

THE **PLASTIC** PARADOX: UNPACKING PUBLIC ATTITUDES

Study for ClientEarth

Most people believe that plastic products and packaging are a rather negative choice for the environment.

However, when these products and packaging are marked with green logos, the majority perceive them as an environmentally positive choice.

Information about plastic influences purchasing decisions.

The vast majority of consumers are more likely to make a purchase if the packaging is labeled as fully recyclable or as containing recycled plastic.



Key takeaways

POLAND

1.Perception of Plastic Packaging

A substantial 76% of Polish respondents consider plastic products or packaging to be a rather negative choice for the environment. Conversely, only 7% view them positively, with 11% remaining neutral.

2.Interpretation of Environmental Logos

Despite the fact, that most people consider the impact of plastic on the environment to be negative, environmental logos on packaging lead 65% of respondents to perceive the product as environmentally positive.

3.Influence of 'Recyclable' and 'Recycled Plastic' Labeling

Labeling packaging as fully recyclable or containing recycled plastic significantly impacts purchasing decisions, with approximately 75% of consumers more likely to buy products with such labels.

4.Trust in Recycling Logos

A high level of trust exists regarding recycling logos, with 80% believing such products will be recycled if disposed of correctly.

GREAT BRITAIN

1.Perception of Plastic Packaging

A notable 71% of British respondents see plastic products or packaging as a rather negative choice for the environment. Only 7% hold a positive opinion, and 11% remain neutral on the matter.

2.Interpretation of Environmental Logos

Environmental logos have an impact in Great Britain, with 72% of respondents believing that they signify plastic products or packaging as environmentally positive choices.

3.Influence of 'Recyclable' and 'Recycled Plastic' Labeling

The presence of labels indicating full recyclability or the use of recycled plastic greatly influences purchasing behavior, with 74% and 68% of respondents more inclined to buy the products, respectively.

4.Trust in Recycling Logos

78% of British respondents believe that the products with recycling logos will be recycled if properly disposed of.

Key takeaways

FRANCE

1. Perception of Plastic Packaging

A significant 74% of French respondents regard plastic products or packaging as a rather negative choice for the environment. Merely 9% have a favorable view, and 9% remain neutral on the matter.

2. Interpretation of Environmental Logos

Environmental logos on packaging lead 65% of respondents to perceive these products as environmentally friendly.

3. Influence of 'Recyclable' and 'Recycled Plastic' Labeling

Labels indicating full recyclability or the inclusion of recycled plastic have a strong effect on purchasing choices, prompting around 70% of consumers to be more likely to choose products with these labels.

4. Trust in Recycling Logos

73% of respondents trust that the products with recycling logos will be recycled if disposed of properly.

GERMANY

1. Perception of Plastic Packaging

A considerable 73% of German respondents believe that plastic products or packaging are harmful to the environment. Conversely, only 9% view them favorably, and 12% remain neutral on the matter.

2. Interpretation of Environmental Logos

Although many recognize the negative environmental effects of plastic, environmental logos on packaging cause 58% of respondents to see these products as a positive choice for the environment.

3. Influence of 'Recyclable' and 'Recycled Plastic' Labeling

The presence of labels that denote full recyclability or the use of recycled plastic substantially affects consumer decisions, with approximately 70% showing a preference for products with these labels.

4. Trust in Recycling Logos

Recycling logos are considered trustworthy, as 80% of respondents believe these products will be recycled if disposed of correctly.

At a glance: Poland

76%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



76%

say **plastic** products or packaging are a **rather negative choice** for the environment



65%

think that **plastic** products or packaging **featuring green logos** are a **rather positive choice** for the environment

72%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



80%

think that products and packaging featuring recycling logos **will be recycled if disposed of correctly**



68%

individuals who believe that plastic is rather a negative choice for the environment tend to perceive products labeled with green logos as a rather positive choice for the environment

At a glance: Great Britain

74%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



71%

say **plastic** products or packaging are a **rather negative choice** for the environment



72%

think that **plastic** products or packaging **featuring green logos** are a **rather positive choice** for the environment

68%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



78%

think that products and packaging featuring recycling logos **will be recycled if disposed of correctly**



70%

individuals who believe that plastic is rather a negative choice for the environment tend to perceive products labeled with green logos as a rather positive choice for the environment

At a glance: France

72%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



74%

say **plastic** products or packaging are a **rather negative choice** for the environment



65%

think that **plastic** products or packaging **featuring green logos** are a **rather positive choice** for the environment

68%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



73%

think that products and packaging featuring recycling logos **will be recycled if disposed of correctly**



66%

individuals who believe that plastic is rather a negative choice for the environment tend to perceive products labeled with green logos as a rather positive choice for the environment

At a glance: Germany

71%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



73%

say **plastic** products or packaging are a **rather negative choice** for the environment



58%

think that **plastic** products or packaging **featuring green logos** are a **rather positive choice** for the environment

70%



are **more likely to buy** a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



80%

think that products and packaging featuring recycling logos **will be recycled if disposed of correctly**

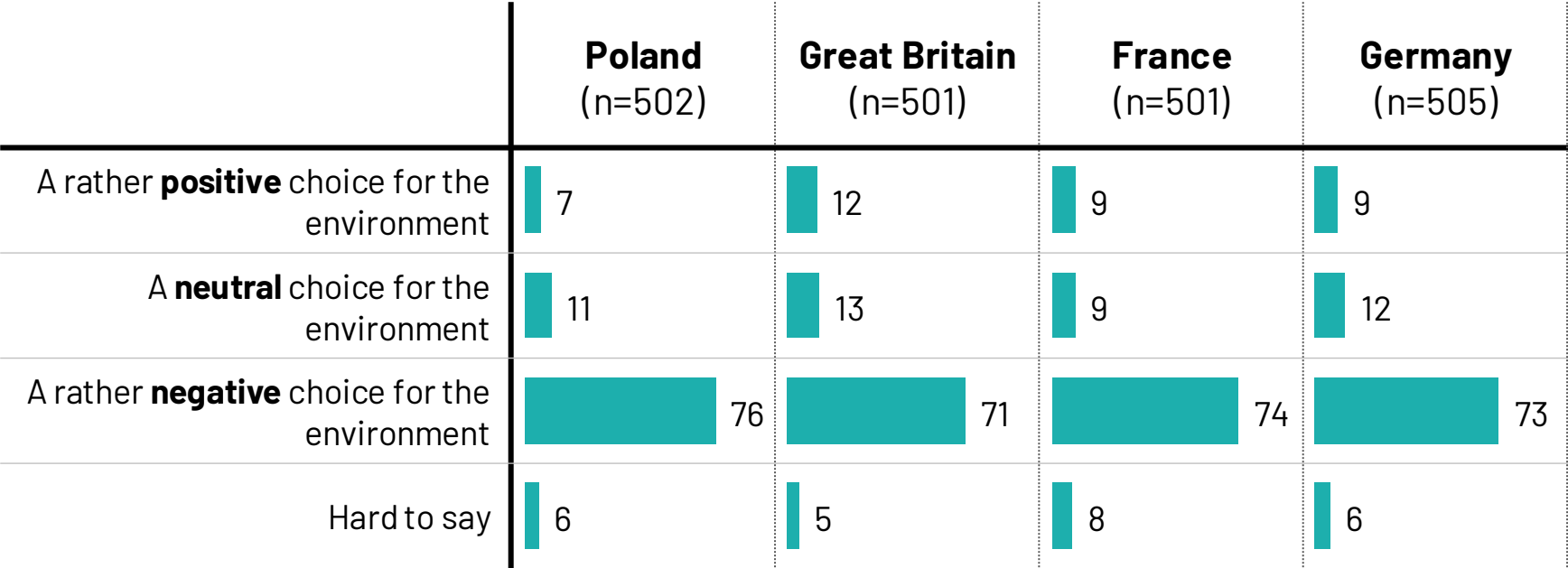


56%

individuals who believe that plastic is rather a negative choice for the environment tend to perceive products labeled with green logos as a rather positive choice for the environment

Environmental impact of plastics: a comparison among countries

Do you think plastic products or packaging are...?



© Ipsos The survey was conducted by Ipsos on behalf of ClientEarth using the CAWI method. Fieldwork was carried out between November 20 and November 25, 2024. The study targeted nationally representative samples of individuals aged 18-65.

