PERILS OF PERCEPTION

Environmental Perils GB findings

April 2021

GAME CHANGERS

These are the latest findings from Ipsos' Perils of Perception survey. The survey was conducted in 30 markets and asked people about what individuals can do to tackle climate change. This deck presents findings for Great Britain only.

For the purpose of this study, the main sources of 'actual' data for impacts of individual actions on climate change can be found at the end of the report.

Summary

Despite high concern and high confidence among Britons we know what to do in our own lives to combat climate change, misperceptions are rife and many often just don't know.

On average, Britons underestimate the most impactful climate actions they can take, such as having fewer children and overestimate some less impactful ones, such as recycling

Awareness of the climate change impacts we are already seeing is low. Few knew how warm recent years have been, or how many lives are already impacted by climate change

Climate action messaging can confuse: many think it's better to eat local meat rather than imported plants, when the reverse is true: vegetarianism is far more impactful

In Great Britain, over 7 in 10 agree:

“I understand what action I need to take to play my part in tackling climate change.”

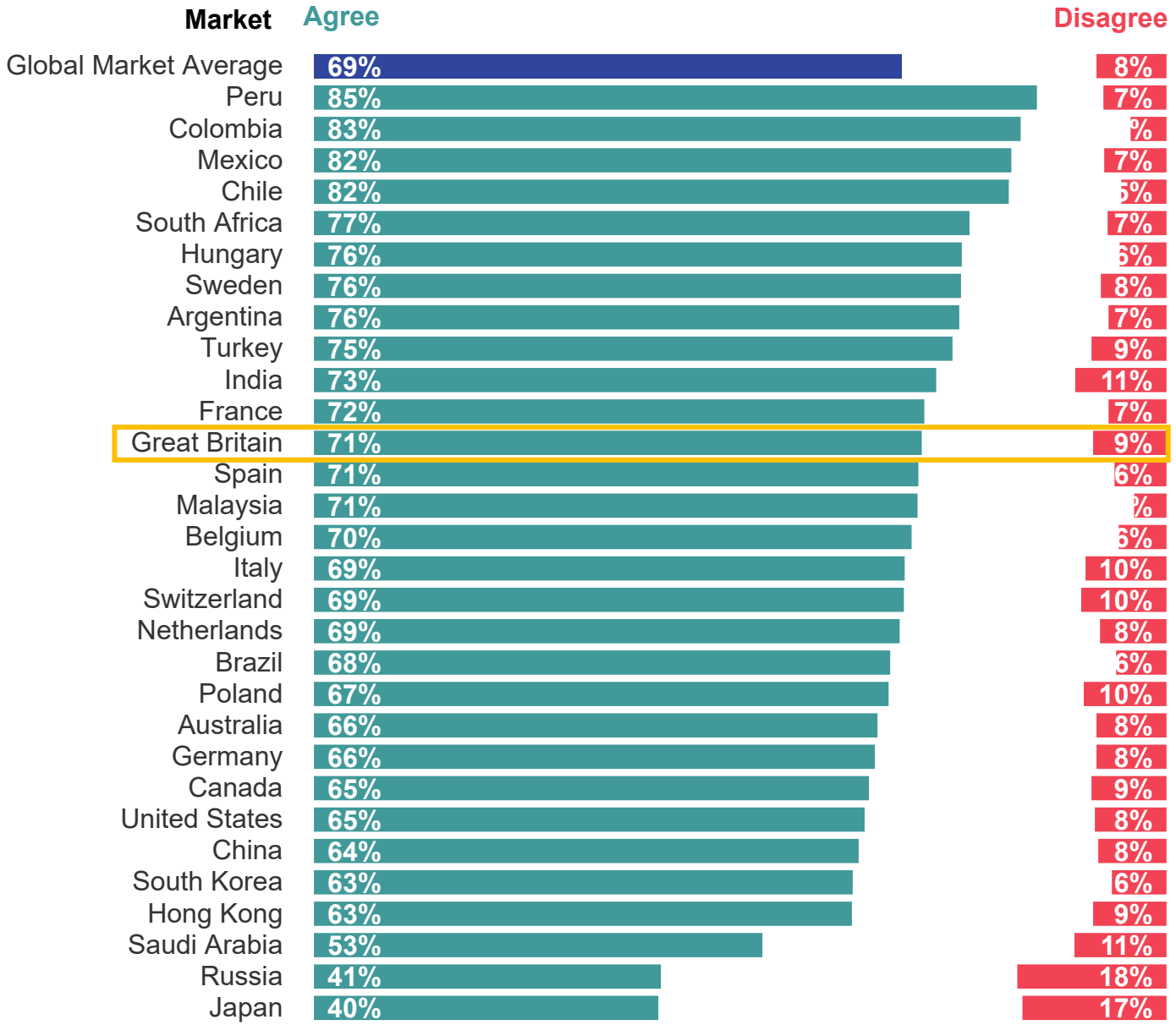
But do we really?

Q.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following:
I understand what action I need to take to play my part in tackling climate change

In almost every market, a majority agree they understand what action they need to take to tackle climate change.

But do we really?



Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

Behavioural perceptions

How do we reduce our climate change impact?

Looking at well-known ‘green’ actions, how does the public rank potential greenhouse gas savings from each?

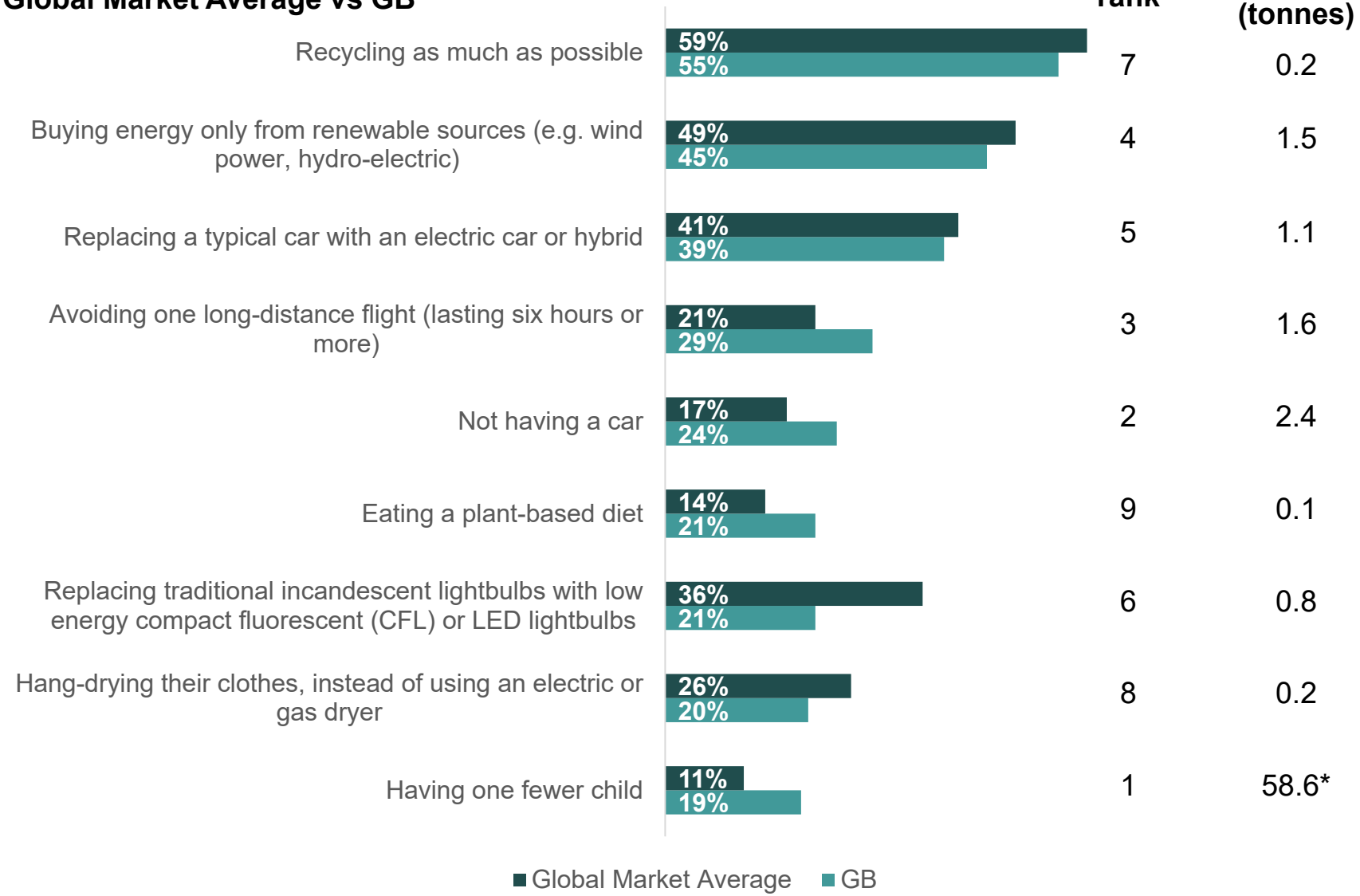
Q.

