

Impact Evaluation of the Spanish Citizens' Climate Assembly



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Executive Summary

The Spanish Citizens' Climate Assembly (SCCA) started in November 2021 and concluded in May 2022. This report aims to evaluate the SCCA's impact across different areas, including policy, assembly members' attitudes, public engagement, and the media. To guide this evaluation, we employed the Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF) developed by Christina Demski and Stuart Capstick of the Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations (CAST) for the Knowledge Network of Climate Assemblies (KNOCA). The IEF can be downloaded from the KNOCA website.¹ Our research strategy relied on methodological triangulation, incorporating various means of data collection, including: opinion surveys (among assembly members, the general population, and political representatives and policymakers), qualitative interviews (with organisers, assembly members, public servants, and recognised experts), document analysis, and a systematic examination of digital and social media.

Key Findings

Policy Impact:

As of December 2023, public information regarding the implementation of SCCA recommendations remains unavailable; there is no official document or platform providing information on the status of these recommendations. However, there are indications of some progress - albeit very limited - in the follow-through and implementation process:

In August 2022, the Ministry of Labour (led by the minority party in the coalition government) furnished a document to assembly members outlining the status of recommendations related to the labour sector.

In July 2023, the Office of the President of the Government sent an undisclosed letter to assembly members, updating them on the status of the recommendations. According to this letter, approximately one-third of the recommendations have been implemented. However, due to limited available information, verifying the extent to which these measures directly result from the assembly remains challenging.

Interviews with high-ranking officials from the regional administrations where the assembly's recommendations were presented, revealed that there is no direct communication between the central government and regional governments to systematically address the assembly's recommendations.

Aside from the implementation process of the recommendations, the SCCA has been replicated at least four times on a subnational level. In some regions, climate assemblies have been postponed due to changes in government following the latest regional elections, although many regions have included the possibility of conducting a climate assembly in their legislation.

Impact on Assembly Members:

As is the case with other citizens' assemblies carried out in different countries, assembly members assert that they have gained new knowledge and skills that bolster their perception of their own political efficacy.

The assembly has also resulted in an increase in unconventional political participation (e.g. engaging with the media, contacting politicians etc.) among its members. An example of this

¹ <https://knoea.eu/impact-evaluation-framework/>

is the creation of their own association to disseminate and defend the assembly's recommendations.

However, no relevant changes have been observed in terms of assembly members taking actions that directly influence the reduction or mitigation of climate change, possibly because many assembly members were already environmentally conscious before the start of the assembly. In any case, changing the behaviour of assembly members is not part of the assembly's objective.

Furthermore, there is some scepticism when assessing the potential impact of the SCCA, especially from the media, energy companies, political parties, and governments. Nonetheless, the level of satisfaction regarding the assembly's design and outcomes remains very high, despite a year having passed since its conclusion and the perception that the recommendations have had a limited impact.

Impact on the General Public and in the Media:

According to a survey (see '*Impact on the General Public*'), the level of public awareness about the SCCA is low, with only 12% of the population reporting awareness of the SCCA, while 71% denied any knowledge of it, and 17% indicated it sounded vaguely familiar.

Regarding the SCCA's impact in digital media, peaks of media coverage coincide with key moments of the assembly (e.g. its launch, completion and the presentation of results). However, the peak corresponding to the assembly's launch is lower than expected. Potential explanations include the need to ensure the anonymity of assembly members and the privacy of recommendations, which may have limited media interest in dissemination. Another explanation, according to interviews conducted, relates to the zero-risk strategy adopted by the government.

Concerning the subsequent impact of the assembly, several key informants highlight the importance of reconsidering when to distribute material and allocate human resources to communication efforts. Due to limitations on dissemination of information associated with guaranteeing participant anonymity and deliberation privacy, it is impractical to allocate the majority of communication resources solely to the months during which the assembly is ongoing. Instead, these resources should be allocated to the period before the assembly's launch and most importantly, upon its conclusion, in order to publicise the results.

Finally, regarding the communication strategy, preliminary results indicate that the primary means by which the public receives information about the assembly is through media articles that do not specifically focus on the assembly (see full section). In other words, the most read (and shared) articles online are those where the assembly is not the main feature of the article. This observation may be valuable when reconsidering future communication strategies.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Between November 2021 and May 2022, 100 citizens were selected to be part of the Spanish Citizens' Climate Assembly (SCCA).² At the time of writing this report, a year and a half has passed since the assembly concluded. This is a good time to ask the question: What impact has the SCCA had?

This report is the result of a commission by the European Climate Foundation in collaboration with the Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies (KNOCA). Why produce a report on the impact of this assembly? Greater attention has been given by scholars and experts to how assemblies are conducted, with a particular emphasis on the quality of deliberation. However, we know little about what happens after these processes have concluded, whether it be months or years later. To date, the majority of attention has focussed on how assemblies operate and their immediate impact, particularly on members. Yet, precisely because of all the effort invested early on, it becomes necessary, after some time has passed, to revisit the issue and ask: What has happened with the recommendations? What has been the impact in the media? What do policymakers think of the process? What do we know about the assembly members? Did the message reach the general population? This study revolves around addressing these questions. However, it should be noted that although a year and a half has elapsed since the conclusion of the SCCA, it is still premature to assess any lasting impact, as it may either materialise or diminish entirely over the long term.

The SCCA follows a similar approach to other assemblies carried out in countries such as France, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Scotland, and Austria, among others. Currently, other citizens' assemblies on the climate are also taking place at the subnational level. In Spain, for instance, assemblies have been held in Mallorca (Balearic Islands), Gipuzkoa (Basque Country), and the city of Barcelona. Another regional-level assembly is currently underway in Catalonia. Most of these assemblies share common features in terms of their design and structure. Essentially, these are processes that typically last between 3 and 6 months, during which a group of around 100-150 randomly selected citizens, following stratification criteria, come together in various sessions to analyse, deliberate, and formulate recommendations on climate change. During sessions that can last one or two days at a time, assembly members interact with experts and advocates from different fields. The interaction between experts

² <https://asambleaciudadanadelcambioclimatico.es/>

and citizens aims to help the latter form opinions and acquire the knowledge necessary to propose recommendations to policymakers and the government. There are variations between assemblies, including differences in their design (e.g., the number and duration of sessions), the questions they are required to address (e.g., more or less generic), and their institutional framework (e.g., whether they are established by law and whether their recommendations are binding or advisory).³

What sets the Spanish Citizens' Climate Assembly apart from other national assemblies is its broader and more complex mandate. The question it aimed to address was, "A safer and fairer Spain in the face of climate change: how do we achieve it?". This question encompassed a greater level of complexity because, unlike assemblies in France, the UK and Scotland, the SCCA had to address both mitigation and adaptation aspects of climate change. While other countries focused primarily on how to reduce emissions (mitigation), Spain emphasised the importance of addressing adaptation while also considering mitigation.

Another distinguishing factor is that the SCCA was initiated and promoted by the Spanish government in accordance with The Law on Climate Change and Energy Transition. What makes this unique is that this Spanish climate change law explicitly allows for the possibility of citizens' assemblies, a legal provision absent in other countries like France or the UK. There are differing opinions and viewpoints on this matter. Some believe that the SCCA should have been conducted before the approval of the climate change law, while others see the fact that the law was passed first as a beneficial legal framework for the assembly. Beyond this debate about what might have been more appropriate, it is important to consider the specific context and timeline in which the SCCA was conceived and executed.

In September 2019, the Spanish Congress of Deputies declared a state of climate emergency in Spain.⁴ In November 2019, general elections were held, and three months later, in January 2020, the government officially declared a climate emergency.⁵ In March 2020, a state of emergency was declared due to the COVID-19 health crisis. Nearly a year later, in March 2021, the Climate Change and Energy Transition Law was passed, which included (art. 39)

³ See KNOCA website for details of different approaches.

⁴

https://www.congreso.es/es/busqueda-de-iniciativas?p_p_id=iniciativas&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&_iniciativas_mode=mostrarDetalle&_iniciativas_legislatura=XIII&_iniciativas_id=173%2F000001

⁵

https://www.miteco.gob.es/content/dam/miteco/es/prensa/declaracionemergenciaclimatica_tcm30-506551.pdf

the possibility of conducting a citizens' assembly on the climate.⁶ In September 2021, a ministerial order was approved, establishing the composition, organisation, and functioning of the SCCA⁷. Finally, in December 2021, the first session of the SCCA took place, and in May 2022, the last session concluded. The following month, in June 2022, the recommendations were presented to the government, prime minister and minister for ecological transition in the garden of the prime minister's residence (La Moncloa). Four months later, in October 2023, the SCCA recommendations were presented in the Congress of Deputies. In July 2023, just ten days before the next general elections, the Secretariat of the Presidency of the Government sent an undisclosed letter to all assembly members, explaining the current status of the recommendations. This is the political context that frames the conception and development of the SCCA. The following section will detail the research strategy used to conduct the first analysis of the impact of the SCCA.

Rationale and methodology

The primary objective of this report is to evaluate the impact of the Spanish Climate Assembly using the Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF) developed by Christina Demski and Stuart Capstick of the Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations (CAST) for KNOCA (see Table 1).⁸ The aim of the IEF is to facilitate analysis of the medium and long-term impact of assemblies. Specifically, how climate assemblies have the potential to influence climate governance, citizen engagement and civil society's capacity to address climate change, as well as to drive and modify public debate and discussion.

The IEF identifies a series of potential impacts of climate assemblies that are operationalised in two dimensions: areas of impact and types of impact. The first dimension, *impact areas*, consists of three categories: policy, social, and systemic. Within the *policy* category, impacts include those on public policies and political discourse. In the *social* category, impacts are confined to public discourse and broader social engagement. Finally, the *systemic* category would refer to changes in democratic structures and political decision-making processes, as well as changes in foundational aspects of society, such as new economic paradigms,

⁶ https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2021-8447#:~:text=La%20ley%20establece%20un%20marco,mejorar%20las%20decisiones%20de%20inversi%C3%B3n

⁷ <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/10/08/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-16347.pdf>

⁸ <https://knoea.eu/impact-evaluation-framework/>

modifications to national constitutions, and changes in the interaction between citizens and the state.

Table 1. Impact Evaluation Framework (potential impacts of climate assemblies. (Demski and Capstick). Adapted version. For full version visit KNOCA’s website)

Dimension 1. Impact areas	Dimension 2. Types of impact			
		Instrumental	Conceptual	Capacity-building
	Policy	Policies, legislations, political discourse.	Policy-makers’ knowledge, attitudes and understandings.	Skills to integrate public perspective into climate policy
	Social	Practices and behaviour of media, businesses and organisations	Key actors’ knowledge, attitudes and understandings.	Media, businesses and civil society skills in climate action
Systemic	Climate governance	Understandings of climate change	The use of deliberative processes to address climate change	

The second dimension, *types of impact*, consists of three categories: instrumental, conceptual, and capacity-building. *Instrumental* impacts are those that influence both public policy and specific behaviours and practices. *Conceptual* impacts focus on how climate assemblies influence our way of thinking, affecting our knowledge, attitudes, and conceptions about climate change. Lastly, the third type of impact is called *capacity-building*, which essentially involves acquiring new capabilities and skills to address the issue of climate change.

In order to implement the IEF and trace the progression of the assembly’s impacts, it is essential to apply a research strategy based on methodological triangulation. In this regard, various methods of data collection have been employed for this report including opinion surveys, qualitative interviews, documentary analysis, and analysis of digital and social media.

Three surveys have been analysed: a survey of the general population, a survey of assembly members, and a survey of political representatives and members of the administration. The general population survey, conducted by a specialist company, aims to understand the level of awareness of the SCCA and the level of support for its recommendations among the general population. The participant survey primarily seeks to cover potential impacts in the social analysis subcategory, focusing on possible changes in attitudes and behaviours regarding climate change. The online survey of political representatives and members of the administration covers policy impact.

In addition to the surveys, a total of 23 semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. The interviews were carried out via video conferencing and recorded. Subsequently, they were transcribed and coded using Atlas.ti software. A simplified version of the analytical framework proposed by Stuart and Demski was used for recoding⁹. The number of interviews according to the type of informant is as follows:

- 6 interviews with individuals who were responsible for various aspects of the organisation of the assembly, both before, during, and after its conclusion. Each of these interviewees belongs to different organisations, both public and private.
- 7 interviews with assembly members, including 4 men and 3 women from different regions.
- 6 interviews with experts in environmental issues, from various disciplines and areas of expertise (labour, sociology, and environmental sciences).
- 4 interviews with personnel from regional government administrations in different regions (autonomous communities).

The digital and social media analysis involves systematically searching for articles in the digital press that directly or indirectly mention the SCCA and analysing their impact on social networks. Finally, documentary analysis has been carried out to complement the collected data.

The report consists of five chapters. The first chapter analyses the SCCA's impact on policy. It starts with an update on the monitoring and implementation of the assembly's recommendations, based on an informal letter sent by the Spanish government to the assembly members one year after its conclusion. It further analyses the impact on policy through an exploratory survey of parliamentarians and interviews with members of the administration and regional governments. The second chapter analyses the impact on the assembly's members, mainly through a survey conducted one year after the assembly's completion and qualitative interviews. This chapter examines aspects such as members' satisfaction with the assembly's design, the results obtained, and changes in their attitudes and behaviour related to climate action. The third chapter is dedicated to understanding, through the analysis of an opinion survey, the impact of the SCCA on the general population by gauging awareness of the assembly's existence and support for its main objectives and recommendations. The fourth chapter analyses the assembly's impact on digital and social

⁹ We thank Emma Lancha for the work done in coding the interviews.

media through the creation of a database of systematically sourced news articles in digital media and the evaluation of their impact on social networks. This chapter examines, among other aspects, the coverage and communication strategy adopted to disseminate information about the assembly among the general public. Finally, the fifth chapter concludes the report with reflections on the impact of the SCCA, summarising key findings and implications for future evaluations utilising the Impact Evaluation Framework.

Chapter 1

Policy Impact



Policy Impact

In this section, we will analyse the impact of the SCCA's recommendations. First, we will describe the level of implementation of the recommendations based on the response provided by the Secretary of the Government's office in July 2023. Next, we will present the public's evaluation of some of these recommendations using data from a survey of the Spanish population and compare it with the support received among the assembly's members (table 2). Then, we will examine the results of an exploratory survey conducted with political representatives (members of parliament and senators) and personnel from local and regional administrations regarding their opinions on some of the assembly's recommendations. Finally, we will conduct an in-depth analysis of several qualitative interviews with high-ranking officials from the administrations of four Spanish regions.

The implementation of recommendations

*The follow-up process*¹⁰

The SCCA was established by law, but the legislation did not specify any provisions for follow-up. The development of the assembly was outlined in a ministerial order. When the assembly was announced, it was stated that the citizens' recommendations would be presented to the government and shared with the plenary session of the Congress of Deputies. This was intended to facilitate discussions and decision-making on climate change policy and involve stakeholders in the economy and society. However, the recommendations were not presented during a plenary session of the Congress of Deputies. Instead, a separate event was chosen for their presentation, attended by political representatives including the presidents of the congress and the senates, as well as five assembly members who explained the work carried out during the assembly. However, it is also necessary to highlight the event that took place on August 31, 2022, in which the vice president of the government, minister of labour, and leader of the minority party in the governing coalition (Yolanda Díaz) met with spokespersons of the assembly. During that meeting, the vice president and members of her cabinet handed over a document explaining the status of implementation of the recommendations from the assembly related to their domain (the Ministry of Labour). More

¹⁰ Most information provided in this section was provided by a collaborator of KNOCA through Graham Smith in March 2023. Not all aspects included in this summary have been verified by the author of this report.

information about these two events can be found in the Digital and Social Media Impact section.

Subsequently, when the members delivered their recommendations to the Spanish government, President Pedro Sánchez made a commitment to release an official government response within a year, scheduled for June 2023. This response would evaluate the feasibility of incorporating the recommendations into government actions. During the assembly, the Office for Climate Change within the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge served as the secretariat. This same office is responsible for overseeing the follow-up process and preparing the government's response. The Office for Climate Change has played a significant role in the assembly process since its inception. However, it did not establish specific structures for receiving recommendations after the assembly concluded. This decision was influenced by a desire to tailor the follow-up process to the content of the recommendations and to avoid centralising the process. Instead, they opted for a collaborative approach involving various branches of the administration.

As the assembly process neared its conclusion, the Office for Climate Change began organising the follow-up process. Their first step was to request that the assembly members designate spokespersons from among themselves. These spokespersons would be responsible for presenting the assembly's recommendations to relevant stakeholders. The rationale behind this approach was the belief that raising awareness among those potentially affected by the recommendations, before the government's response, would enhance their impact. After the spokespersons were appointed, the Office for Climate Change commenced preparations for a series of meetings scheduled from September to December 2022. These meetings involved various parties, including representatives from regional governments and administration (Valencia, Extremadura, La Rioja, and Catalonia), third sector organisations, the business sector, trade unions, the education sector, the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), the president of the Congress of Deputies, the president of the senate, and the government of the Canary Islands. The objective was to foster dialogue and information exchange with these key stakeholders. More information about these meetings can be found on SCCA's website.¹¹

¹¹ <https://asambleaciudadanadelcambioclimatico.es/novedades/>

Simultaneously with the meetings mentioned above, the Ministry for Ecological Transition, under the coordination of the Office for Climate Change, conducted an initial analysis of all the citizens' recommendations, encompassing the following aspects:

Current Implementation Status: This involved evaluating whether the recommendations had already been fully implemented, partially implemented, or not implemented at all.

Responsible Actors: Identifying the entities or stakeholders responsible for implementing the recommendations, including state-level authorities, regional bodies, local administrations, businesses, and citizens.

Implementation Types: The analysis considered the nature of implementation required for each recommendation, such as regulatory measures, incentives, or any other specific approach.

Timeframe Considerations: The assessment determined whether the recommendations were feasible in the short, medium, and long term, or if they necessitated further in-depth analysis.

The preliminary analysis served as a basis for engaging with other ministries to solicit their input. A total of 21 ministries reviewed the recommendations to determine their jurisdiction for implementation. They evaluated whether they had already implemented or were planning to implement these recommendations. The quality of input received from the ministries varied, and as a result, the Office for Climate Change may need to continue reaching out to some ministries and possibly arrange bilateral meetings to further discuss and clarify specific aspects.

As of March 2023, the structure of the government's response remained undetermined. However, the Office for Climate Change sought to provide an overview of the status of the recommendations, categorising them as fully implemented, partially implemented, or requiring further analysis. They were considering establishing a category system to clarify the level of implementation of the recommendations, ensuring transparency regarding what was in progress and what still needed attention. In March 2023, the Ministry for Ecological Transition expressed its intention to monitor the implementation of the recommendations after the government response had been provided. They planned to produce follow-up reports to assess the progress. However, there is uncertainty regarding the feasibility of this

process and the frequency of such reports. The ministry was still in the process of determining how and when follow-up reports would be generated.

Upon reflection, the Office for Climate Change acknowledged that the follow-up process could have been better planned and organised in advance. In particular, organising presentations by spokespersons proved to be a challenging task. Additionally, the office anticipates significant challenges in handling the more complex recommendations that require medium or long-term implementation or further analysis. As the upcoming election approached, the Ministry for Ecological Transition suggested that it would propose initiatives for the incoming government, some of which may take into account the recommendations from assembly members. However, the ministry could not predict how the new government will respond to these proposals.

The general elections took place on July 23, 2023, and according to an interview conducted in October 2023, assembly members received a response outlining the level of implementation of the recommendations on July 12, 2023. The Secretariat of the Presidency of the Government sent an email to all assembly members explaining the implementation status of the recommendations. The following section summarises that letter based on a participant interview, as the full content of the email is confidential. The recommendations of the assembly are advisory in nature, and as such, any analysis of their implementation must always take this fact into account.

Status of recommendations

In October 2023, during an interview with an assembly participant, she mentioned that on July 12th (ten days before the general election), all assembly members received an email from the Office of the President of the Government. The email included a report that analysed the responses provided by public institutions to the 172 recommendations from the SCCA. The full content of the email cannot be reproduced as it is confidential. However, during the interview with the participant, notes were taken regarding the content of the letter.

The government provided the following overall assessment of the recommendations. Approximately a third of the recommendations have been implemented, some of which were already in effect. A quarter of the recommendations must be transferred to other administrations or stakeholders. Almost another quarter of the recommendations are scheduled for review or are currently under consideration. For the remaining recommendations, no specific measures have been identified.

Next, the government reported the level of implementation of the recommendations within the 5 different areas of life and society.

In the area of **Consumption**, the following measures have been implemented:

1. Grants for the comprehensive rehabilitation of residential buildings, with an expected 510,000 renovation projects in the second quarter of 2026.
2. RD-Law 20/2022 on shared self-consumption, which extends the limit to 2 km, and Grants from the CE-IMPLEMENTA program funded by PRTR1.
3. Law 7/2022 on waste and contaminated soils for a circular economy; and RD-Law 1055/2022 for waste reduction in commerce.

In the area of **Food and Land Use**, the following measures have been taken:

A new Common Agricultural Policy (PAC) for 2023-2027, which reduces the environmental impact of agri-food production (with incentives for organic production and extensive livestock farming).

1. RD-Law from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food (MAPA) for the organisation of the livestock sector, focusing on maximum production capacity and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
2. RD-Law 1051/2022, establishing standards for sustainable nutrition in agricultural soils.
3. Sustainable Fishing Law and the draft Law on the Prevention of Food Loss and Waste (approved by the Council of Ministers in June 2022).

In the area of **Communities, Health, and Care**, the following measures have been taken:

1. Improvements to the National Plan for Preventive Actions against the Health Effects of Excessive Heat (2023).
2. PRTR funds with incentives related to electric mobility (MOVES III).
3. RD-Law 4/2023 (promotion of collective land public transportation for young people).
4. Sustainable Mobility Law (in progress).
5. Action Plan for Environmental Education for Sustainability (2021) with 61 environmental education actions for the 2021-2025 period.
6. Thematic portal on Education and Communication for Climate Change. Adaptation Platform (AdapteCCa), multimedia resources, and a virtual classroom.

In the area of **Work**, from the 43 recommendations, the following measures have been taken:

1. New Spanish Strategy for Safety and Health at Work 2023-2027, addressing the impacts of climate change on workplaces.
2. Strategic Plan for Promoting Vocational Training (emerging jobs) with PRTR. Comprehensive study by MITECO in May 2023.
3. In Employment and Ecological Transition, 14 priority sectors (renewable energies, bioeconomy, and sustainable forest management) have been defined, along with 40 strategic occupations for the next decade, in the context of ecological transition.

In the **Ecosystems** area, out of the 38 recommendations, the following actions have been taken:

1. Implementation of Low Emission Zones (ZBE) mentioned in Law 7/2021 on climate change and energy transition, regulated by RD 1052/2022.
2. MITMA allocated 1 billion euros in 2021 and 500 million euros in 2022 to support municipalities in creating Low Emission Zones and promoting sustainable and digital urban transportation.
3. New Spanish Forest Strategy for 2050. Forest Plan 2022-2032 and Common Basic Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management.
4. State Strategic Plan for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity by 2030.
5. Green Infrastructure, Connectivity, and Ecological Restoration Strategy.
6. Actions from the National River Restoration Strategy (2nd Phase) aimed at flood risk reduction and biodiversity enhancement.
7. Grants (Biodiversity Foundation, with PRTR) for the restoration of urban river ecosystems (2021) and the promotion of forest bioeconomy (2023).

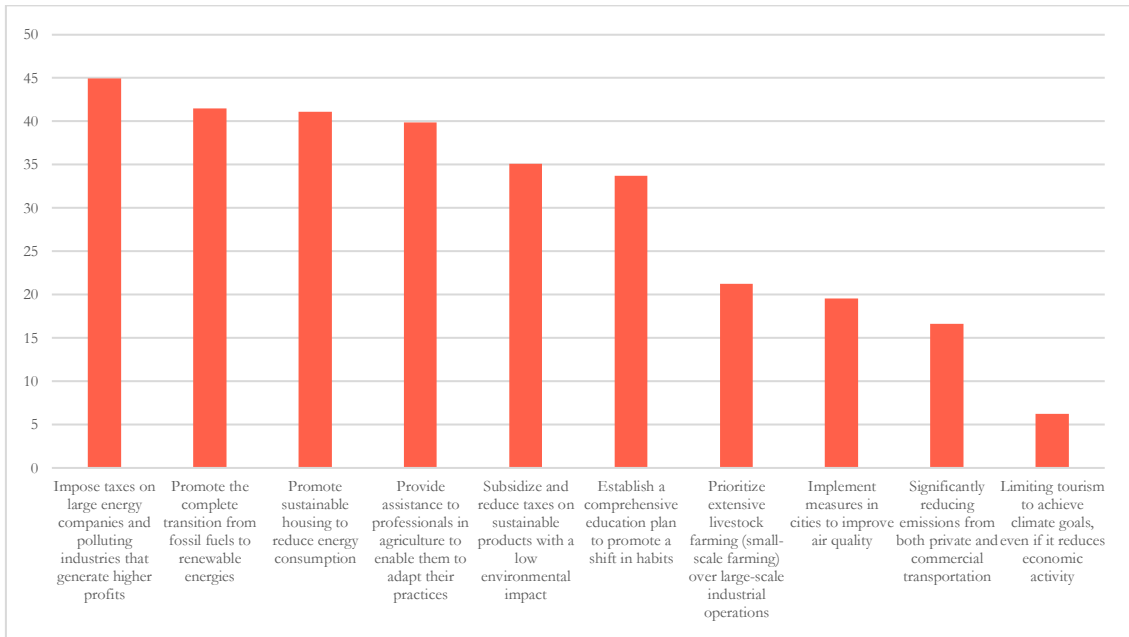
In summary, we have limited information about most of the recommendations. According to the government, some (a small minority) of them are being implemented. However, this list may include actions that were already in place before the assembly, as well as others that are planned over the coming years but there is no verification process in place to ensure they correspond to the proposals made by the SCCA. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether these initiatives were already in place before the SCCA or they were implemented in response to the assembly. Similarly, in the letter sent by the government, the effects (outcomes) of these mentioned measures (outputs) are not specified. Overall, this suggests a cherry-picking logic that is evident in many other participatory processes, where the measures most aligned with the government agenda are totally or partially incorporated, causing a lack of clear accountability in the follow-up process.

The general population's assessment of the recommendations

What does the Spanish population think about the goals and recommendations that emerged from the SCCA? To answer this question, we used a survey conducted by *More in Common* between May and June 2023 with a sample of 2,050 adult individuals. At the beginning of this report, we used the same survey to approximate the level of awareness that the SCCA had achieved among the general population, which was around 12%. In this section, we will analyse the level of support for some of the goals and recommendations of the SCCA. It should be noted that respondents were not aware that these recommendations arose from the SCCA. The questionnaire consisted of four main categories: general objectives, transportation, energy, and water. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support, and in some cases, to prioritise various measures.

Figure 1 displays the level of support for different objectives outlined by the assembly. The main observation is the strong and widespread support for all of them, with the exception of limiting tourism to meet climate goals. This has two possible explanations, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. On the one hand, tourism is one of the primary drivers of the Spanish economy, directly and indirectly creating numerous jobs. On the other hand, from a methodological perspective, this item is unique in its statement as it introduces potential costs or trade-offs associated with adopting a specific measure. This methodological nuance is significant; for example, while 52% of respondents strongly support measures to improve air quality in cities, this percentage drops to 35.9% when the measure involves reducing emissions from both private and commercial transportation. This variation may be due to the fact that measures restricting the circulation of private vehicles in major cities tend to generate greater controversy in public opinion. To address the potential desirability bias in responses, respondents were subsequently asked to prioritise these measures as their first, second, and third choices (Figure 2).

