

Climate action in the shopping basket:

What is important for consumers?

Representative consumer survey
on shopping behaviour and awareness for climate action



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Methodology of the survey

The statements are based on the responses of a total of 1,002 people in Germany, who were contacted by the market research institute Appinio on 14 January 2021 as part of a survey commissioned by ClimatePartner. The people surveyed cover a representative cross-section with regard to age (16 to 65 years) and sex (male, female).

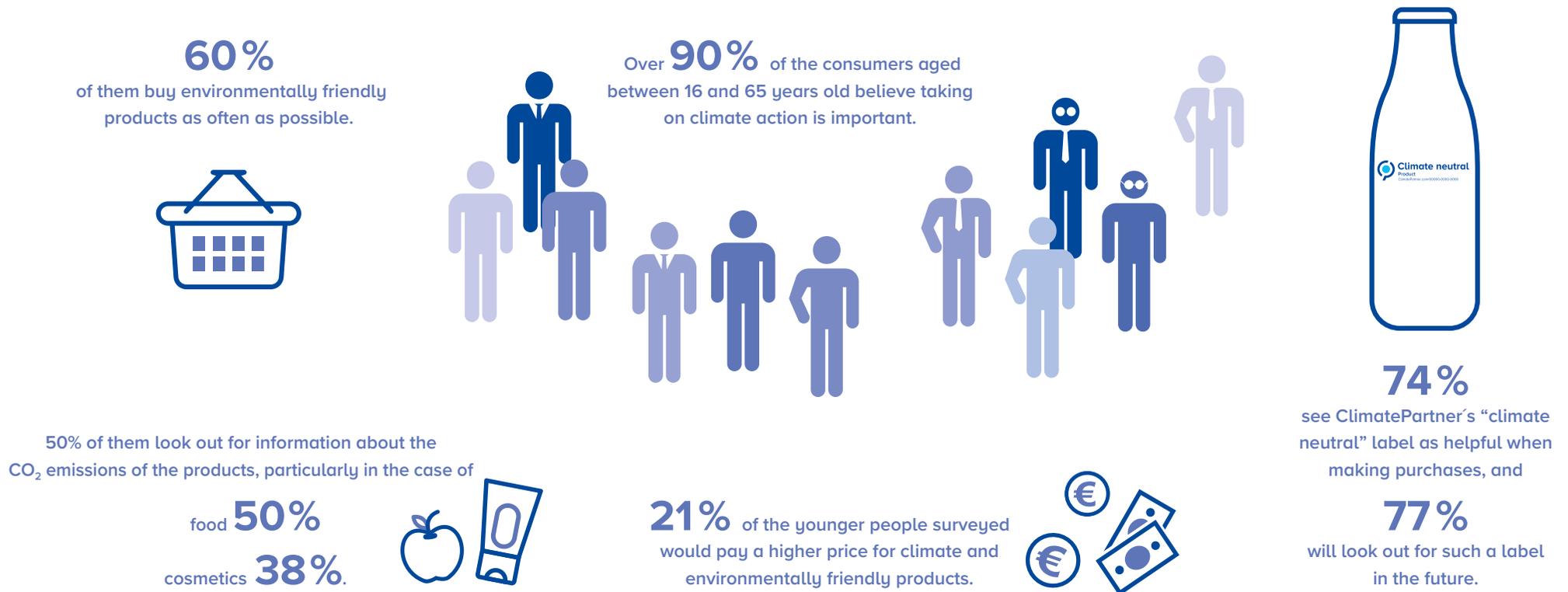
This report is an excerpt from the “Climate Awareness Report 2021” published in April 2021.

Statistics in the graphics are in percentages.

Shopping and protecting the environment – both are possible

Private consumption plays an important role when it comes to global CO₂ emissions. With their purchasing decisions, consumers can influence companies to make their products more environmentally friendly, to bring about systemic changes, and to continuously reduce their carbon emissions.