Tendency to buy specially labeled products: a comparison among countries

Are you more likely to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as...?
[% of yes]

	Poland (n=502)	Great Britain (n=501)	France (n=501)	Germany (n=505)
...fully recyclable	<div><div></div></div> 76	<div><div></div></div> 74	<div><div></div></div> 72	<div><div></div></div> 71
...containing recycled plastic	<div><div></div></div> 72	<div><div></div></div> 68	<div><div></div></div> 68	<div><div></div></div> 70

Environmental impact of the product or packaging with special type of logos: a comparison among countries



When you see this type of logos on a product or packaging, do you think this means that this product or packaging is...?

	Poland (n=502)	Great Britain (n=501)	France (n=501)	Germany (n=505)
A rather positive choice for the environment	<div><div></div></div> 65	<div><div></div></div> 72	<div><div></div></div> 65	<div><div></div></div> 58
A neutral choice for the environment	<div><div></div></div> 22	<div><div></div></div> 22	<div><div></div></div> 23	<div><div></div></div> 33
A rather negative choice for the environment	<div><div></div></div> 6	<div><div></div></div> 3	<div><div></div></div> 4	<div><div></div></div> 4
Hard to say	<div><div></div></div> 6	<div><div></div></div> 3	<div><div></div></div> 8	<div><div></div></div> 6

Recycling of the product or packaging with special type of logos: a comparison among countries



Do you think that products and packaging featuring these or similar recycling logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly?

	Poland (n=502)	Great Britain (n=501)	France (n=501)	Germany (n=505)
Yes, they will be recycled if disposed of correctly	80	78	73	80
No, they won't be recycled even if disposed of correctly	6	8	12	9
Hard to say	14	13	15	12

POLAND

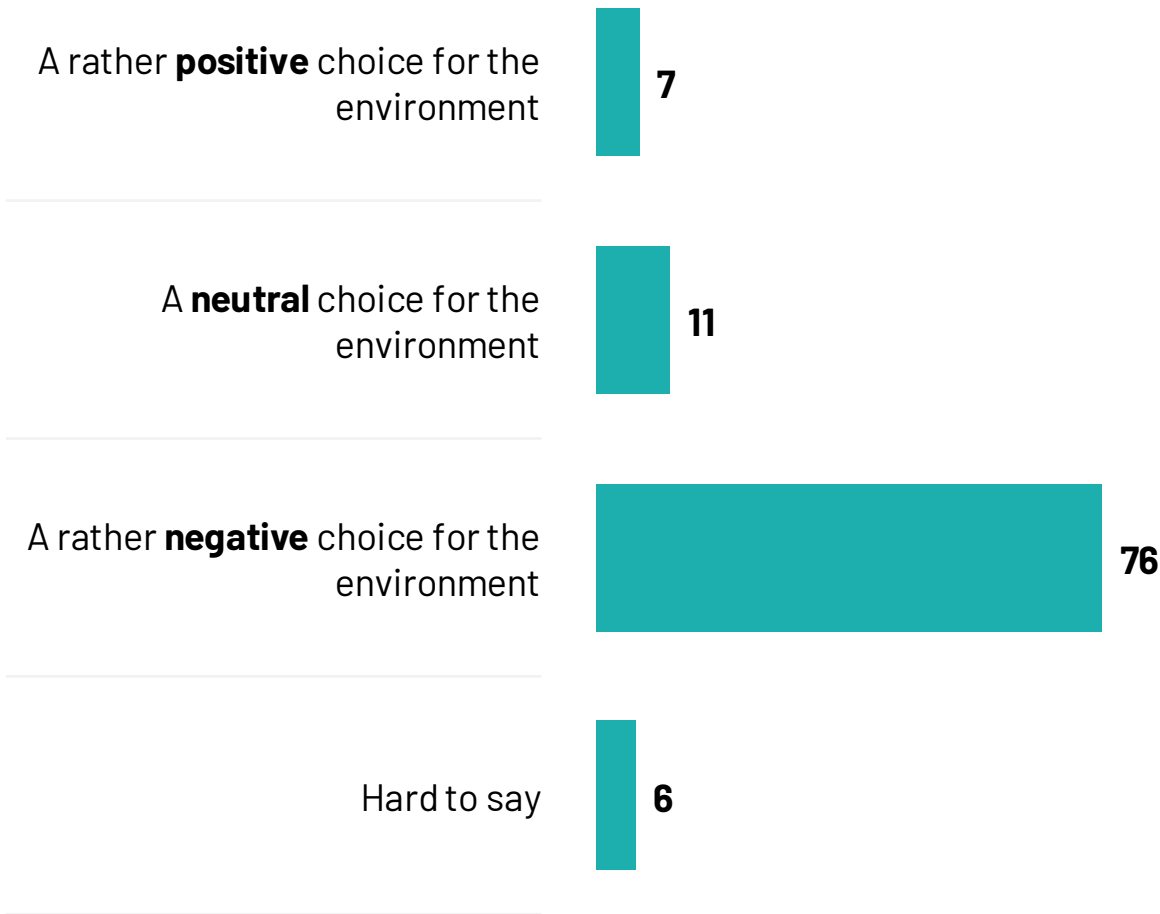
76% of respondents in Poland believe that plastic products or packaging are a rather negative choice for the environment.

This belief is mainly shared by the oldest respondents aged 55 to 65 (86%) and those with higher education (82%).

Do you think plastic products or packaging are...?

Poland, 18-65, N=502

Environmental impact of plastics



In Poland, 76% of respondents are willing to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as fully recyclable.

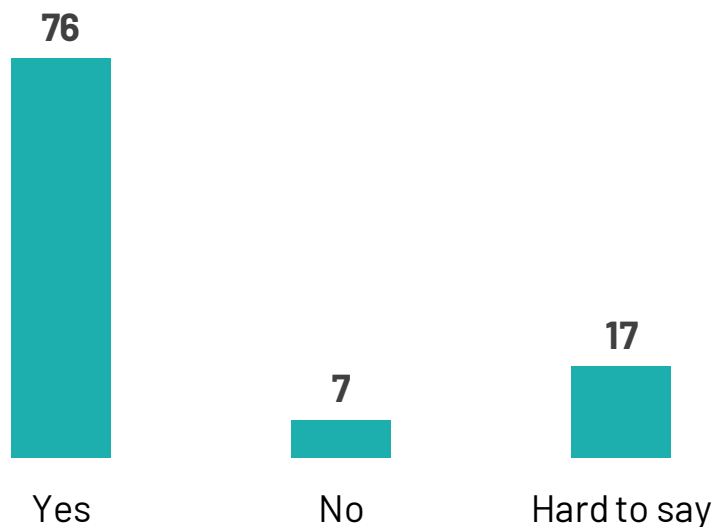
A slightly lower percentage, 72%, would likely buy the product if the packaging contained recycled plastic.

Are you more likely to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as...?