From this list of options, which three do you think would most reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of an individual living in one of the world's richer countries?

Global Market Average vs GB

While all actions can make a difference, the most impactful actions are ranked too low, and the least impactful actions ranked too high in the public's estimations of carbon savings.

Global Market Average vs GB



Base: Global Market Average 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets; GB 1,000 online adults aged 16-74. Fieldwork dates 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: Institute of Physics, 2017. The most effective individual steps to tackle climate change aren't being discussed. Available here: https://phys.org/news/2017-07-effective-individual-tackle-climate-discussed.html*

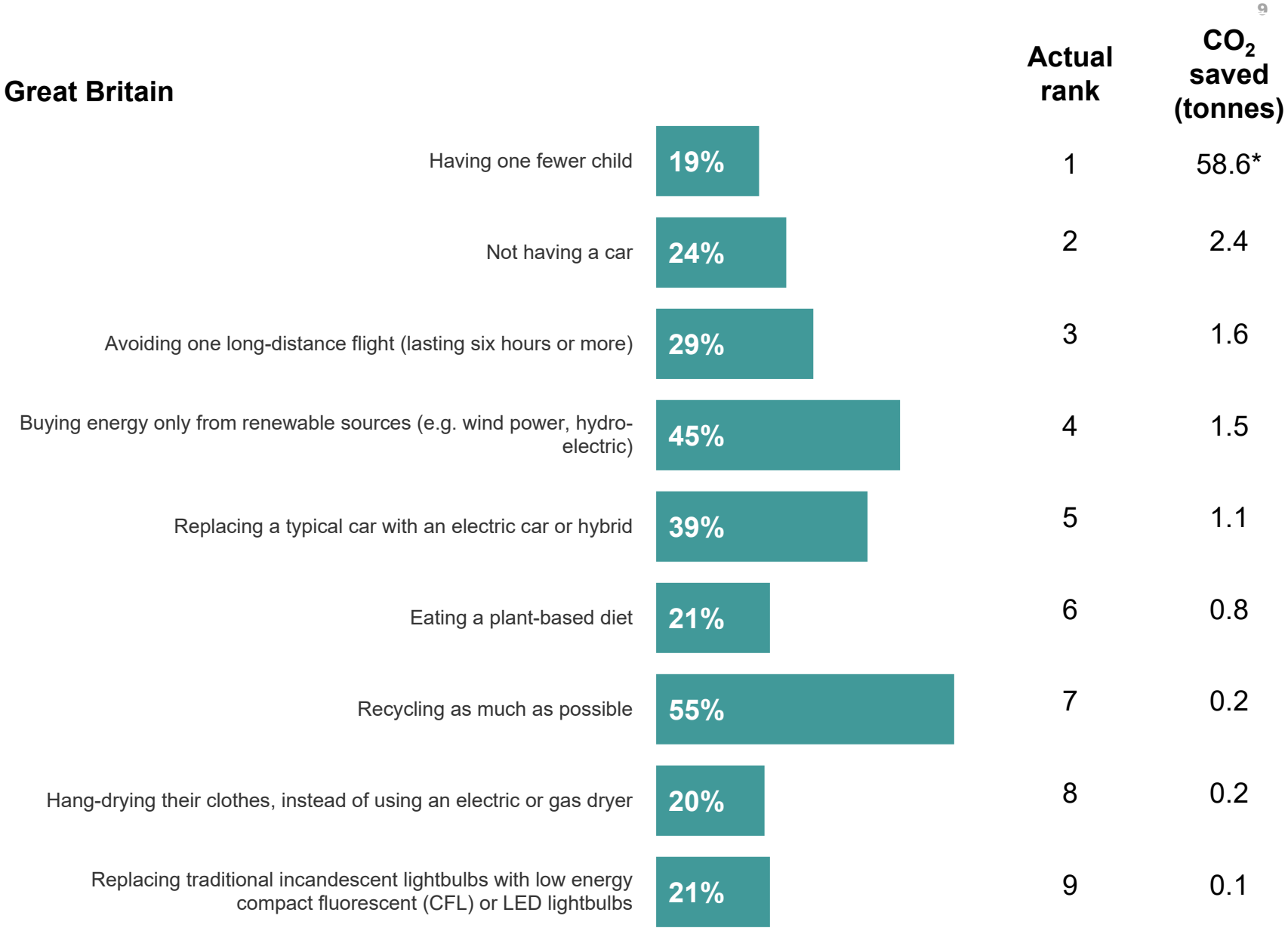
NB: Emissions saved from having one fewer child is calculated by quantifying future emissions of descendants based on historical rates, based on heredity

Q.

From this list of options, which three do you think would most reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of an individual living in one of the world's richer countries?

Great Britain

The difference is clear when ranked by actual order – actions like recycling are over-estimated compared with not having a car at all or avoiding long-distance flights



Base: 1,000 online adults aged 16-74, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: Institute of Physics, 2017. The most effective individual steps to tackle climate change aren't being discussed. Available here: https://phys.org/news/2017-07-effective-individual-tackle-climate-discussed.html*

NB: Emissions saved from having one fewer child is calculated by quantifying future emissions of descendants based on historical rates, based on heredity

Going beyond the (more) obvious, what other actions could we take, and do we understand their potential impact?

Q.