In a representative market research study, ClimatePartner asked consumers about their general view on climate action. The level of understanding and the willingness to take on climate action through their purchasing decisions is high:



Climate action and consumer behaviour

1. The importance of climate action is clear

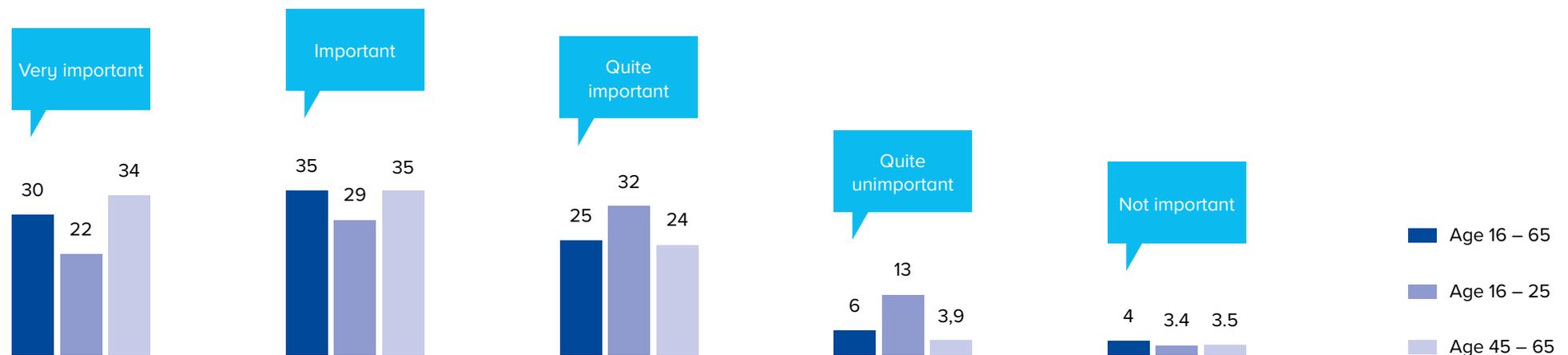
At more than 90 percent, climate action is fundamentally important for the vast majority of those surveyed between the ages of 16 and 65. Almost one third said they thought this topic was very important.

However, there is a clear difference depending on the age of the consumer: 17 percent of the young people surveyed between the ages of 16 and 25 admit that they think

climate action is only slightly or not at all important, whilst only seven percent of those surveyed between the ages of 45 and 65 shared this opinion.

The age gap is also visible in the opposite direction: More than 22 percent of 16 to 25 year olds think climate action is very important, whereas this is more than 33 percent for 45-65 year olds.

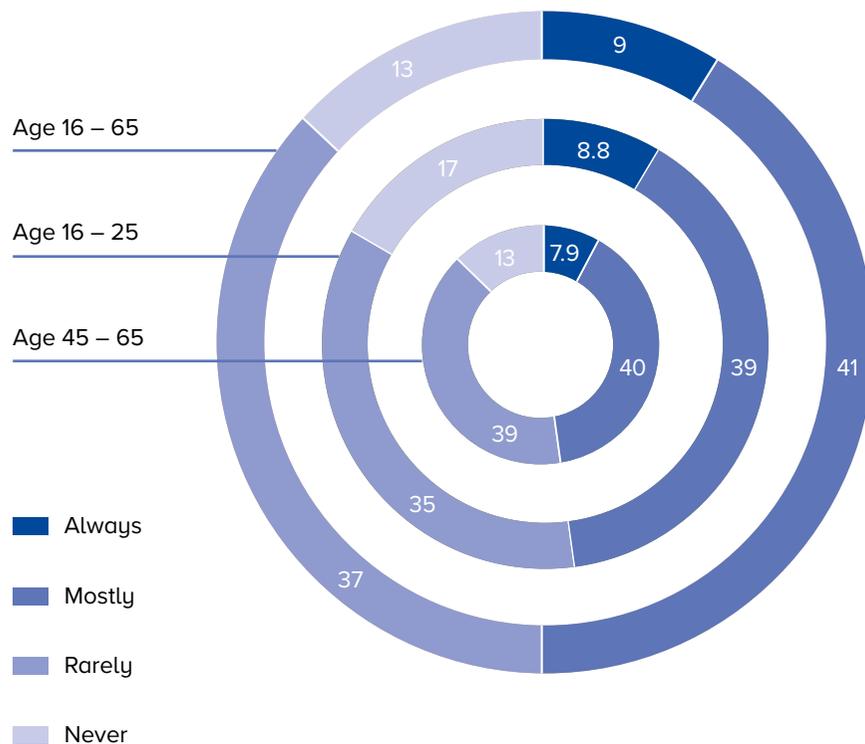
How important is climate action for you?