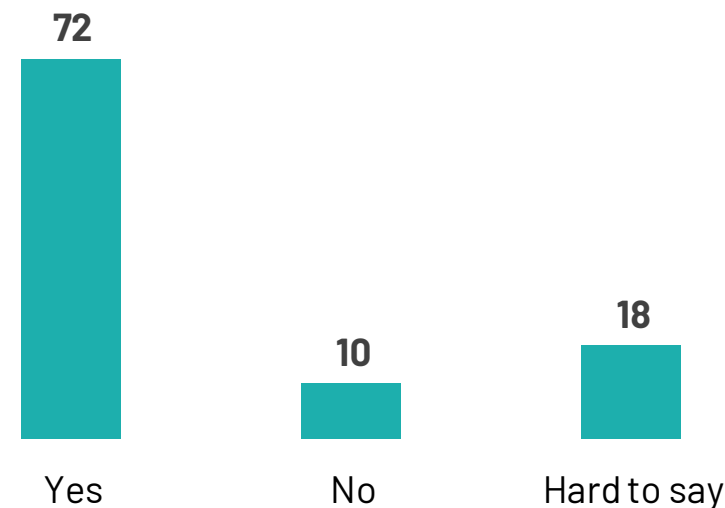
Poland, 18-65, N=502

Willingness to buy a product packaged in plastic with recycling information

More likely to buy, if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



More likely to buy, if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



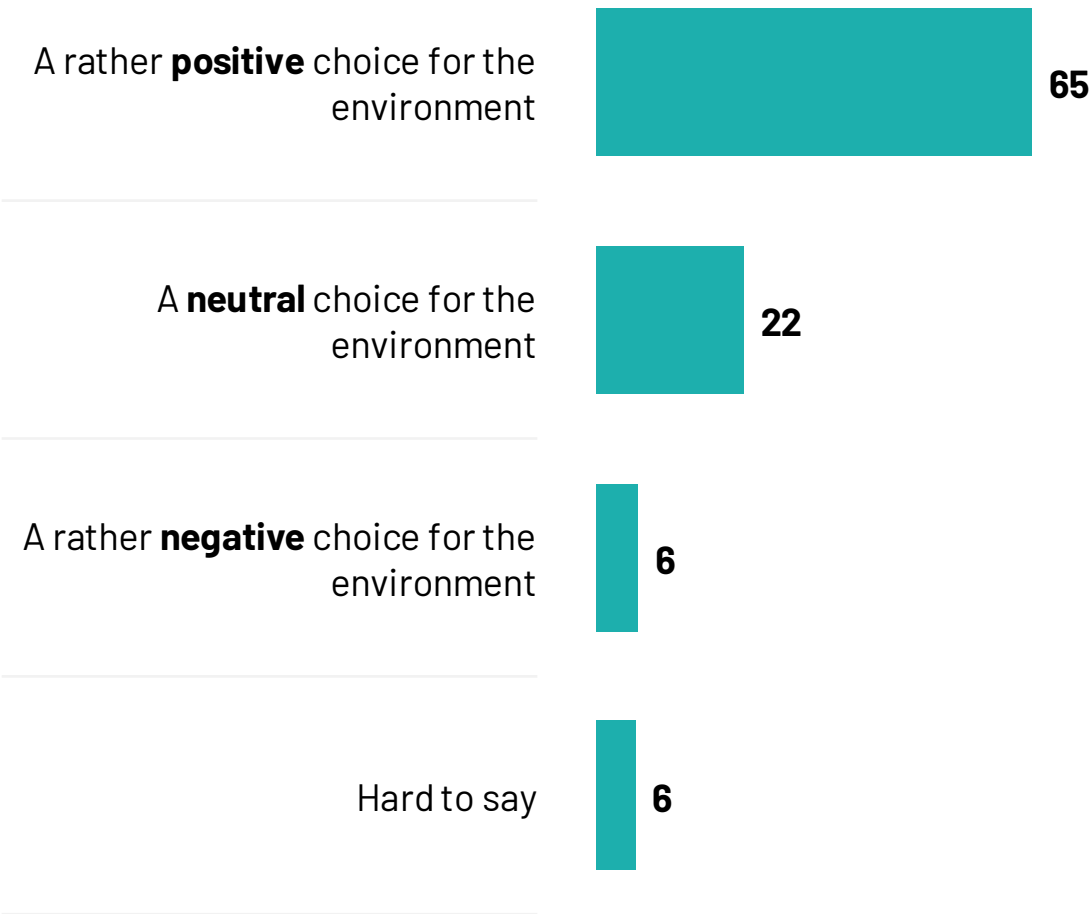
Environmental logos significantly influence Polish respondents, leading many to perceive plastic products or packaging as a rather positive choice for the environment.

This view is particularly prevalent among respondents aged 55 to 65 (77%).

When you see this type of logos on a product or packaging, do you think this means that this product or packaging is...?

Poland, 18-65, N=502

Environmental impact of the product or packaging with this type of logos

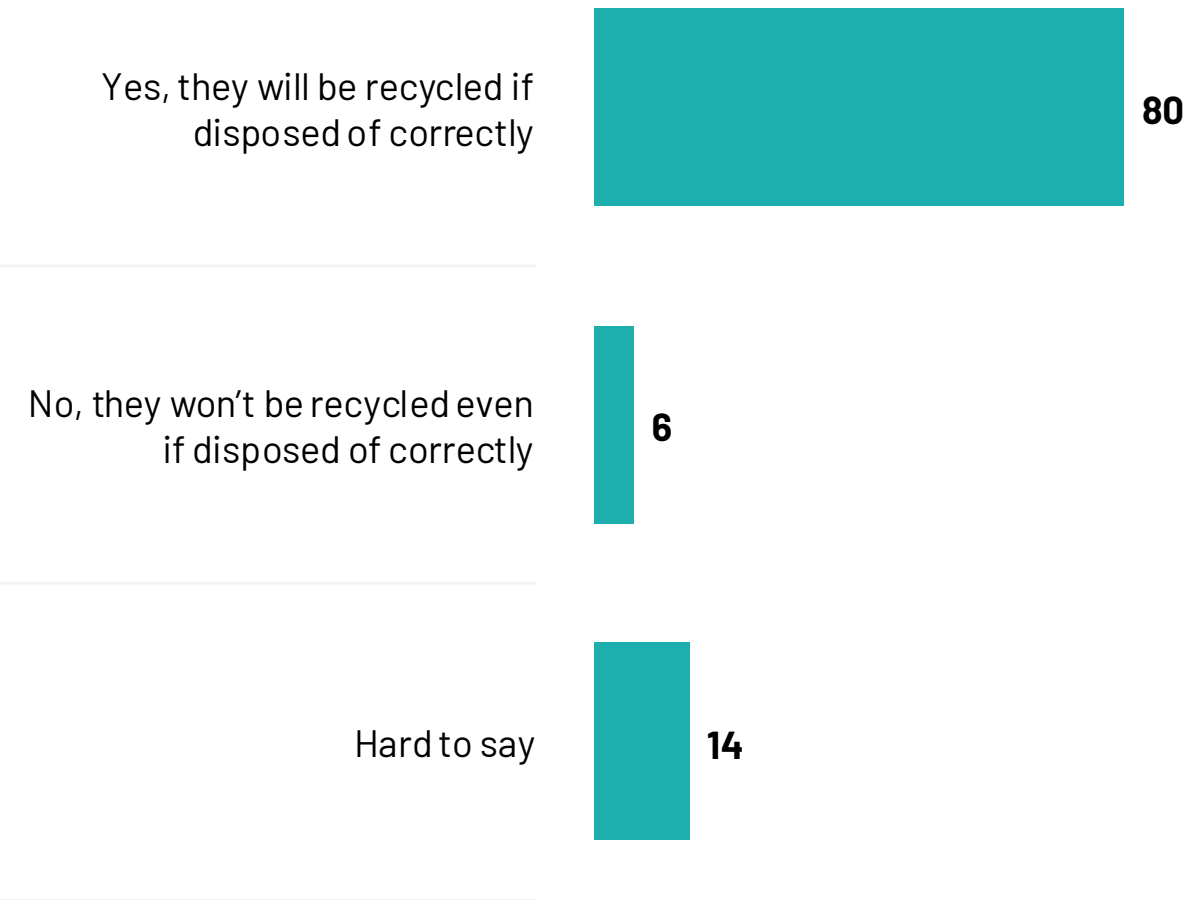


80% of Polish respondents believe that the product or packaging with green logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly.

Do you think that products and packaging featuring these or similar recycling logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly?