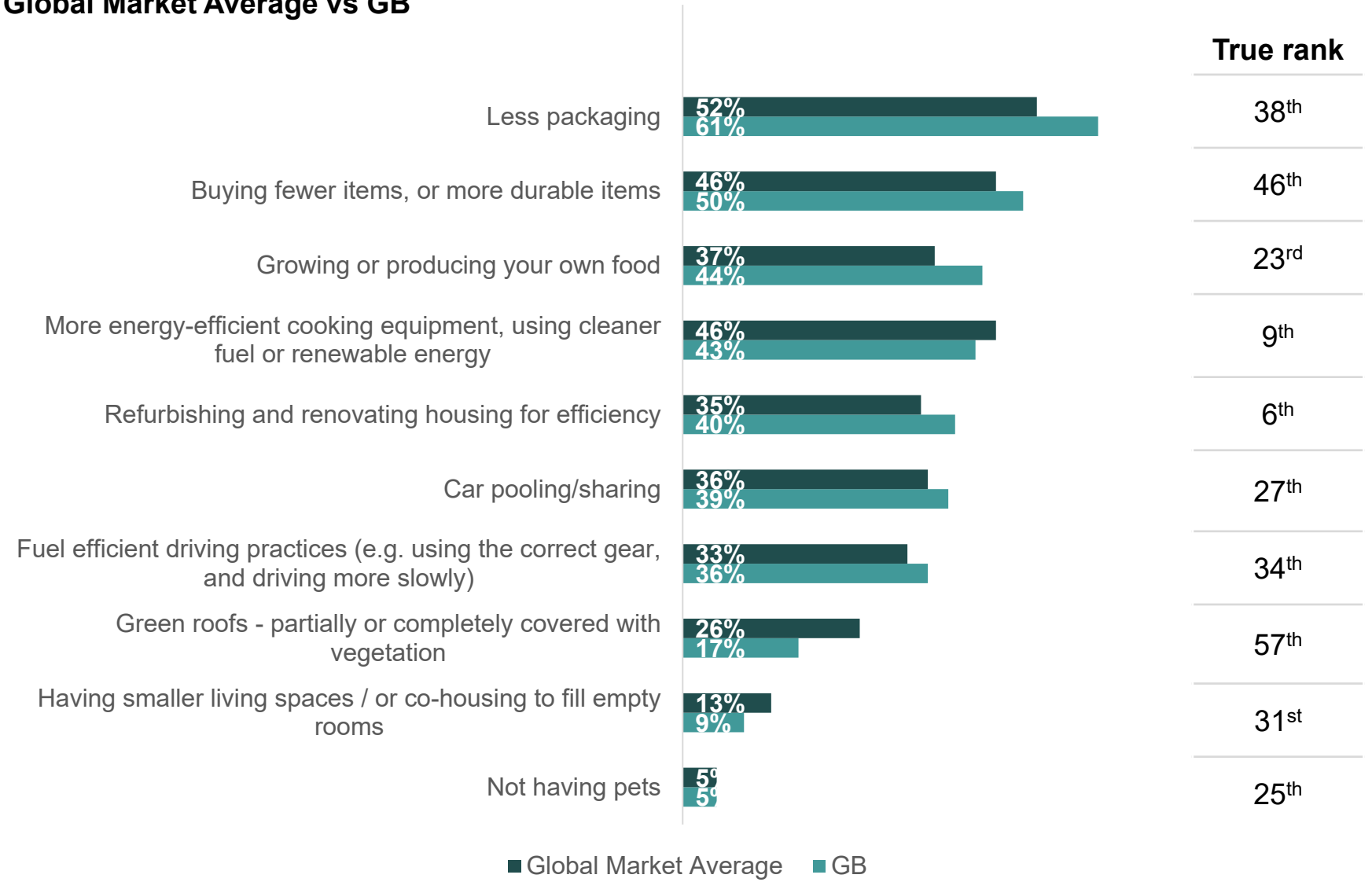
Which of the following actions do you think appear in the top 30 ways of reducing our personal climate change impact? Please select up to five.

Global Market Average vs GB

Britons were generally more accurate in selecting actions in the top ways to reduce our climate impact.

However, 3 in 5 believed less packaging (61%) was in the top thirty, with half believing buying less (50%)was highly ranked. This was more than, for example, renovating or refurbishing housing for efficiency (40%).

Global Market Average vs GB



Base: Global Market Average 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets; GB 1,000 online adults aged 16-74. Fieldwork dates 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

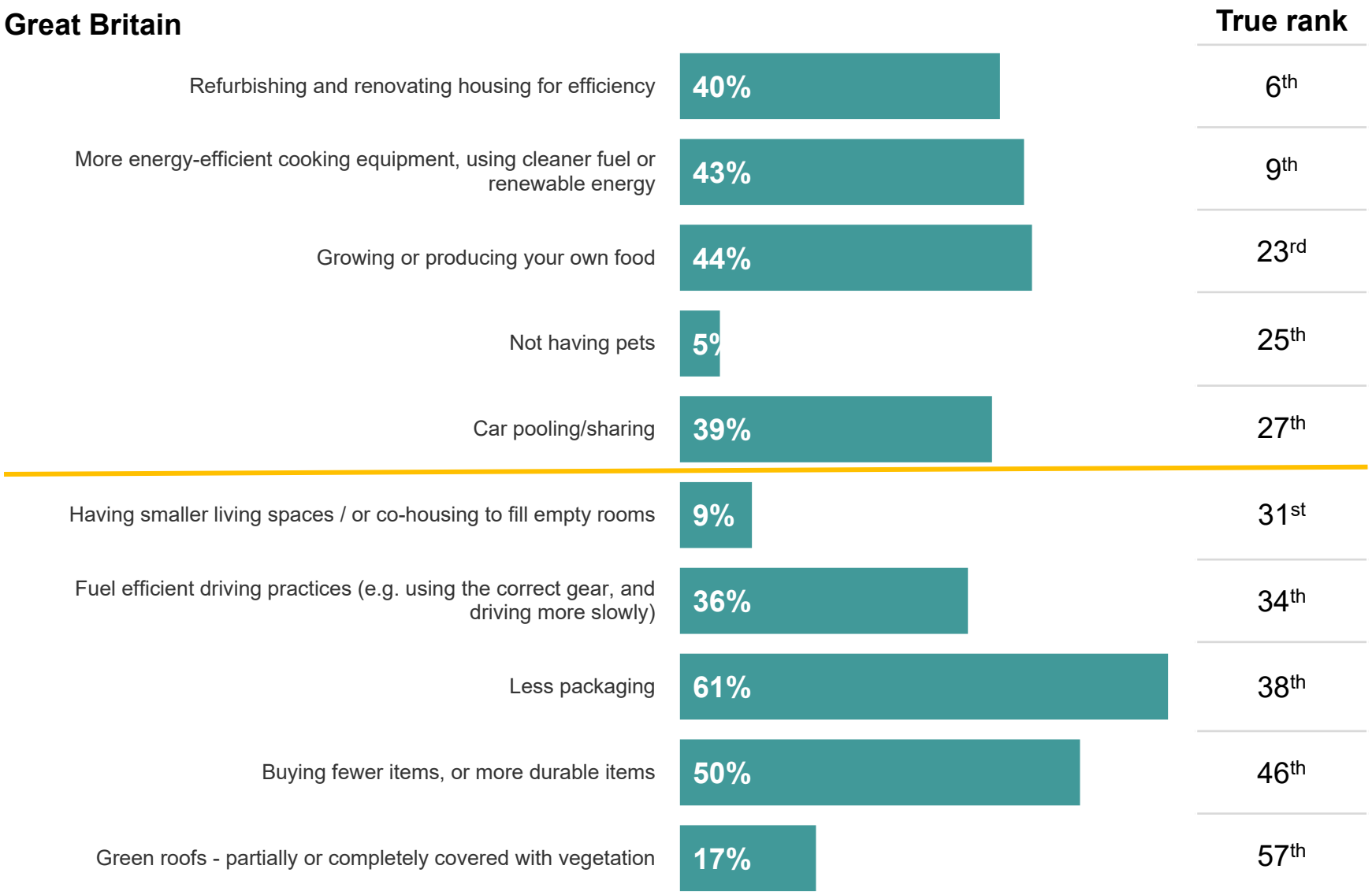
**Source: Ivanova et al., 2020. Quantifying the potential for climate change mitigation of consumption options. Available here: https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab8589/pdf*

Q.