2. CO₂ emissions: 50% of the consumers are already paying attention to it when shopping

With regards to information on the carbon emissions of the products, already one half of consumers surveyed already look out for corresponding information and labels. Ten percent always take emissions data values into account.

When you're shopping (food, cosmetics, clothing, etc.) do you look for information on CO₂ emissions for the products?



3. Above all, food and cosmetics products should be climate friendly

Above all, it is the purchase of consumer goods for our daily needs where fundamental behavioural habits crop up regularly and remain embedded in our decisions because of this. The products where consumers across all ages pay most attention to climate friendly credentials when shopping are therefore food (50 percent) and cosmetics products (38 percent).

Which products do you check most carefully when you are shopping to make sure that they are climate friendly?

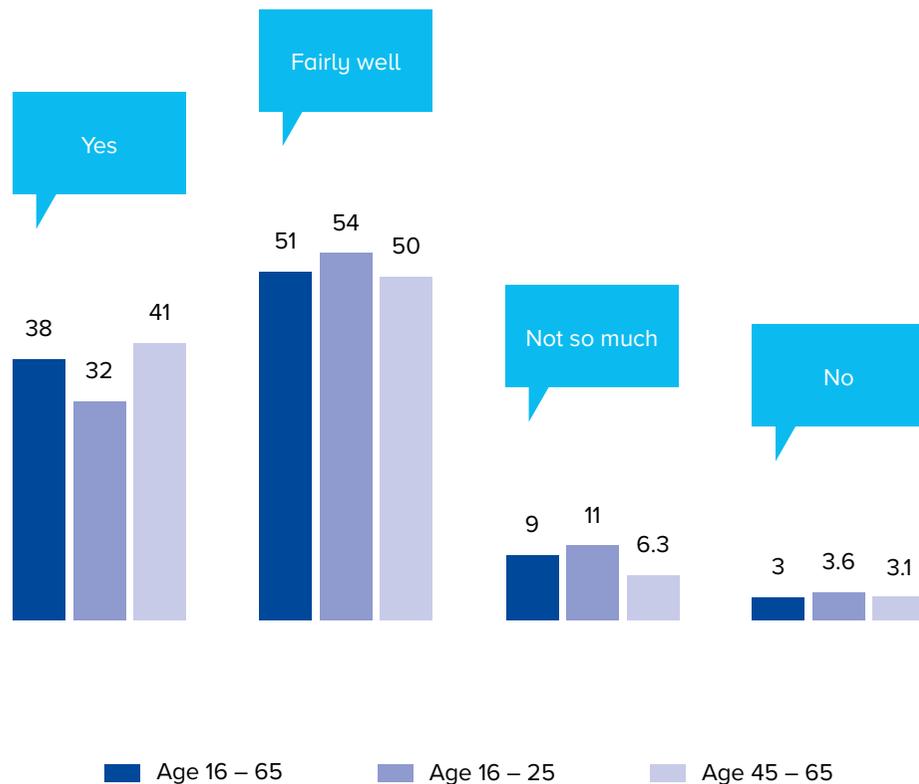


There is difference in responses by age when it comes to shoes and clothing. For 16-25 year olds, climate friendly clothing is a lot less important than for older adults. In the 45 to 65 age group, at 37 percent it is more than 13 percent higher than in the 16 to 25 cohort.