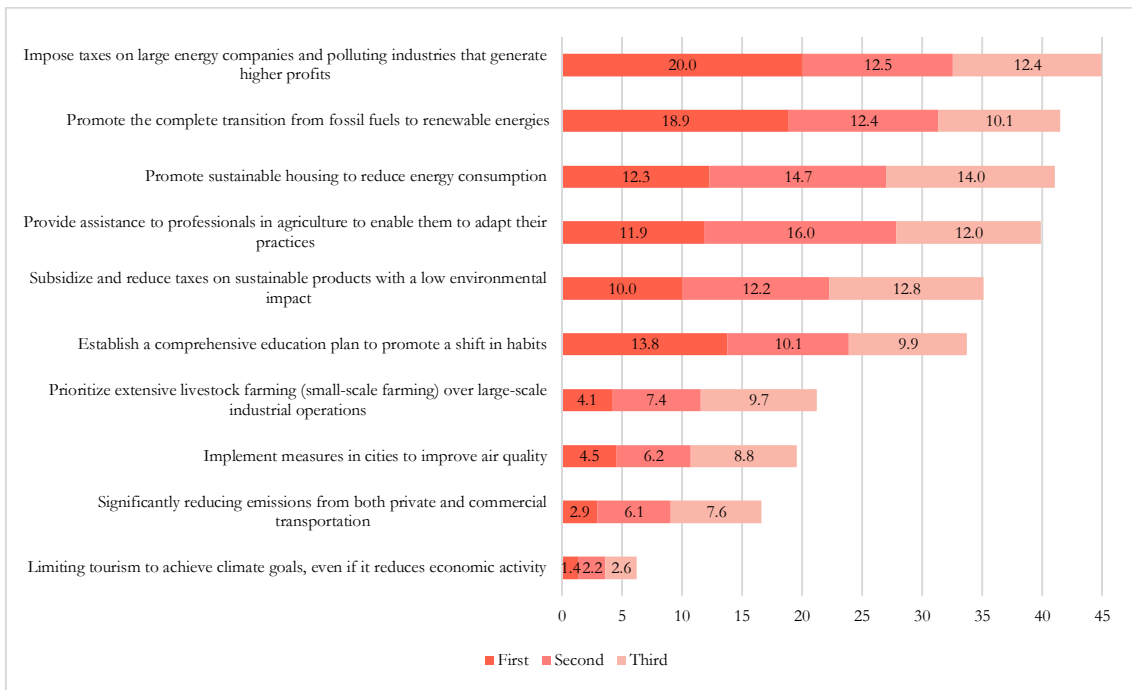
Figure 1. Level of support for the assembly's objectives (multiple choice)



The prioritisation observed in Figure 2 does not yield significantly different results from the previous analysis. However, it does serve to emphasise the level of support for different objectives. The objectives with the highest support are primarily related to measures associated with energy transition, such as imposing taxes on large energy and polluting industries, promoting renewable energies, and encouraging energy efficiency in homes. Providing assistance to livestock farmers and fishermen to adapt their practices is also among the most prioritised measures. In contrast, objectives related to mobility restrictions in major cities and limiting tourism are least prioritised. Support for extensive agriculture¹², as opposed to intensive agriculture, also garners less support compared to other measures.

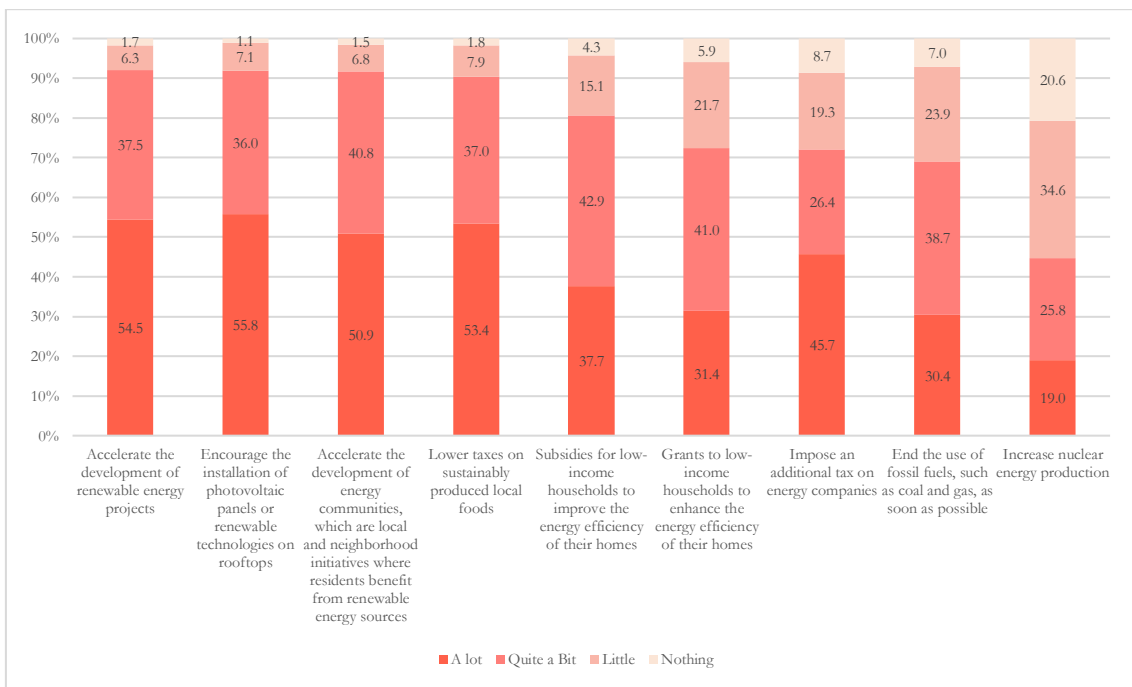
¹² There are multiple definitions of extensive agriculture. Here the focus is on supporting small-scale farming over large-scale industrial operations. It should be noted that extensive livestock farming and extensive agriculture are not completely comparable. However, both aim to avoid overexploitation of the land.

Figure 2. Level of support for the assembly's objectives (single choice)



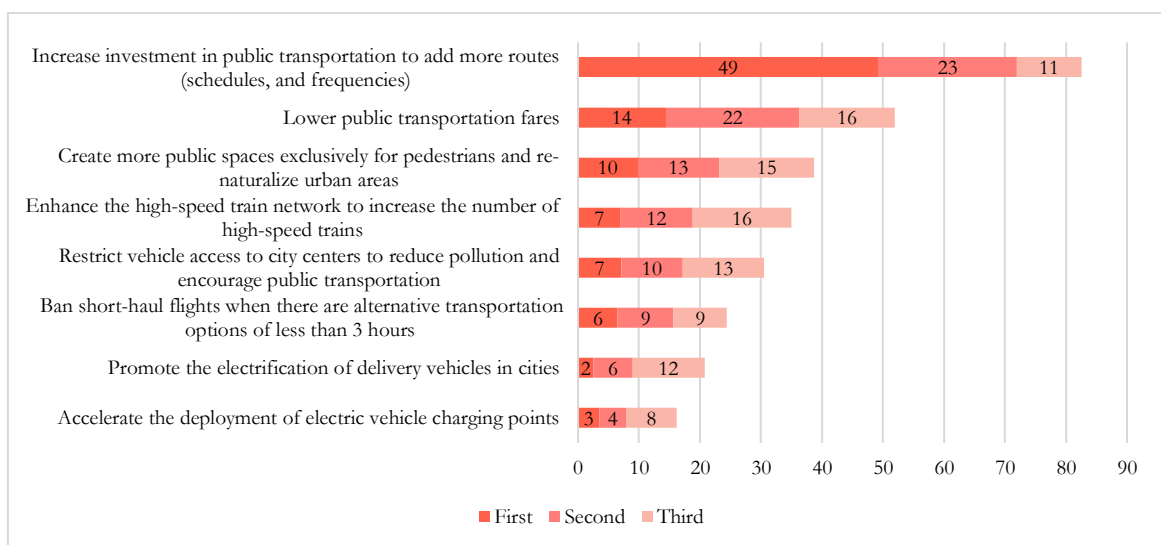
Next, we will delve into some specific recommendations addressing **energy transition**, which, as previously noted, receive the highest support (Figure 3). Of the nine recommendations focused on energy measures, eight exceed 70% support, with those related to the implementation of renewable energies and the promotion of local foods through tax reduction being particularly prominent. Finally, the proposal facing majority opposition (55%) is the increase in nuclear energy production.

Figure 3. Support towards specific recommendations addressing energy transition.



Respondents from the general population were also asked about recommendations regarding **transportation and urban mobility** (Figure 4). Among them, the two most prioritised recommendations are those related to increased investment in public transportation, either by improving the service or reducing prices. The recommendations that receive less support are those related to traffic restrictions, such as limiting short-haul flights or access to the city centre with private vehicles in major cities. It is important to note that the assembly did not propose to ban short-haul flights (less than 3 hours) but rather to minimise domestic flights in Spain when there is a train alternative (recommendation 66). This recommendation received 87% support in the assembly, slightly below the others. Measures related to increased investment to promote the use of electric vehicles attract the least support among all recommendations, possibly due to the limited adoption of such vehicles. These results are similar whether prioritising or choosing among recommendations.

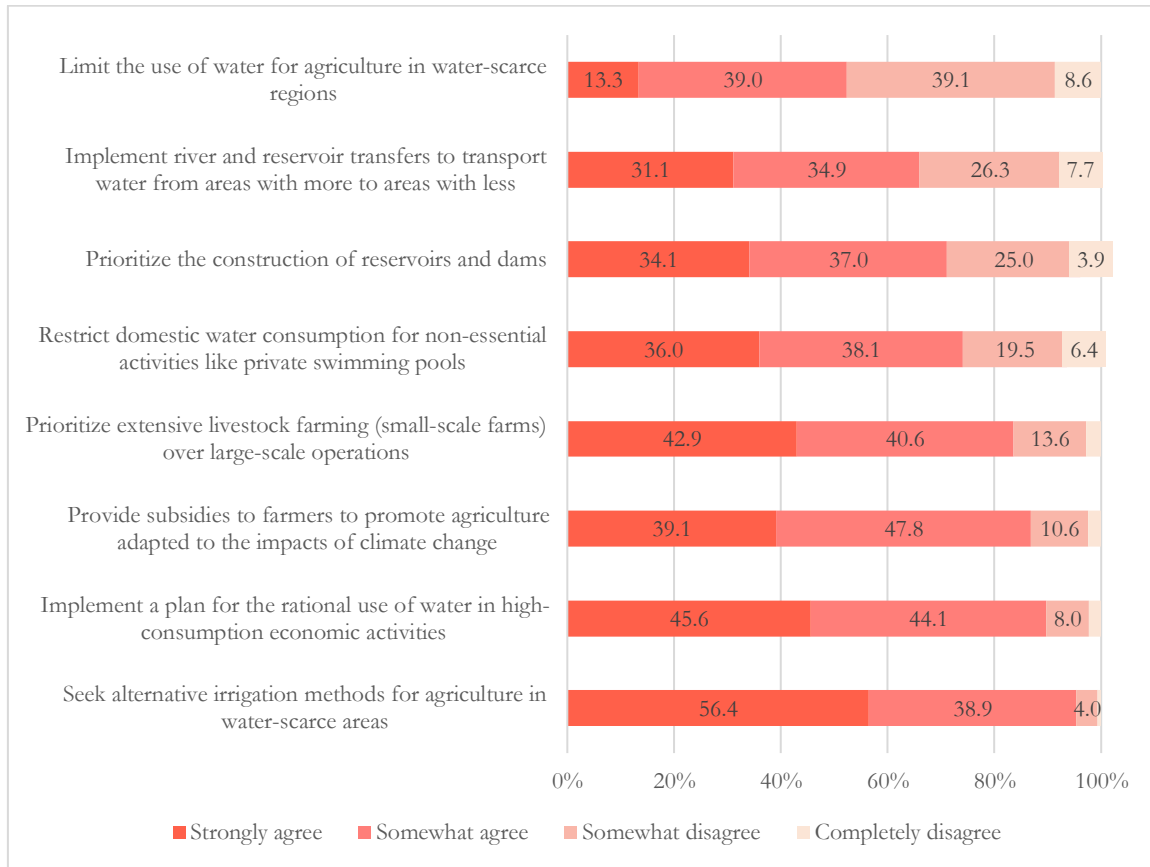
Figure 4. Support towards specific recommendations about transportation and urban mobility.



Finally, respondents were asked for their opinions on some recommendations related to water management. Out of the eight proposed measures, the four that receive the highest level of support are those where the target of the policy is part of the primary (agriculture, etc.) and secondary (industry, etc.) sectors of the economy. Furthermore, all of these recommendations are formulated in a positive direction. In contrast, the four least valued recommendations involve the limitation of water consumption, whether for non-priority domestic use (pools) or for agricultural activities in areas with water scarcity. This latter measure barely gathers 50% support. Two other recommendations that do not seem to

garner widespread support, with at least 30% not supporting them, are related to water transfer policies and the creation of reservoirs.

Figure 5. Support towards specific recommendations related to water consumption.



To conclude this section, we have compared the level of support that certain measures have received from the general population and from the assembly’s members. However, the comparison is not perfect and should be considered an approximation for the following reasons. Firstly, the statements in the survey do not always match the more detailed recommendations from the SCCA. Sometimes they are quite similar, but in some cases, they only share a few core elements. Secondly, support is not measured in an identical way in both the survey and the assembly. While the vote in the assembly had three possible options (in favour, against, and abstention), the survey offered four response categories (strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, strongly disagree).

To facilitate the analysis, we have compared the percentage of votes in favour obtained in the assembly with the percentage of responses indicating ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ in the survey. Lastly, we have included the ranking of each recommendation based on the level of support compared to the other recommendations. This allows us, to some extent, to analyse

whether the order of preferred recommendations remains similar between the general population and the assembly members, as well as to understand to what extent variations in the way that recommendations are formulated generate greater or lesser opposition. Below, each of the 8 recommendations included in this analysis is compared one by one.

Table 2. Support for specific recommendations (comparison between the general population and assembly members). The table only includes recommendations from the assembly which are comparable with the items from the survey.

Spanish Citizens' Assembly		General Population Survey	
Recommendations	Vote% (ranking)	Recommendations	Support (ranking)
Nº 156. Reducing air pollution and enhancing air quality control in cities.	100 (1º/8)	Implement measures in cities to improve air quality.	91.5 (3º/8)
Support for measures to reduce air pollution in cities receives strong support both among the general population and among the assembly's members.			
Nº 158. Sustainable management of reservoirs.	100 (1º/8)	Prioritise the construction of reservoirs and dams.	71.1 (7º/8)
The management of reservoirs receives very different levels of support between the general population and the assembly's members, depending on the specific perspective of the measure. While the general population moderately supports the construction of new reservoirs and dams, the assembly's members approved sustainable reservoir management unanimously.			
Nº 3. Improving management and financing conditions to enable citizens to easily carry out proactive energy-efficient rehabilitation of their homes without economic or bureaucratic obstacles.	98.9 (2º/8)	Subsidies for low-income households to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.	80.6 (6º/8)
Support for assistance to improve the energy efficiency of homes varies between the general population and the assembly's members due to an important nuance. While in the assembly, the measure was aimed at the general population, the survey limited it to low-income households. Although support is high in both groups, we observe a significant reduction in support or prioritisation for this measure when the criterion of social justice is included.			
Nº 38. Promoting public policies to reduce the environmental impact of agri-food production through tax incentives for the agroecological sector (production, distribution, and consumption) and imposing fiscal penalties on bad practices.	98.9 (2º/8)	Reducing taxes on sustainable food production.	90.3 (4º/8)
Granting tax benefits for sustainable and low-impact environmental food production garners wide support among both the general population and the assembly's members.			
Nº 51. Public control for efficient water management in agriculture.	98.8 (3º/8)	Limit water use for agriculture in water-scarce areas.	52.3 (8º/8)
Public management of water for agricultural use generates differing opinions depending on the approach taken. Assembly members look favourably on public control to ensure efficient water management for agricultural purposes. However, half of the Spanish population rejects limiting water use for agriculture in areas with water scarcity. This notable difference is likely due mainly to the perspective adopted, the expression 'limit or restrict the use of water' has a more negative connotation than the expression 'public control'. Another possible interpretation relates to the learning effect derived from the assembly, that is, when the causes and effects of controlling the use of water are explained to us, our opinion may change and we may view water control measures more positively. However, this interpretation cannot be confirmed as it would have been necessary to carry out a survey before and after the assembly.			

N° 6. Accelerate the development of energy communities in municipalities.	95.6 (4°/8)	Accelerate the development of energy communities, which are local or neighbourhood initiatives in which residents benefit from renewable energy sources	91.7 (2°/8)
Accelerating the development of energy communities receives strong support from both assembly members and the general population, with 96 and 92% support respectively, as well as ranking among the top recommendations.			
N° 7. Promote the self-consumption of energy and the sale of self-consumed energy in households.	95.6 (4°/8)	Promote the installation of photovoltaic panels or renewable technologies on rooftops	91.8 (1°/8)
Promoting the self-consumption of energy generates strong agreement in both groups. In the case of the general population, the question focuses on photovoltaic rooftops, making it the second-highest-rated measure.			
N° 41. Transitioning to an animal production model that promotes agroecological extensive livestock farming connected with the local environment, while limiting and gradually reducing industrial livestock farming (macro-farms and similar operations).	95.4 (5°/8)	Prioritise extensive livestock farming (small-scale farms) over large-scale operations (macro-farms).	82.7 (5°/8)
Prioritising extensive livestock farming over intensive livestock farming (factory farming) receives high support both among the general population and assembly members. However, there is a slightly higher level of opposition in the general population (around 20%).			

Impact on policymakers

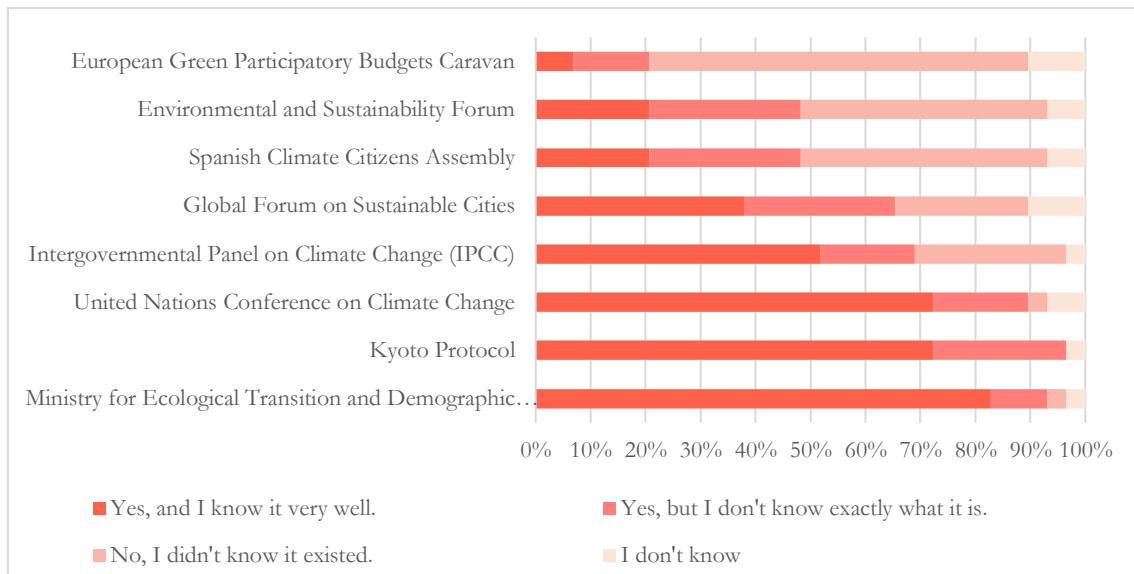
An exploratory survey of parliamentarians and public servants

In this section, we conducted an exploratory analysis to gauge the level of knowledge among political representatives and administrative staff regarding the SCCA and their opinions on some of the recommendations that emerged from the assembly. To achieve this, an online survey was distributed to members of the Spanish parliament (*diputados* and *senadores*) and to local and regional administrative staff involved in advisory councils on environmental issues. The survey, which had a duration of eight minutes, was carried out between March and June 2023. The survey received 55 responses (28 parliament members and 27 administrative staff). The response rate was extremely low (less than 5%), given the profile of the respondents. The purpose of this exercise was not to conduct a comprehensive survey of the Spanish political elite. Instead, we aimed to establish a database using the recommendations as the primary unit of analysis. In simpler terms, the goal was not to conduct specific research on the views of the Spanish political elite regarding the SCCA's recommendations. Rather, it was to gather data from various actors and their perspectives on those recommendations. This database serves as a foundation for future evaluations, which may seek to expand upon this work by incorporating additional information such as public opinion data, media coverage, or the extent of implementation in public policies.

Level of awareness of the assembly

To obtain a general and exploratory understanding of the level of awareness of the SCCA among parliamentarians and members of the administration, respondents were asked if they were familiar with a selection of organisations and participatory mechanisms associated with the environment and climate change. The decision to inquire about a list of such structures, rather than asking directly about the SCCA, was made to minimise desirability bias in responses. Respondents were also reminded that there were no incorrect answers, and that data treatment would be entirely anonymous.

Figure 6. Level of awareness of the SCCA (parliamentarians and administrative staff).



The SCCA is scarcely known among this target population. However, approximately 50% indicate that they are aware, to varying degrees, of the SCCA. This percentage, despite the low response rate, is somewhat encouraging considering that the SCCA is a relatively new and non-permanent institution. However, it is important to note that the recommendations were presented in the Congress of Deputies, and the survey was conducted almost a year after the presentation. The fact that the presentation of the recommendations took place not in a plenary session but in a specific room likely influenced the limited knowledge among parliamentarians.

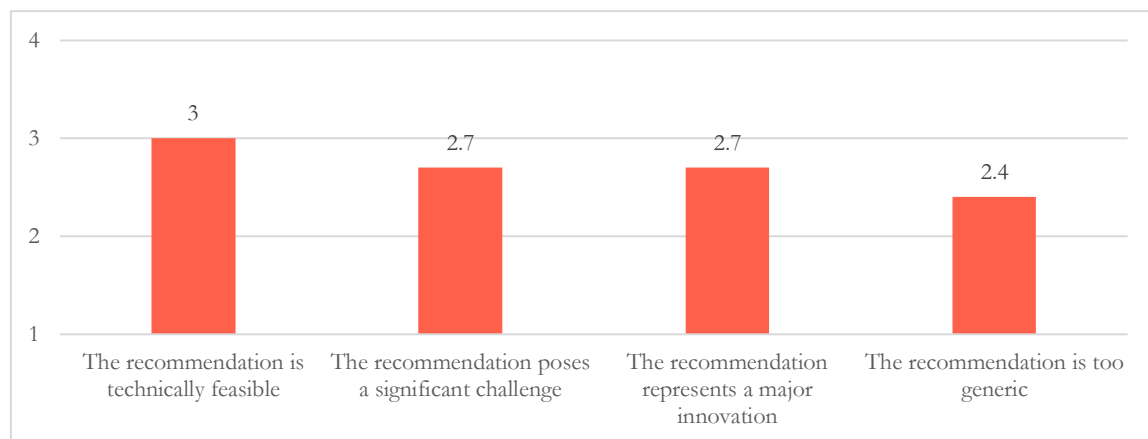
General assessment of the recommendations

Four specific aspects of the recommendations were analysed: whether they represent significant novelty, whether they pose a challenge, whether they are technically feasible, and, finally, whether they are too generic. The final document of recommendations is organised into 5 areas, 58 objectives, and 172 recommendations. Due to the large number of recommendations, a random selection was carried out. Ultimately, 86 recommendations were chosen, taking into account their distribution across the different areas within the document. Subsequently, each informant was asked about 7 recommendations also chosen at random. From the 86 recommendations selected, information was obtained for 61. Out of these, 22 had a single informant, 19 had two informants, 11 had three informants, and 9 had more than three informants.

Figure 7 outlines the key findings from the assessment given by the political representatives and administrative staff who responded to the recommendations survey. A scale from 1 to

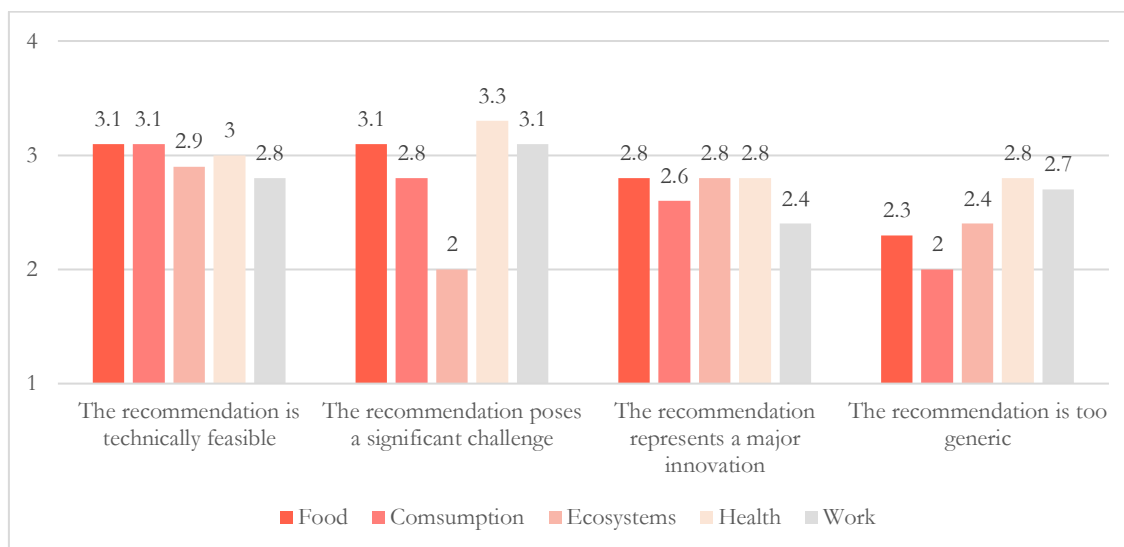
4 was used, where 1 represents "completely disagree" and 4 represents "completely agree." In general, the analysed recommendations are perceived to be technically feasible (with a rating of 3) and possess a certain level of novelty (with a rating of 2.7). Regarding the level of challenge they pose, they also occupy a midway position (with a rating of 2.7). Finally, the attribute with the lowest level of agreement is that they are too generic (with a rating of 2.4 points) – in other words, the recommendations are viewed in a relatively positive light.

Figure 7. Assessment of the SCCA's recommendations (parliamentarians and administrative staff).



When we compare the assessment of recommendations by their thematic areas, we observe both similarities and differences. All recommendations are considered technically feasible, regardless of the area of life and society to which they belong. However, differences are observed in the assessment of whether they represent a significant challenge. In this regard, recommendations in the area of Health are perceived as the most challenging (with a rating of 3.3), in contrast to those in the Ecosystem area (which received a rating of 2). Recommendations are generally seen as quite novel, with no significant differences noted between thematic areas. Finally, the recommendations that are perceived as more generic belong to the Health and Work areas (with ratings of 2.8 and 2.7 respectively), while those in the area of Consumption are seen as the least generic (with a rating of 2.4).

Figure 8. Assessment of the SCCA's recommendations by thematic issue (parliamentarians and administrative staff).



Interviews with executive personnel of regional administrations.

Six in-depth interviews were conducted with high-ranking officials and political representatives from regional administrations to understand the potential impact that the SCCA had within their areas of responsibility. The selection criteria for the informants were that they belonged to one of the regions where the SCCA presented its results and that they had attended that presentation. The interviews focused on four main areas: the possibility of replicating a similar citizens' assembly in their respective regions, the communication established between the Ministry of Ecological Transition and the regional body responsible for climate change following the SCCA, the overall assessment of the recommendations arising from the citizens' assembly, and, finally, a more detailed evaluation of specific recommendations.

Replication of the SCCA on a regional level

As of today, three citizens' assemblies for the climate have been held on a subnational level: in Barcelona, Mallorca, and Gipuzkoa. The Citizens' Assembly of Catalonia is expected to take place soon. This section analyses to what extent high-ranking officials in regional administrations have considered the possibility of replicating the SCCA in their respective regions and what obstacles or impediments they have encountered. In most of the regions where the interviews were focused, their respective regional laws on climate change included provisions for the creation of a citizens' assembly for climate change in their region. In one

instance, however, the deputy secretary explained that in their region, it was not seen as viable due to a lack of participatory culture among unorganised society.

Deputy Secretary¹³ (DS): We did consider it, and in fact, we have a measure in our strategy to create and support spaces for citizen participation in climate action. Spaces for citizen participation. However, we haven't specifically outlined it as an assembly.

Interviewer (I): I see. Is there a specific reason for that?

DS: You also need to take into account... the social fabric of each region. Some regions probably have a longer history of social participation with more active associations and citizens. Here, in general, people participate less.

I: On the other hand, councils are better, right? I understand.

DS: Yes, because it's a more regulated body in which people represent organizations and have the voice of the organizations they represent, such as chambers of commerce, professional associations, universities, or environmental groups. I believe it's more formal, you formalize the space more, and it usually works better. Of course, it may still vary in terms of how constructive they are.