Which of the following actions do you think appear in the top 30 ways of reducing our personal climate change impact? Please select up to five.

Great Britain

The difference is clearer when ranked by actual order – actions such as buying products with less packaging and buying fewer or more durable items are over-estimated compared with refurbishing homes for energy efficiency.



Base: 1,000 online adults aged 16-74, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: Ivanova et al., 2020. Quantifying the potential for climate change mitigation of consumption options. Available here: https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab8589/pdf*

Impacts of climate change

Climate change already displaces more people than conflict, but only a minority know this.

Q.

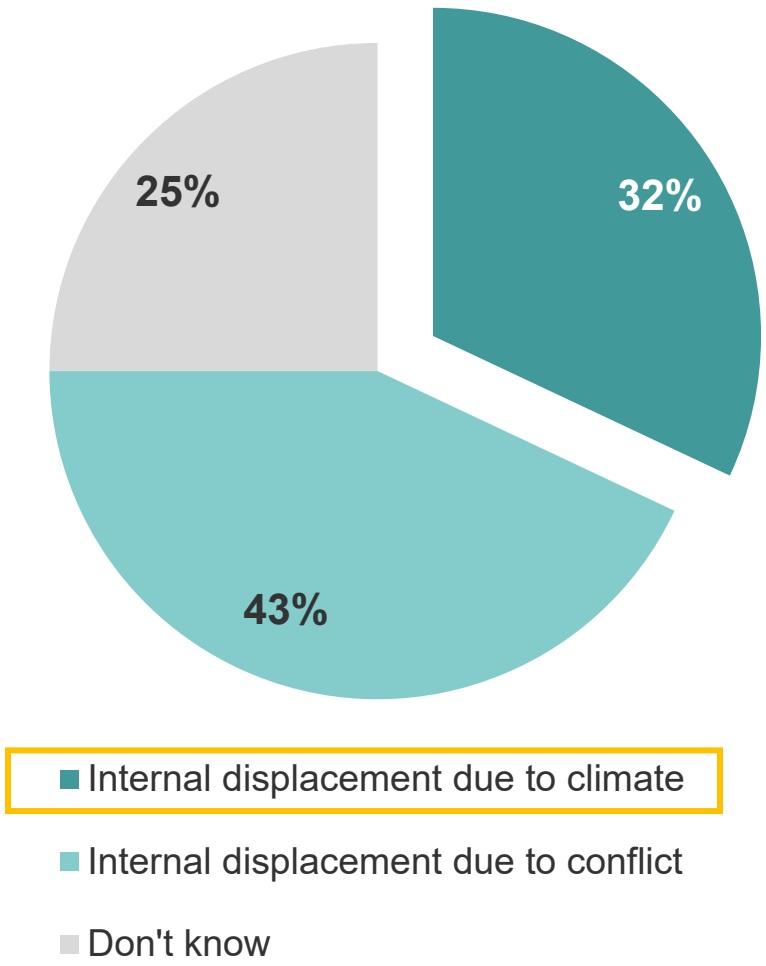
In 2020, do you think more people suffered internal displacement as a result of conflict (such as war, criminal and political violence) or as a result of climate and weather-related disasters (such as hurricanes, storms and flooding)?

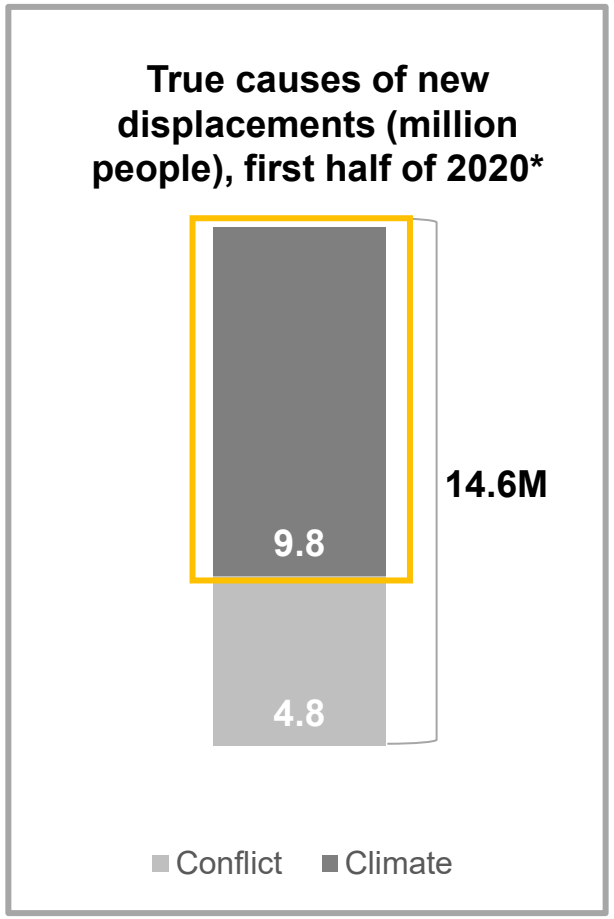
Global Market Average

Two in five (43%) believe conflict to be the greater cause of internal displacement, while a third (32%) chose climate and weather-related disasters.

The true cause (climate and weather) accounted for two thirds (67%) of new displacements in the first six months of 2020.

Global Market Average





Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

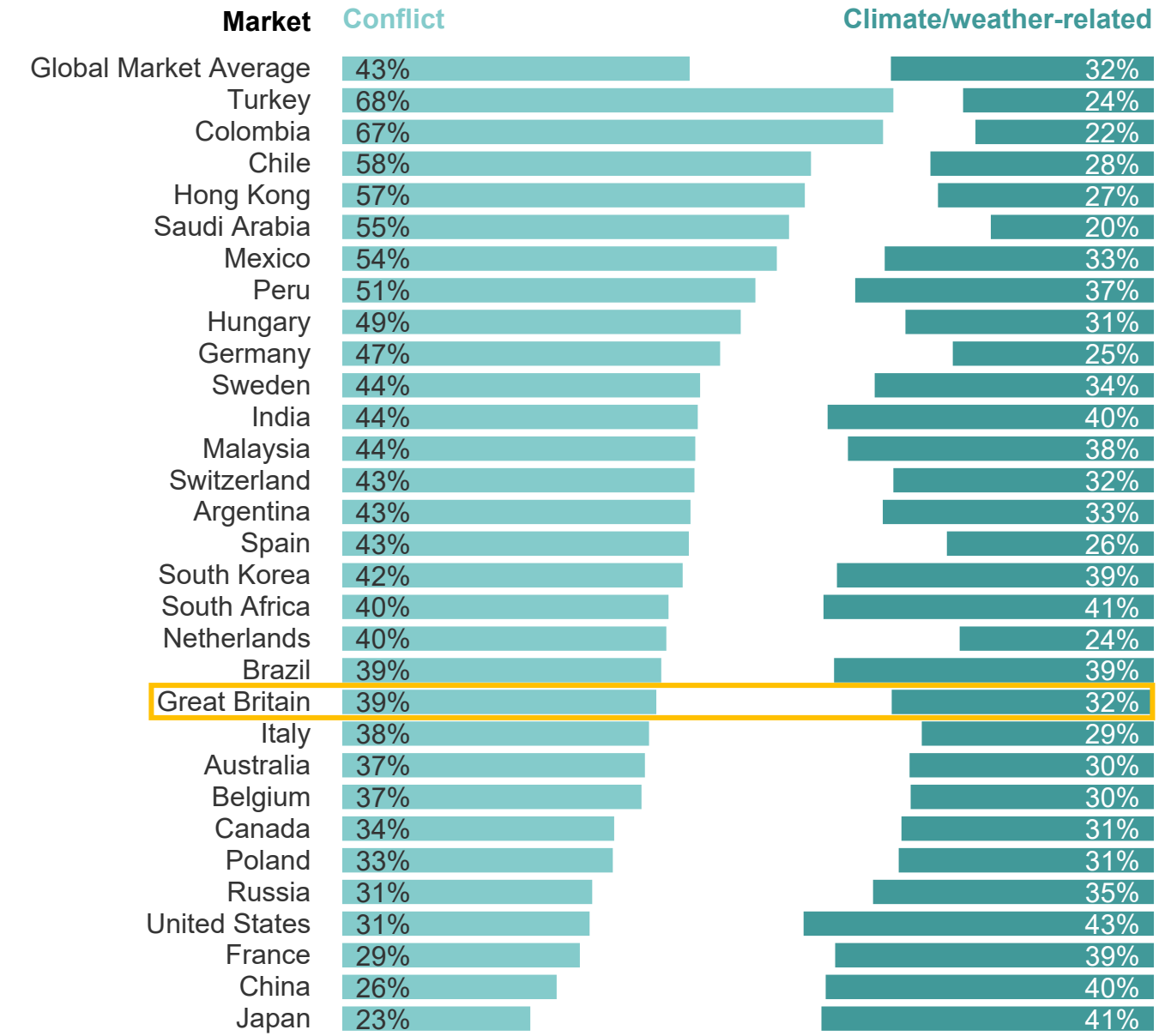
**Source: GRID, 2020. 2020 Mid-Year Update. Available here: https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/2020%20Mid-year%20update.pdf*

