
Note on the methodology:

This survey was carried out by Ifop for WWF. A representative sample of 1,050 French people over the age of 18 was questioned via a self-administered online questionnaire between 16 and 24 April 2014. Quota sampling (gender, age and profession of the respondents) was used to ensure representativeness with a stratified sample by geographical region and type of area.

Survey findings:

More than half of the French population (57%) thinks that Europe should do more in terms of environmental protection, compared to only 9% who would like to see less commitment than at the moment. Looking beyond this overall finding, this feeling appears to be relatively independent of the respondent's gender, age or profession. Only two criteria proved particularly divisive: political leanings, and type of area.

Ensemble des Français = 57%



Furthermore, when asked to declare how much emphasis should be given to issues associated with energy transition and environmental conservation in the European election campaign, nearly a quarter of French people consider it a major issue (23%), and over half (55%) take a more moderate stance and describe the subject as "important".

Based on this desire for greater commitment from the European Union, and in a difficult economic climate, **three-quarters of French respondents support the idea of a development model that encouraged the conservation of natural resources in Europe and around the world**. An even greater number (90%) declared their support for a development model based on renewable energy and energy efficiency, which is hardly surprising given the steadily rising cost of energy and (Europe-wide) debates about supplies.

Here too, it is respondents' political inclinations that account for the only significant gaps in perception, as left-wing sympathisers - primarily supporters of *Europe Ecologie-Les Verts*, but also, to a lesser extent, of the *Front de Gauche* - are most likely to back this kind of model of development for Europe, whereas National Front sympathisers are the least supportive.

This solid backing for a future model incorporating these environmental issues can probably be partially explained by the fact that over three-quarters of French respondents view energy transition and environmental conservation as sectors capable of stimulating economic development and job creation (two areas of considerable public concern) in the various countries.