I: Do you know if you've had any requests from a social group to create a citizen assembly for climate change in our region?

DS: No.

I: You haven't received any demand or request?

DS: No, and in fact, just to give you an idea, the Climate Action Strategy was on the participation portal, and we didn't receive a single proposal.

Deputy Secretary, Region 1, June 14, 2023

In the rest of the interviews, the interviewees stated that their respective regional laws on climate change had anticipated the possibility of creating citizens' assemblies. In the first of the cases presented below, relevant officials mentioned that regional laws did include provisions for it, but since the processing of a proposed regional assembly coincided with the development of the SCCA, they opted to wait and see the results at the national level. Ultimately, it was not implemented due to time constraints and a lack of resources. The second case followed a similar pattern, although the informants did not mention any specific efforts to implement a climate assembly in their region. In the third case, a different process was followed, as provisions for a citizens' assembly were not included in their regional climate change law, and therefore, it would have to be pursued through a different legislative procedure. In all three cases, the recent transition from progressive to conservative governments in the last regional elections may affect support for assemblies.

Department Head: There was a pronouncement from the regional assembly in favour of following the steps being taken at the national level with the Citizen Assembly, meaning to create a parallel structure in our region. However, this hasn't been implemented due to political and implementation issues. We wanted to wait and see the results of the national assembly because a region is not the same as the entire country. But, well, there hasn't been enough time to do it. The intention was there, but we needed external technical support. There was a proposal for promotion that stated, "The regional assembly urges the regional government to

¹³ In Spanish 'viceconsejera'.

promote the creation of a citizen assembly for climate change in accordance with national regulations as a forum for debate and citizen participation in climate change and energy transition. But it hasn't been finalised. However, the intention was there... I can't remember who voted against, but the party currently in government supported it."

Department Head, Region 2, May 30, 2023

Department Head: In our Climate Change Law, we also consider the possibility of creating a regional assembly in a consultative manner. This allows certain sectors of society that may not typically have a direct impact on the day-to-day government management to express their opinions and communicate to the government topics they find interesting, as well as provide suggestions on the direction to follow or propose their ideas. We were aware of the existence of the assembly, and it was something that we found interesting. When the draft law was made public for input, some people suggested it to us, and we included it in the law from that point onwards.

Department Head, Region 3, May 23, 2023

Department Head: In the Regional Climate Change Law, the Podemos group insisted on the inclusion of a Citizens' Assembly. It is now included in the law, and we will have to develop it through a decree. We have a draft decree, and we are likely to begin the regulatory process in the next two weeks. The issue is that the regional law was approved in December of last year, and since then, we have been working on developing the various instruments outlined in the law at a pace that aligns with the resources available to us.

Department Head, Region 4, May 17, 2023

Communication between the central and regional administrations

During the interviews, the interviewees were asked if the central government or any of its affiliated organisations had contacted them after the citizens' assembly had concluded, either to distribute the recommendations or to coordinate a response to the SCCA's final report. All of the interviewees were unaware of any attempt at communication from the central government. Some did mention that during the design phase of the assembly, the Ministry of Ecological Transition and the Spanish Office for Climate Change informed them about the upcoming launch of the assembly. Below, we present two instances in which the interviewees describe this lack of communication:

Deputy Secretary (DS): No. We had access to the document through the website, but we have not received it officially, nor have we had any approach to the document in our meetings with the Ministry. For us, that document belongs to the Assembly, and the Ministry has not conveyed anything to us.

Interviewer: I understand that you have meetings with the Ministry in some form, more or less regularly, or...?

DS: Yes, well, there are different forums. There are sectoral committees and sectoral conferences, and there are also climate change coordination committees, but there haven't been many of those lately. I believe that since the report of the Assembly was published, there

probably hasn't been any Coordination Committee for climate change policy. And in the working groups of the Coordination Committee, they have been focused on other topics related to climate change adaptation and such, and as far as I know, in the ones I participated in from the assembly, it has never been discussed.

Deputy Secretary, Region 1, June 14, 2023

Department Head: Not at the moment. But we don't know if they are working... In the climate change law, it was established that regions should appear before the Congress Environment Committee as they approve their own energy and climate plans. We were the first, and they never called us to appear. I use it as an example. I don't know if 'Pedro' has any other experiences in the sectoral conferences.

Public server: No, but from what he tells us, about the response document that the Ministry may be preparing, which I assume will reach the Spain Office for Climate Change, they have not involved us.

Department Head and public server, Region 2, May 30, 2023

General assessment of the recommendations

In the interviews, we asked for their general opinion on the SCCA's recommendations. It is noteworthy that there was a high level of agreement and alignment in their responses. For all of them, the recommendations were, for the most part, in line with their own regional plans. They claimed that many of the recommendations were already being implemented or were in the process of being implemented, so the content of most of the recommendations did not come as a surprise. They viewed the final document of recommendations as confirmation that their plans were indeed aligned with the assembly's report. However, beyond this general agreement, several of the interviewees mentioned the need to adapt some recommendations and concepts to rural environments. For example, one of the directors was somewhat cautious about accepting the concept of degrowth because it is a complicated concept to explain in areas that have not yet reached the same level of development.

Department Head: We noticed that there was a fair amount of agreement between the measures they were proposing and some that were included in our plan. Of course, not all of them, because our plan is perfectly tailored to our region, and the Assembly's plan is at a national level. Here, we are mostly rural. We don't have large cities, and we don't have significant air quality problems. So, for us, there are other issues that take priority, which may not have been as important for them. But this is not due to political disagreement. We don't have excessive gas emissions because we don't have intensive industrialization like some other regions. So, introducing concepts like degrowth in less developed regions can be complicated. We all want sustainable development, but ultimately, it's still development. We can't limit development to certain regions that haven't even reached where they should be.

Department Head, Region 2, May 30, 2023

Department Head: In general, the conclusions were quite aligned with what we were already doing here. In reality, when we met, we already had our document well advanced, and it did

serve to check that some of the measures we had were also proposed by the assembly. Others seemed quite distant. For example, efficient water management, but not in agriculture because we hardly use water for agriculture. Now, if you mention public control for efficient water management in industry, where we do have significant consumption, I would say that fits well.

Deputy Secretary, Region 1, June 14, 2023

Department Head: In general, the proposals were very general. Almost all of them were more or less incorporated into the energy policy of our government, which aligns closely with the energy policy of the Spanish government. In principle, we haven't had to work on anything that wasn't already being done or developed. In other words, it didn't open up any new issues. It is true that, in one way or another, the recommendations that were relevant to me largely reflect the principles and guidelines on which our energy policy is based.

Department Head, Region 3, May 23, 2023

Department Head: We studied it quite thoroughly and looked at the different measures, which we organised by areas. We conducted an analysis here, and then I distributed it to all the technicians working for me so that they were also aware of what the assembly was proposing. But in the end, in terms of jurisdiction and what can be done within our sphere, it aligned quite well with what we were already doing. Because when you get into the field of combating climate change, the mitigation and adaptation measures are quite clear and evident. So, we saw that we were in alignment, more or less following what was recommended. They didn't surprise us much. Yes, I think we've already implemented it.

Department Head, Region 4, May 17, 2023

Conclusions on policy impact

In this section, we have analysed the impact of the assembly on public policy and its network of actors. Firstly, we examined the support from the general population for some of the overall goals and specific recommendations that emerged from the assembly. Secondly, we explored support for certain recommendations through an exploratory survey involving a small group of parliamentarians and members of the administration. Thirdly, we delved deeper into the opinions of high-ranking officials in regional administrations through in-depth interviews regarding the assembly's impact within their sphere. Finally, we described the process of monitoring and implementing the recommendations by the Spanish government through various (limited) internal documents.

In general, the Spanish population shows a moderately high level of support for the objectives and recommendations of the assembly. Measures related to energy transition garner greater support, while those related to mobility restrictions, tourism limitations, the shift from intensive to extensive agriculture, and limiting water consumption for agricultural use receive less support. However, the level of support for recommendations varies widely depending on how they are framed. Recommendations that emphasise limitations, restrictions, and prohibitions tend to receive lower support, whereas when formulated positively, with no mention of costs and trade-offs, or when an alternative to restrictions is proposed, support increases considerably.

The exploratory results obtained from the survey of members of parliament and local and regional administration personnel point to very limited awareness of the assembly. However, in terms of their evaluation of the recommendations, there is generally a positive sentiment regarding their feasibility, novelty, challenge, and level of specificity. However, the results from this survey are limited in scope, and generalisations should not be made.

During interviews with four regional department heads, the majority expressed a willingness to conduct regional citizens' assemblies on climate change. This willingness was formalised by including it in various regional laws on climate change. However, due to a lack of resources and changes in government after regional elections, the measures have been put on hold. Nevertheless, three subnational assemblies have been conducted in Spain, and another one is planned in Catalonia. During the interviews, the department heads also confirmed that they had not had any communication with the central government and administration about the process of monitoring and implementing the recommendations. Lastly, their perception

of most of the recommendations is that they are not significantly innovative compared to their own plans for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Regarding the process of implementing the recommendations and monitoring the process, as of the time of writing, only one undisclosed letter has been sent by the President's Office to all assembly members. In that letter, various measures were listed to fulfil some of the assembly's recommendations. However, quite a few of these measures had already been implemented before the government received the recommendations. According to the information provided by the government, approximately one-third of the recommendations have been implemented, but this figure cannot be independently verified. As confirmed during interviews with assembly members and heads of regional environmental departments, there has been no communication between the central administration and regional administrations during the year following the presentation of the recommendations. According to the information obtained, analysis of the recommendations has been limited to the ministries and the central administration.

Chapter 2

Impact on *Assembly* Members



Impact on Assembly Members

Methodological Notes

About the survey

To assess the impact on assembly members in any Citizens Assembly for Climate, it is undoubtedly useful to conduct surveys before, during, and after the assembly to understand the nature and magnitude of changes. In several evaluations conducted in other countries such as United Kingdom and France, surveys were conducted during each of the assembly sessions. The primary goal of these evaluations was to analyse how the process had unfolded, rather than assessing the impact over time following its completion. There is no exact number of surveys that need to be conducted; it depends on what you want to measure. For instance, in the case of the Citizens' Assembly in France, surveys were conducted at the beginning and end of each session. In the case of the Citizens' Assembly in the UK, surveys were conducted during and some time after. In the case of the Citizens' Assembly held in Spain, surveys were not conducted at the beginning or right after the assembly concluded. This places limitations on our ability to know details of shifts in attitudes and behaviours. Despite these limitations, a survey was conducted among the assembly members between six and twelve months after the assembly's conclusion. Between March 25 and May 4, 2023, assembly members were invited to complete an online survey, resulting in a response rate of 52% (48 respondents). In the following pages, we will outline the main results of the survey. However, it is important to keep in mind that in this chapter, we are referring only to the assembly members who participated in the survey. Therefore, although the response rate has been high, we cannot extrapolate the results to draw conclusions about all members of the assembly.

How similar are the members of the Assembly to the general Spanish population? The survey conducted one year later with the assembly members did not include sociodemographic questions to ensure anonymity. However, the composition of the entire set of assembly's members is available on the SCCA website. As detailed in the technical specifications, the sample was adjusted based on data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE)¹⁴.

¹⁴ <https://asambleaciudadanadelcambioclimatico.es/la-asamblea-por-el-clima/>

Next, the political attitudes of the assembly members are compared to the general Spanish population.¹⁵ Three general indicators about political attitudes and a specific indicator on climate change were used for this purpose. Figure 9 shows, on a scale from 0 to 10, preferences for political decision-making processes in which citizens (value 0) or politicians (value 10) should make all decisions. Figures 10 and 11, respectively, display the satisfaction level with the functioning of democracy in Spain and the ideological self-placement, both among the assembly members and the general population. Figure 12 illustrates the positioning of the assembly's members when choosing between prioritizing economic growth or fighting climate change. In the latter case, unfortunately, there are no comparable data with the general Spanish population.

In Figure 9, it can be observed that the preferences of the assembly members towards decision-making processes are quite similar to those of the general population, with a slight tendency to support processes with greater citizen participation. This data is noteworthy because, at first glance, one might expect that SCCA's members would be much more inclined toward the idea of a more participatory and deliberative democracy than the entire Spanish population. On the other hand, if we turn our attention to Figure 10, we can see that satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in Spain does not show significant differences between the assembly members and the general population, with slightly higher satisfaction levels among SCCA's members.

However, there is a bit more distance between the two groups when it comes to the ideological scale. In Figure 11, it is evident that most of assembly members position themselves in the left and (69% between 0 and 4), while the majority of the Spanish population situates themselves in the centre (52% between 3 and 7) with a somewhat more balanced distribution, although not entirely symmetrical, on both sides of the ideological spectrum. As mentioned above, this section reflects the attitudes and opinions of members who responded to the survey. We know from public opinion studies in Spain that individuals on the left are usually more inclined to accept invitations to participate in surveys.

¹⁵ Several indicators regarding the political attitudes of the participants are compared to those of the general Spanish population using data from the European Social Survey (ESS) and the Centre for Sociological Research (CIS).

Figure 9. How would you prefer political decisions to be made in Spain.¹⁶

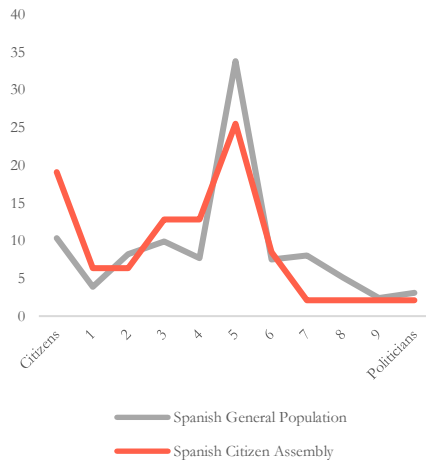


Figure 10. How satisfied are you with the functioning of democracy in Spain?¹⁷

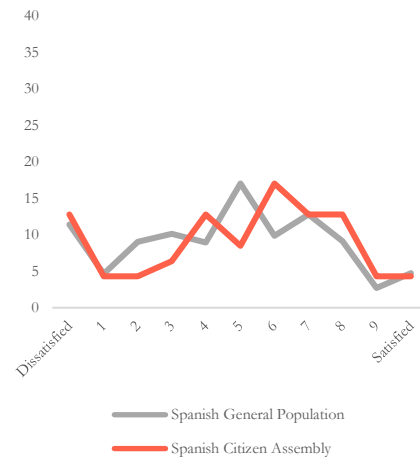


Figure 11. Where do you place yourself ideologically¹⁸

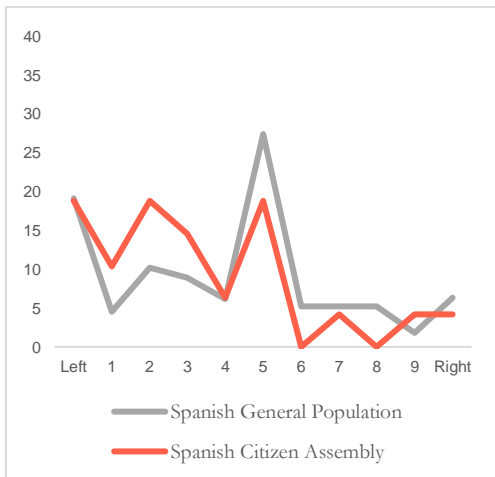
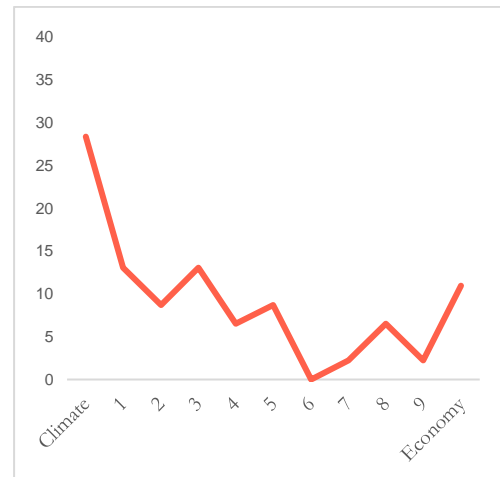


Figure 12. Economic growth vs fight against climate change (assembly members)



Finally, Figure 12 displays the distribution of the opinions of the assembly members regarding whether 'the fight against climate change should be prioritized, even if it harms economic growth' (value 0), or if, on the contrary, 'economic growth should be prioritized, even if it harms the fight against climate change' (value 10). Exactly similar data for the general population were not found. However, in a recent study, a sample of 4,500 Spanish adults was asked if they agreed that economic growth is more important than the protection of nature. On a scale where 0 indicated total disagreement and 10 total agreement, the average score was 3.5 points, indicating a slight preference for protecting nature over economic

16 CIS, opiniones y actitudes, n° 71. Trabajo de campo, 2011.

17 ESS 10, trabajo de campo 2022

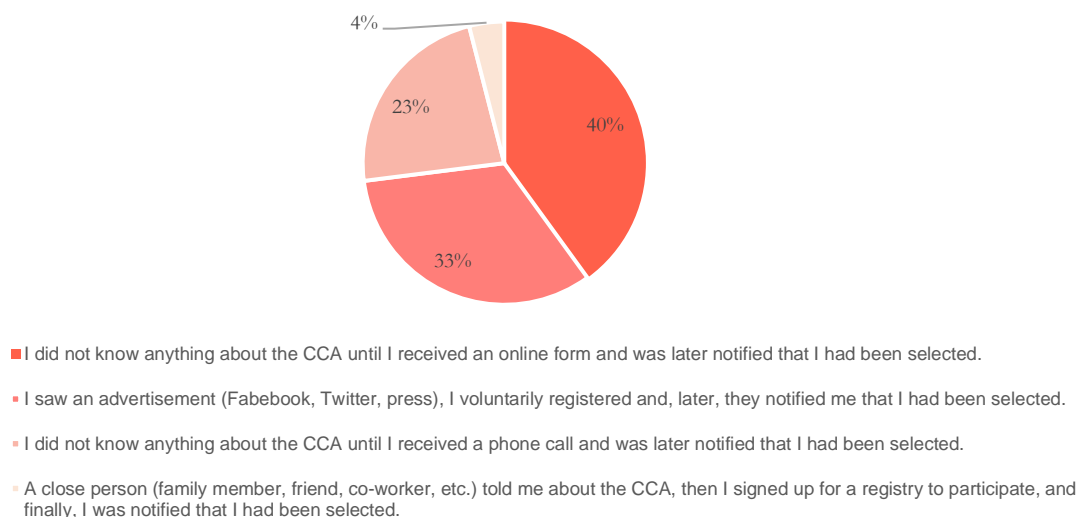
18 ESS 10, trabajo de campo 2022

growth (3.4 in the case of the question asked to the assembly members). Therefore, if we accept this comparison as valid, the position of the assembly on the environmental protection vs. economic growth axis is similar to that of the general population. In addition to the assembly members survey, several semi-structured interviews were conducted with members. In the following pages, the results from the survey and the interviews are interspersed to provide a more comprehensive view.

Selection of assembly members and level of involvement

To understand the extent of the assembly's impact, it is necessary to understand the type of participation and involvement that members engaged in. For this purpose, three key moments are analysed: before the Assembly to determine how the recruitment was carried out; during the Assembly to gauge their level of participation and commitment, and lastly, after the Assembly to assess their level of involvement once the Assembly concluded.

Figure 13. How were you selected to participated in the Climate Assembly?



Regarding the recruitment or selection of assembly members, Figure 13 illustrates the channels through which they were contacted to participate in the Assembly. There is a predominant group (63%) that claims they knew nothing about the Assembly until they received an online form (40%) or were contacted by phone (23%). Here is an example of a participant explaining how she was contacted through this method:

Assembly member (AM): They called me and they said that I have been pre-selected to be part of the Citizens' Assembly for Climate that I was on a list of participants and if I wanted

to participate. At first, I told them that if they were trying to sell me something, I didn't want to buy anything at all. They assured me it wasn't about buying anything, and if I wanted to join, I should let them know, and they would call me back. So initially, I said yes, that I would think about it, gather information, and so on. At that moment, it really made me laugh, and I started looking up the Citizens' Assembly on the internet, and I saw that they were indeed going to hold an assembly, and so on [...] They called me back and said, "Do you remember that we're from the assembly?" And I said, "Yes, that's true." And they asked, "Have you thought about it? You're pre-selected now. Are you willing to participate?" I said, "Well, yes, I'll sign up [...]"

Interviewer: Until they called you, didn't you know nothing about the Citizens' Assembly?

P: Nothing at all.

Assembly member 1, March 30, 2023

A second group (33%) states that they voluntarily registered to be part of the Assembly after seeing an advertisement in some media or on social networks. In several of the interviews we conducted, Facebook is the most mentioned social media platform. In the following excerpt, a participant describes this contact method:

I was one day browsing Facebook, and I saw there was a portal that allowed you to sign up to participate in a study, but it didn't mention it was for the assembly. Since I usually sign up for those things because I have no problem participating, I signed up. They asked for my personal information, or rather, information related to gender, education, geographic location, my employment, and my background. Well, a series of data, which I assume is for cross-referencing and generating statistics and forming the group of 100 people. I answered that, and after about a week, they called me and asked if I had responded to this. I said yes. They asked if any of the people I worked with or the people I lived with were involved in sociology. I said no. They told me they were doing the selection for a meeting related to climate change and asked if I wanted to participate. I told them yes, there was no problem. Subsequently, they informed me that there would be financial compensation, provided if I participated in the entire assembly. That's how I got involved in the assembly.

Assembly member 2, April 4, 2023

Finally, a minority group (4%) claims that someone close to them proposed the possibility of participating in the Assembly. Although it hasn't been confirmed in the interviews, this last minority group likely resulted from last-minute substitutions to fill vacancies. According to interviews with individuals responsible for the organization, the participant selection process closely aligns with the agreement reached with the company.

Organiser (O): It couldn't be done like in England because we couldn't access the database of all individuals. You can access it, but they can't provide the information. So, we couldn't send letters to every resident in Spain as in England. Our own legislation prevented us from doing it like in other European countries. Therefore, it was limited to databases where individuals had given their consent to receive information and participate in various processes, without bias related to climate change or any of the requirements imposed during the recruitment process. Mass invitations to participate were sent to these databases. Those who responded formed a microcosm of Spain.

I: And who ultimately carried out this process?

O: A company specialized in public participation processes. They informed us from the beginning of the contract that there could be a failure rate of up to 20%. In other words, in the first session, you might experience a 20% participant drop. There were indeed some

dropouts, but that was addressed in the first session, and subsequently, there were absolutely none. The level of commitment has been tremendous from the start.

Organiser 1, groupal interview, March 28, 2023

In line with the previous informant regarding the level of commitment and continuity of assembly members, the vast majority of survey respondents claim to have attended all the Assembly sessions (figure 14). They were also asked which Assembly thematic group they had belonged to. There is also a balanced proportion of the different working groups in which the respondents participated, with the consumption group being the most overrepresented and the food and land use group being the least (figure 15).

Figure 14. How often did you participate?

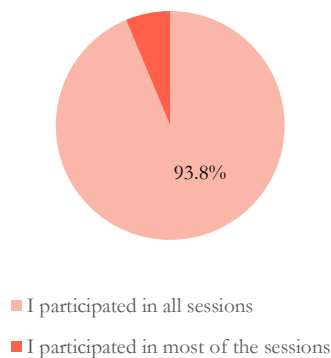
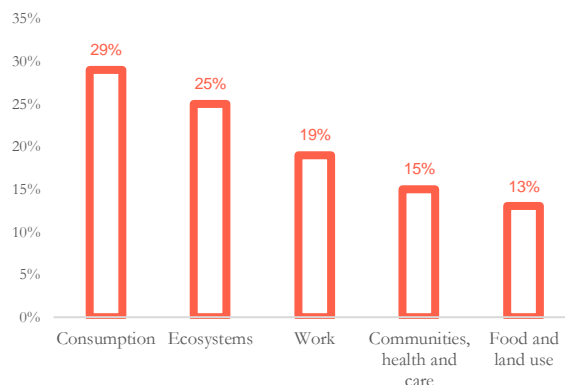


Figure 15. In which areas did you participate?



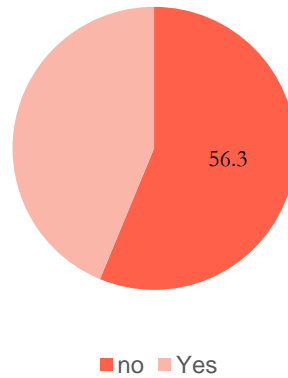
A clear indicator of the assembly members involvement is their integration into the Association created after the Assembly's conclusion, known as the Civic Association for Climate Change, to disseminate its goals and recommendations. Later on, we will dedicate a section to the activities carried out by the Association. The autonomous and independent creation of this Association by the assembly members is undoubtedly one of the main impacts that the Assembly has had, as it has represented a significant change in how many of them engage in public affairs and has increased their perception of political influence. The following excerpt is from a participant who describes the process of creating the Association and its initial objectives:

Do you know that an association has been formed from the assembly? Well, the idea is for the same association to establish parameters and indices so that it can evaluate itself and be much more independent. [...] In other words, through the same assembly with external advisors, without government intervention. I'm not sure if we'll be able to achieve that because the association is forming, but it's not progressing at the speed it needs to in order to accomplish this within this year.

Assembly member 3, April 5, 2023

The following graph shows the percentage of survey respondents who are part of the association (44%, Figure 16). The figure is similar to that indicated by the interviewees (close to 50%). In the next section, the level of satisfaction of the assembly members is analysed in relation to some key aspects of the Assembly's design and the follow-up of its results.

Figure 16. Did you become an Association member?

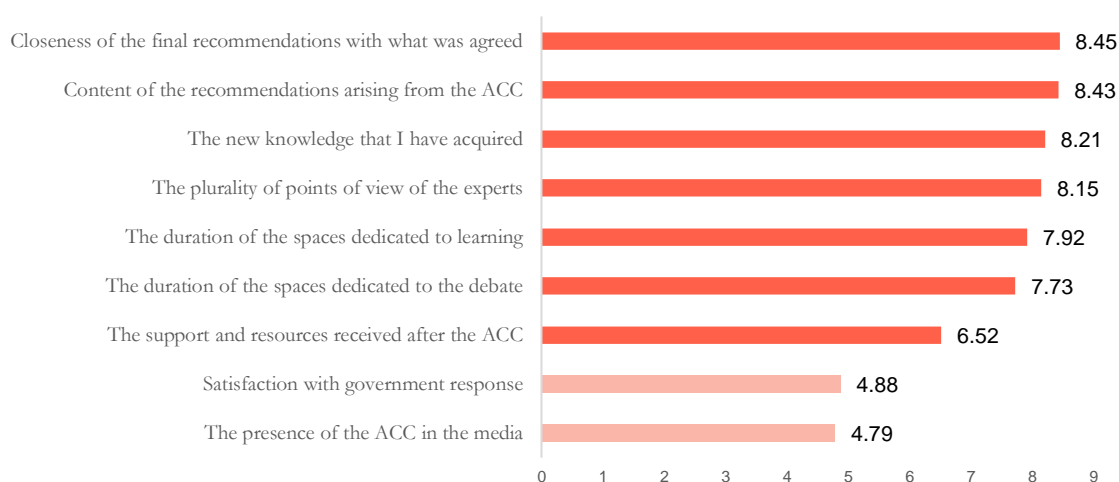


Level of satisfaction with the design and results (one year later)

Below, we present some indicators and excerpts from the survey and interviews that provide insights into the self-assessment made by the assembly members. Nearly a year after the SCCA, their members, in general, express a high level of satisfaction with how the Assembly was conducted (see Figure 17). It is important to clarify that knowing the level of satisfaction during the development of an assembly serves as an indicator of how the process has

progressed. On the other hand, understanding the level of satisfaction a year later can be considered a form of impact assessment.

Figure 17. Satisfaction with the design of the Assembly



On a scale from 0 to 10, assembly members rated the recommendations that emerged from the Assembly (both their content and proximity to what was agreed) with more than 8 points, as well as the new knowledge acquired and the diversity of perspectives provided by the experts who participated in the Assembly. The following excerpt illustrates the high level of satisfaction regarding how the recommendations were ultimately presented in the final document:

I believe that our work and success, which I truly believe in, have a lot to do with both the scientific experts and the facilitators. In other words, it's the structure and our enthusiasm that have allowed us to get where we are. The role of the experts... during the early sessions, they provided us with a wealth of information on climatology, health management, work, from many different perspectives. From there, all the experts did was answer questions, and we bombarded them with questions, I mean, they didn't have time to answer before we were asking another and another. So, what I can tell you is that each and every recommendation comes from us, not from them, and they were very careful not to interfere so that the recommendations truly belonged to us. No one influenced that.