Q.

In 2020, do you think more people suffered internal displacement as a result of conflict (such as war, criminal and political violence) or as a result of climate and weather-related disasters (such as hurricanes, storms and flooding)?

In GB, 2 in 5 (39%) perceived conflict as being the greater cause of internal displacement, with a third (32%) correctly believing climate/weather to be the greater cause.

This is broadly in line with the Global Market average.



Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

Feeling hot, hot, hot? Only one in twenty-five of the public know that all of the last six years were among the hottest on record.

Q.

The World Meteorological Organization collects annual global temperatures, to see whether they are rising or falling across the world. Records begin in 1850.Since 2015, how many years have been the warmest year on record?

Global Market Averages

Nearly all respondents either underestimated (22%) or were unsure (73%) of how many years since 2015 have been the warmest on record.

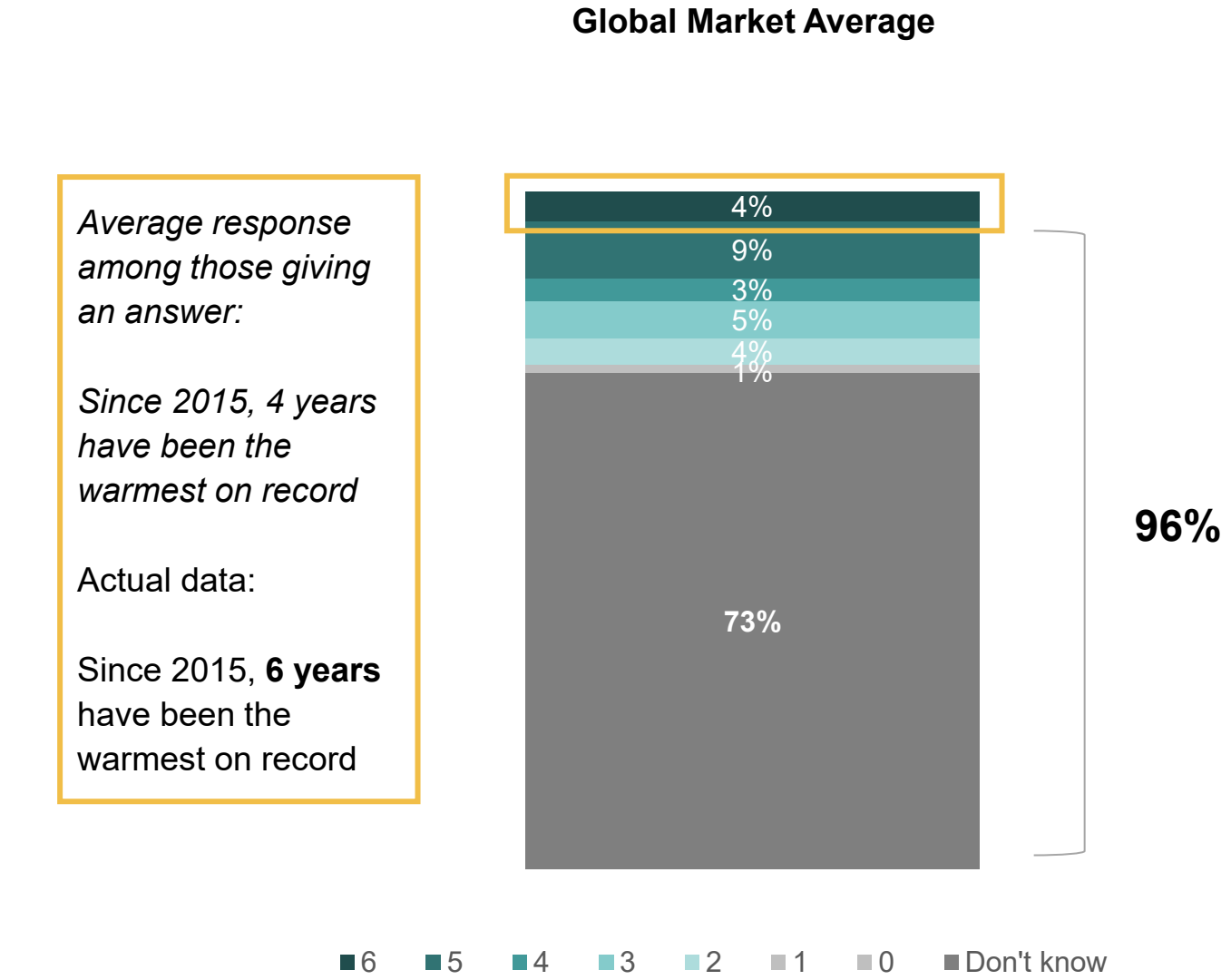
Only one in twenty-five (4%) correctly stated that the 6 years since 2015 have been the warmest on record.

Average response among those giving an answer:

Since 2015, 4 years have been the warmest on record

Actual data:

Since 2015, **6 years** have been the warmest on record



Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: The World Meteorological Organisation, 2021. 2020 was one of three warmest years on record. Available here: https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/2020-was-one-of-three-warmest-years-record*

Q.

The World Meteorological Organization collects annual global temperatures, to see whether they are rising or falling across the world. Records begin in 1850.Since 2015, how many years have been the warmest year on record?

Great Britain

As with the Global Market Average, the vast majority of respondents were unable to or incorrectly stated how many years since 2015 have been the warmest on record.

Only one in twenty-five (4%) correctly stated that the 6 years since 2015 have been the warmest on record.