4. Almost everyone knows what carbon neutrality is

A total of almost 90 percent say that they are well informed or reasonably well informed about carbon neutrality. Only three percent of those surveyed say that they have no idea about the concept behind it. The age groups 16 to 25 and 45 to 65 responded similarly to the majority of those surveyed.

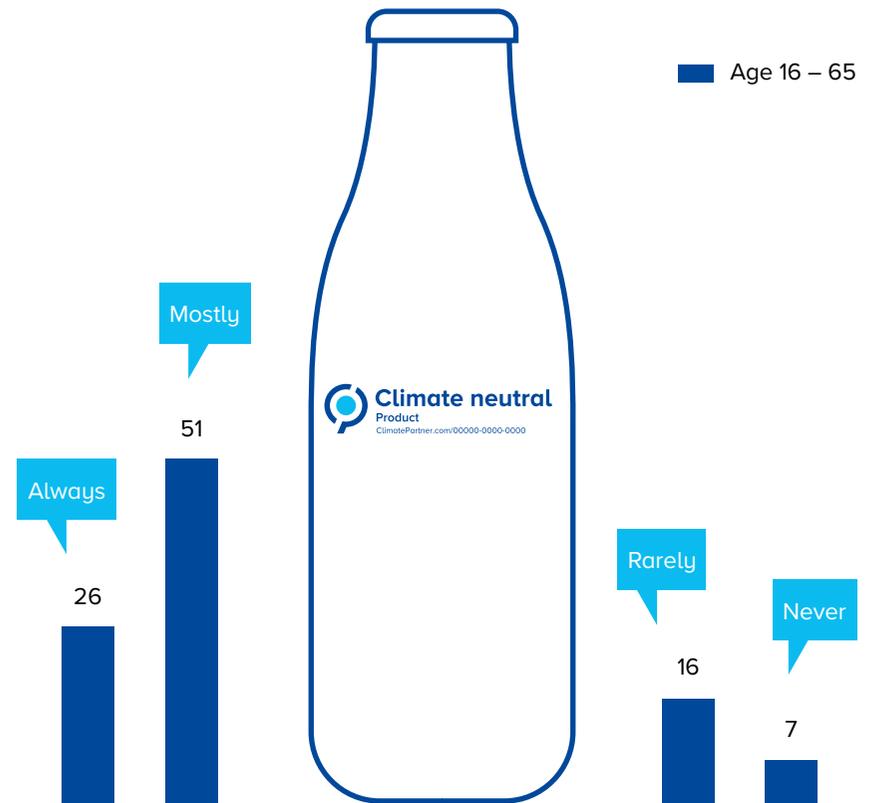
Do you know what is meant by carbon neutrality?



5. The majority pays attention to labels

A total of 77 percent of all respondents would look out for a carbon-neutral or climate-neutral label like the one from ClimatePartner when shopping. This statement clearly shows the high level of recognition of the label.