Assembly member 4, March 21, 2023

Regarding the duration of the spaces dedicated to learning and discussion, even though they are also very positive, they are slightly below 8 points. While the objective of this report is not to evaluate the process itself, it is interesting to learn from the following excerpt the opinion of assembly members about how the deliberation and recommendation development process unfolded.

We had the opportunity, unlike other European climate assemblies, such as the French one, to work in the life area I wanted. In other words, I had my assigned area where I primarily participated, but throughout the month, I could easily work in any other area because the chat channels were open, and the lines of work were open to all groups. This cross-functionality also happened in the final assembly so that we could discuss or provide input on things that didn't convince us or that we believed could be improved.

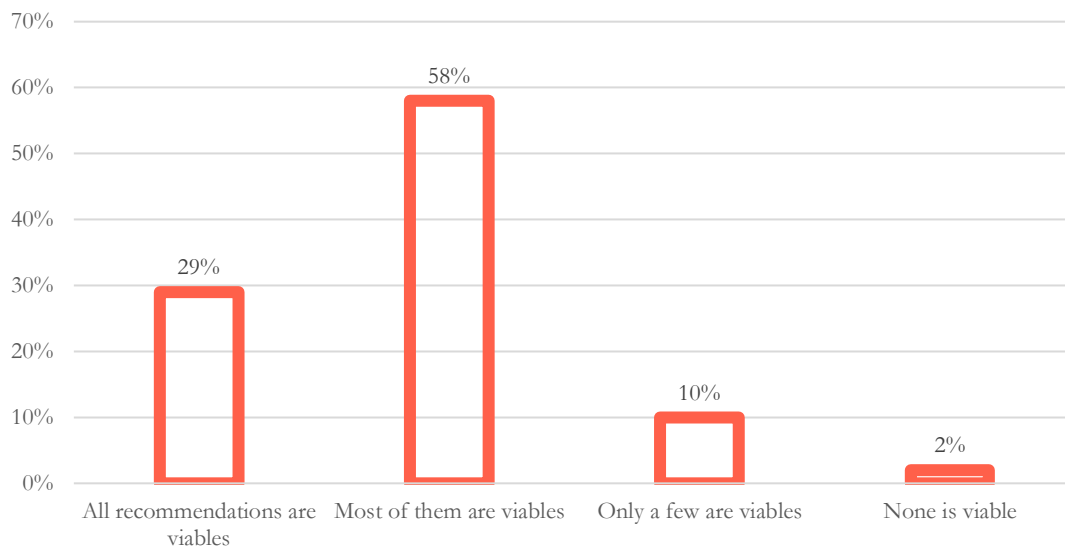
Assembly member 4, March 21, 2023

Finally, three aspects where the level of satisfaction is significantly lower are the perception of support and resources received after the Assembly's completion (6.5 points), the government's response to the recommendations (4.8 points), and the Assembly's presence in the media (4.8 points). These three aspects will be discussed in more detail in their respective sections. However, it must be considered that on the date of the survey the assembly members had not yet received a response from the Spanish Government, which, as we will see later, took place on July 12, 2023. On the other hand, the last section of the report is dedicated entirely to the impact on the media.

Perception of feasibility of recommendations

Approximately 29% of assembly members believe that all the recommendations are viable, 58% believe that the majority of them are and, only 12% state that none or only a few are viable (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Feasibility of recommendations.



However, beyond this general consideration of the feasibility of the recommendations, it is interesting to note the reflections that some of the assembly members have arrived at nearly a year after the Assembly's conclusion, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

If they don't want to, they won't do anything. I believe that is a flaw of the assembly, not having a binding character. The problem is that to make it binding, we would have needed more assembly time and a legal component to indicate if we could create laws or if these proposals could or could not become laws. None in the assembly really had a clear understanding of that. We would have needed a different type of advisors, a different type of assembly to take these beautiful proposals from the environment and fit them into the real world.

Assembly member 3, April 3, 2023

The previous excerpt illustrates how the assembly members themselves are aware of the limits of participation in terms of the potential influence and impact their recommendations may have on legislation and public policies. Furthermore, it raises an aspect of particular interest in the field of deliberative democracy, which is the suitability of greater or lesser presence and prominence of experts during the Assembly's development. In this case, the participant interviewed suggested the inclusion of legal advisors to inform about the feasibility or infeasibility of proposals that arise during the assembly, aiming to facilitate their subsequent integration into the administration.

Also related to the feasibility of the proposals, another assembly member believes that it would have been good to prioritize them, either by the level of decarbonization and/or by their economic cost. On the other hand, during another interview with an expert, we can see how, for her, the budget constraint is not the main limitation but rather the lack of willingness to implement them. In contrast, the Regional Director of Climate Change places emphasis precisely on the lack of an economic feasibility study in the Assembly's document. Below are three different viewpoints:

Assembly member (AM): Also, if we had organised the 172 proposals based on the level of decarbonization they represented, it could have been another interesting approach to see where the brakes of big financial lobbies and multinational corporations were. Or if we had sorted them by the economic cost of each measure, we would have seen the budgetary challenges more clearly, especially with Article 135 of the Constitution, which states that the first priority is to pay the debt to the banks and then address other socio-economic issues. It's a reflection I see now in hindsight.

Assembly member 5, April 3, 2023

Interviewer: How do you assess these recommendations or what is your opinion on them today, considering that every proposal comes with a cost or implies making cuts in other sectors?

Expert: Well, I don't see it that way, honestly. I mean, I'll tell you, on a general level, I think all the recommendations show a lot of common sense from the citizens. And what's important to me about many of them is not that they're groundbreaking, but that they're so obvious that it's impossible not to implement them. Some of them may be complex. But, for example, disseminating good practices, setting examples, and so on, all of this should be a part of the overall policy framework.

Expert 1, May 15, 2023

Director General: What the Citizen Assembly document lacks somewhat is completing the proposals with feasibility. In other words, many of the proposals suggest increasing resources, making grants available, and so on. But, of course, all of that involves an additional economic effort, and what I missed is that the Assembly did not analyse those kinds of issues. Of course, this has significant economic implications because it also demands providing more resources. However, all of this needs to be funded.

Director General of the Regional Administration, May 30, 2023

Assembly members were also asked to what extent they believe the Spanish government has a clearly established plan on how the government, businesses, and citizens will work together to address climate change. It is noteworthy to see how the assembly members are evenly split: 46% believe the government has a plan for addressing climate change, while another 46% believe it does not (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Question: ‘To what extent do you agree with the following statement? The Government of Spain has a clearly established plan on how the government, businesses, and citizens are going to work together to address climate change?’

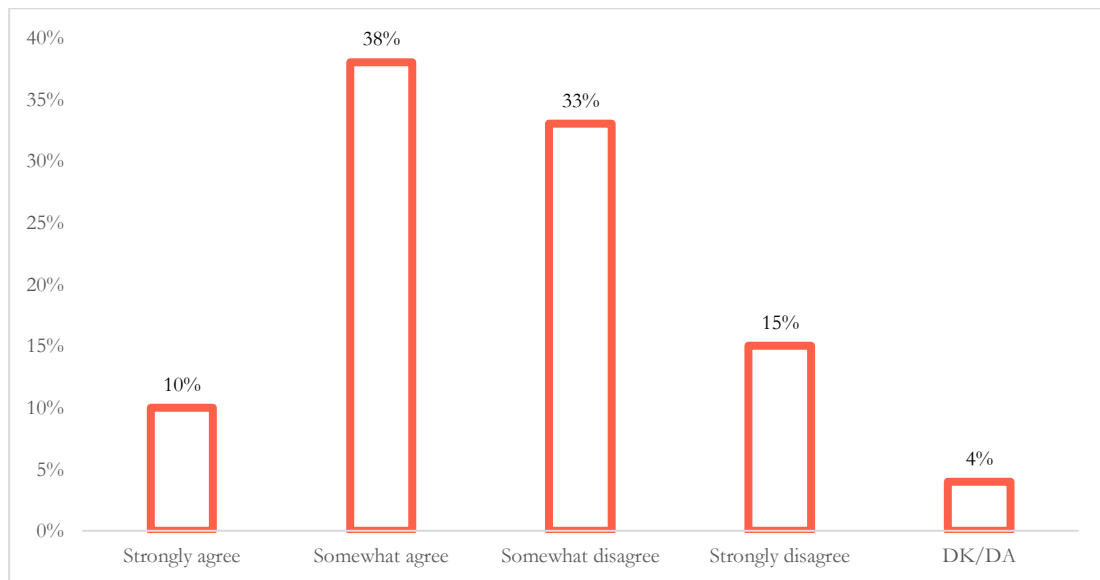
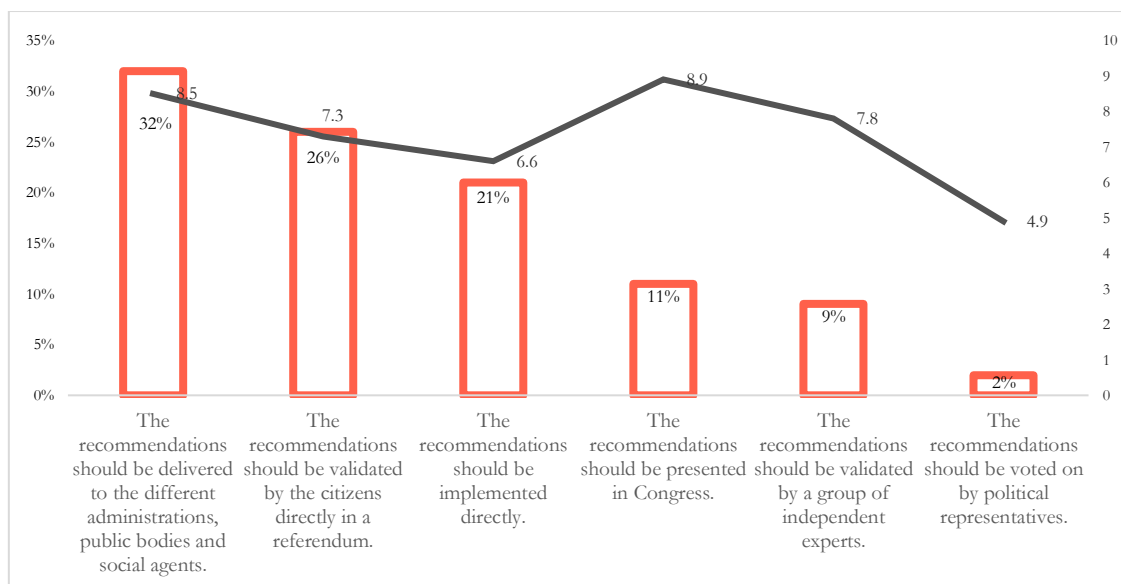


Figure 20 shows the preferred options of the assembly members regarding what should be done with the recommendations (single answer). There are clearly three favoured and three unfavoured options. Among the favored options, presenting the recommendations to different administrations, organizations, and social actors stands out (32%), followed by a vote by the general public through a referendum (26%), and direct implementation of the recommendations (21%). The three options that receive the least support are presenting the recommendations to the Congress of Deputies (11%), validation by a group of experts (9%), and being voted on by political representatives (2%). It is worth mentioning that two of the

options (presentation in Congress and presentation to administration and social actors) have already been carried out, so the respondents have an additional degree of experience in shaping their preferences for what to do with the recommendations.

Figure 20. Preferences on what to do with the recommendations



Next, they were asked to separately rate each of the previous options on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means "completely disagree" and 10 means "completely agree" (gray line, Figure 20)¹⁹. The results show that the order of preferred options doesn't necessarily align with the separate ratings given to each of them. While the rating for presenting recommendations to major social actors is in line with the previous results (8.5 points), approval through a referendum or direct implementation of the results receives a moderate rating (7.3 and 6.6 points, respectively). On the other hand, having recommendations evaluated by a group of experts receives a high rating (7.8 points) even though only 9% had chosen this option as their preference. One possible interpretation is that while the positive role that experts can play in improving recommendations is appreciated, when it comes to choosing a single option, the priority is given to dissemination among different social actors, holding a referendum, or direct implementation. Finally, there is consensus in the low support for recommendations to be voted on by political representatives.²⁰ This does not mean at all

¹⁹ Exact statement: And now, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the different alternatives on what to do with the recommendations of an ACC? 0 means 'I strongly disagree,' and 10 means 'I strongly agree'.

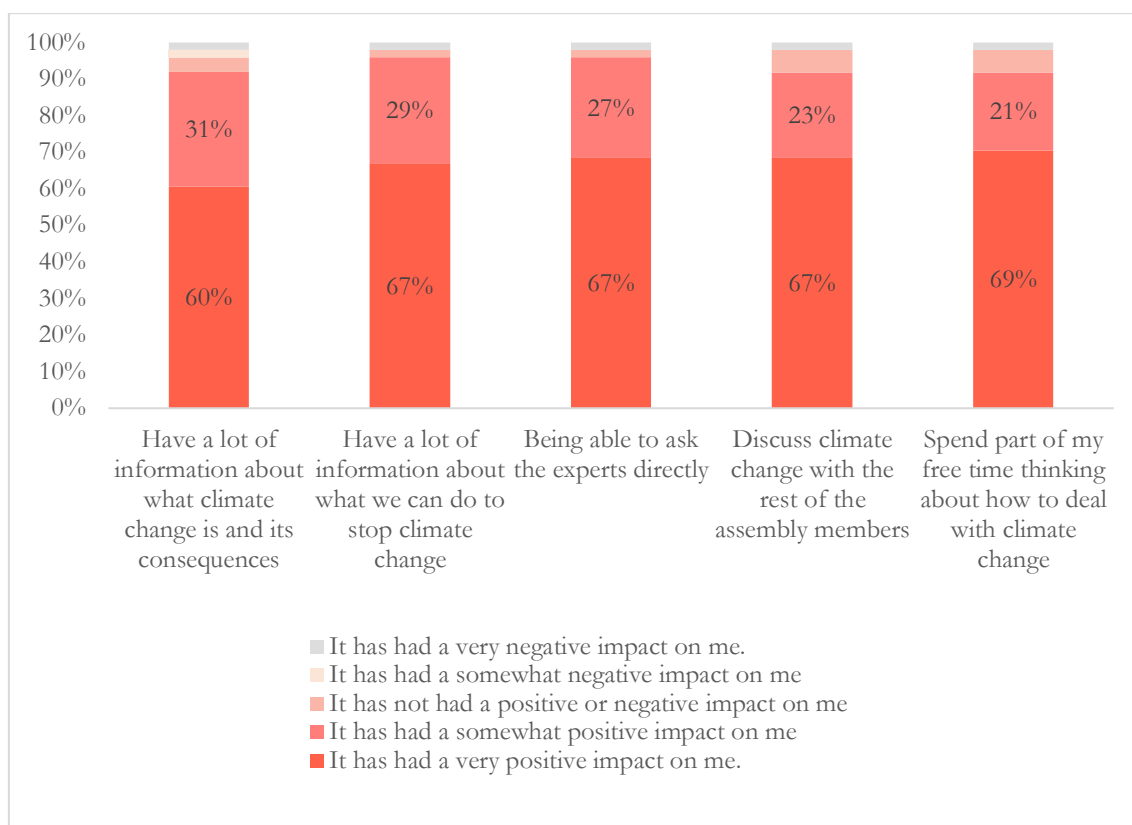
²⁰ As mentioned earlier, without prior measurements, we cannot determine to what extent the participants' opinions about what to do with the recommendations have changed as a result of their personal experience in the Assembly. However, a recent study of the Citizens' Assembly on the island of Mallorca conducted two

dismissing the central role of Congress in political life: presenting the recommendations there receives the highest approval (8,9).

Impact on the self-perception of skills, confidence and emotions

To comprehend the assembly members' perception of how the assembly has impacted them, we analyzed the potential effects of certain elements related to its design. For instance, receiving extensive information about the consequences of climate change, engaging in discussions with experts and fellow citizens, as well as dedicating some of their free time to brainstorm solutions to combat climate change.

Figure 21. Self-perception of the impact of the Assembly on oneself.

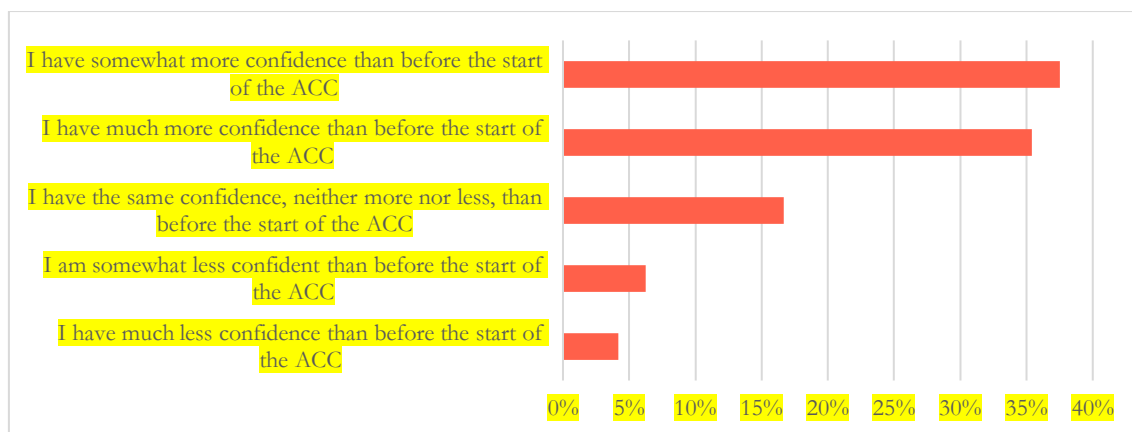


As seen in Figure 22, there is no self-perceived negative impact in relation to any of the aforementioned elements. On the contrary, more than 90% state that participating in the Assembly has had a very positive or positive effect on them. Along the same lines, three-

surveys, one at the beginning and one at the end of the Assembly, which asked a similar question but limited it to four options: direct implementation, holding a referendum, validation by independent experts, and approval by political representatives. The results show that the preferred option, both at the beginning and at the end of the Assembly, with little variation, is to submit the recommendations for approval by a group of experts, increasing from 47 to 50%. Second, there is an increase in favor of direct implementation of the recommendations, increasing from 13% to 28%. Finally, the options of a referendum and voting by political representatives decreased from 19% to 13% and 10%, respectively.

quarters of the assembly members express having much or somewhat more confidence in themselves than before the Assembly (Figure 22). However, qualitative interviews reveal another side of the same coin, related to a recent phenomenon known as climate anxiety.

Figure 22. Changes in self-perception of self-confidence.



During one of the interviews with a participant, the topic of the emotional impact of participating in the Assembly came up. The majority of the effects in this regard tend to increase one's sense of political efficacy, meaning feeling more competent and prepared to engage in political actions aimed at addressing climate change. Most assembly members are content with the knowledge they've gained about climate change and the practical skills acquired to convey and disseminate their opinions and demands. However, several assembly members reported an increase in their environmental concern, which at times resulted in emotions such as anxiety and feeling overwhelmed. The following excerpt from the conversation with one of the assembly members illustrates how this process, often known as climate anxiety, unfolded:

Assembly member (AM): What struck me the most, and had the strongest impact, were all the images they showed us of what would happen with climate change, the drought, how the Extremadura region would end up... The future they described in the short term, that's what impacted me the most. Seeing images of dry rivers. They were showing us the map of Spain, how some places might possibly turn out... It impacted me a lot. It even created a bit of overwhelm in me. During the assembly, they told us that we had psychological support to deal with some of the images or information that could be tough. And honestly, it was a bit tough at the beginning.

Interviewer (I): And how have you been experiencing that afterward? How have those emotions been?

AM: Honestly, I live it with concern. Sometimes I try not to think about it because I know it's not good for me psychologically, but I live it with concern. The concern about seeing the day-to-day, especially the weather. It's very noticeable in Zaragoza. We've gone from intense cold to days with 25 degrees. I live with concern about climate change, how the summer will be, how I'll be able to handle it. At my job, if it's going to be hot because last year at my job, we already experienced a lot of heat. So, thinking about the summer overwhelms me a bit.

I: Was this feeling of overwhelm the same before the assembly, or is it much greater now?

AM: It's much, much greater now. Now, I keep thinking about what's going to happen and what people do. Things I see on the street. Maybe I see a motorcycle speeding, emitting black smoke, and it makes me angry. Things that maybe I saw before, but now it makes me much angrier. Much angrier.

I: Have you talked with other assembly members about these emotions?

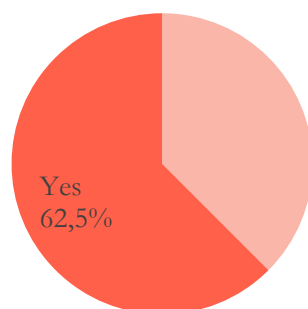
AM: I think that for all of us who were at the assembly, it affects us more or less equally, and we have the same emotions. We share information, send each other news. Honestly, it affects all of us a lot. At least with those I have a relationship with right now, yes.

Assembly member 1, March 30, 2023

Changes in the private sphere behaviour

Another possible effect of participating in a climate assembly is behavioural changes regarding directly combating climate change. To analyse this aspect, assembly members were asked if, since the conclusion of the SCCA, they had taken new actions to combat climate change²¹. We found that 63% of members confirmed that they had taken some new action aimed at combatting climate change for the first time in the past 12 months (Figure 23).

Figure 23. Change in behaviour aimed at directly combating climate change (for the first time in the last 12 months).



It is important to consider that many of the members were already engaged in these types of actions before taking part in the Assembly, as one of the surveyed individuals mentioned: "I believe that I already had a consumption behaviour very much aligned with the Assembly's goals before, and I have maintained it this way." However, those who responded that they had taken some actions for the first time were asked to provide specific examples, some of which include participating in outreach and advocacy activities, turning off their Wi-Fi at

²¹ Complete statement: The aim of the SCCA was not to ask you to make changes in your life. However, we would like to know if in the last 12 months you have taken any action, for the first time, aimed at combating climate change.

night, switching to a 100% electric vehicle, joining a grassroots climate association, and using organic waste to enrich their home garden.

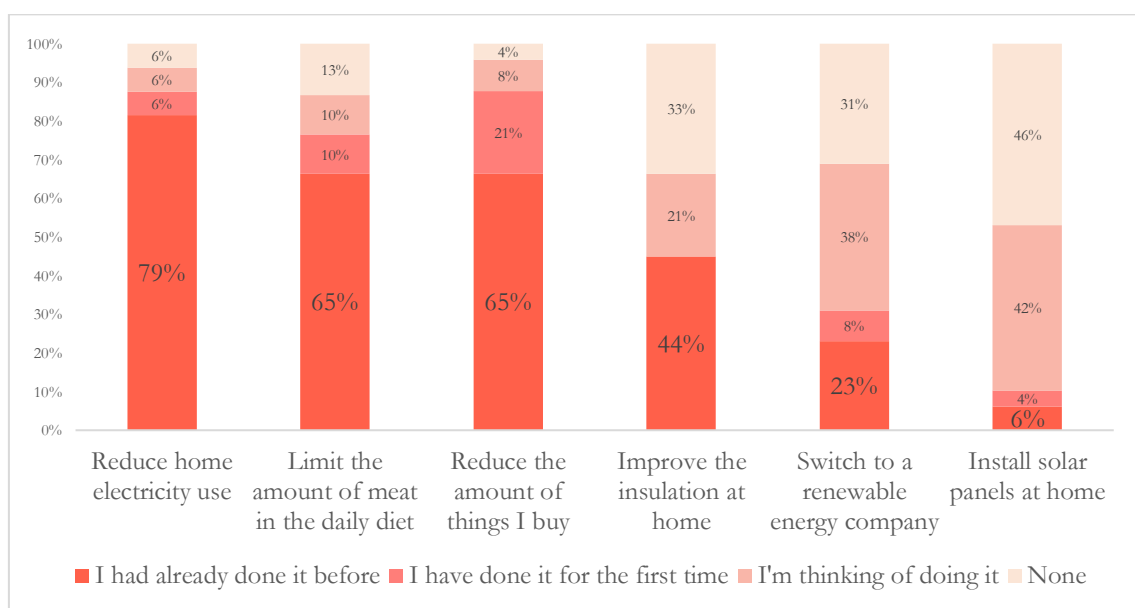
During the qualitative interviews, the majority of informants also shared examples of actions they began to undertake after their participation in the Assembly, as observed in the following paragraph:

I've become more involved in environmental associations. I even participate in one that's part of the Neighborhood Association, and we've done several things like organizing environmental talks. Last week, we planted trees. Also, when I go running or walking, I take a bag with me and pick up litter, which I didn't do before. For example, I used to separate my waste at home, but now I carry it all in a bag and separate it directly in front of the container because I find it much more effective, ensuring that the waste goes into the container already separated. For instance, I'm much more aware that there's a landfill in my area, and I've taken part in actions against the landfill to have it removed, I didn't do before. And well, there are some other things I can't recall right now.

Assembly member 5, April 3, 2023

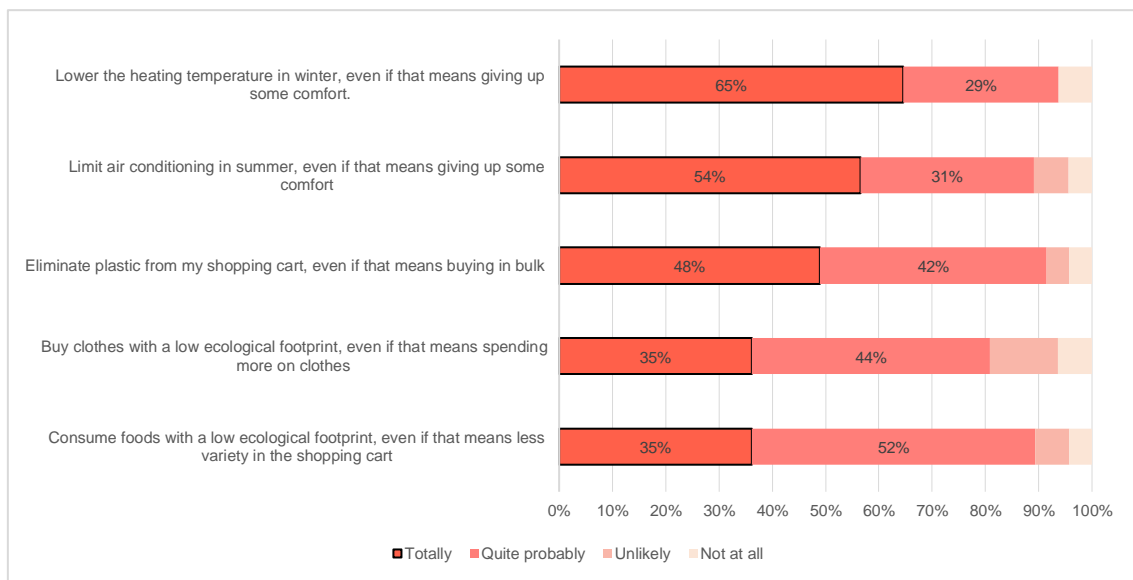
During the survey of the assembly members, they were explicitly asked about certain actions to combat climate change. In figure 24, it can be observed that the majority stated they had already carried out some of these actions. Mainly, those actions involve gradual changes such as reducing overall consumption, limiting the amount of meat in their daily diet, and reducing household electricity consumption. On the other hand, for actions that require concrete execution and implementation a significant portion mentioned that they are considering implementing them, for example: installing solar panels at home (42%) or switching to a renewable energy provider (38%).

Figure 24. And thinking about the last 12 months, have you taken any of these actions?



Lastly, Figure 25 shows the high level of willingness among the assembly members to take certain actions to combat climate change. For all of these actions, more than 80% express their willingness, even when potential downsides, costs, or negative consequences are specified for each one. Beyond the broad predisposition, there is notable variation between strong and moderate support for the proposed actions. While measures related to regulating temperatures in public spaces and shopping centres receive strong support ranging from 54 to 65%, actions that require individual effort, whether in terms of time or money, see strong support drop to as low as 35%.