Poland, 18-65, N=502

Recycling of the product or packaging with this type of logos

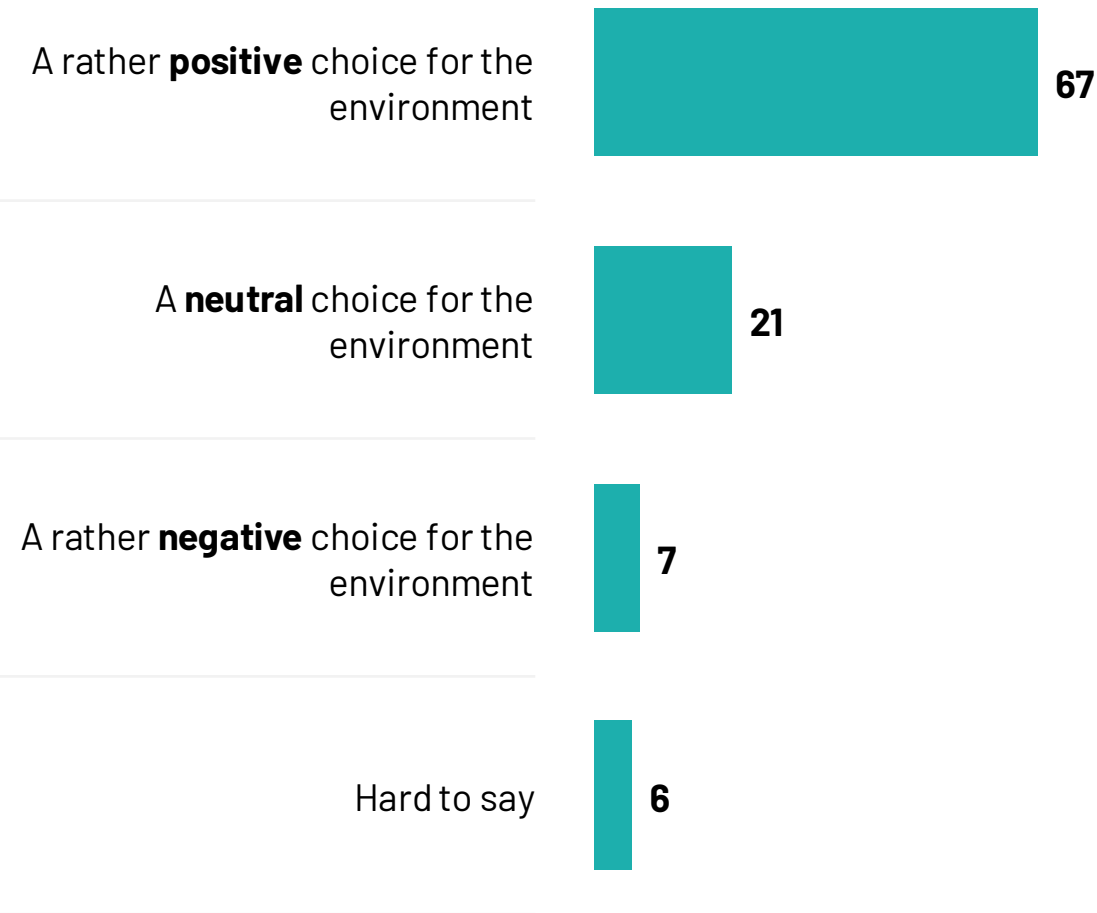


The effect of the additional visual tested in Poland is nearly the same as that of other visuals tested. It persuades people to view the product or packaging as an environmentally positive choice.

When you see this type of logos on a product or packaging, do you think this means that this product or packaging is...?

Poland, 18-65, N=502

Environmental impact of the product or packaging with this type of logos



GREAT BRITAIN

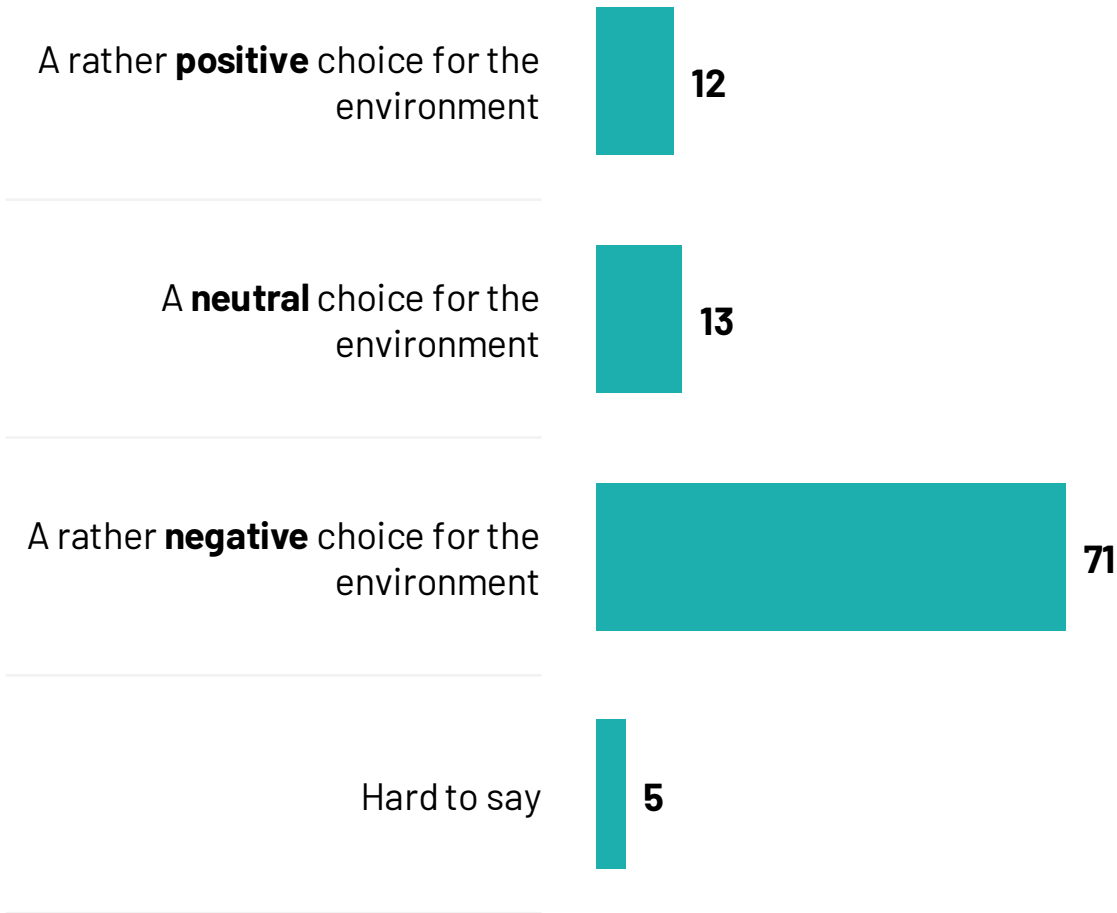
71% of respondents in Great Britain think plastic products or packaging are a rather negative choice for the environment.

This opinion is especially common among the oldest respondents aged 55 to 65 (82%) and those living in small towns (81%) or villages (80%).

Do you think plastic products or packaging are...?

Great Britain, 18-65, N=501

Environmental impact of plastics



In Great Britain, 74% of respondents would buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging was labelled as fully recyclable.

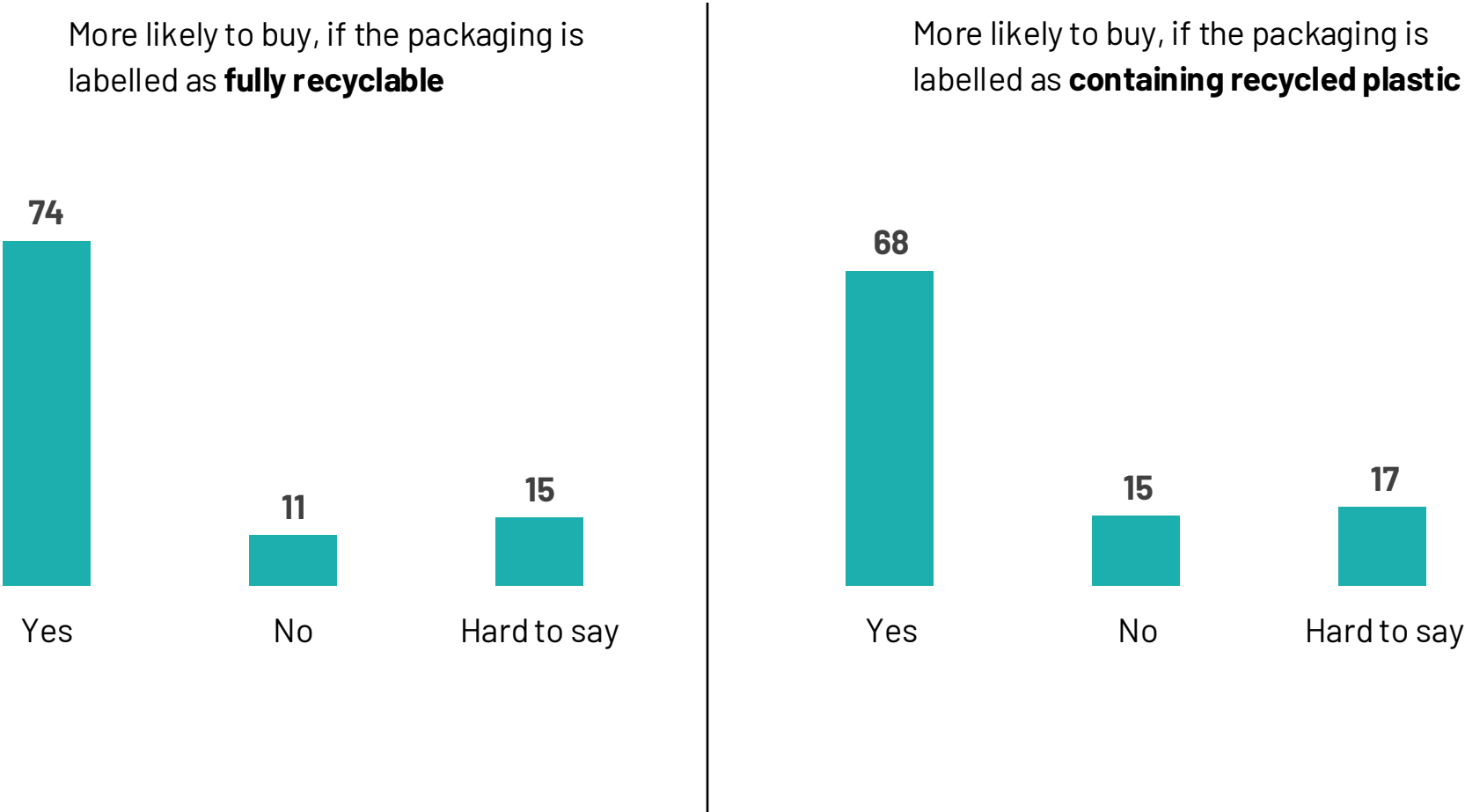
The “containing recycled plastic” label is less persuasive, but still appeals to 68%.