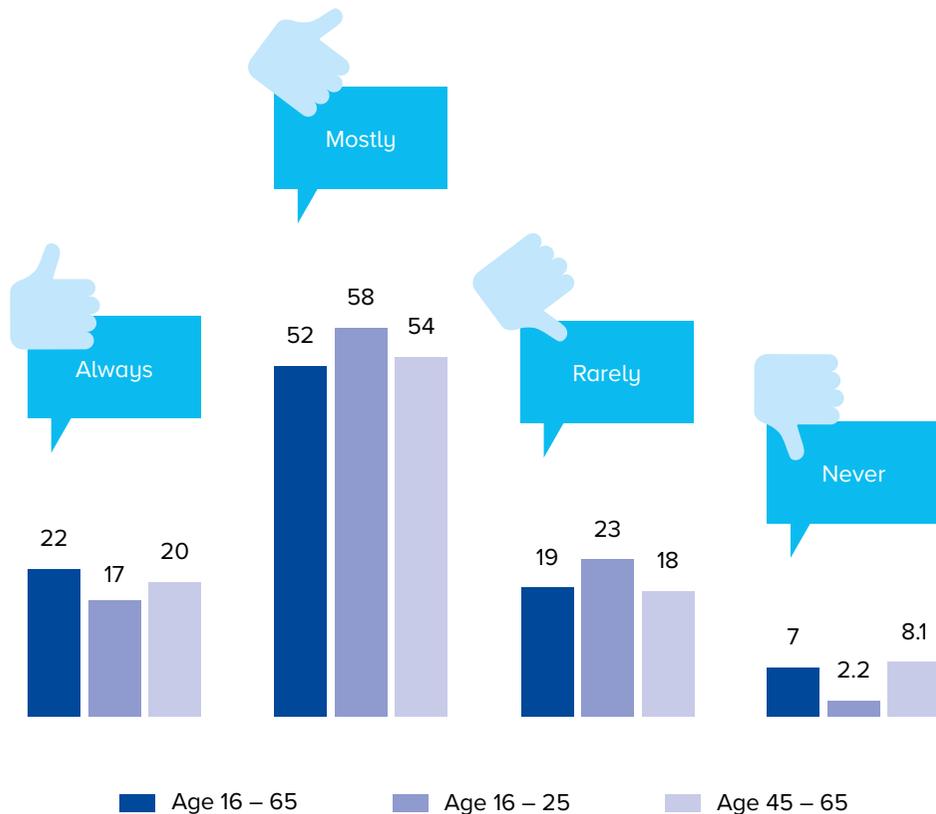
When shopping, would you look out for products with a climate-neutral label?



6. Helping consumers decide

A total of 74 percent see the ClimatePartner “climate neutral” label as a decision-making aid when shopping. This shows that there is a fundamental willingness to make a contribution to climate action through individual shopping behaviour.

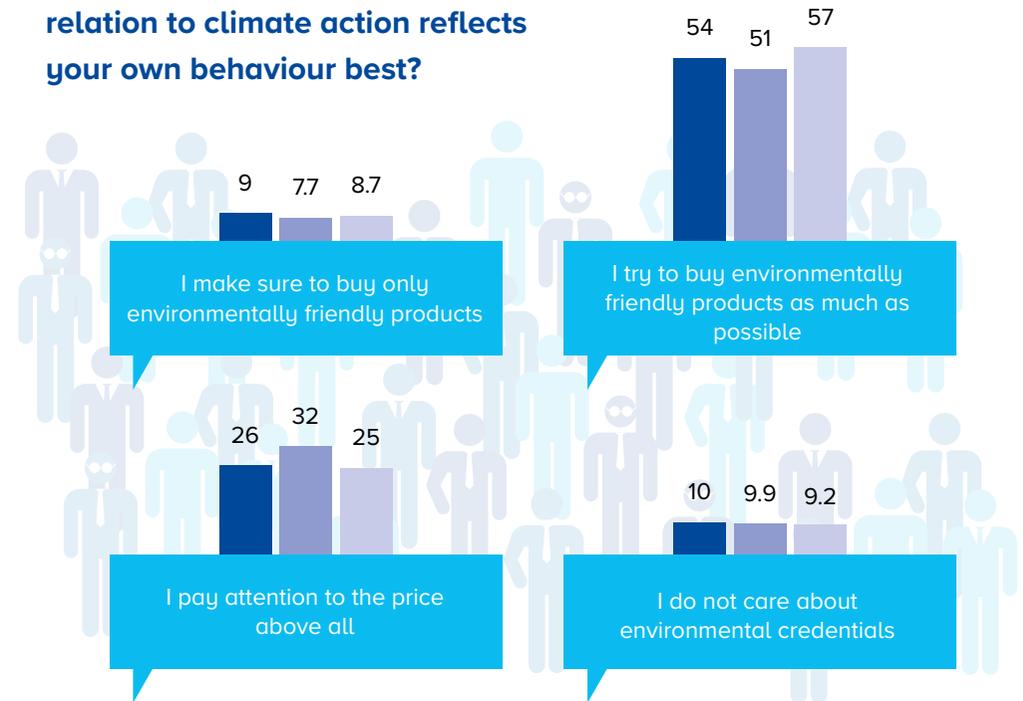
The label “climate neutral” confirms that the carbon emissions of a product have been offset. Would this information influence your future purchasing decisions?