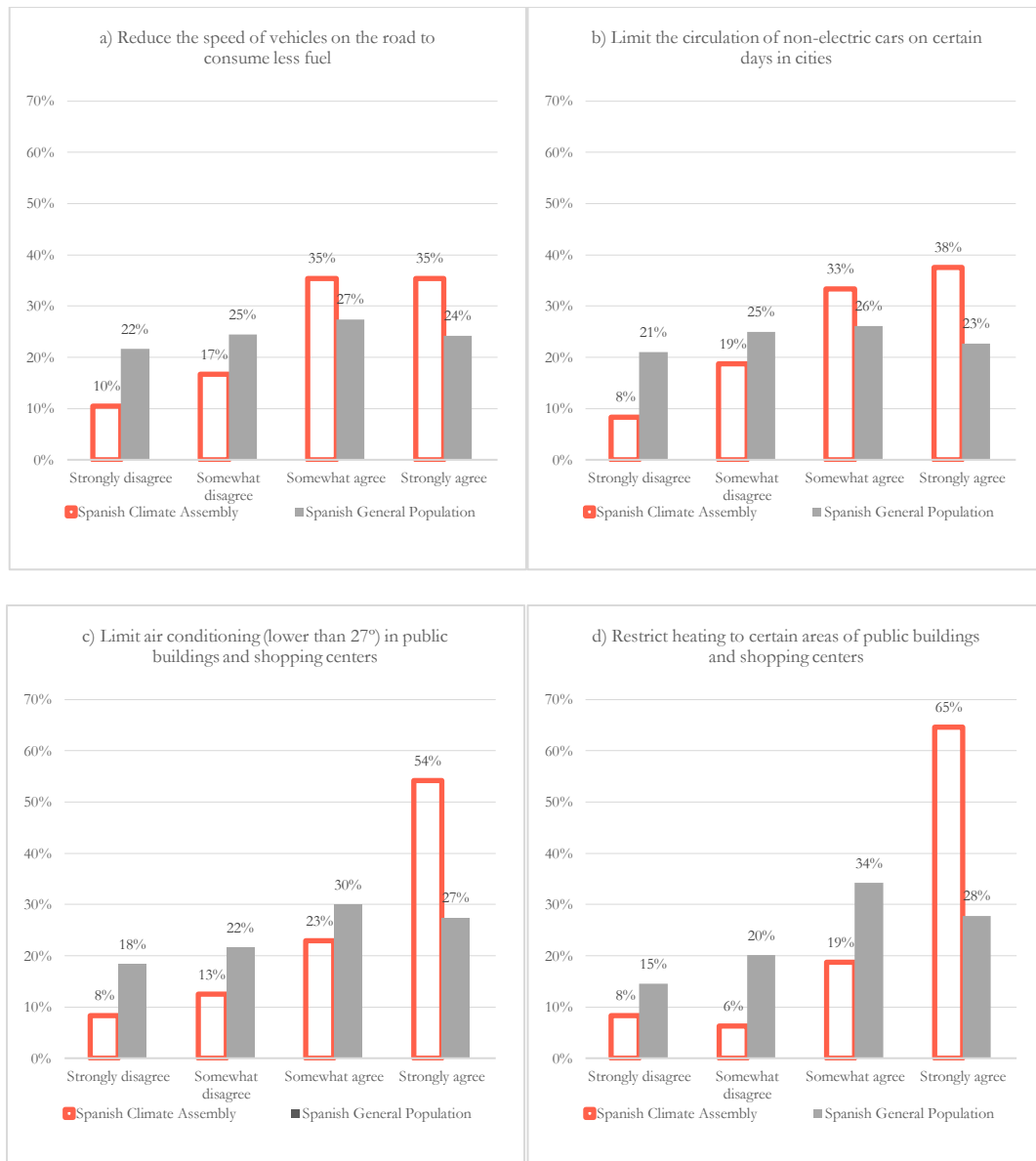
Figure 25. Which of the following actions to combat climate change would you be truly willing to undertake in the next 12 months?



Next, the level of support for the adoption of certain public measures is compared between members of the assembly and the general population in Spain. Regarding reducing the speed of circulation to save fuel (Figure 26a), it is observed that the general Spanish population is evenly split between those who support and those who do not support this measure. In contrast, among the members of the assembly, support is in the majority, with 70% in favour of the measure. A similar distribution is seen with another measure related to private vehicle mobility. Specifically, the limitation of non-electric vehicles in cities on specific days (Figure 26b). It is worth noting that even among the members, the positions in favour are equally divided between those who strongly support and those who moderately support both measures related to private mobility. On the other hand, if we look at support for measures related to regulating temperatures in public buildings and shopping centres (Figures 26c and 18d), there is a stronger inclination among assembly members to support these types of

measures. In contrast, in the general population, these measures (compared to urban mobility restrictions) achieve slightly more support or generate less opposition. It is important to emphasize again that since there are no data on the attitudes of members before and after the Assembly, we cannot attribute any direct effects of the Assembly on these attitudes.

Figure 26. Support for climate change public mitigation measures²²



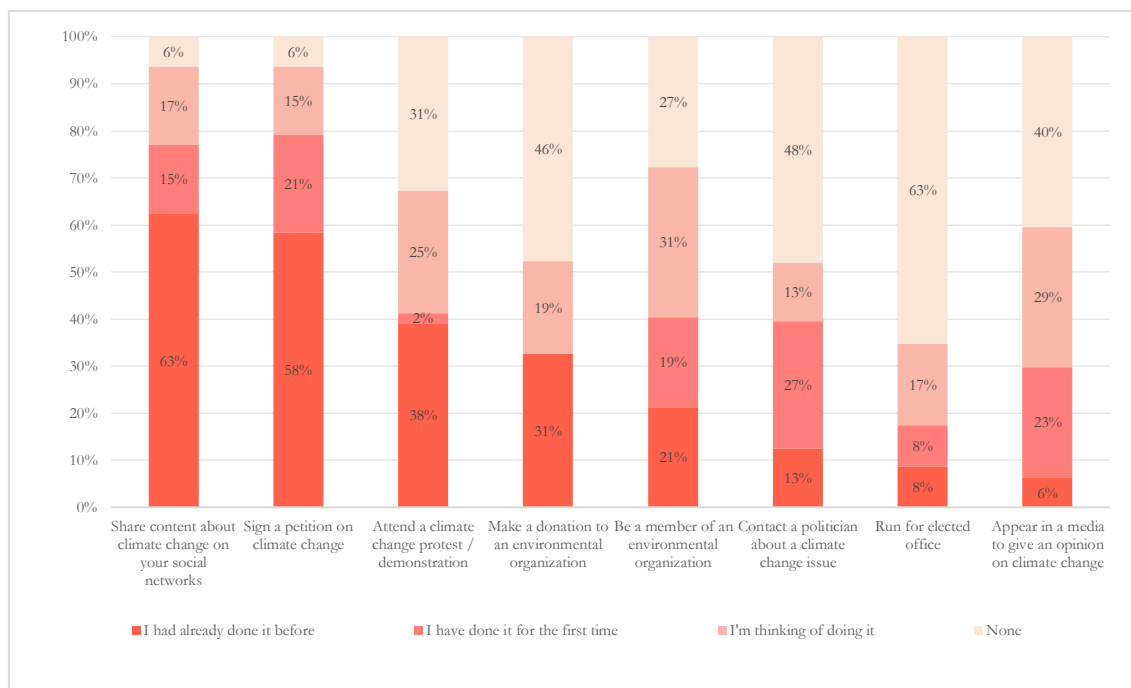
Changes in the public sphere behavior

To understand the effects of the SCCA on members' engagement in actions aimed at indirectly combating climate change, they were asked about activities where the primary goal was to exert political influence in this regard. The first thing to note is that a greater change

²² CIS, Estudio n°3375, Barómetro de septiembre 2022

occurs in behaviour related to political actions (e.g., those focused on political participation and mobilisation) than in behaviour aimed at directly reducing climate change (e.g., those aimed at reducing emissions).

Figure 27. Take indirect actions against climate change for the first time in the last 12 months.



For example, one in four members from the Assembly has engaged for the first time in a media outlet to express their opinion on climate change or has contacted a politician for the same reason. The impact on other first-time political actions, such as sharing climate change news on social media, signing a petition, or joining an environmental association, also shows a significant percentage. However, other actions like making donations or participating in protests or demonstrations experience less chance. Nevertheless, several members acknowledged that before the Assembly, they typically did not attend protests or demonstrations primarily related to the environment, as observed in the following excerpt:

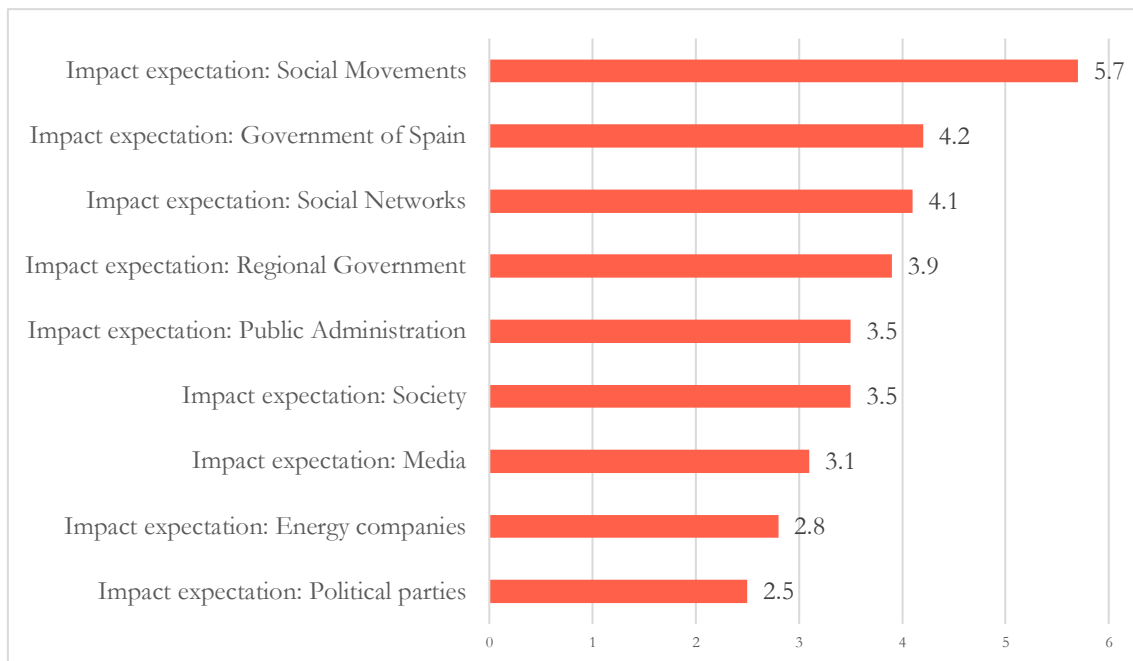
Assembly member (AM): Yes, I had attended protests, but now there was one here against the expansion of the airport, and I went, even if my family didn't come, I went. And some others as well. A protest against the Repsol Chair at the University of Barcelona, to have it removed and replaced with something else within the universities. I was there too, supporting a few young people.

Interviewer: And would you say that these activities, if it weren't for the Assembly, you wouldn't have done them, or would you have done them anyway?

AM: I wouldn't have done them because I wouldn't be as sensitized to this issue, as I was more focused on other social issues rather than ecological ones. But now, the arguments I've encountered in these assemblies have made it clearer and inclined me a bit more.

Members were also asked about their expectations of the impact of the Assembly on different political and social actors. If we look at Figure 28, what stands out the most are the extremely low expectations of impact. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no impact and 10 means total impact, only expectations for impact on social movements exceed 5 points. Following that, with approximately 4 points, are expectations for impact on the Spanish Government, social media, and regional governments. At the bottom, below 3.5 points, are expectations for impact on the Public Administration, the general population, the media, energy companies, and political parties.

Figure 28. Impact expectation in different political and social actors.



The Civic Assembly for the Climate Association

During the last session of the SCCA, the members agreed to continue meeting with the purpose of conveying their recommendations to groups and organizations. Currently, nearly half of the assembly members initially took part of the Civic Assembly for Climate Association. The change from "Citizens' Assembly" to "Civic Assembly" was made at the request of the organisers and promoters. Below is an excerpt from an interview with a participant in which she explains the objective of the Association:

Assembly member (AM): We have formed an association. We decided in our last meeting that we wouldn't stop at this point and that we wouldn't only present our recommendations to the government or to the Congress and the Senate. We wanted to share them with other institutions or administrations but in different contexts, like community or municipal levels, or with third-sector organizations. [...] Besides addressing the climate issues, we believed it was crucial to emphasize the strengthening of democracy, direct democracy in particular, and how this can support our representative democracy, which is not perfect.

Assembly member 4, March 21, 2023

Before becoming an Association, the members of the Assembly shared the recommendations among various regional administrations and both public and private entities. The official website of the Assembly registered the activities carried out until December 2022. The table below shows the activities that the members of the Assembly have undertaken once they were established as an Association. The autonomy gained by the assembly members, as well as their high level of activity of the Association in disseminating the recommendations, is one of the main impacts of the SCCA.

Table 3. List of activities carried out by the Association of SCCA's members.

Nº	Date	Event	Role
1	11/04/2023	Multi-Actor Dialogue: Renewable Energies: Inspiring Cases to Enhance the Deployment of Renewable Energies.	To attend as listeners
2	14/04/2023	The Role of the Judiciary in the Fight Against Climate Change and Environmental Protection. ²³	Two assembly members delivered a presentation focused on Recommendations 146, 147 y 148: Training judges and members of the judiciary on legal responses to climate change and environmental protection.
3	18/04/2023	Development of a Manifesto in collaboration with other Civil Society Organizations: Deliberative Tide, Stop Ecocide, Oxfam, Ecologists in Action, Plantonique Foundation, among others	
4	03/05/2023	"II CPI Europe Day: 'Collaboration Opportunities in Horizon Europe Missions'.	To attend as listeners
5	10/05/2023	Taller de apoyo a los participantes después de la Asamblea organizado por KNOCA.	To attend as listeners
6	10/05/2023	Debate on the Situation of Doñana.	Five assembly members participated in the debate.

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X28ANAAx1c>

7	11/05/2023	Benalmádena in Transition Platform.	An assembly member is working on mobilizing people from their municipality to gather proposals and recommendations and present them to political representatives for inclusion in their programs
8	11/05/2023	Rural Climate Forum 2023 Aranda de Duero.	Several assembly members and organisers were invited by the European Climate Pact Ambassador to a presentation on Civic Governance.
8	11/05/2023	Metaforum 'The Future is Being B.	Three assembly members were invited to participate in the session.
9	12/05/2023	IV Ibero-American Sustainable Tourism Forum.	One assembly member participated in this forum.
10	15-17/05/2023	Beyond Growth 2023.	One assembly member participated in the conference.
11	15-17/05/2023	Green Transition Debate organised, among others, by the Barcelona City Council and the Generalitat of Catalonia.	One assembly member participated in the debate.
12	19/05/2023	UPV Summer Courses 'Citizen Assemblies, a New Wave of Citizen Engagement in Europe	Several assembly members and organization members participated in one of the roundtable discussions
13	23/05/2023	Debate on Ecological Transition promoted by Fundación Alternativas and Repsol.	Several assembly members took part in the debate.
14	31/05/2023	Workshop: Learning from Citizen Assemblies for the Climate	Five assembly members participated.
15	06/06/2023	Manifiesto Presentation	
16	09-10/06/2023	International Meeting of Women Leaders	One assembly member participated in the meeting
17	14/06/2023	Plataforma Ha Vesos Meeting	An assembly member met with that platform. The platform's decalogue is based on the recommendations of the Assembly
18	21/06/2023	KNOCA's Annual Event.	An assembly member presented the draft of the Coordination of Assemblies in Europe
19	23/06/2023	Meeting of Fridays for Future and Málaga for the Climate	An assembly member met with the Fridays for Future and the Málaga Network collectives to present the Assembly's recommendations.
20	30/06/2023	Adherence to the #MoreTrainBetterClimate campaign promoted by the State Coordination for Public, Social, and Sustainable Trains	
21	02/07/2023	Participation in a national radio program. RN3	Two assembly members participated in the RNE 3 program 'el Bosque Habitado' discussing the potential of citizen assemblies. Yes, there would be time with citizen assemblies.
22	05/07/2023	Luso-Spanish Forum: The Iberian Space Connected to Accelerate Decarbonization	An assembly member attended as a listener.
23	05/07/2023	Workshop of the ADJUST Project (Horizon-EU) organised by BC3.	Eight assembly members participated in this workshop
24	06/07/2023	Radio Initiative - Biweekly Program on Climate Change	An assembly member participates alongside the Ha Vesos platform
25	17/07/2023	Forum Europa Breakfast with the Minister of Ecological Transition and Cristina Narbona	The president of the Association participates.
26	18/07/2023	Press conference at the Círculo de Bellas Artes along with other collectives at the Democracy for Climate event	
27	21/07/2023	Roundtable discussion with Extinction Rebellion and Democracy for Climate	Two assembly members took part in the debate
28	26/09/2023	Panel Discussion on Health and Climate Change organised by the College of Physicians of Cádiz.	An assembly member participates in the debate and meets with the Mayor of Cádiz.

The above table compiles a wide and diverse range of activities in which the Association members have been involved from April to September 2023. Among these activities, we find attendance and participation in conferences and roundtable discussions related to climate change, collaborative work with other groups and platforms advocating for environmental

protection in their region as well as many media interventions. Several activities stand out due to the specificity of their objectives. For instance, activity 2 involved the participation of an Association member and a member of the organizing team in an event hosted by the Associations of Lawyers of Madrid.²⁴ The focus of the event was Environmental Governance, and the panel in which the assembly members participated revolved around Recommendations 146, 147, and 148. These recommendations primarily target members of the judiciary and emphasize the need for more specific training in environmental protection, surveillance, and remediation, as well as the inclusion of ecocide as a crime in the penal code²⁵. The debate that arose following the presentation of the speakers revolved around how to ensure the right to the environment without the need to amend the Spanish Constitution, as in the Constitution, the protection of the environment is a principle and not a right.

Image 1. Environmental Governance event (Associations of Lawyers of Madrid)



²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X28ANaXx1c>

²⁵ In the appendices, you can find the two newsletters prepared by the Association up to the present date, which include links to most of the activities listed in the table.

Conclusions on impact on assembly members

In this section, the impact of the SCCA on the members has been analysed based mostly on the data from a survey conducted with the assembly members one year after the Assembly. In addition, in-depth interviews have been conducted, primarily with assembly members but also with other relevant actors such as regional government officials and politicians. Finally, the formation of the Civic Assembly for Climate Change Association as a result of the Assembly has been documented.

1. Most assembly members report a positive impact of the Assembly in terms of the **skills** acquired and their perception of **self-confidence**. However, qualitative interviews indicate the emergence or intensification of environmental **anxiety** as a consequence of the information received.

2. Regarding the implementation of **activities aimed at directly reducing the negative consequences of climate change**, 63% of the surveyed members claim to have taken actions towards this goal for the first time in the last 12 months. On the other hand, 40% are considering changing certain habits in the next 12 months.

3. Among the assembly members, there is significant support for potential **government measures** aimed at reducing emissions. However, measures related to mobility restrictions receive more moderate support, while measures related to temperature control in public spaces receive strong support.

4. An attitudinal and behavioural change is observed in assembly members in relation to **political participation**. In other words, members have experienced a more significant shift in those actions that seek to influence public opinion or policymakers. For example, contacting a politician to discuss environmental issues (27% did this for the first time in the last 12 months), intervening in the media (23%), signing a petition (21%), or joining an environmental association (19%).

5. Most assembly members have low **expectations** regarding the impact the Assembly may have on other political and social actors. They believe it will have some impact on social movements, little impact on the government, social media, and regional administrations, and no impact on the media, political parties, and energy companies.

6. One of the main impacts of the Assembly has been the creation of an association to promote the work done by the Assembly. Approximately 40% of the assembly members belong to the **Association**. The work carried out by the association reflects the autonomy gained by the assembly members. However, according to informal interviews (phone conversations), they are facing many difficulties in formally establishing the association and becoming fully active. At times, it has been suggested that they would need legal and administrative guidance.

Chapter 3

Impact on the General Public



Impact on the General Public

Level of knowledge of the Assembly

During the months of May and June 2023, More in Common conducted a survey among the Spanish adult population (n=2050), alongside other objectives, to know the level of support for Climate Assemblies and, more specifically, to obtain an approximation of the knowledge about the SCCA among the general public. The final sample is composed by 49% women and 51% men; 25% under 35 years old, 40% between 35 and 54, 35% over 54; 20%, 20% live in municipalities with less than 10.000 inhabitants, 46% in municipalities between 10.001 and 200.000, and 24% in municipalities over 200.000. These were the main findings:

- Only 12% of the population claimed to have heard of the SCCA, while 71% denied any knowledge of it, and 17% said it sounded vaguely familiar.²⁶
- 75% of the respondents believed that deliberative assemblies could help reduce tensions in Spain.²⁷
- 88% believed that governments and political leaders should have the obligation to respond to and take into account the recommendations that arise from such assemblies.
- 85% believed that deliberative assemblies should be organised regularly.
- 85% would participate in a deliberative assembly if invited. Among those who wouldn't participate, the main reasons are not feeling qualified for it, followed by a lack of time, lack of interest in debating with people they don't know, as well as the belief that citizens should not make such decisions.

Next, we delve into the data on the level of knowledge of the Citizens' Assembly for Climate Change held in Spain, focusing on its distribution according to the following variables: age, habitat, education level, ideology, and gender.

In the younger population (up to 24 years), less than 5% claim to have heard of the SCCA. This percentage increases to a little over 10% in the age grs ranging from 25 to 44 years. It

²⁶ The questionnaire question is as follows: "Have you heard about the Citizens' Assembly for Climate that was organised in Spain between December 2021 and May 2022?". These questions are often especially affected by social desirability, so that the real proportion of people familiar with it could be smaller.

²⁷ The questionnaire question is as follows: Citizen assemblies involve the gathering of a group of randomly invited citizens, so they do not know each other and do not form pressure groups among themselves, and with different characteristics (age, gender, educational level, regions where they live, ideology, etc.). These individuals meet over several working days, they are paid, provided with documentation, and supported by experts to deliberate among themselves and decide on various issues that affect everyone. The conclusions are subsequently conveyed to the government so that they can take them into account. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Strongly agree, somewhat agree, slightly agree, strongly disagree).

is from the age of 45 onwards that a considerable increase is observed, reaching 27.3%. Finally, among the age groups ranging from 55 to over 64, the percentage hovers between 19% and 27%. When comparing the different groups, especially those who say they have heard of the SCCA and those who have not, the greatest difference is seen in the older age group.

Table 4. Level of knowledge about the SCCA by age.

AGE							
	>25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	>64	TOTAL
Yes, I have heard about the SCCA	4,2	10,8	11,2	27,3	19,4	27	100%
No, I haven't heard about the SCCA	9,2	16,2	20,9	20,6	17,6	15,5	100%
It sounds familiar to me	14,8	11,3	18,8	21,9	16,9	16,3	100%

If we look at the type of location based on the population size, we can observe that three-quarters of those who claim to have heard of the SCCA live in municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants. This percentage is similar when considering other indicators, such as the type of terrain: rural (19.4), intermediate (32.2), and urban (48.4). When comparing the two main groups, there are no important differences based on the type of habitat between those who have heard of the SCCA and those who haven't.

Regarding the level of knowledge according to the educational level, it is clear that among those who claim to know about the SCCA, the majority have only primary education. This is most likely due to the age of those who have heard of the SCCA. As we saw earlier, with nearly 50% being over 50 years old. Taking into account this, if we compare those who do know about the ACC and those who don't, differences are noticeable.

Table 5. Level of knowledge about the SCCA by habitat.

HABITAT						
	<2.000 inh.	2.001 – 10.000	10.001 – 50.000	50.001 – 200.000	>200.000	TOTAL
Yes, I have heard about the SCCA	7,6	17,8	27,3	22,2	25,2	100%

No, I haven't heard about the SCCA	4,5	12,6	26,2	23,4	33,3	100%
It sounds familiar to me	8,3	15,2	26,9	23,6	26	100%

Table 6. Level of knowledge about the SCCA by education.

EDUCATION LEVEL				
	Primary	Secondary	Advanced	TOTAL
Yes, I have heard about the SCCA	46,5	24,9	28,5	100%
No, I haven't heard about the SCCA	28,4	33,6	38	100%
It sounds familiar to me	36	32,7	31,3	100%

When comparing the data based on ideology and gender, no differential pattern is observed either within the group that claims to have heard of the SCCA or when comparing it to the group that has no knowledge of it.

Chapter 4

Digital and Social Media Impact

José Luis Fernández Martínez

Coco Bates



Digital and Social Media Impact

In the previous chapter, we analysed the level of knowledge about the SCCA among the general population. Undoubtedly, one of the main channels, though not the only one, to reach a wide audience is the media. In this chapter, we will analyse the impact that the SCCA has had on digital media. For this purpose, an ad hoc research strategy was developed, consisting of creating a database of news articles about the SCCA. The first step was to carry out an automated search for news articles published in digital media that included a link to the official SCCA website (i.e. a backlink). The results of this automated search were supplemented with the record of online news publications about the SCCA provided by the assembly's communication team (press clippings). Once the database was refined, the next step was to input specific information for each news article (our unit of analysis), such as the type of media in which it was published, the date, the main theme of the article, the impact of the article on social media (Facebook and Twitter), among others (see Table 7). All this information allowed us to quantitatively assess the coverage that the SCCA achieved in the media and analyse the effectiveness of the communication strategy adopted from a more qualitative perspective. The following pages will analyse the impact of the SCCA considering the following aspects: 1) its coverage in digital media; 2) the logic of the communication strategy; 3) the impact of the coverage on social media (Facebook and Twitter), and finally, 4) the activity of the assembly's own social networks.

Media impact of the SCCA

Rationale and methodological considerations

The presence of CCAs in the media serves a dual function: on the one hand, in an exercise of transparency, it seeks to disseminate the design, objectives, and results of the CCAs, and on the other hand, as part of a communication strategy, it aims to generate debate on climate change that extends to wider spheres of society. However, the way this dissemination occurs largely depends on the communication strategy pursued. There are cases where public debate has occurred practically in parallel and simultaneously with the development of the Assembly, such as the well-known example of the *Convention Citoyenne pour le Climat* in France, where mass media (especially television and radio) played a fundamental role in terms of

dissemination. In many other cases, public debate has been limited to very specific moments of the Assembly, such as its beginning, conclusion, and the delivery of recommendations.

In this section, the coverage of the Spanish Climate Citizens' Assembly (SCCA) in digital media is addressed, and a qualitative and systematic analysis of the content published about it is conducted (Maia 2023: 371). For this purpose, a database was created with approximately 350 digital media entries. The data collection process consisted of two phases. Initially, contact was made with the Citizens' Assembly's communication team, who provided a press clipping with entries in digital media from November 10, 2021, to December 15, 2022. Subsequently, a comprehensive search was conducted for digital content that included a backlink to the official website of the SCCA, published up until May 15, 2022. After removing duplicates and refining the results, 135 new entries in digital media were obtained (40% of the total database). The next step was to record the following information for each entry:

- Publication date (month and year);
- Publication title;
- URL;
- Media outlet name;
- Media type: digital press (differentiating between newspapers, environmental magazines, general magazines, and other magazines); institutional websites (mainly websites of ministries, municipalities, foundations, and research centres); social organisations and third-sector websites (e.g., NGOs and companies); and audiovisual media (TV, radio, and podcasts);
- Main geographical scope (international, national, and subnational);
- SCCA as the main topic (yes/no);
- Specific topic (open text);
- Manner of introducing/presenting the SCCA (open text);
- Impact on Facebook: number of likes;
- Impact on Facebook: number of shares;
- Impact on Facebook: number of comments and,

- Impact on Twitter: number of shares

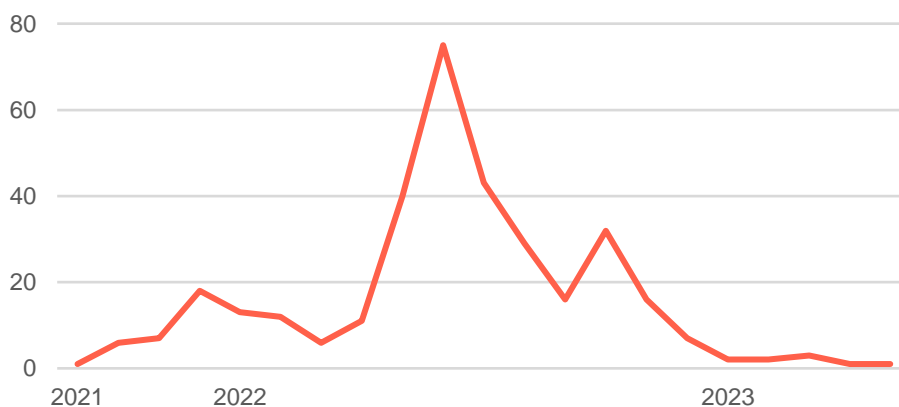
Table 7. Database variables.