Both labels are most convincing to those aged 25 to 34, with 82% and 78% respectively.

Are you more likely to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as...?

Great Britain, 18-65, N=501

Willingness to buy a product packaged in plastic with recycling information

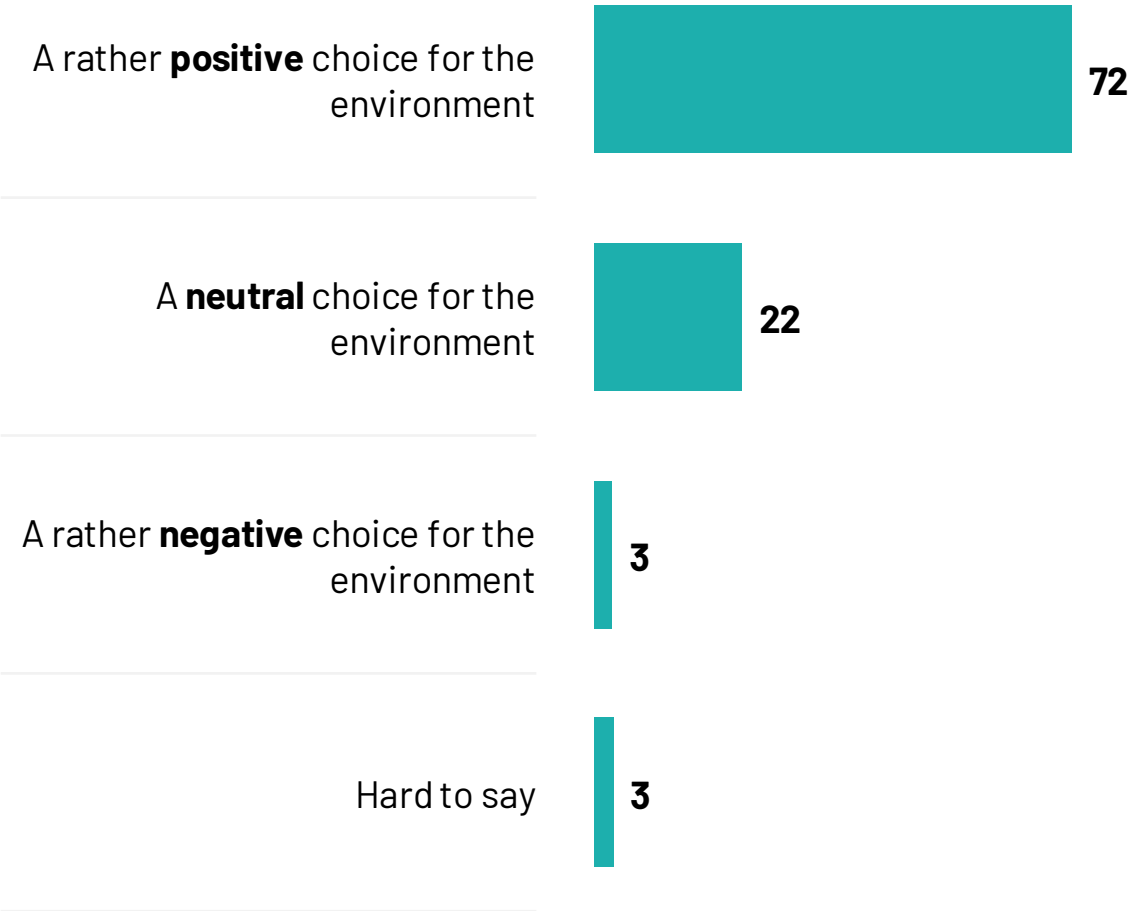


The logos presented have an impact in Great Britain, with most respondents believing that environmental logos signify plastic products or packaging as environmentally positive choices.

When you see this type of logos on a product or packaging, do you think this means that this product or packaging is...?

Great Britain, 18-65, N=501

Environmental impact of the product or packaging with this type of logos



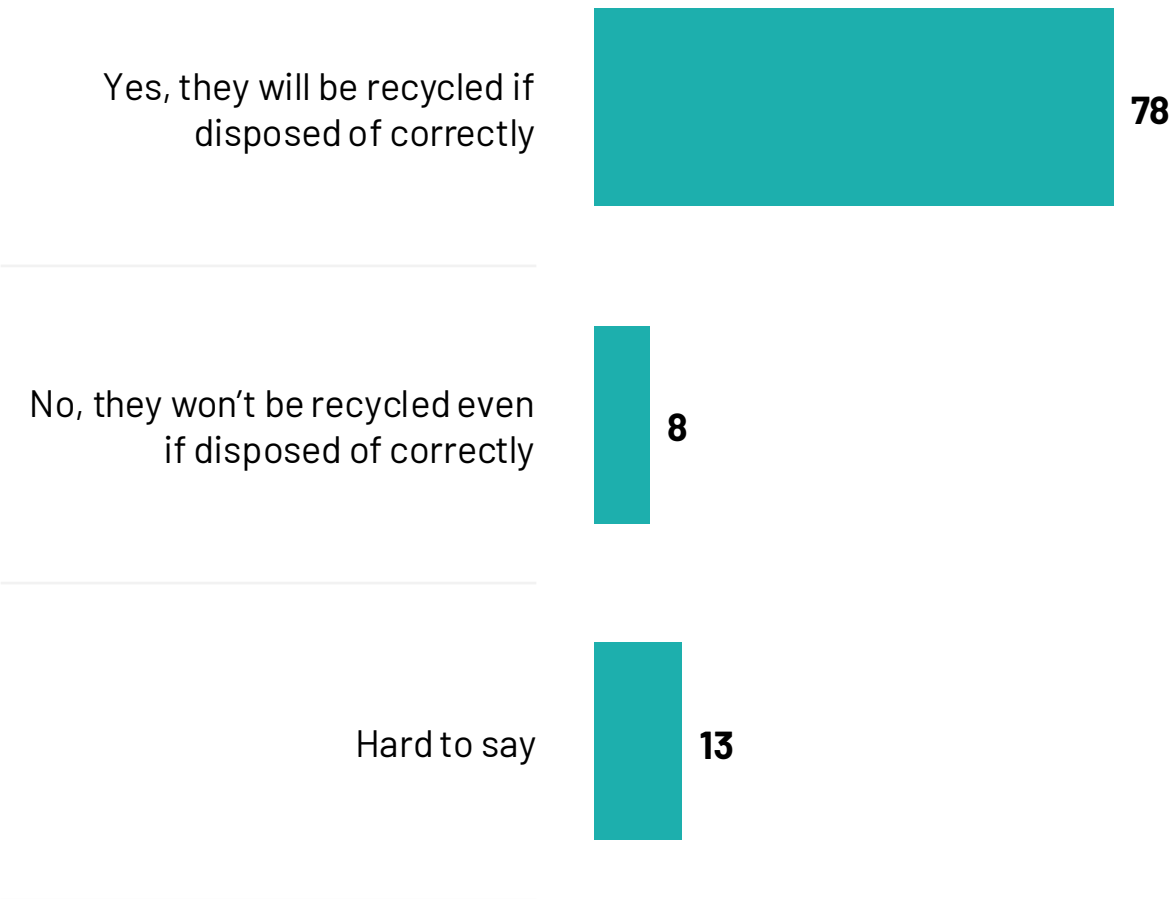
76% of British respondents believe that the product or packaging with green logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly.