7. Environmentally friendly products are in-demand

Almost ten percent of respondents buy environmentally friendly products only. Together with those who at least try to do this, the figure is well over 60 percent. In total, about 36 percent neglect climate action considerations when shopping. They either pay attention to the price of the products or do not think about it at all.

Which shopping behaviour in relation to climate action reflects your own behaviour best?



While amongst 16-25 year olds the basic motivation is similarly distributed, at 31 percent there is a higher percentage of those who focus primarily on the price of the products. This is the case in just 25 percent of 45-65 year olds.

■ Age 16 – 65
 ■ Age 16 – 25
 ■ Age 45 – 65

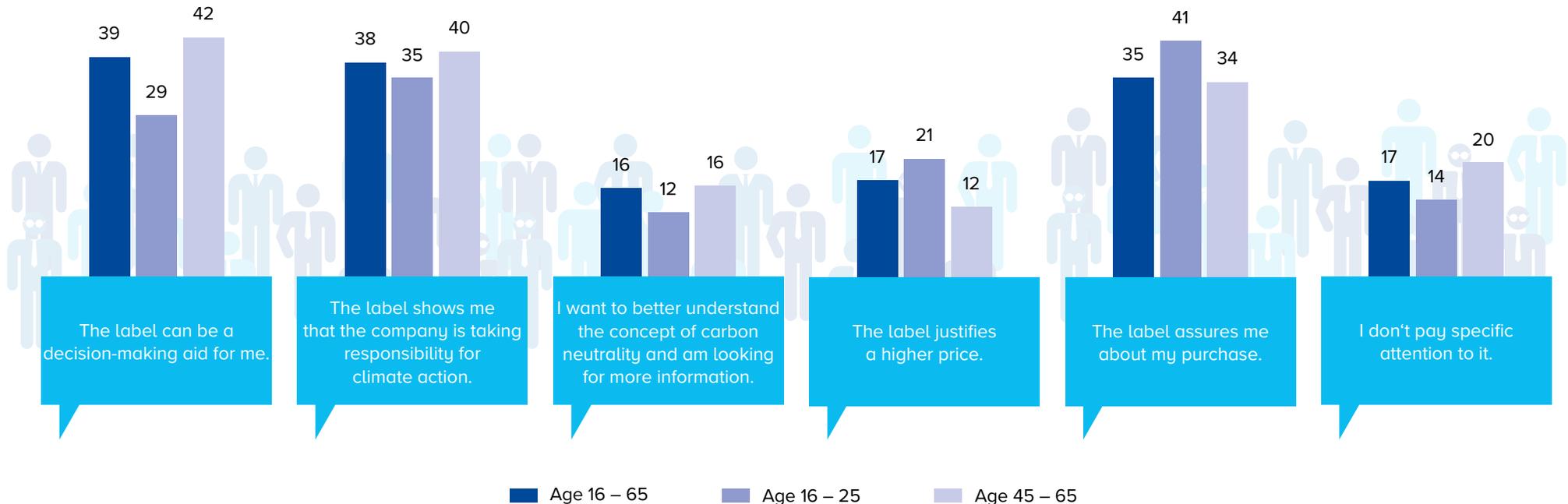
8. The label provides assurance and creates trust

A label that certifies the carbon/climate neutrality of a product is a clear decision-making aid, especially for older consumers. This is stated by over 42 percent of 45 – 65 year olds, significantly more than among 16 – 25 year olds (29 percent). For almost 40 percent of those surveyed, it also signals that companies are taking responsibility for climate action.

More than a third feel better about their purchasing decision as a result of a label. For 17 percent, a climate neutrality label also justifies a higher price.

Even if previous answers have shown that the younger respondents is more cost-sensitive, 21 percent of those surveyed would accept higher prices. In their group, a label also has more influence on personal feeling/judgement – 41 percent of the 16 to 25 year olds say this.