Contextual	Content	Impact on Social Networks
V1. Publication date	V7. Main geographical scope (International, national, and subnational)	V9. Impact of Facebook: number of likes
V2. Publication title	V8. SCCA (main topic): - Yes - No	V10. Impact on Facebook: number of shares
V3. URL	V9. Specific topic (open text)	V11. Impact on Facebook: number of comments and
V4. Media outlet name	V10. SCCA presentation (open text)	V12. Impact on Twitter: number of shares
V5. Media type		

Coverage of the Spanish CCA in digital media

Figure 29 illustrates the number of entries in digital media referencing the SCCA from September 2021 to May 2023. The first observation is the coincidence of peaks in media coverage with three key moments of the SCCA. The first peak occurs in December 2021, coinciding with the start of the Assembly. From that point on, there is a decline in coverage until the month of May. In that month, there is a significant increase in media coverage, coinciding with the final session of the Assembly held on May 22nd. This growth culminates in June, with the highest peak recorded so far, coinciding with the act of delivering the recommendations to the president of the Government and the minister of Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge on June 6th in the Moncloa Palace Gardens. After the recommendations were handed over, there is a decline in media coverage that extends until October. In that month, a third peak is observed, coinciding with the presentation of the recommendations on October 24th at the Congress of Deputies.

Figure 29. Evolution of published entries on the SCCA. *Source:* Own elaboration.



By type of digital media and territorial scope

Regarding the types of media that have published information related to the SCCA, digital newspapers have published nearly 40% of the content (Figure 30). Magazines, whether generalist, environmental, or other specialised topics, have published 30%. Websites of public institutions, social organisations, and companies have published 20%. Finally, audiovisual media such as television, radio, and podcasts, account for 10% of the content. As for the geographical scope of the media outlets (Figure 30), 3 out of 4 are national, while the rest are distributed similarly between international and subnational media (local, provincial, and regional).

Figure 30. Coverage of the SCCA, by type of digital media. *Source:* Own elaboration

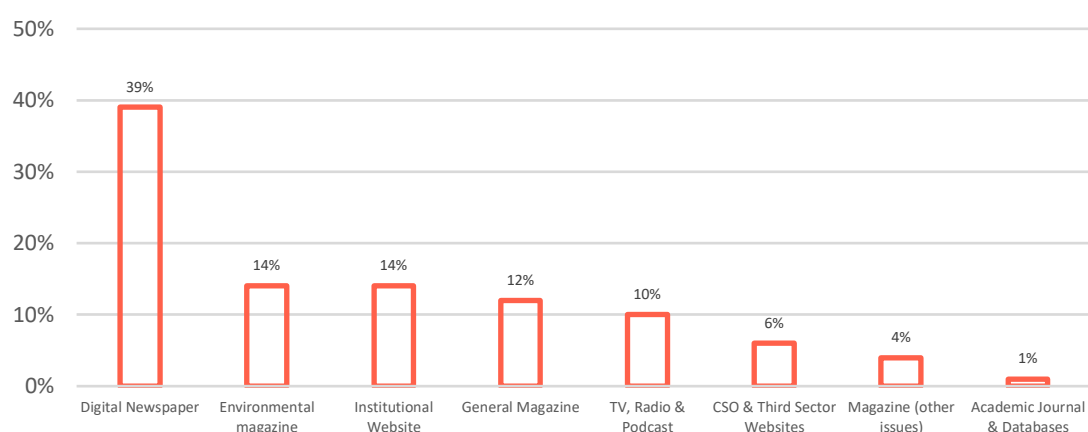
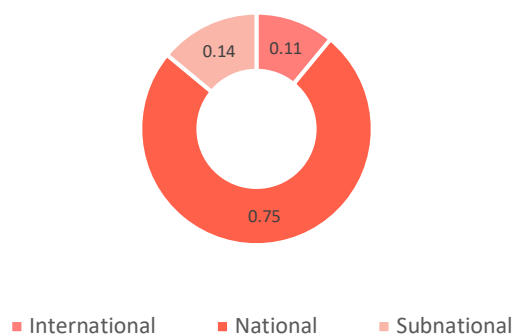


Figure 31. Coverage of the SCCA, by territorial scope. *Source:* Own elaboration



The communication strategy

This section analyses the SCCA's communication strategy, with particular attention to its evolution from September 2021 to May 2023. The analysis incorporates both the data obtained from the systematic search of media mentions as well as interviews conducted with people central to the Assembly.

When analysing the specific content published in digital media about the SCCA, the first step was to differentiate between articles where the Assembly was the main topic and those where it was not. Two news articles published in February 2022, three months after the start of the Assembly, are presented as examples. Image 2 represents a news article where the SCCA is not the main topic, while Image 3 represents a news article where it is. By comparing both articles, we observe that the way in which the SCCA is treated is completely different. While the news article in image 2 merely mentions the participation of the Youth Advisory Council of Spain in the Assembly, the news article in image 3 provides detailed information about the objectives and functioning of the SCCA.

Image 2. Example of a news article in which the SCCA is not the main topic. *Source:* El Confidencial.

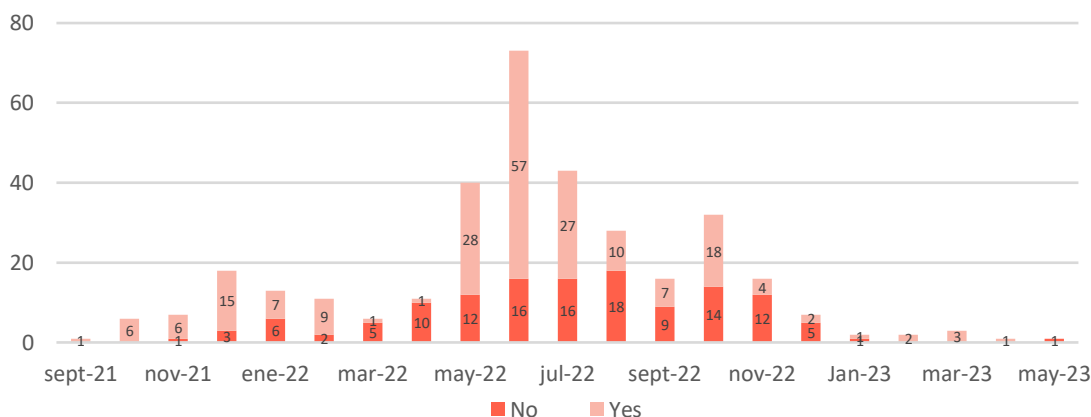


Image 3. Example of a news article in which the SCCA is the main topic. *Source:* Info Libre.



Figure 32 displays the distribution over time of the number of entries in the media based on whether the SCCA is the main topic or not. To gain a more detailed understanding of how the communication strategy has unfolded, our analysis has been divided into four key moments that align with peaks in the media coverage: before the start of the Assembly (Sept. - Nov. 2021), during the months when the Assembly took place (Dec. 2021 - May 2022), the delivery of the recommendations (Jun. - Oct. 2022), and subsequent monitoring of the Assembly (Nov. 2022 - May 2023).

Figure 32. Evolution of published entries on the SCCA, by main topic. *Source:* Own elaboration



During the months leading up to the SCCA

Between September and November 2021, a total of 14 entries were published, with the SCCA being the main topic in the majority of them. Regarding authorship, half of the entries were published by institutions that promoted or organised the Assembly (MITECO, Moncloa, Biodiversity Foundation, SDSN²⁸, and BCS²⁹), aiming to announce the launch of

²⁸ Sustainable Development Solutions Network-SDSN (Red Española de Desarrollo Sostenible-REDS)

²⁹ Barcelona Supercomputing Center-BSC (Centro Nacional de Supercomputación-CNS)

the Assembly following the official publication of the Ministerial Order³⁰ that stipulated the Assembly's regulations and structure. The other half of the entries were published by both digital newspapers and magazines, dedicating ample space to explain in detail the design and objectives of the Assembly.

Despite their similarities, different points of view can be observed regarding the Assembly in the digital press. On the one hand, there is the perspective that CCAs are considered, in general, to be a hopeful alternative to intergovernmental strategies that combat climate change, particularly referring to COP. On the other hand, there is the stance that criticises, in particular, the communication strategy used to spread awareness of the SCCA among the general public, as well as the participant selection process. Lastly, some well-known media outlets criticised the economic expenditure associated with the SCCA, as well as the selection process of the companies chosen to carry out the deliberative process. As we will see in the following chapter, when analysing the impact of news coverage on social media, although this coverage accounts for only a small percentage of the total volume of news shared, it has had a significant impact on social media.

In summary, and beyond what was strictly published before the start of the SCCA, what really stands out is the limited media coverage that the Assembly received during the months leading up to its inception. The launch of the SCCA would have undoubtedly been an opportunity to spread awareness of the Assembly to broader spheres of society and to reach beyond the network of promoters and organisers as much as possible. Some participants stated in interviews that while they understood the need to ensure privacy during the deliberation process, they did not fully comprehend the limited publicity of the Assembly before its inception. It should be noted that the communication strategy implemented before the Assembly was not carried out by the same company later responsible for public relations, but rather by entities associated with the Ministry of Ecological Transition. As for the organisers, several interviewees from the organisation team expressed a certain fear of the unknown consequences that the Assembly could have. One of these interviewees (a member of the Assembly's organisation team) stated that a zero-risk strategy had been chosen as a precautionary or prudent measure given the uncertain impact the Assembly might have:

Yes, caution and fear were a key factor. There was never the slightest risk taken. It was a zero-risk option. So, of course, a communication strategy that is approached with zero risk is unlikely to have an impact. Whenever there is some impact, you lose control over the information because it belongs to everyone. So, it's possible that this is the case. But

³⁰ <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/10/08/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-16347.pdf>

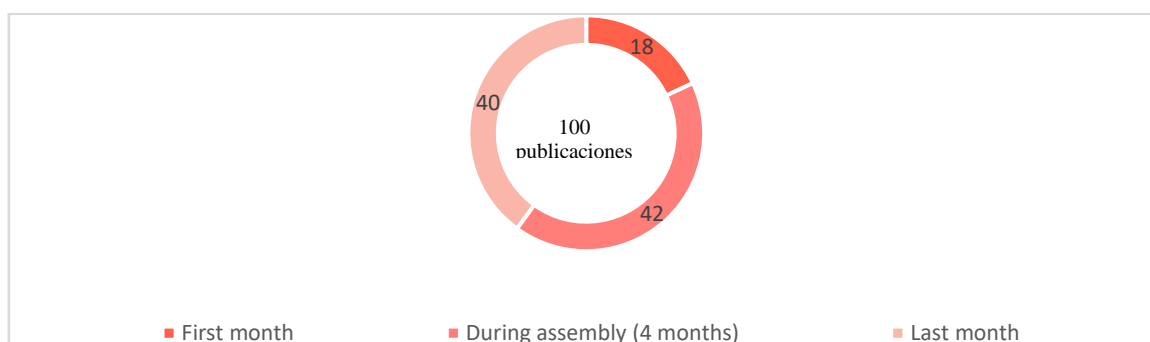
at the same time, I must say, I'm certain that the Government wanted information about the Assembly to be as widely known as possible. But this was the driving factor. The result here has been unsatisfactory, but as I mentioned, there are several reasons for it.

Expert 2, May 16, 2023

During the months in which the SCCA took place

Regarding the digital content published during the Assembly, 100 entries were identified, of which 18% were published during its first month (Dec. 2021), 40% during the central 4 months of the Assembly (Jan. 2021 - Apr. 2022), and 42% during the last month (May 2022) (Figure 33). These figures provide us with some clues about the communication strategy adopted.

Figure 33. Evolution of published entries on the SCCA during the Assembly. *Source:* Own elaboration



During the first month of the Assembly, 18 entries were published, with the vast majority of them focusing on the SCCA as the main topic (figure 32). Specifically, these entries aimed to promote and introduce the objectives and structure of the Assembly. Unlike the previous stage, where the promoting institutions carried out the entire communication campaign, during this initial month of the Assembly, most of the content was published by digital newspapers and magazines (e.g., *El País*, *Europa Press*, *Ecoavant*, *Portal Veterinario*, *Ciencias Ambientales*, among others). While there was a greater presence and diversity of media outlets covering the Assembly during the first month, the data obtained suggests that the communication efforts during such a crucial moment, the beginning of the Assembly, were, at least quantitatively, very limited.

During the central months of the SCCA, specifically between January and April 2022, there was a slight decrease in media coverage, and more importantly, a change in how the SCCA was presented. During these four months, 42 entries were published, of which more than

half did not focus on the Assembly as the main topic (figure 32). The fact that the SCCA was not the central or most prominent theme of the news coverage does not necessarily mean that it would have less impact (in terms of website visits or social media shares), or that it would be less effective in raising awareness about the Assembly. In many cases, as shown in the following two examples, a hook or news angle is used to attract the attention of a wider audience, including new readers. The next two examples illustrate these different communication narratives.

Image 4. Example 1, showing the use of an indirect narrative to introduce the SCCA. *Source:* El País.



Image 5. Example 2, showing the use of an indirect narrative to introduce the SCCA. *Source:* La Vanguardia.



In the first example, the authors use the movie "Don't Look Up" to explain the association between the audiovisual production company Netflix and a civic platform against climate change. They then emphasise the need to go beyond individual lifestyle changes to address the climate emergency, highlighting the importance of large-scale democratic mobilisation and mentioning the recommendations of the IPCC³¹. It is at this point that they discuss the missed opportunity of not giving the SCCA the prominence it deserves. In the second example, the controversy surrounding the selection process of the song representing Spain in the Eurovision Song Contest is used to denounce the lack of diffusion and attention given

³¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

to the Assembly by political representatives. The authors of both articles belong to social movements such as Extinction Rebellion, among others. One of the interviewees from the Assembly's organisation team specifically mentioned the stance of some social movements that criticised the SCCA's lack of transparency.

In short, during the process, the communication wasn't very effective. But I believe that after the end of the Assembly, it was. In fact, they [the assembly members] are very active on social media, organising events and joining events organised by others, such as panels, roundtable discussions, etc. And in that sense, the community is being more effective. But during other stages of the Assembly, the truth is that media coverage was a handicap because there was negativity from more extreme groups like Extinction Rebellion, claiming that this was a Government thing and that it was all very non-transparent. They confused the limited transparency, or what they called limited transparency, with the anonymity that the process had to have in order to be a secure process for citizens and make them feel safe to engage in dialogue.

Organiser 4, March 29, 2023

The communication strategy we just saw in the last two articles written by members of Extinction Rebellion differs significantly from the vast majority of articles where the SCCA is not the main topic. In those articles, the reference to the Assembly is treated tangentially or, if it may be said, it is 'forced in'. During an interview (with a member of the Assembly's organisation team), this aspect was mentioned as one of the difficulties in spreading information about the process:

During the first part of the Assembly, the main problem was that we couldn't reveal much, so when we shared articles by experts, it was a bit like... for example, on World Water Day, there was an expert who had participated in the assembly to talk about water and then she would add a mention of the assembly, but it was a bit... well, it wasn't easy.

Organiser 1, March 29, 2023

Below are three examples of articles published in national newspapers during the central months of the Assembly. The first article was published on European Day Against Energy Poverty, proposing housing rehabilitation as a solution to this issue. The second article was published on World Water Day, explaining the need to protect groundwater. The third article was published on April 3, a day before the start of the environmental mobilisation week announced by "Scientific Rebellion".

Image 6. Example 1, showing the use of a forced narrative to introduce the SCCA. Source: *20 Minutos*.



Image 7. Example 2, showing the use of a forced narrative to introduce the SCCA. Source: *El Confidencial*.



Image 8. Example 3, showing the use of a forced narrative to introduce the SCCA. Source: *Contrainformación*.



In these articles, the percentage of text dedicated to discussing the SCCA is very low: 7%, 3%, and 4% respectively. Furthermore, the message is limited to presenting the Assembly as an example of citizens' initiatives to combat climate change. Another recurring element in many articles following this narrative pattern is that their authors are part of the group of experts participating in the SCCA. This effort by the experts to disseminate information should not be considered bad practice. Instead, it can be interpreted as a signal that public debate surrounding the Assembly failed to gain momentum independently and move away from the sphere of the promoters and organisers. In the same way, it is observed that the entire content of a significant number of these articles has been published in multiple media

outlets. While it is common practice to reach different audiences, it can significantly limit the plurality of opinions and arguments. One of the interviewees from the Assembly's organising team highlighted the difficulty of disseminating information about the process during this stage:

Communication was very challenging in this phase because we could hardly reveal anything.. we couldn't even attend the sessions, so the amount of information we could share was minimal. Therefore, communication was very limited. We did have a press meeting.. we heavily relied on the team of experts during this initial phase because they could speak to the media, so we held a press conference and wrote several articles in the media to address the issue. However, the significant impact came later with the final report and its presentation.

Organiser 1, March 29, 2023

In summary, both the communication strategy itself and the different opinions surrounding it originate from the debate on finding a balance between respecting the privacy of the deliberations and providing the media with engaging information. Several of the participants interviewed commented that at the beginning of the Assembly, anything related to privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity was interpreted as an attempt to hide the work of the SCCA. However, once the Assembly concluded, especially after observing how some digital media outlets addressed its recommendations, they appreciated the organisation's decision to prioritise maximum anonymity. Nevertheless, according to the interviewees, that protection should have been replaced by another communication strategy.

We had a confidentiality agreement. I was very critical at first about not being allowed to talk about anything. However, I must admit that I appreciated it later. It's true that we need to protect the individuals involved in the deliberations from external influences, and in that sense, I appreciated it. But I think they went too far. They should have started sharing some information with the press as we were not allowed to do so ourselves. Since we had that confidentiality agreement and couldn't disclose or share anything, they should have started warming up the media and sharing information. That's my opinion. And certainly, after the confidentiality agreement ended and we released all the recommendations, it was a disaster in my opinion.

Assembly member 2, April 4, 2023

During the last month of the SCCA (May 2022), there was a significant increase in its presence in the media. In that month, 40 entries were published, the majority of which had the Assembly as their main theme (Figure 32). All of them intended to inform the general public about the conclusion of the Assembly and the approval of the recommendations in the following days. Beyond the similarity in this regard, two clearly differentiated positions can be identified. On the one hand, we have the stance of the majority of social movements

and organisations, and on the other hand, the stance of the promoting and organising institutions.

Among the issues raised by social movements, three main ideas stand out: the demand for more Assemblies in the future, but with greater transparency; the criticism that the SCCA was held after the approval of the so-called Climate Change Law; and finally, the announcement of a day of social mobilisation during the last session of the Assembly (May 22, 2022). On the other hand, one of the ideas that is most repeated among the institutions promoting the Assembly, is the importance of highlighting that the SCCA was carried out "under the protection" of the Climate Change Law ("*bajo el amparo*", a term used in most news articles). Therefore, while for some social movements, this fact represented a significant obstacle, for the promoting and organising institutions, it implied greater recognition and added value.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that several media outlets leaked the content of some of the recommendations a few days before the conclusion of the Assembly, before the document was made public. According to one of the interviewees (a member of the Assembly's organisation team), the leak caused the timelines to accelerate: In other assemblies, it usually takes about a month to present the recommendations to officials because they need to be refined and so on, but all of this made the process speed up significantly. Many media outlets picked up on some recommendations, claiming that they wanted to ban domestic flights and other similar things. To compensate for this, there was a rush to quickly release the report and present it to the president of the Government.

During the months following the SCCA

In June 2022, there was a peak in the dissemination of content about the Assembly with 75 entries in digital media, where the SCCA was the main topic in 3 out of 4 articles. It was particularly prominent in digital newspapers. In terms of content, the majority of articles had the same focus: reporting on the completion of the Assembly, covering the public event in which the recommendations were delivered to the president of the Government and the minister of Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, and most importantly, highlighting some of the Assembly's recommendations. The event was attended by 40 members of the assembly and 15 experts. In addition, the director of Greenpeace Spain was also present. During the delivery ceremony, the president of the Government pledged to respond to the final document of recommendations within approximately one year.

Image 9. Delivery of the SCCA's recommendations to the Government. *Source: La Moncloa.*



Which recommendations received the most attention from the media? It is noteworthy that there is a significant overlap in the recommendations highlighted by the media. Despite the final report of the SCCA containing 172 recommendations, most media outlets emphasise the same ones: increasing remote working and reducing the working week to 4 days; minimising domestic flights when there are alternative train options; regulating advertising and pro-consumption messages; reducing the size of industrial livestock farms; and introducing ecocide as a new crime in the criminal code. However, several participants expressed during interviews their disappointment with the way some media outlets reported on the proposals. In particular, a national newspaper had to rectify one of its headlines stating that the Assembly proposed banning domestic flights.

That recommendation came to the foreground the next day, it was the most important one, it was the headline of the article. It was such a distortion of the facts that they had to rectify it, they had to rectify it. ABC, a national, supposedly prestigious, newspaper was involved. And why is this? It's because that's what they want, they want sensationalism. Otherwise, there would be no readers.

Assembly member 5, April 3 2023

Image 10. Examples of the most widely disseminated recommendations. *Source: ABC, 20 minutos y La Sexta.*

→ ABC → Sociedad

20minutos NACIONAL

La Asamblea del Clima pide a Sánchez reducir los vuelos nacionales

El Gobierno afianza los impuestos verdes y los límites al turismo, avión y coche y jornada de 4 días a través de la Asamblea por el Clima

CLARA PINAR / NOTICIA / 06.06.2022 - 20:44H

CRISIS CLIMÁTICA

La Asamblea para el Clima propone a Sánchez teletrabajo, menos aviones y reducir las macrogranjas

- Cuatro días laborales a la semana, ecocidio como nuevo delito y un pacto de Estado contra el cambio climático, otras recomendaciones

Entre sus 172 medidas

La Asamblea Ciudadana para el Clima propone al Gobierno teletrabajo y una jornada laboral a 4 días

Asamblea Ciudadana para el Clima está formada por un centenar de ciudadanos escogidos al azar que tenían el objetivo de debatir y esbozar un documento de propuestas con las que afrontar el cambio climático. Este lunes ya se lo han hecho llegar al Gobierno mediante un informe donde han plasmado 172 medidas sugeridas.

Additionally, while the coverage of the SCCA in audiovisual media has been low overall, there was a slight increase in appearances on television, radio, and podcasts during the month of June³². However, after June, there was a continuous decline in SCCA coverage, which lasted until October, coinciding with the presentation of the recommendations in the Congress of Deputies. In June, the focus was on the act of delivering the recommendations and highlighting some of them. In July, the key information was the announcement made during a press conference by the Minister of Ecological Transition that the recommendations would be transferred to the Congress of Deputies. It is worth noting that weekly press conferences after the Council of Ministers are followed with great anticipation and are broadcast live on public television. In the transcript of this particular press conference, it can be observed that the Minister gave central importance to the Assembly by starting her speech by addressing it and informing the public about the transfer of recommendations to the Congress of Deputies.

Image 11. Press conference after the weekly Council of Ministers. *Source: La Moncloa.*



"The matters that we have brought before the Council of Ministers today have a probably innovative and interesting nuance in relation to how we traditionally oversee environmental issues.

The first issue I would like to share with you is the agreement by which the Council of Ministers takes note of the report presented by the Climate and Sustainability Assembly, a pioneering and unique experience. This assembly has allowed 100 Spanish citizens to debate and propose recommendations on how to combat climate change in an uncommon format. It has provided a different perspective on how to accelerate the fight against the climate crisis. This initiative emerged from the Declaration of Climate Emergency in February 2020 and was further consolidated with the approval of the structure and general guidelines for the functioning of this Assembly in late September of last year.

Since then, 100 randomly selected citizens, representing a mini-Spain in terms of geographical origin, level of education, and age, have presented us with 172 recommendations, framed within 58 objectives and organised into five main areas: food consumption and land use, work, community, health and social care, and ecosystems. Their aim has been to provide the correct diagnosis and offer recommendations and

³² Highlighting the following: the midday news on TV3, the podcast 'Tierra a la vista' from Cadena Ser, the podcast 'Por tres razones' from Radio Nacional de España, the radio program 'Más de uno La Ribera' from Onda Cero, and the international channel France 24, among others.

ideas that need to be evaluated and studied by the public authorities in order to effectively integrate them into the fight against climate change.

But in this agreement, with the Council of Ministers taking note, we also include the referral of these recommendations to the Congress of Deputies. This will allow citizens, through their spokespersons, to share their conclusions with the Legislative Branch, opening a new path to strengthen channels of public participation and citizen involvement beyond official, institutional, or electoral ones."

The end of summer and the beginning of the new academic year were marked by a significant event concerning the SCCA. It deserves special attention as it serves as an example of how to place the Assembly at the centre of public debate and the political agenda on a national level. On August 31, 2022, the Second Vice President and Minister of Labour and Social Economy met with representatives of the SCCA. Following the meeting, she held a 45-minute press conference. All eyes were on her to hear her remarks regarding the negotiations with the employers' association concerning the increase in the minimum wage. This was a highly relevant topic as the relations between the employers' association and other social organisations (the government and labour unions) had been stalled for over four months due to this issue.

Image 12. Press conference following a meeting with the spokespersons of the Assembly. *Source: La Moncloa.*



Building on that context, the Minister of Labour began her speech by explaining that the meeting with the SCCA had been productive and intense. She stated that the government's intention was to move towards a green collective bargaining negotiation and proposed the creation of a specific AENC (Table for Agreement on Employment and Collective Bargaining) for energy efficiency. Additionally, the minister conveyed a specific demand made by the Assembly, which involved the establishment of equalities committees with climate delegates in companies. During her presentation, she emphasised that combating the climate emergency is more than just avoiding collapse, stating the following: "I believe that the proposals made by the SCCA align with the stance advocated by this Vice Presidency,

which is not to address climate change or the ecological emergency as a means of safeguarding ourselves from ecological collapse. It is not about this at all. It is about much more." After the journalists' questions concluded, the Minister of Labour yielded the floor to the Assembly's representatives, who had over 20 minutes to present their work, attracting an audience of more than 8,700 viewers.

In addition, it's worth examining the speech made by Eduardo, one of the spokespeople for the SCCA and part of a group of participants that focused on labour-related issues. As he explains, the Ministry of Labour prepared a document that analysed each of the 43 proposals pertaining to their sector, specifying which ones were already being implemented. What Eduardo describes is highly relevant for tracing the trajectory of the Assembly's recommendations.

Image 13. Assembly spokespersons addressing media questions after the Vice President's speech *Source: La Moncloa.*



"We noticed that prior work had been done on these proposals, which made us very happy. They had assessed which ones were being implemented and which ones were not. They conveyed that to us and provided us with the relevant information. For the proposals that were not being implemented, they promised to work on them. This feedback has been very positive, being able to see that our work has been read and that the proposals were considered valid and worth working on. We did not expect the ministry to provide us with a ready-made analysis of what was being done and what was not. There are proposals that need to be worked on; we are not experts, we are citizens, and while we may have some knowledge in certain areas, the more technical aspects of the labour sector require expertise to ensure that the objectives are reached and that the recommendations are feasible."

In October, there was a surge in coverage of the SCCA, coinciding with the presentation of the recommendations in the Congress of Deputies on October 25, 2022, which was also the International Day against Climate Change. The steps taken to reach this milestone were as follows: first, on June 6, the Assembly submitted the report of recommendations to the President of the Government and the Minister of Ecological Transition; then, on July 13, the Government forwarded the report to the Congress; and finally, at the beginning of September, the report was distributed to the members of the Committee on Climate Change and Demographic Challenge.

Image 14. Assembly spokespersons during the presentation of recommendations at the Congress of Deputies. Source: Congreso de los Diputados.



The event at the Congress of Deputies was attended and addressed by the President of the Congress of Deputies and the President of the Senate, along with members of the Committee on Climate Change and Demographic Challenge. The event was recorded and can be accessed via the Congress' website. The organisation of this event was stipulated in Article 3.3 of the Ministerial Order (Order TED/1086/2021) that established the regulations of the Citizens' Assembly. However, it should be noted that this article envisioned the presentation of the recommendations report in the Plenary of the Congress of Deputies, which would have contributed to greater visibility of the Assembly. Following the delivery ceremony at the Congress, there is a further decline in coverage of the Assembly in digital media, which continues until May 2023, when this report was written.