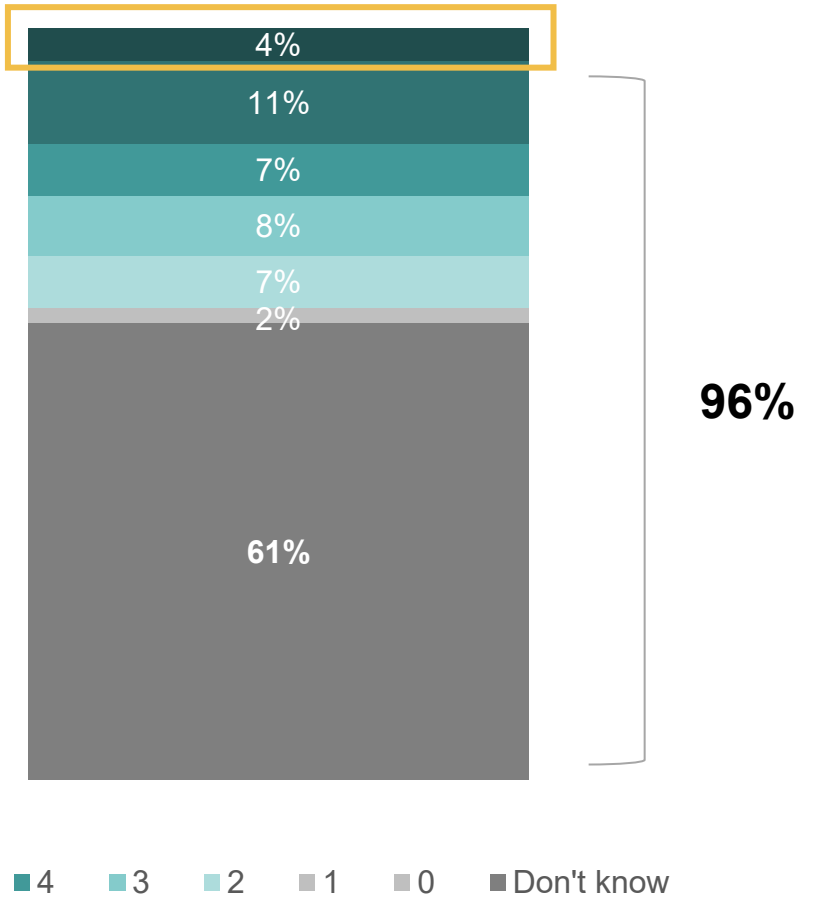
Great Britain

Average response among those giving an answer:

Since 2015, 3.8 years have been the warmest on record

Actual data:

Since 2015, **6 years** have been the warmest on record



Base: 1,000 online adults aged 16-74, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: The World Meteorological Organisation, 2021. 2020 was one of three warmest years on record. Available here: https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/2020-was-one-of-three-warmest-years-record*

Climate change and diet

Going plant-based makes more of a difference to your carbon footprint than eating local, but the public guess this is the other way around.

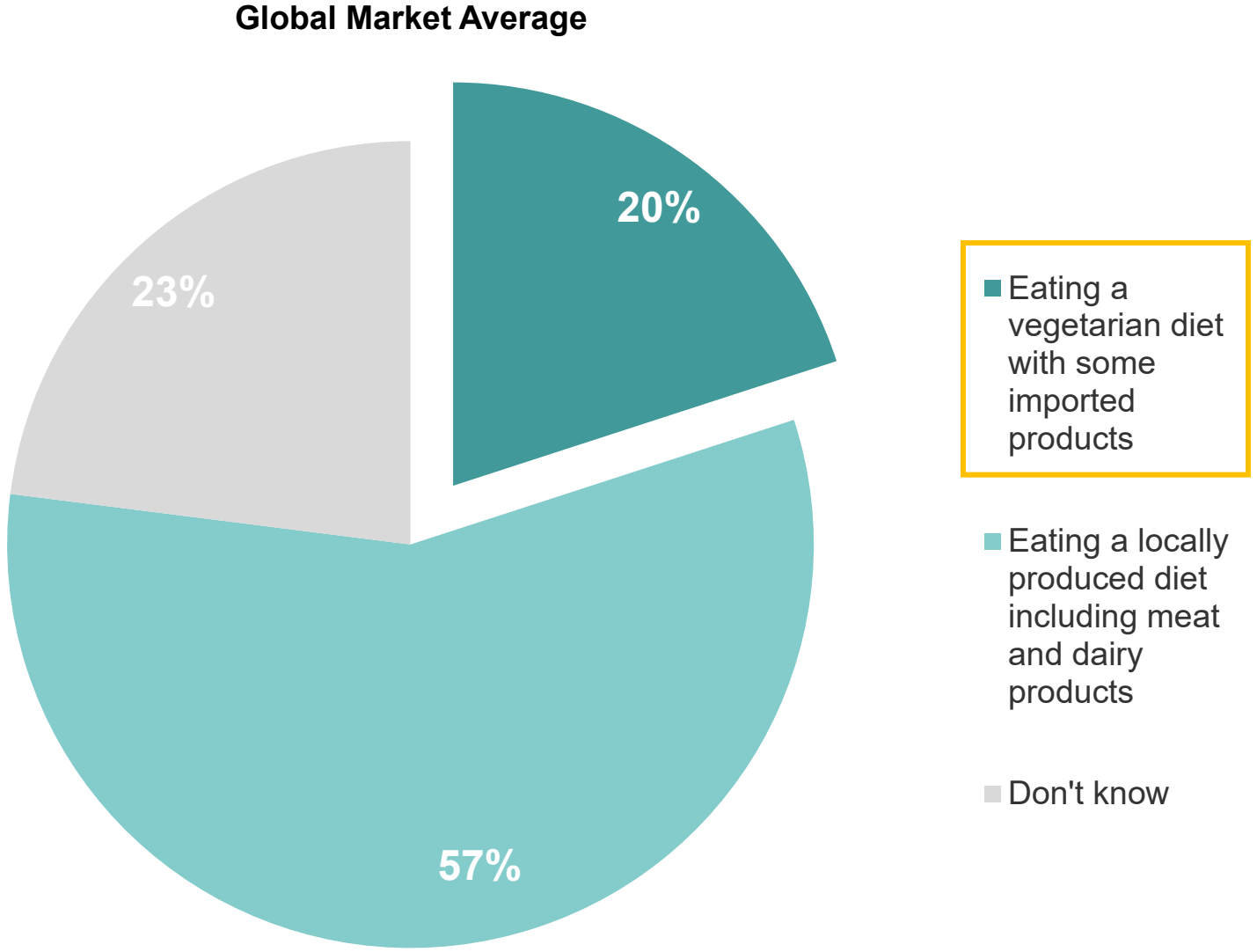
Q.

And which of these two actions do you think would most reduce an individual's greenhouse gas emissions?

Global Market Average

Eating local does not necessarily mean eating greener, as switching to a vegetarian diet including some imported fruit and vegetables more effectively reduces an individual's greenhouse gas emissions.

However, three in five (57%) perceived eating a locally produced diet that includes some animal foodstuffs as being the more environmentally friendly diet.



Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: Our World in Data, 2020. You want to reduce the carbon footprint of your food? Focus on what you eat, not whether your food is local. Available here: https://ourworldindata.org/food-choice-vs-eating-local*

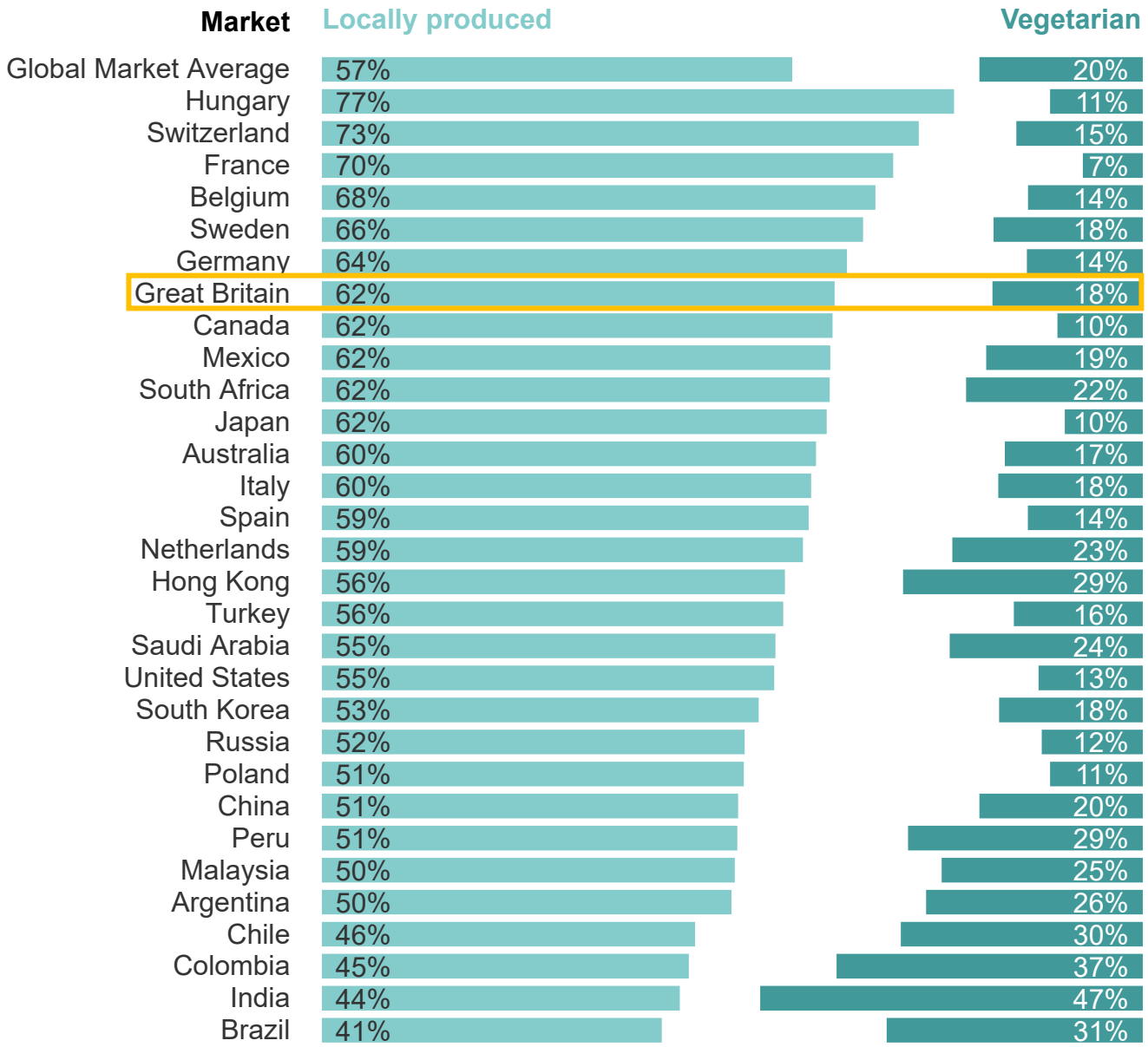
Q.

And which of these two actions do you think would most reduce an individual's greenhouse gas emissions:

Eating a diet that is mostly locally produced, including locally produced meat and dairy products?

Eating a vegetarian diet, even if some of the fruit and vegetables have been imported from other countries?

In GB, 3 in 5 respondents (62%) perceived a locally produced diet to have lower emissions – 5 points higher than the Global Market Average (57%)



Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

The true meaning of food miles? Public understanding of relative impact of meat and miles is low. We have little idea of how burgers compare to carbon emissions from driving.

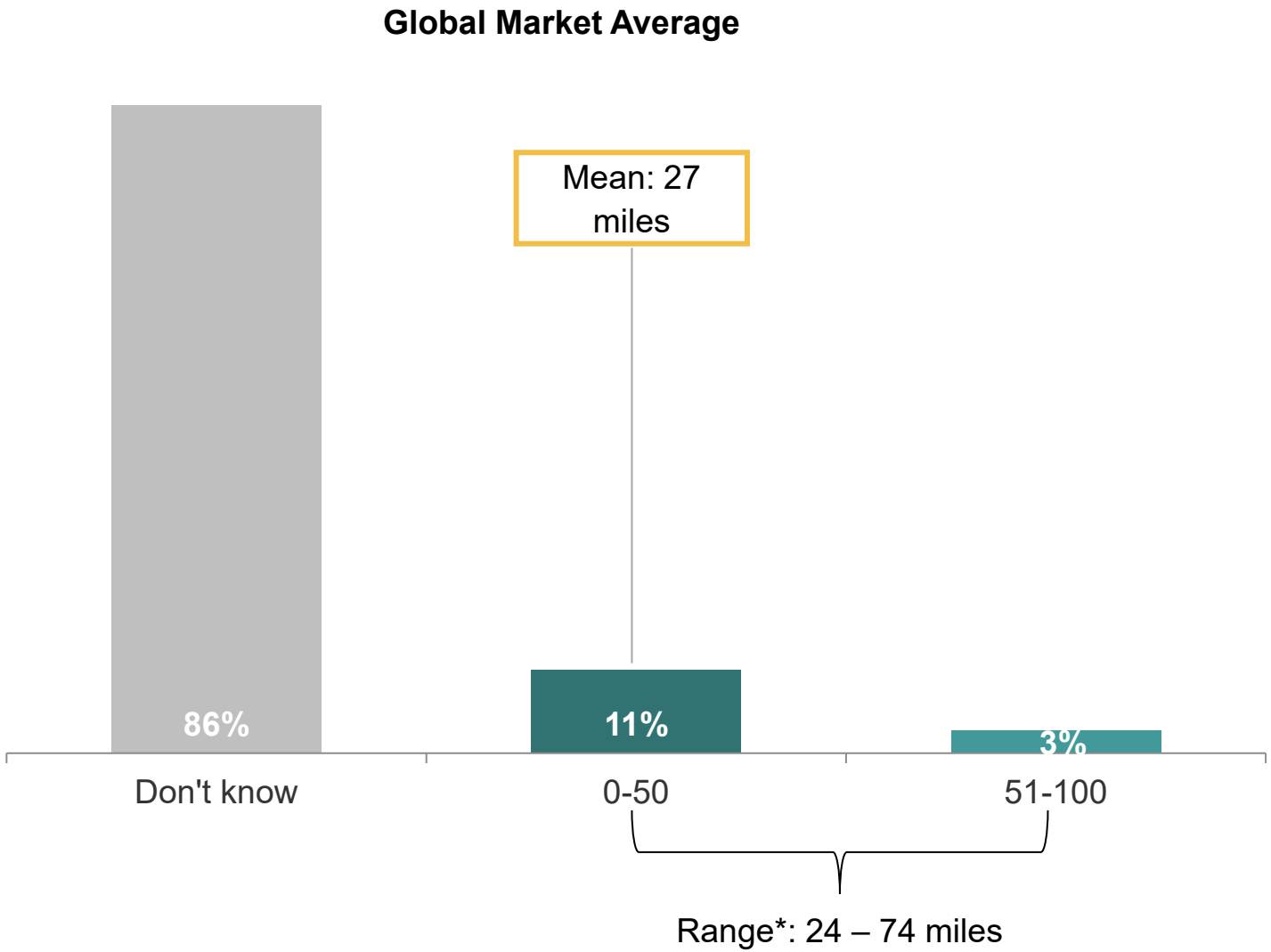
Q.

The amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of making one beef burger is equivalent to driving how far in a car?

Global Market Average – mean in miles

The majority of respondents (86%) could not say how many miles of driving a beef burger was equivalent to. Of those who answered, 1 in 10 (11%) believed this to be 50 miles or less.

The true journey range is between 24 and 75 miles, depending on car efficiency. The average answer (27 miles) came just within the lower end of this range.



Base: 21,011 online adults aged 16-74 across 30 markets, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: Our World in Data, 2020. You want to reduce the carbon footprint of your food? Focus on what you eat, not whether your food is local. Available here: https://ourworldindata.org/food-choice-vs-eating-local ; IEA 2021. Tracking Transport 2020. Available here: https://www.iea.org/reports/tracking-transport-2020/rail#abstract . Quarter pounder burger patty weight of 113.4g is assumed.*

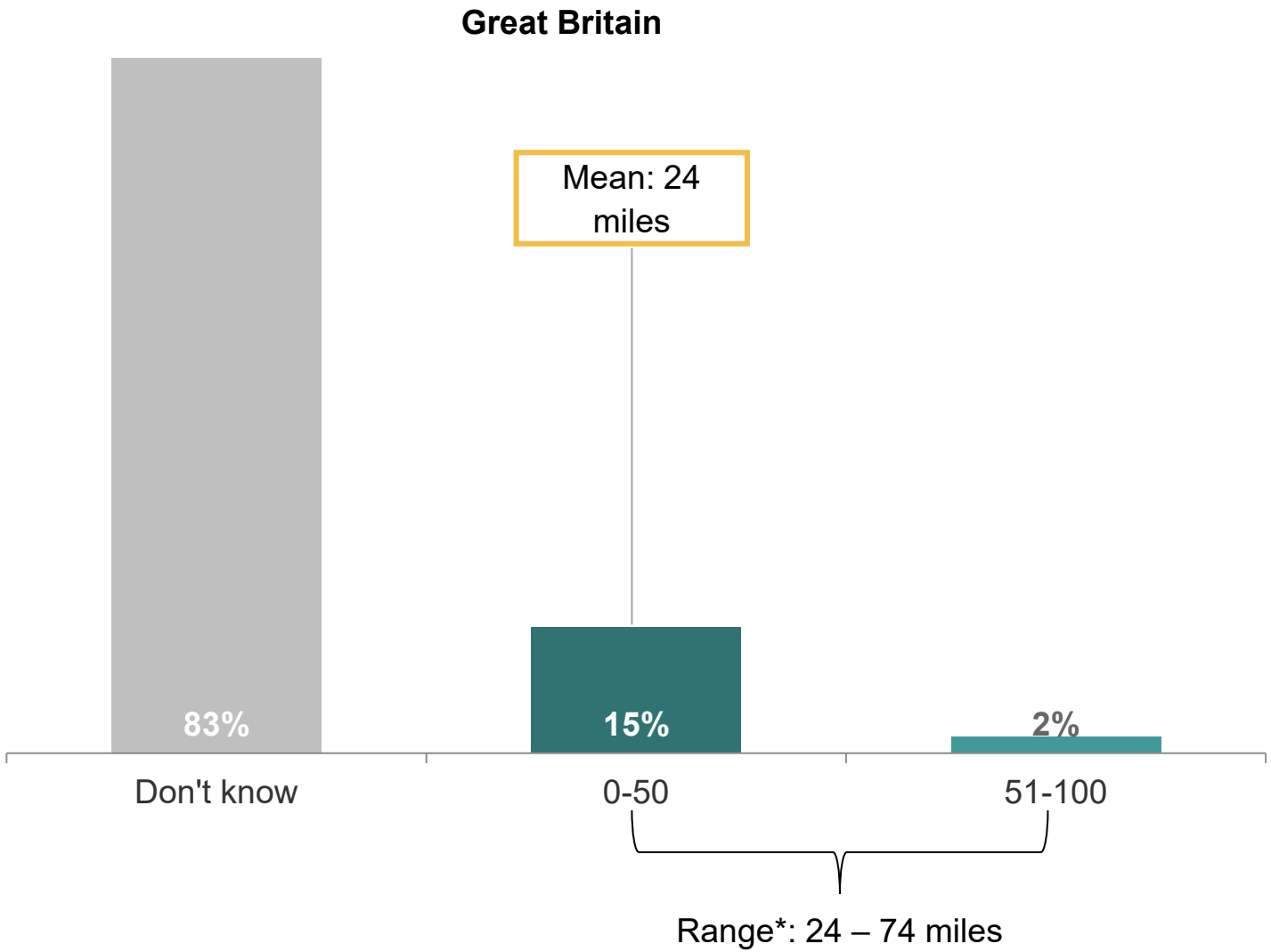
Q.

The amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of making one beef burger is equivalent to driving how far in a car?

Great Britain – mean in ..

As with the Global Market Average, most Britons (83%) could not say how many miles of driving a beef burger was equivalent to. Of those who answered, 15% believed this to be 50 miles or less.

The average answer (24 miles) was at the bottom end of the true range.



Base: 1,000 online adults aged 16-74, 19 Feb – 5 Mar 2021

**Source: Our World in Data, 2020. You want to reduce the carbon footprint of your food? Focus on what you eat, not whether your food is local. Available here: https://ourworldindata.org/food-choice-vs-eating-local ; IEA 2021. Tracking Transport 2020. Available here: https://www.iea.org/reports/tracking-transport-2020/rail#abstract . Quarter pounder burger patty weight of 113.4g is assumed.*

These are the findings of the *Global Advisor* wave 152 (GA 152) an Ipsos survey conducted between February 19 and March 5, 2021.

The survey instrument is conducted monthly in 30 markets around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system.
The markets reporting herein are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

For the results of the survey presented herein, an international sample of 21,011 adults aged 18-74 in the US, Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Africa, and Turkey, and age 16-74 in all other markets, were interviewed. Approximately 1000+ individuals participated on a market by market basis via the Ipsos Online Panel with the exception of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey, where each have a sample approximately 500+. The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points and of 500 accurate to +/- 5.0 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

17 of the 30 markets surveyed online generate nationally representative samples in their countries (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United States).

The samples in Brazil, Chile, mainland China, Colombia, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Turkey are more urban & educated, and/or more affluent than the general population. We refer to these respondents as “Upper Deck Consumer Citizens”. They are not nationally representative of their market.

Summary of sources for actual data

A range of data sources were used to derive the 'true' values referenced in this deck. Details of each source and any assumptions made are included on the relevant slides. The full list of sources is included below:

GRID, 2020. *2020 Mid-Year Update*. Available here: https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/2020%20Mid-year%20update.pdf

IEA 2021. *Tracking Transport 2020*. Available here: https://www.iea.org/reports/tracking-transport-2020/rail#abstract

Institute of Physics, 2017. *The most effective individual steps to tackle climate change aren't being discussed*. Available here: https://phys.org/news/2017-07-effective-individual-tackle-climate-discussed.html

Ivanova et al., 2020. *Quantifying the potential for climate change mitigation of consumption options*. Available here: https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab8589/pdf

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The World Meteorological Organisation, 2021. *2020 was one of three warmest years on record*. Available here: https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/2020-was-one-of-three-warmest-years-record

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