This is mainly the opinion of people living in large cities (87%) or suburbs (90%).

Do you think that products and packaging featuring these or similar recycling logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly?

Great Britain, 18-65, N=501

Recycling of the product or packaging with this type of logos



FRANCE



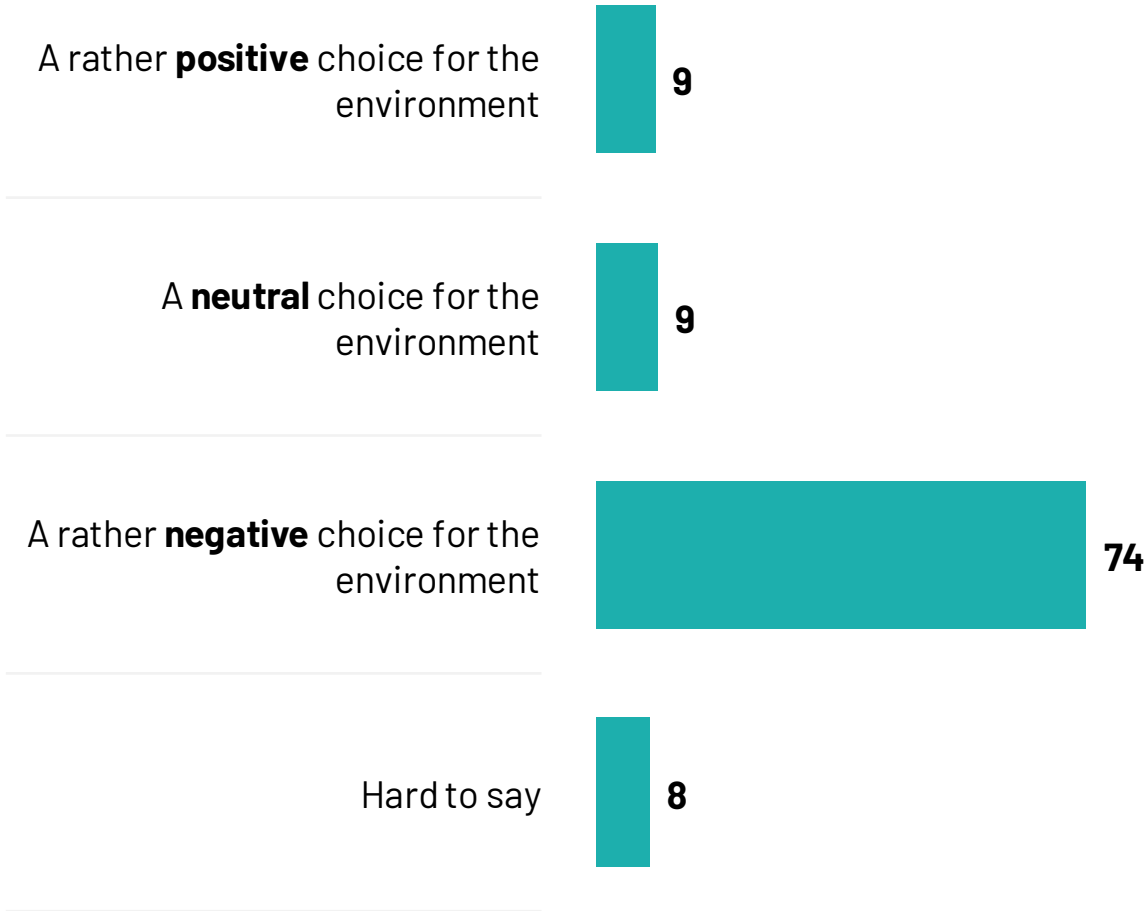
74% of respondents in France consider plastic products or packaging as a rather negative choice for the environment.

This opinion is primarily held by the oldest respondents aged 55 to 65 (83%) and those with higher education (79%).

Do you think plastic products or packaging are...?

France, 18-65, N=501

Environmental impact of plastics



In France, 72% of respondents are likely to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as fully recyclable.

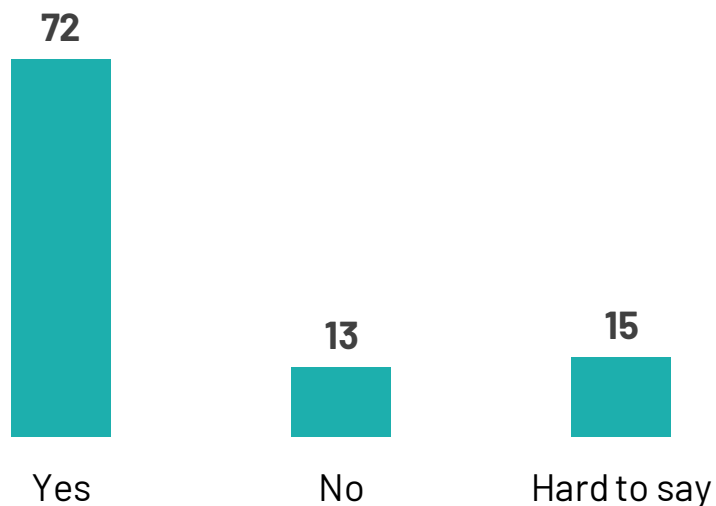
The “containing recycled plastic” label is slightly less appealing but still attracts 68%.

Are you more likely to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as...?

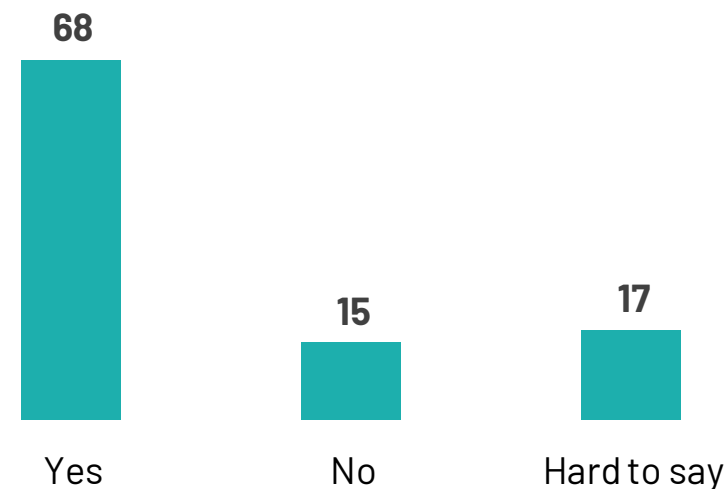
France, 18-65, N=501

Willingness to buy a product packaged in plastic with recycling information

More likely to buy, if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



More likely to buy, if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



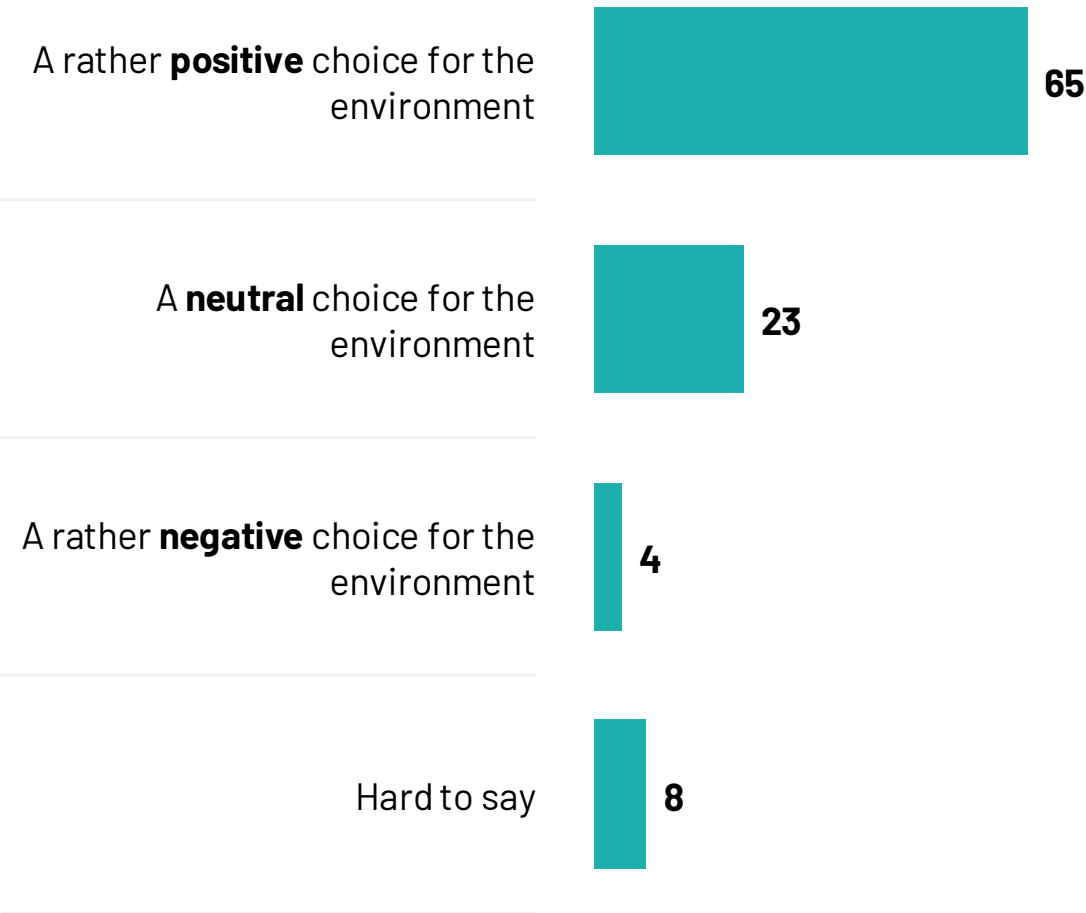
Environmental logos convince 65% of respondents that the product or packaging is a rather positive choice for the environment.