What effect does a carbon label/labelling have on you?



Consumers are on board

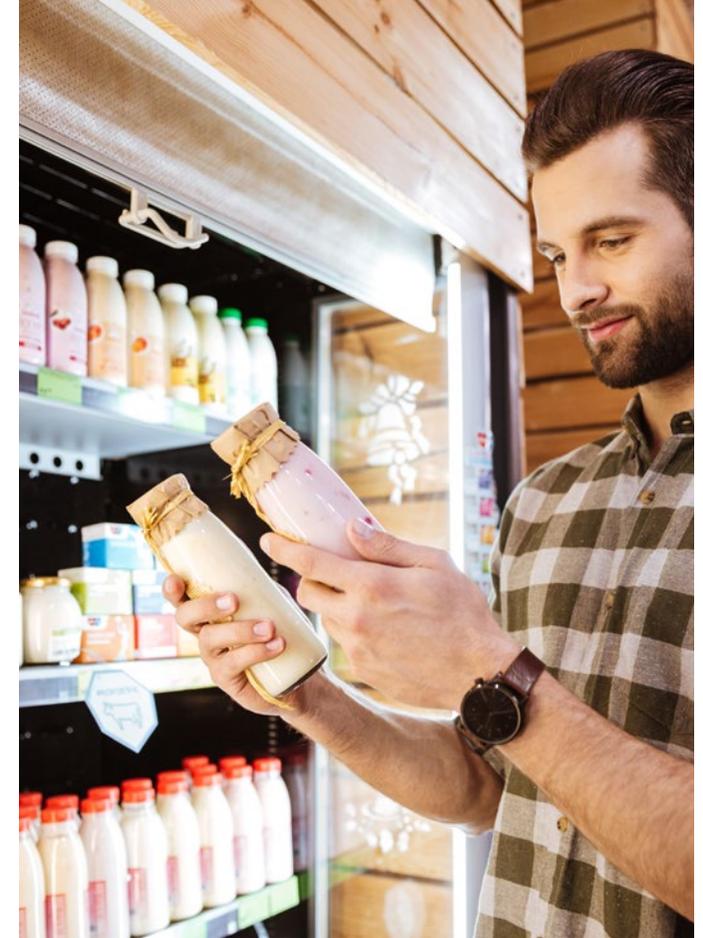
Climate neutrality, which is achieved through internationally recognised processes, is an important element of holistic climate action. The survey proves that the majority of consumers are informed about the principle of carbon/climate neutrality – probably not least because of the increased presence of the topic in public discussion. This knowledge is crucial for companies who want to enable their customers to make a conscious decision in favour of climate action by purchasing carbon/climate-neutral products.

Consumer acceptance of such products is a lever through which companies can achieve an effect with their product range. These factors are important if the distribution and availability of carbon/climate-neutral products is to become more widespread, and an important building block in climate action is to be strengthened with them.

- Consumers can promote the availability of carbon/climate-neutral products **through their purchasing decisions.**
- Companies must **respond to demand by offering more carbon/climate-neutral products.**
- Their products and services should be **clearly labelled as carbon/climate neutral.**

Throughout all of this, however, it is also clear that further measures are still needed to limit global warming. This includes a systemic change in consumer behaviour: regional, seasonal, and less emission-intensive food, reusable instead of disposable packaging, recyclable raw materials, recycling of components and the discouragement of unnecessary consumption are further necessary measures here.

Labelling products with information on their respective carbon footprints is a first step towards this. A label such as “climate neutral” shows that the process of reducing emissions is already underway.



Your partner for climate action

About ClimatePartner

ClimatePartner is a solution provider for corporate climate action: we help our clients calculate and reduce their CO₂ emissions and offset unavoidable emissions. In this way, products and companies become carbon/ climate neutral, which is confirmed by our label.

ClimatePartner was founded in Munich in 2006, and we now have offices in Munich, Berlin, The Hague, Essen, Yerevan, Cologne, London, Vienna and Zurich.

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