The analysis thus far has been limited to the coverage of the SCCA in the traditional media. The analysis of the effects on social media is addressed in the next section, primarily focusing on the impact on Facebook and Twitter of the content published about the SCCA, followed by a brief overview of the impact of social media activity on the SCCA's official accounts.

Social media coverage

When examining the digital media coverage of the *Spanish Climate Citizens' Assembly (SCCA)*, a key way to assess the impact it has had on the general public is by recording the engagement with this content on social media. In other words, analysing how the articles written about the climate assembly have been shared and interacted with on social platforms. Focusing on Twitter and Facebook alone, as these are the two most common platforms for political discussion of this kind, data was gathered for 342 entries in the database using an online index of social engagement data³³. The data collected included the number of likes, comments and shares on Facebook, and the number of shares on Twitter per entry. There are 16 entries for which there is no available data³⁴, most of which are either articles with broken links, or bulletins on institutional websites that are less immediately sharable, however, results have been recorded for the vast majority of entries in the database. In order to measure the effect of the digital coverage of the SCCA, examination of the data has been broken down into the following categories: 'Engagement by Article Published', 'Engagement by Media Outlet', 'Engagement by Main Topic', 'Engagement by Media Type', 'Engagement by Social Platform', and finally, 'Engagement Over Time'. This analysis provides valuable insights into the overall consumption of digital media reporting on the assembly around the world.

Engagement by Article Published

In total, 20,316 interactions were recorded for 326 articles published. This is the equivalent of an average of 62 interactions per article. To better understand the import of this number of interactions, it is necessary to compare it to engagement with other climate assemblies. A search of the key term "Climate Assembly UK" for example, using the same online index produces results for 284 articles, with 33,839 total engagements and an average of 119 engagements per article, a much higher average than that of the Spanish CCA. A search for the assembly "Climate Assembly Scotland" however, results in 80 articles analysed, with a total of 1,924 engagements and an average of 24 engagements per article, which is lower than the average engagement with content featuring the SCCA. While these two searches are much less exhaustive than the study carried out of all articles written about the SCCA, they help to give insight into the impact that the content has had relative to other assemblies,

³³ Data collected using online marketing tool *BuzzSumo* in May 2023.

³⁴ With IDs 58, 77, 105, 111, 112, 126, 136, 162, 173, 213, 230, 241, 251, 284, 319, 328

placing the levels of engagement with SCCA coverage between that of the Climate Assembly UK at the higher end, and the Climate Assembly Scotland at the other.

As is to be expected, the interactions with the coverage of the SCCA were not evenly distributed across all of the content in the database; some entries were far more popular in terms of social media engagement than others. The top four articles alone (in terms of highest engagement across both Facebook and Twitter) account for almost exactly one third of the total interactions. Furthermore, 106 articles, just under one third of the total number of articles, received no interactions at all. This is illustrated in figures 34 and 35 below, and they show the stark differences in rates of engagement per article.

Figure 34. Distribution of total interactions. *Source:* Own elaboration.

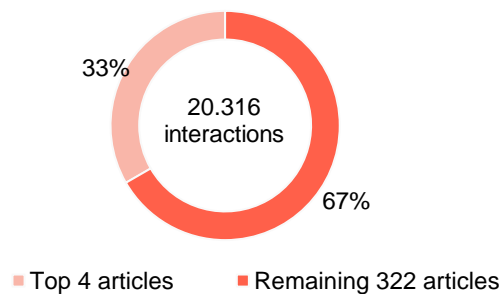
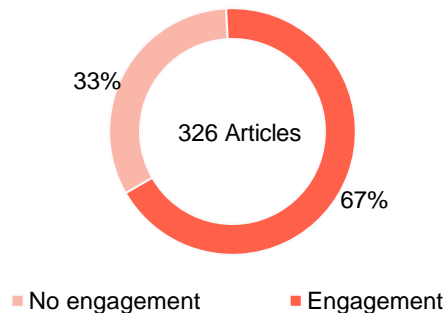


Figure 35. Comparison of articles with engagement vs. articles with no engagement. *Source:* Own elaboration.



Examining the top pieces of content by engagement can help shed light on why they have gained more interaction than others. The four articles with the most engagement are the following:

Image 15. The four articles in the database with highest levels of engagement. *Source: Okdiario, Público and Aftonbladet.*

<p>1. <i>Okdiario</i>: 3,883 engagements (2,683 FB, 1,200 TW)</p>	<p>2. <i>Público</i>: 1,231 engagements (1,105 FB, 126 TW)</p>
<p>3. <i>Okdiario</i>: 971 engagements (901 FB, 70 TW)</p>	<p>4. <i>Aftonbladet</i>: 686 engagements (618 FB, 68 TW)</p>

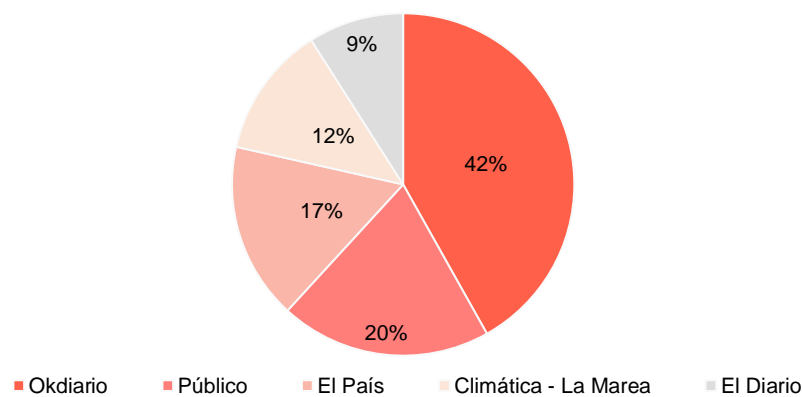
Two of these four articles, both from digital newspaper *Okdiario*, are explicitly critical of the SCCA, specifically government spending on the organisation of the assembly. The headlines of both of these articles, which have the highest and third highest levels of engagement of all the articles analysed, focus attention on the exact costs spent on volunteers (assembly members) and organising bodies respectively and are the only two articles in the database to feature exact sums of this kind in their headlines. It is not surprising, therefore, that articles with stark and negative headlines such as these have garnered more engagement than the vast majority of articles, with a total of 2,422 shares between the two. The article with the second highest amount of engagement, from Spanish online newspaper *Público*, is less explicitly about the SCCA itself, and reports on Yolanda Díaz’s comments on salary increases, another potentially emotive issue. Towards the end of the article, it also discusses one of the SCCA’s main goals which is energy efficiency. Finally, the article with the fourth highest engagement rate is from Swedish daily newspaper *Aftonbladet*, which criticises then Climate and Environment Minister Annika Strandhäll, and remarks on the merits of citizens’ assemblies for the climate held in Germany, Spain, the UK and France. These last two articles have been shared 241 and 165 times respectively.

Engagement by Media Outlet

In addition to examining which individual pieces of content have received the most interactions, the data can also be analysed in terms of engagement by media outlet. That is, which newspapers, magazines or other websites have provoked the most debate across social

media with their articles published about the SCCA. The top five media outlets are *Okdiario*, *Público*, *El País*, *Climática - La Marea* and *El Diario*, which have a total of 11,597 engagements for the 32 articles they published. These five digital newspapers represent a broad spectrum both in terms of their audience reach and their political or ideological stance. The share of engagements between these top five domains is illustrated in figure 36 below, with the 2 articles of *Okdiario* previously discussed accounting for the vast majority of engagement at 42%. This is followed by *Público* with 20%, *El País* with 17%, *Climática - La Marea* with 12% and *El Diario* with 9%.

Figure 36. Media outlets with highest levels of engagement for their coverage of the SCCA. *Source:* Own elaboration.



It is necessary, however, to bear in mind how many articles each of these media outlets have published. This relationship between engagement and number of articles published per media outlet (for the 20 domains with the most interaction) is illustrated in the graph below (figure 37). Here we can see how some media outlets have relatively high levels of engagement for the number of articles published, for example *Okdiario*, while others, like *EFE Verde*, have relatively low levels of engagement relative to the 14 pieces of content published on the subject of the SCCA.

To distil this relationship further, the media outlets in the database can be ranked in terms of the average number of engagements received per article published (figure 37). From examining this graph one can see that the same three digital newspapers (*Okdiario*, *Aftonbladet* and *Público*) that published the top four articles in terms of engagement are ranked highest, with an average of 2,427, 686 and 444 engagements per article respectively. This is to be expected given their relatively low number of articles published, and the relatively high level of engagement. However, it is worth highlighting *CTXT*, *La Marea*, *The Conversation* and *National Geographic* as other publications all with over 300 interactions on average per article

(444, 338, 330 and 320 respectively), a relatively high engagement rate. At the other end of the spectrum, there are 53 media outlets (32%) that garnered no social media engagement at all.

Figure 37. Comparison of engagements with the number of articles published by media outlet. *Source:* Own elaboration.

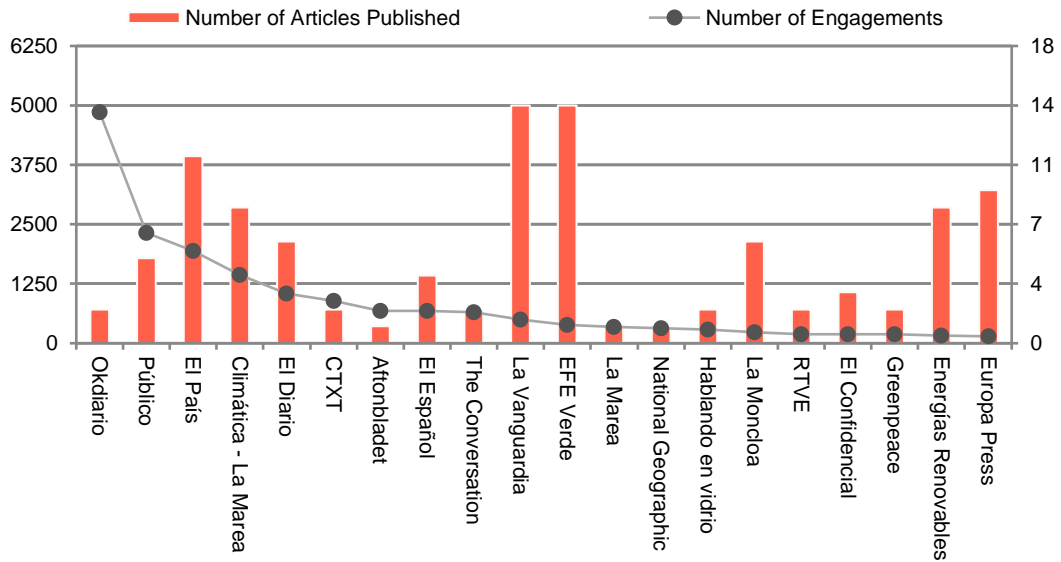
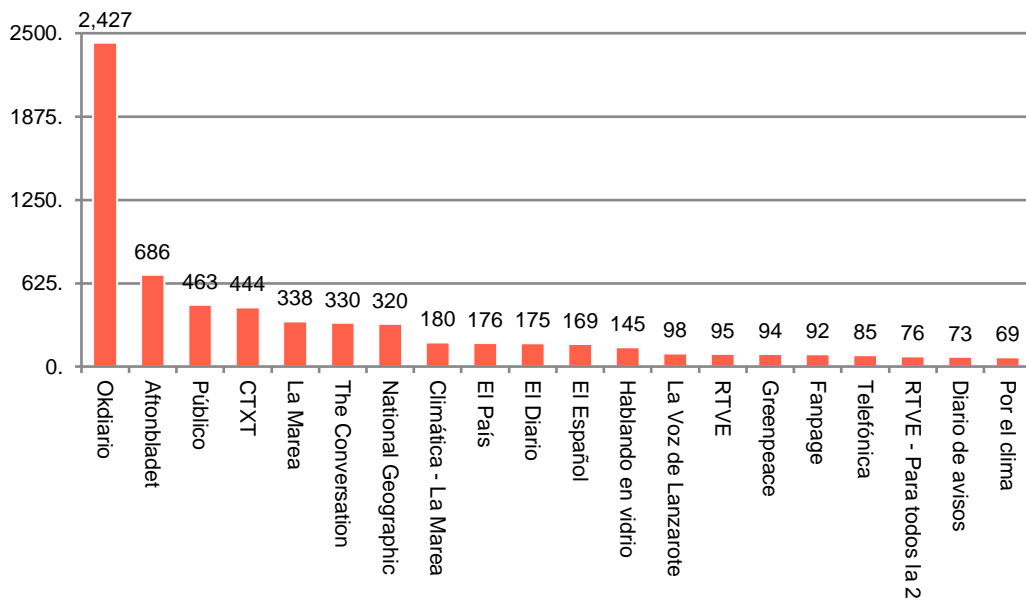
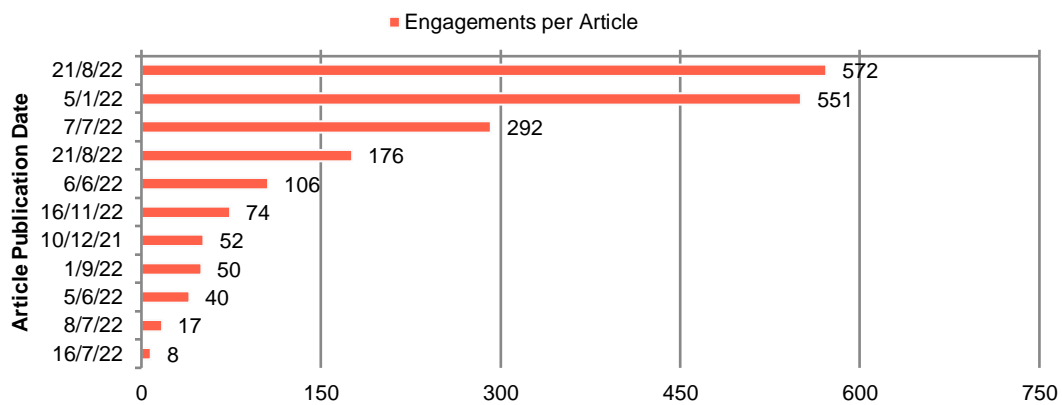


Figure 38. Average interaction by media outlet (for the 20 domains with the most interaction). *Source:* Own elaboration.



Within specific media types, it can also be insightful to compare engagement between individual articles. Take for example *El País*, a national news publication which has the third highest number of interactions of all the media outlets analysed, but only the ninth highest average number of engagements per article. This is because there is a large variety in levels of engagement across the 11 articles published. There is a range of 564 interactions between the article with the highest rate of engagement (572 interactions for the article published 21/08/22³⁵) and the article with lowest engagement (8 interactions for the article published 16/07/22³⁶). This range is illustrated in figure 39. Notably, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the top three articles published by *El País* are not about the SCCA specifically, rather they discuss the broader issues of climate change in general.

Figure 39. Number of interactions with articles published by El País. *Source:* Own elaboration.



Engagement by Main Topic

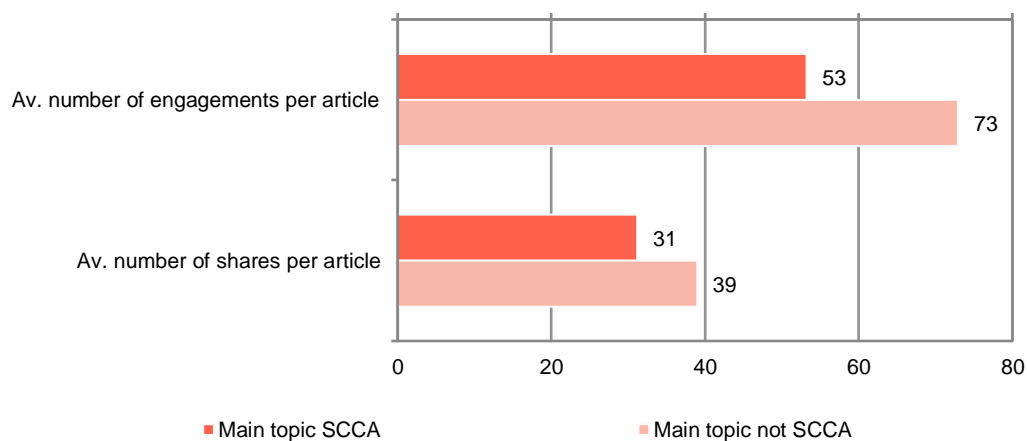
There is a small difference in the levels of engagement with articles in which SCCA is the main topic and articles in which it is not. Of the entries in the database, articles which are primarily about the SCCA received the most engagement overall, with a total of 10,906 interactions, while articles that are not specifically about the SCCA received a total of 9,410 interactions. However, given there were 205 articles published that were primarily about the SCCA and only 129 articles published that were not, it is necessary to examine the average number of engagements per entry for a more enlightening comparison. In doing so, it becomes clear that articles where the main topic is not the SCCA have on average resulted in more engagement per entry published, with 73 interactions per article compared with only

³⁵ <https://elpais.com/espana/2022-08-21/el-clima-extremo-mete-presion-en-la-agenda-politica.html>

³⁶ <https://elpais.com/clima-y-medio-ambiente/2022-07-16/joaquin-nieto-la-formacion-es-vital-para-las-cuestiones-ambientales.html>

53 interactions per article for entries specifically about the SCCA. This trend remains the same when comparing the average number of shares per entry (that is, excluding Facebook likes and comments from the analysis): articles that focus primarily on other topics gained more shares (with an average of 39 shares per entry) compared with entries where the SCCA is the main topic, which received an average of 31 shares per entry. These findings can both be seen in figure 40. Furthermore, only 6 of the top 20 entries in terms of engagement are specifically about the assembly. This shows that, on many occasions, the public is coming across the SCCA in articles which are primarily about other issues and where discussion of the SCCA is probably limited.

Figure 40. Average number of interactions and shares per article depending on whether the SCCA is the main topic or not. *Source:* Own elaboration.



The entries with the highest level of engagement that are specifically about the SCCA are the two aforementioned articles in *Okdiario* that criticise the financial cost of the assembly, which received 3,883³⁷ and 971³⁸ interactions respectively. The two entries with the next highest levels of engagement are both articles summarising the proposals of the SCCA, focusing on the idea of degrowth in particular, one in left-wing Spanish online publication *CTXT*³⁹, which received 601 interactions and was shared 600 times on Twitter alone, and the other in the climate-focussed supplement of *La Marea*, *Climática*⁴⁰, which gained 405 interactions in total. Finally, the entry with the fifth highest number of interactions is an article published in the

³⁷ <https://okdiario.com/espana/teresa-ribera-gasta-65-000-100-voluntarios-que-aplaudan-sus-politicas-climaticas-7755381>

³⁸ <https://okdiario.com/espana/gobierno-paga-551-034-cooperativa-podemita-atacar-empresas-espanolas-contaminar-8440296>

³⁹ <https://ctxt.es/es/20220501/Firmas/39721/asamblea-ciudadana-por-el-clima-decrecimiento-cambio-climatico-madrid-ipcc.htm>

⁴⁰ <https://www.climatica.lamarea.com/asamblea-ciudadana-clima-recomendaciones/>

environmental magazine, *Hablando En Vidrio*⁴¹, which provides a general overview of how the assembly works and how it could be improved, with 266 interactions, almost all of which took place on Facebook (256).

On the other hand, the top two entries that are not specifically about the SCCA and have the highest levels of engagement are the two previously mentioned articles published in *Público* and *Aftonbladet* discussing comments from ministers Yolanda Díaz and Annika Strandhäll respectively and briefly mentioning the merits of climate assemblies, which gained 1,231⁴² and 686⁴³ interactions. This is followed by an article published in the economic supplement of *El Español*, *Invertia*⁴⁴, that discusses the rising price of electricity due to climate change, and its coincidence with the presentation of the assembly's 172 recommendations to congress, which received 624 interactions on Facebook and Twitter. The entries with the fourth and fifth highest amount of engagement on social media are both about changing attitudes towards climate change, increased levels of awareness of the subject, and action being taken to prevent further deterioration of the climate and the planet's ecosystem. Namely, an article published in international magazine *The Conversation*⁴⁵ and one in *Público*'s debate forum, *Espacio Público*⁴⁶, which both garnered 594 interactions in total. While it is these articles with varying subject matters that have produced the most engagement from readers, with the percentage of text dedicated to discussing the SCCA in these five articles varying from 3% to 23%, the main topic of these five entries are not entirely removed from issues central to CCAs in general.

Engagement by Media Type

Another approach to analysing this data is to examine the rates of engagement on social media in terms of media type: the 9 aforementioned media classifications are Academic Journey & Databases, CSO & Third Sector Websites, Digital Newspaper, Environmental Magazine, General Magazine, Institutional Website, Magazine (other issue), Radio & Podcast, and TV. In doing so, one can see that the dominant media classification by a large

⁴¹ <https://hablandoenvidrio.com/asamblea-ciudadana-para-el-clima-que-es/>

⁴²

<https://www.publico.es/politica/yolanda-diaz-emplaza-patronal-volver-mesa-negociacion-subida-salarial.html>

⁴³ <https://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/a/eJ1lGR/forskarna-du-saknar-krisinsikt-om-klimatet-strandhall>

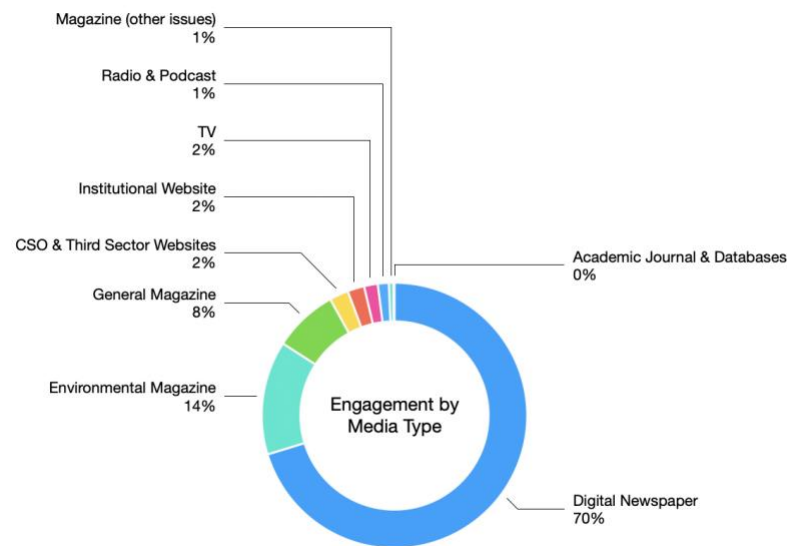
⁴⁴ https://www.lespanol.com/invertia/empresas/energia/20220711/gobierno-avisa-subira-precio-aumento-demanda-viento/686931487_0.html

⁴⁵ <https://theconversation.com/la-rebelion-de-la-ciencia-180551>

⁴⁶ <https://espacio-publico.com/debate-en-torno-a-la-transicion-ecologica>

margin is Digital Newspaper, with a total of 14,274 interactions, accounting for 70% of all engagement (figure 41). This is followed by Environmental Magazine with 2,815 interactions (14%) and General Magazine with 1,594 interactions (8%). The classification with least interaction is Academic Journey & Database, for which there are just 25 engagements (<1%). It can be said that digital press, therefore, has provoked the most online discussion. However, this imbalance in classification interactions is partly due to the relative ease of sharing content from the majority of digital news media in comparison to other websites, but it is also indicative of the type of content that is being more widely consumed by the general public.

Figure 41. Distribution of engagement by media type. *Source:* Own elaboration.

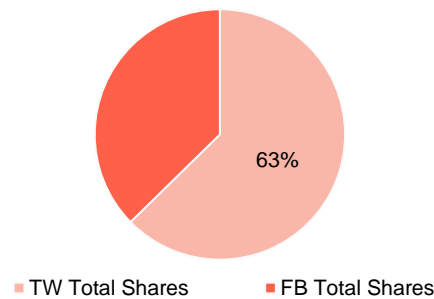


Engagement by Social Platform

Comparisons also can be drawn from the data collected between the different social media platforms used. Of the total 20,316 interactions, 13,161 of those took place on Facebook and 7,155 of those were shares on Twitter. This would suggest that the majority of engagement with this content is taking place on Facebook rather than Twitter. However, given this does not include data for the number of retweets, likes or @replies on Twitter, a more accurate comparison to assess which platform is hosting the most discussion of these articles would be to compare the number of Facebook shares with the number of Twitter shares. Shares account for only 32% of interactions recorded on Facebook, with likes making up 50% (6,590) and comments making up 18% (2,308). As you can see in Figure 42, Twitter has been the dominant social media platform overall in terms of sharing digital media, totaling 7,155 shares on Twitter compared to 4,263 shares on Facebook. This is in contrast

to findings that in 2022 Facebook was the most important network in terms of news usage, in both Europe and around the world⁴⁷, which suggests content about the SCCA has had a relatively high level of shares on Twitter. With a total of 11,418 shares across both Facebook and Twitter, that's equal to an average of 35 shares per article, showing a considerable consumption of the content.

Figure 42. Distribution of shares by social platform. *Source: Own elaboration.*



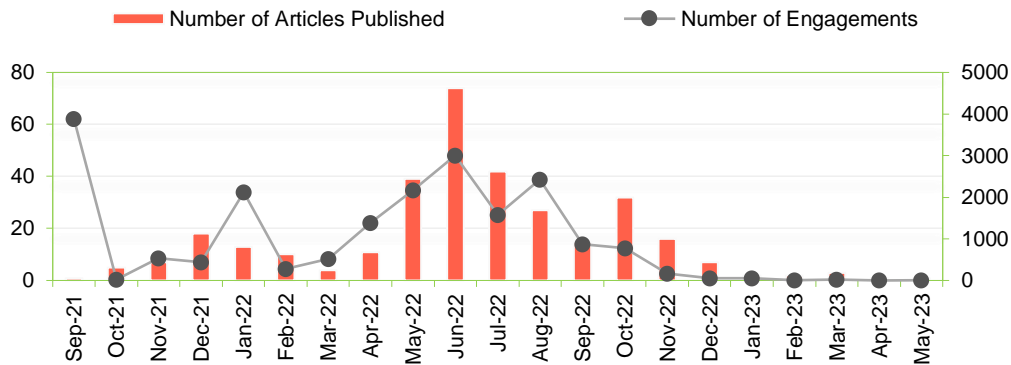
Engagement Over Time

A final lens through which to examine this data is by analysing levels of engagement over time. This approach is illustrated in figure 43 below. Upon examining this graph, it can be observed that there is generally a high correlation between the number of engagements and the number of articles published, which is to be expected. There are a few exceptions however. Firstly, there are peaks in the quantity of engagement relative to the number of articles published that month in September 2021, January 2022, and August 2022. These coincide with the publication of the three articles in the database with highest engagement. Secondly, and more interestingly, there are several months where the engagement is relatively higher than the number of articles published that month. Namely, November 2021, which coincides with beginning of the assembly, and March 2022 - May 2022, which are the three months leading up to the culmination of the assembly. This suggests an increase in consumption of and interest in content about the SCCA during these key months of the assembly. There is a considerable drop in the number of interactions from November 2022 onwards, which is the month after the assembly's recommendations were officially presented in the Parliament

⁴⁷ Newman, N. *et al.* (2022) *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2022*, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Available at: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2022/dnr-executive-summary> (Accessed: 08 June 2023).

(Congreso de los Diputados). This shows how interest in coverage of the SCCA has declined since the official end of the climate assembly.

Figure 43. Evolution of engagement over time, in comparison with the number of articles published. *Source:* Own elaboration.



Social media is one of the most important means through which news articles are shared and debated. Analysing these online interactions helps provide better insight into the true impact of media coverage, in this case, the impact of digital articles reporting on the SCCA. In this study, this key metric of engagement has been examined in terms of the article, media outlet, main topic, media type, social platform and over time, in order to document the overall effect of the coverage, as well as the ways in which people have responded to the content. Furthermore, one of the reasons why examining social media engagement with these entries is so revealing, is that it arguably demonstrates more than mere consumption of the content, rather it documents interest in or an emotive response to the articles on this particular subject.