However, those aged 35 to 44 are the least convinced, with 30% considering it a neutral choice.

When you see this type of logos on a product or packaging, do you think this means that this product or packaging is...?

France, 18-65, N=501

Environmental impact of the product or packaging with this type of logos

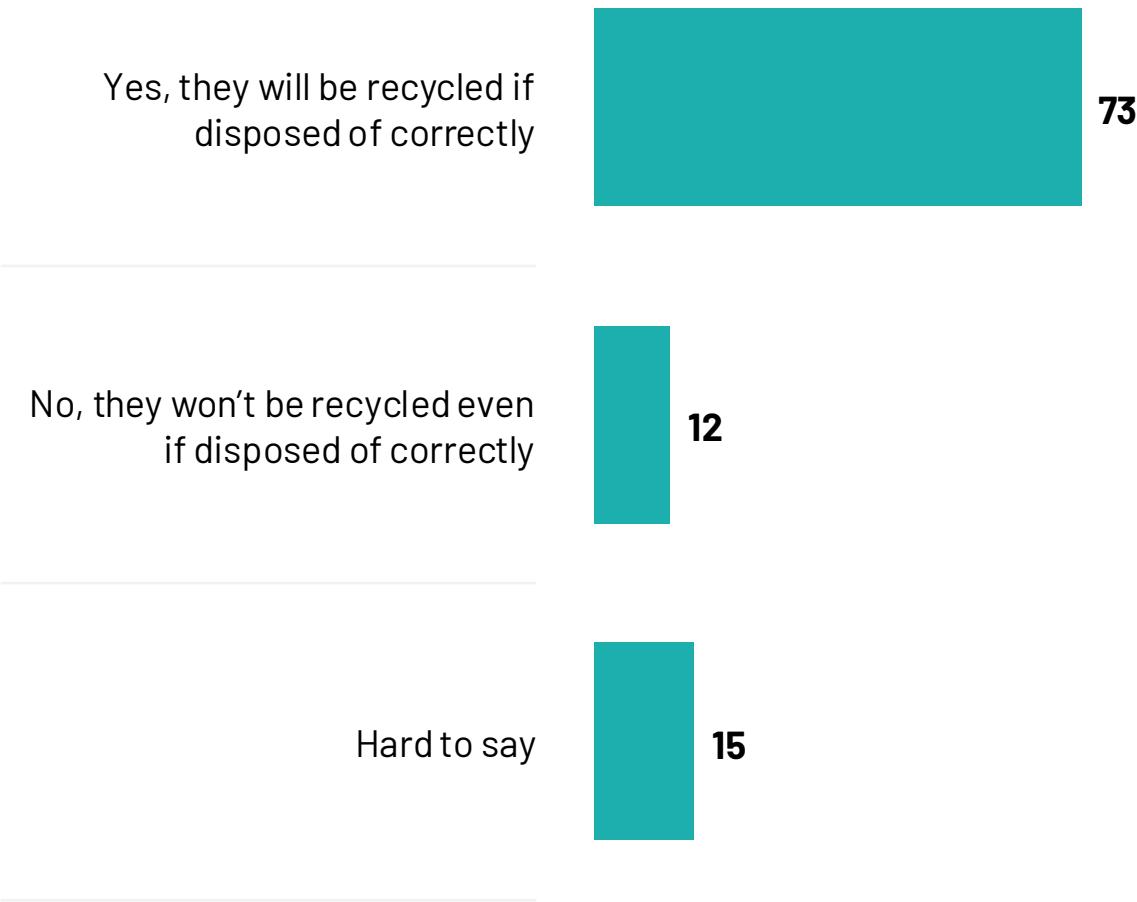


73% of French respondents believe that the product or packaging with green logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly.

Do you think that products and packaging featuring these or similar recycling logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly?

France, 18-65, N=501

Recycling of the product or packaging with this type of logos



GERMANY



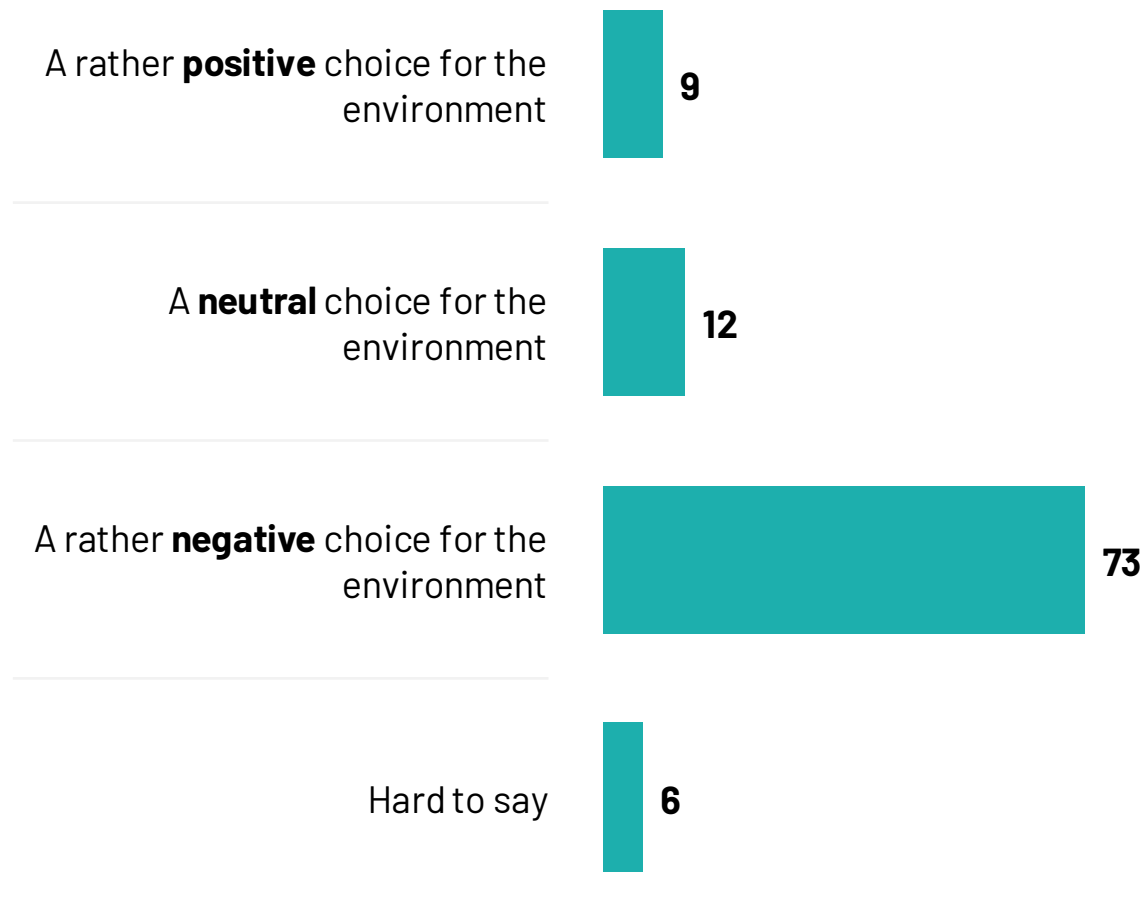
73% of respondents in Germany find plastic products or packaging a rather negative choice for the environment.

This perspective is chiefly held by the oldest respondents aged 55 to 65 (85%) and those aged 45 to 54 (84%).

Do you think plastic products or packaging are...?

Germany, 18-65, N=505

Environmental impact of plastics



In Germany, 71% of respondents are ready to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as fully recyclable. The "containing recycled plastic" label is similarly appealing, with 70% willing to buy.

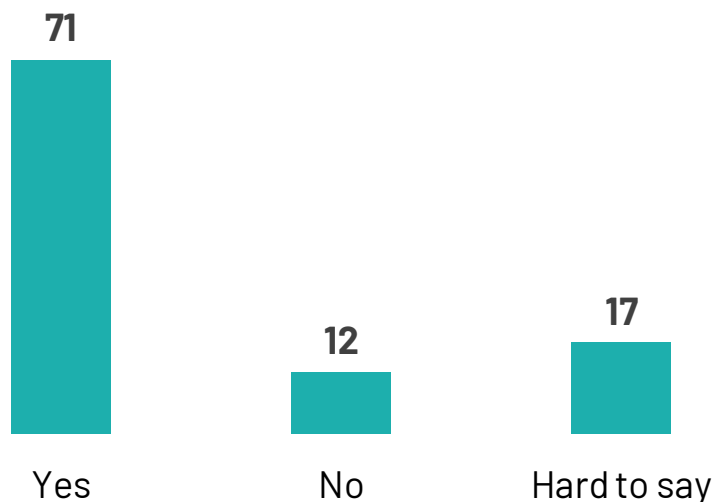
Both labels resonate most with those aged 25 to 34, at 82% and 84% respectively.

Are you more likely to buy a product packaged in plastic if the packaging is labelled as...?

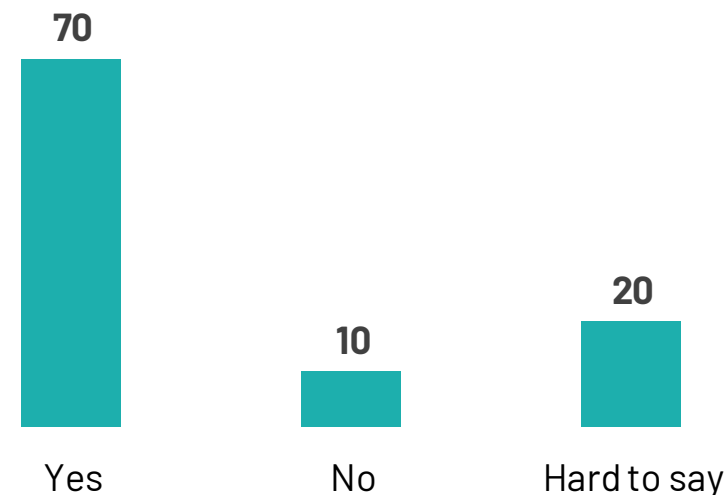
Germany, 18-65, N=505

Willingness to buy a product packaged in plastic with recycling information

More likely to buy, if the packaging is labelled as **fully recyclable**



More likely to buy, if the packaging is labelled as **containing recycled plastic**



A majority of 58% of German respondents believe environmental logos signify that the product or packaging is a rather positive choice for the environment, with those aged 25 to 34 being the most optimistic at 66%.

When you see this type of logos on a product or packaging, do you think this means that this product or packaging is...?

Germany, 18-65, N=505

Environmental impact of the product or packaging with this type of logos

A rather **positive** choice for the environment



A **neutral** choice for the environment



A rather **negative** choice for the environment



Hard to say

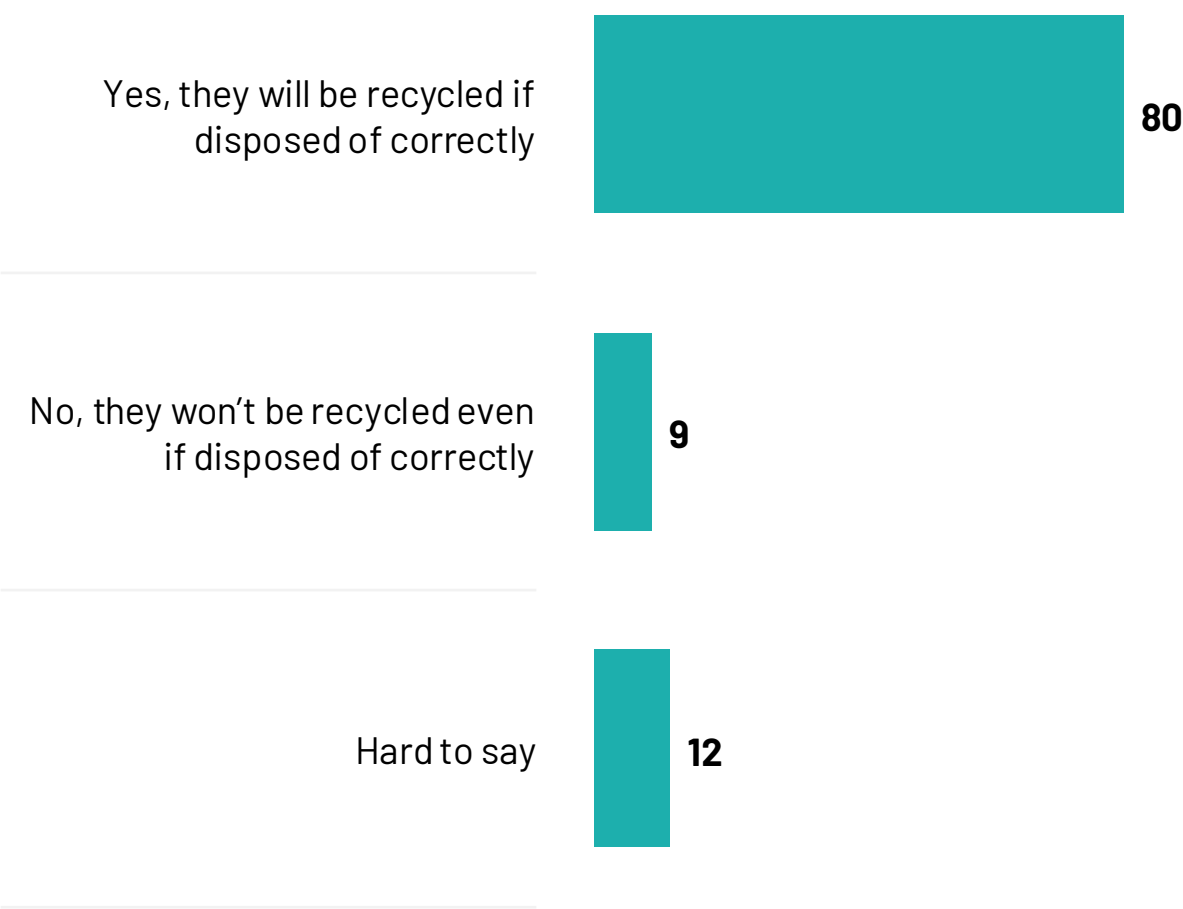


80% of German respondents believe that the product or packaging with green logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly.

Do you think that products and packaging featuring these or similar recycling logos will be recycled if disposed of correctly?

Germany, 18-65, N=505

Recycling of the product or packaging with this type of logos



METHODOLOGY

Method: Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI)

Timing: November 20-25, 2024

Sample Sizes:

- Poland (PL): n=502
- Great Britain (GB): n=501
- France (FR): n=501
- Germany (GER): n=505

The composition of each country's sample reflects the demographic profile (age, gender, region) of the 18-65 population, according to the most recent census data.

The results are rounded to integers, which may mean that they do not always add up to exactly 100%.

Data source: IPSOS The Plastic Paradox: Unpacking Public Attitudes. The survey was conducted on behalf of ClientEarth using the CAWI method. Fieldwork was carried out between November 20 and November 25, 2024. The study targeted individuals aged 18-65, with a nationally representative samples in Poland, Great Britain, France and Germany (PL n=502, GB n=501, FR n=501, GER n=505).

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THANK YOU

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