Impact of SCCA social media channels

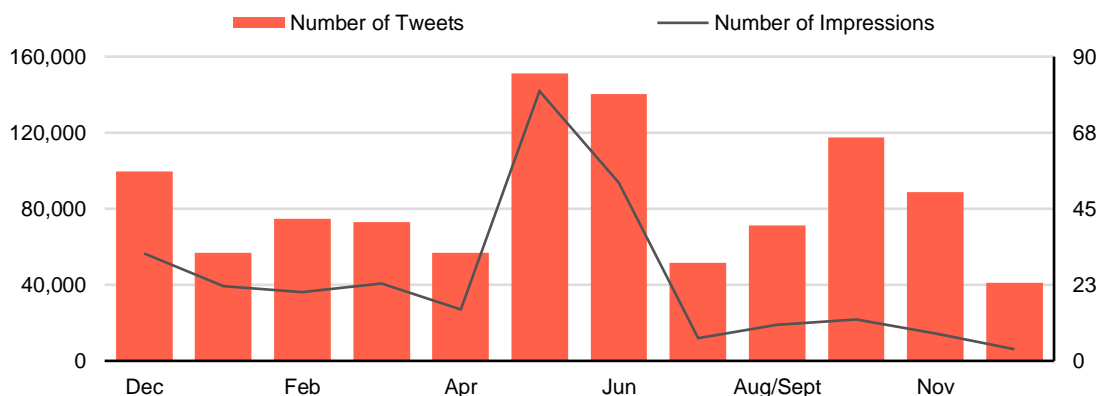
In addition to analysing the coverage of the *Spanish Climate Citizens' Assembly (SCCA)* in the digital media, and the subsequent debates provoked on social media in relation to this content, it is worth examining the impact that the assembly's own social media channels have had on the general public. Unlike in the previous section, this is content that was intentionally published and curated by organisations involved in the coordination of the assembly, with the aim of increasing knowledge not only of the intention, design and outcome of the assembly itself, but of climate change in general. It can therefore be assumed that the material posted on social media presents the SCCA in a positive light, and that on the whole, the content will be consumed by members of the public who are more inclined to agree with the main principles of the assembly (that is, if people viewing the SCCA's social media posts are already followers or subscribers of the assembly's account). These are two assumptions that were not the case with the content published in digital media. Although efforts were made to reach beyond this self-selecting audience, namely by running paid ad campaigns on Facebook, and that people who disagree with the objectives of the assembly inevitably came into contact with the SCCA's posts, it is worth taking this into account when examining the following metrics and understanding the kind of engagement that was provoked.

Due to limited access to backend analytics of the SCCA's social media accounts, the analysis of its impact has been hugely reliant on the social media report kindly provided by the Biodiversity Foundation's communication team. This report focusses on the three social media accounts of the SCCA: Twitter, YouTube and Facebook, and collates key metrics from across all three platforms that are grouped into periods of roughly a month, from 10th December 2021 to 16th December 2022. These periods are not equal in length, the shortest two periods being 19 days in January and 21 days in December 2022, and the longest period being 60 days from the 29th July to the 26th September. However, the remaining 'monthly periods' range from 28-33 days and so for the sake of ease and comprehension, they will be referred to in this report as their corresponding months. By taking a quantitative approach, this section aims to highlight the periods in which each channel had its greatest impact, and how the social media communities have evolved over time.

The SCCA's impact on Twitter

During the period analysed from December 2021 to December 2022, the assembly's official Twitter page gained 1,303 followers, and as of July 2023, this number stands at a total of 2,043. The largest monthly increase in followers was in May 2022, with 324 new followers. This was a key month for the SCCA as it was when the final session of the assembly took place, and a spike in engagement across all three platforms can be observed at this time. As can be seen in Figure 44, there was also a marked rise in the level of content being published on Twitter in May, with a total of 85 tweets published, coinciding with a considerable increase in the content's reach. What is interesting about this graph, however, is that for the first time in May and June, content on the account was reaching a much larger audience relative to the amount of tweets published, with 141,855 and 93,565 impressions respectively (June was another important stage in the assembly's process, as the recommendations were presented to the president of the Government on June 6th). That is to say, not only was there more information being disseminated by the account managers at this time, but it was also being consumed by a lot more people. This is not the case with content published in October for example, (the month in which the recommendations were presented to the Congress of Deputies), where there were many tweets published (66), yet they received only 21,729 impressions, a relatively low figure compared to the rest of the year.

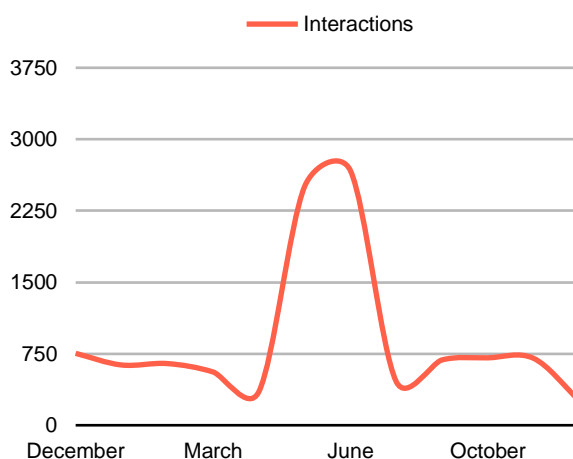
Figure 44. Number of tweets and impressions on Twitter over time. *Source:* Own elaboration.



This spike in impact is reflected in both the amount of interactions and mentions received on Twitter between May and June. Over the year-long period, the 575 tweets published amassed a total of 10,932 interactions and 507,611 impressions. That means an average of 1 in 46 views of the SCCA's tweets resulted in a reaction of some kind. In May and June,

engagement rose to 2,505 and 2,672 interactions respectively (figure 45), by far the highest peak recorded. Similarly, of the 7,939 total mentions, there was a peak in mentions during those same two months with 1,187 and 2,829 mentions respectively, showing an increase in awareness of and discussion about the assembly on social media at this time.

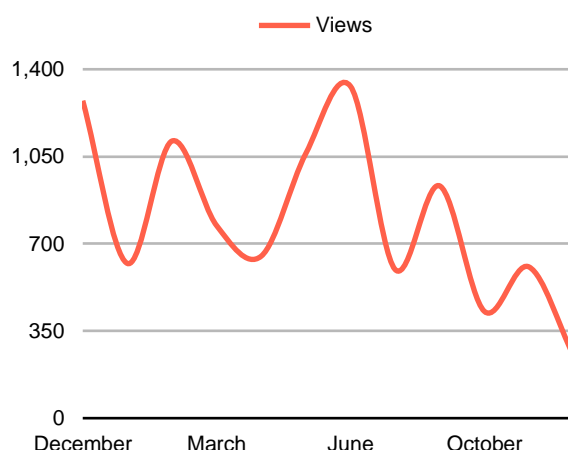
Figure 45. Number of interactions on Twitter over time. *Source:* Own elaboration.



The SCCA's impact on YouTube

Over the same 12-month period, 76 videos were posted on the assembly's official YouTube channel. In this time, these videos gained a total of 9,640 views, 287 likes and 496 shares. The evolution of the number of views over time can be seen in figure 46. In this graph there are several peaks, however the highest peak, reaching 1,332 views in June of 2022, is significant since, as previously mentioned, it coincides with delivering the recommendations to the president of the Government. This is the same month in which coverage of the assembly in the digital media was at its highest, therefore it is a time where people would be actively seeking to educate themselves about the assembly, and the informative videos posted on the assembly's YouTube channel are a particularly good resource to learn more about what the SCCA is and how it works. It is important to note that these views are not representative of the number of times the videos posted in a given month were viewed, rather they represent the total number of views that month of any video on the SCCA's account.

Figure 46. Number of YouTube views over time. *Source:* Own elaboration.



The three videos with the highest number of views as of July 2023 are all informative, introductory videos posted in the first month of the assembly. The top video, with 912 views, is a brief animated, explanatory video providing a general overview of the climate assembly, including its objectives, composition and structure. The following two videos, with 883 and 865 views, are the first two parts of a series of videos giving an introduction to climate change, by Fernando Valladares and Isabel Moreno respectively. The content of these most widely viewed videos is a good indicator of the primary objective of the assembly's YouTube channel: to inform viewers about both the assembly and the broader issues of climate change, and the fact that these types of videos were viewed by so many people speaks to the effectiveness of this platform as a means to educate. As for subscribers, the assembly's YouTube community grew moderately over the course of the year (figure 47). Starting with 75 subscribers in December of 2021, this number grew to 260 by the following December and stands at 287 by the time this report was written in July of 2023.

Figure 47. Number of YouTube subscribers gained over time. *Source:* Own elaboration.

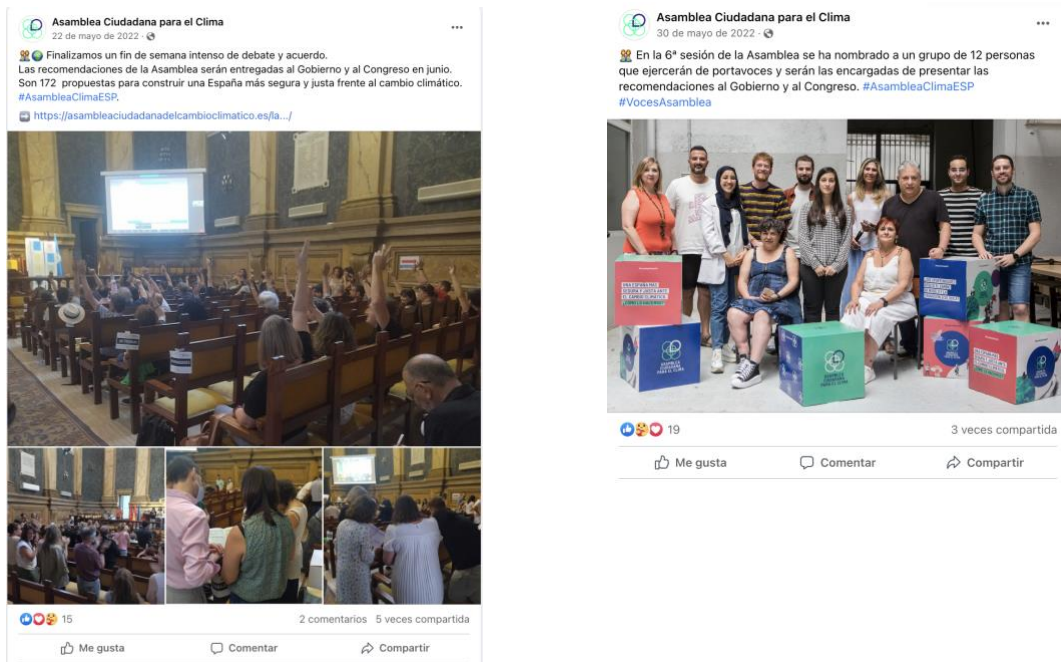


The SCCA's impact on Facebook

The assembly's Facebook account managers used paid ad campaigns as part of their marketing strategy both to increase the number of followers and to boost engagement with the page's content. These paid ads, which successfully increased the number of interactions and followers at different points in time, make the results harder to interpret. However, between the spikes in engagement and impressions caused by the paid ads, there are still changes in these metrics that are worth examining. For example, there are marked increases in terms of impressions during the months of February, April, May and June which are the result of paid ads, but there is also a much smaller but more significant peak in the month of October, where impressions rose to almost double that of the following month despite the same number of posts (17) being published in October and November. This is meaningful as it is the same month that the recommendations from the assembly were presented to the Congress of Deputies, showing an increase in audience on this platform during this important moment in the assembly's timeline.

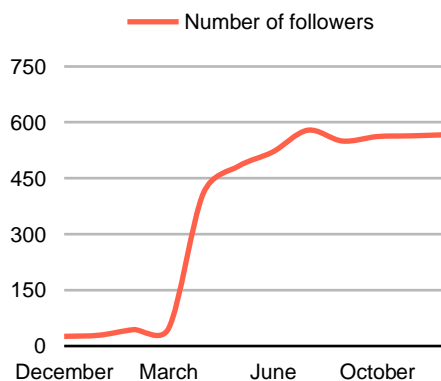
Over the course of the year, 246 posts were published on the assembly's account which garnered 38,279 interactions. As with Twitter, the month in which the most posts were published is May, with 36 posts, even when taking into account the uneven temporal groupings. May also saw the highest level of engagement, with 19,501 interactions recorded that month, showing the significant impact that content about the final session of the SCCA had on Facebook. The two posts with the most reactions, comments and shares that month (a total of 22 interactions each as of July 2023) were both about the 6th and final session. The first, posted 22nd May, includes a series of photographs from the final session and states when the presentation of the recommendations will take place. The second post, published on May 30th, features a photograph of the 12 participants who were selected in the 6th session to represent the assembly during the handing over of the recommendations the following month. However, the month with the highest engagement rate, (that is, the number of interactions divided by the number of impressions and multiplied by 100), is January. This is primarily due to the ad placed that month, which was the most effective of all the ads placed in terms of engagement.

Image 16. Facebook posts by the SCCA’s official account, dated 22/05/22 (left) and 30/05/22 (right).



The number of followers on Facebook grew significantly over the course of the year as well. Starting with 26 followers in December 2021, the account’s community grew to 567 in December 2022, and has increased to 639 as of July 2023. The largest spike in followers was from March to April thanks to a paid Facebook campaign. The only time during this period that there was a decrease in the number of followers was in August and September when there was significantly less material being posted.

Figure 48. Number of Facebook followers gained over time. *Source:* Own elaboration.



Overall, the account with the largest community by far is Twitter, and it was the platform used to post the most content over the course of the year (575 tweets to 76 videos on

YouTube, and 246 posts on Facebook). Furthermore, what stands out about Twitter in comparison to Facebook, is that the followers and interactions on Twitter were all acquired without the need to run paid ads, showing the organic traction the SCCA gained among users of the platform. While the three different social media channels had varying levels of impact throughout the period analysed, without a doubt, the most significant time of increased interaction and reach on all three channels was around May and June of 2022, during the culmination of the assembly, and it can be said that this period was when the SCCA's impact on social media was at its greatest.

Conclusions on media impact

1. Increased coverage of the SCCA in the media coincided with several of the assembly's key moments: the beginning and end of the assembly, as well as the delivery of recommendations to the Government and the presentation of recommendations in the *Congress of Deputies*. However, very limited impact is observed while the assembly was taking place, and a lower-than-expected impact is observed at the start of the assembly (December 2021), a crucial moment in the assembly's timeline, which was also marked by the handling of the situation generated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. The limited impact of the SCCA in the media during its launch and while it was ongoing has been attributed by some of the assembly's key figures to two main factors: on the one hand, the need to guarantee the anonymity and privacy of the participants' deliberations, which restricted the information that could be shared with the media; and on the other hand, the choice to adopt a zero-risk (*riesgo cero*) strategy due to the fear and uncertainty associated with conducting an experiment of this kind for the first time in Spain. The importance given to ensuring the anonymity and privacy of the deliberations was met with scepticism by some participants. However, according to the interviews conducted, many of these participants changed their minds and understood that it was an appropriate decision after observing the media coverage of the assembly's recommendations.

3. The communication efforts made during the period analysed were not carried out by the same company throughout. In the months leading up to the assembly, this task was performed by collaborating entities of the Ministry and its press office. Once the assembly began, communication responsibilities were handed over to contracted companies. These companies received most resources while the assembly was taking place. The contract was

extended after the assembly concluded. Insiders highlighted that it was not a wise decision to allocate the majority of resources to the assembly's active phase, as they felt their actions were constrained due to the anonymity and privacy of the process itself. According to interviewees, it would have been more appropriate to allocate most resources to the final and post-assembly phases.

4. Most of the traditional media coverage analysed was published in online newspapers and magazines (83%). Only 10% was broadcast in audiovisual media (television, radio, and podcasts). The remaining 7% is distributed across other platforms such as institutional websites and civil society organisations' pages. If the goal is to generate more extensive public debate, allocating more resources towards appearing in audiovisual media, whether radio or television, should be considered. Prioritising national platforms during peak hours would be advisable.

5. News articles that indirectly addressed the assembly garnered more interaction. However, this does not necessarily translate to a higher level of awareness of or debate surrounding the assembly. This is because in a significant number of articles where the assembly is not the main topic, it occupies a very minor position. In some cases, the content related to the assembly constitutes less than 5% of the entire article.

6. A higher number of media entries doesn't necessarily equate to a proportional level of engagement and interaction. The four most influential articles (out of a total of 326 analysed) accumulated one-third of the total interactions, while 216 articles accumulated two-thirds of the total interactions. In 106 articles, no interactions are observed.

7. The four articles that accumulated the most interactions have very different objectives. The articles in the first and third positions were published by the same right-wing digital newspaper that typically holds positions opposing the government. The headlines of both articles question the way the companies responsible for conducting the assembly were hired. In this regard, caution is needed when equating higher levels of engagement with a positive impact. A qualitative reading is necessary to understand these nuances.

8. It's worth noting that members of the SCCA were given an audience with relevant political representatives and state authorities, which significantly aided in the dissemination and

recognition of the assembly. Notable individuals who have engaged with the SCCA include the President of the Government (Pedro Sánchez), the President of the Congress of Deputies (Meritxell Batet), the President of the Senate (Ander Gil), the Second Vice President and Minister of Labour (Yolanda Díaz), and the Third Vice President and Minister of Ecological Transition (Teresa Ribera). All of them have personally met with SCCA spokespersons, which generated coverage in numerous media outlets and official records. Additionally, the SCCA has been received by political representatives and members of the administration from most Spain's regions (*CCAA*). The SCCA has also participated in important events alongside other members of civil society.

9. To fully understand the extent of the SCCA's impact on digital and social media, conducting more comparative studies that analyse similar experiences in other countries is necessary. The initial exploratory results obtained by comparing the level of social engagement per published article in Spain, the UK, and Scotland show that the SCCA has had a much smaller impact than in the UK but a significantly greater impact than in Scotland. Future studies should validate these findings and expand the scope of analysis.

Chapter 5

Reflections on the Impact of the SCCA

Reflections on the impact of the SCCA

What have been the main conclusions?

Conclusion 1: Impact on policy

The assembly's recommendations have had a limited trajectory in terms of **policy implementation**; moreover, the **response given** by the government has been weak and has not been made public. Analysing the private letter sent by the government to the members of the assembly follows a selective logic since it cannot be determined whether the measures adopted by the government stem from the assembly or predate it. Furthermore, the government has not responded to the recommendations individually, as has happened in other citizens' climate assemblies (e.g. the Mallorca Climate Assembly).⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the recommendations have, at times, reached specific audiences and marginally influenced **public policy**. As discussed in Chapter 1, the recommendations were presented to public servants and political representatives from different regions as well as to other audiences in more informative, general events for civil society and the third sector. However, the impact of the recommendations has mostly been limited to these **formal gatherings**. According to interviews with members of regional administrations conducted during and after these formal meetings, the SCCA's recommendations were not further analysed with the aim of incorporating them into the administrations' policy agenda. On the contrary, the recommendations served mainly to confirm that their existing plans of action aligned with the proposals. Therefore, in terms of **policy formulation** or identification of new problems, the impact of the recommendations has also been limited.^{49 50}

Likewise, the interviewees from regional administrations highlighted the lack of **communication** between the central government and administrations, either to directly inform them of the results or to design a joint, coordinated plan of action to address the recommendations that arose from the assembly.

⁴⁸ <https://assembleapelclima.uib.es/propuestas/>

⁴⁹ During the interviews, different degrees of knowledge of the recommendations and familiarity with the work carried out by the SCCA were observed among high-ranking officials from different Spanish regions.

⁵⁰ It should be noted that these formal meetings were able to be held thanks to the commendable efforts made by part of the organizational team while their contract was still in effect after the assembly ended.

Despite its limited impact on public policy, the SCCA played a role in promoting similar assemblies at local and regional levels and has led to the inclusion of this type of democratic innovation in several regional laws on climate change. Therefore, in the coming years, it remains to be seen whether subsequent assemblies will have a more significant impact.

Conclusion 2: Impact on the assembly members.

A year after the SCCA ended, assembly members reported a high **level of satisfaction** with how the assembly was conducted and with the skills and abilities acquired during the process. However, satisfaction was considerably lower during the post-assembly phase, particularly concerning the government's response and the resources allocated for follow-up and ongoing support. It should be noted that the survey was conducted before the government sent the letter to assembly members informing them about the status of the recommendations. At the same time, the **level of expectation** regarding the future impact of the assembly is low, which is not necessarily negative since it can be interpreted as an appropriate alignment between expectations and results. However, since no survey was conducted at the beginning of the assembly, we cannot verify whether expectations, like the rest of the attitudes and behaviours analysed, have changed. For future evaluations, it would be interesting to know the evolution and adjustment of members' expectations regarding the assembly's impact before, during and at the end of the assembly.

Regarding **behavioural changes** to combat climate change, a distinction can be made between activities focused on directly mitigating climate change (private behaviour) and activities involving non-conventional forms of **political participation** (public behaviour). As discussed in Chapter 2, a significant percentage of assembly members claim to have taken some form of direct action (such as improving their recycling and waste separation system as well as making home renovations to improve energy efficiency) for the first time in the last 12 years. However, it is in actions related to political participation where a greater effect is observed. Signing a petition, contacting a politician, or engaging with the media are clear examples of how members have been impacted by the assembly. Finally, the creation of the **Civic Association for Climate Change** further illustrates the assembly's impact on its members.

Conclusion 3: Impact on the general population.

Available data indicates that approximately 12% of the general population claimed to have heard of the assembly, while 71% denied any knowledge of it, and 17% said it sounded vaguely familiar. Although this is a relatively low **level of penetration**, it is higher than one might expect, considering the limited debate generated in the media compared to other countries. Beyond this specific data, it is also noteworthy that there is widespread **external support**, with 85% of the general population in favour of the holding of citizens' assemblies in general, as well as general backing for the overall goals and specific recommendations of the SCCA, except for measures that restrict urban or air mobility and the economic activity derived from tourism.

Conclusion 4. Impact in the media.

The **coverage** of the SCCA in the media has been limited, with its presence most notable in digital press. The **communication strategy** primarily focused on publishing news in digital newspapers and magazines, with the SCCA's presence being scarce in broader-reaching media such as television and national radio. Peaks of higher media coverage occur at key moments of the assembly: the beginning, conclusion, and presentation of recommendations. While the assembly was ongoing, its impact in the media significantly decreased, due to the need to maintain anonymity and privacy. However, key informants stated that other factors, such as allocating most economic resources to the period during which the assembly was taking place rather than afterward, and adopting a risk-averse communication strategy, also contributed to the decreased media presence. Finally, the most widely read media articles are those where the assembly is not the main feature of the article. In other words, articles containing information about the assembly that are most extensively disseminated and engaged with on social networks (in terms of sharing and receiving likes) are those in which the headline or main focus is about something other than the assembly.

Testing the Impact Evaluation Framework

One of the objectives of this evaluation was to apply the **IEF** to a real case, specifically the SCCA, and to obtain a series of learnings both at a substantive level (what observable impacts the SCCA has had) and at a methodological level (how we can improve the analysis and measurement of those impacts). In this section, the SCCA's impacts are summarised using the analysis categories of the IEF. The analysis categories proposed in the IEF are the result of the combination of two axes: areas of impact (policy, social, and systemic⁵¹) and types of impact (instrumental, conceptual, and capacity-building).⁵²

Next, the three types of expected or potential impacts within the area of **policy** are addressed:

Assessing instrumental impacts on policy

Impact 1: *'Changes to climate policy and legislation and resulting climate action'.*

Impact 2: *'Changes to political debate/positions on climate change and climate action'.*

It remains unconfirmed as to whether the SCCA has brought about changes in regulations aimed at influencing existing or new forms of climate action. On the one hand, the recommendations arising from the SCCA have not followed the classic trajectory of public policies (problem identification, inclusion in the political agenda and courses of action, etc.). In general, the recommendations have served to inform policymakers at a regional level but have not resulted in climate action. Essentially, the effects observed within this type of impact have been limited to confirming that the actors involved in climate public policies, primarily regional-level high-ranking officials, perceive that their current plans of action is aligned almost entirely with the SCCA's recommendations. Therefore, there has not been a change in the positions of policymakers but rather a confirmation that their actions (and existing strategies) are moving in the direction indicated by the SCCA. It should be noted that in cases where some of the SCCA's recommendations clashed with regional circumstances, there has also been no change in positions, rather it has highlighted the need to adapt the recommendations of the SCCA to the specificities of each region. Lastly, the effects on regulations are limited to the inclusion in regional climate policies of potentially **holding more climate assemblies**, but this does not imply the implementation of climate

⁵¹ Systemic area was not analysed since it refers mainly to a long-terms impacts.

⁵² <https://knoca.eu/impact-evaluation-framework/>

action, but rather certain modifications in decision-making structures which may be considered an observable effect in terms of **systemic impact**.

Assessing conceptual impacts on policy

***Impact 3:** ‘Changes to policymakers’ knowledge and understanding of diverse public perspectives on climate policy issues’.*

***Impact 4:** ‘Changes to policymakers’ understanding of and attitudes towards climate change and climate action’.*

***Impact 5:** ‘Clarification of roles and responsibilities for climate action’.*

First and foremost, it is important to note that empirically, impacts 3, 4, and 5 are not easily distinguishable. Nevertheless, when we examine interviews with policymakers, it is not evident that the SCCA has changed their perspectives on climate change policies. In fact, in several interviews, the main message conveyed is that the SCCA's recommendations merely highlight that many of the measures already on the political agenda are **common sense**. Additionally, when we look at the survey data, the results lead to similar conclusions. The recommendations are not considered particularly innovative or unfeasible. Instead, they are generally seen as somewhat generic and only reinforce common-sense ideas. One interpretation could be that a deliberative process requires a higher level of specificity in its goals and design if its primary aim is to offer new perspectives, insights, or alternative strategies of action to an audience that, in this case, already possesses a relatively high level of knowledge on climate policy. Otherwise, the SCCA runs the risk of merely serving as confirmation that what is being done at the level of public policy aligns with what is proposed by the assembly. In relation to impact 5, the data collected does not show any changes in terms of clarifying new roles and responsibilities regarding climate action. To some extent, this lack of modification may be due to the limited implementation of the recommendations. It is reasonable to expect that in a scenario where the implementation process progresses further, there will be greater debate and a reordering of roles and responsibilities.

Assessing capacity-building impacts on policy

***Impact 6:** ‘Capacity-building focused on specific climate recommendations and policy areas’.*

***Impact 7:** ‘Capacity-building to improve understanding of and integrating public perspectives into climate policy’.*

***Impact 8:** ‘Changes to (or new) political coalitions, networks, or cross-party collaborations’.*

Similarly, the occurrence of impacts 6, 7, and 8 depends to some extent, though not necessarily, on the occurrence of impacts 2, 3, 4, and 5. That is to say, changes in the knowledge, attitudes, and obligations of policymakers (whether they are public servants,

politicians, or councillors) can lead to the need to acquire new skills and tools precisely to integrate new perspectives. This would be somewhat **of a logical path**. However, as the IEF contemplates, one way of developing new capacities could be to establish a series of **workshops or training groups** to support the use of policy recommendations. In this regard, during interviews conducted with promoters of the SCCA and regional public servants, there was clear evidence of a lack of communication between the central government and other administrations. The only strategy developed has been to present the recommendations at **formal meetings** with members of regional administrations as well as at informative events with stakeholders. Although these formal meetings and informative events are valuable for increasing awareness of the existence and work of the SCCA, they do not translate into changes in the skills and capabilities of policymakers that would enable them to integrate new perspectives or specific measures regarding climate change.

Next, the three types of expected or potential impacts within the **area of social activity** are addressed:

Assessing instrumental impacts on society

Impact 9: *'Changes to public climate action/ behaviour.'*

Impact 10: *'Changes to media practices and coverage on climate issues and action.'*

Impact 11: *'Changes to climate policies and practices in businesses and organisations.'*

Following the IEF framework, evaluating the instrumental impacts on society (changes in climate action and behaviour as well as in internal practices and policies) implies distinguishing between the following public social actors: assembly members, the broader public, and those working in the third sector and media. Regarding the impact on the **general public**, the low level of penetration (awareness) of the SCCA observed in the survey conducted among the general Spanish population (Chapter 3) leads us to think that the impact on public discourse has been extremely low. However, if we focus on the impact on **assembly members**, changes in their attitudes and behaviour in the public sphere have been observed, especially in terms of non-conventional political participation. Conversely, their behaviour in the private sphere has been less altered. Concerning organised **civil society**, peak mobilisation was reached during the final phase of the assembly with public demonstrations and activity on social media. On the other hand, the SCCA has not shown to have had a particular echo in the discourse or actions of relevant **private companies**

regarding climate change. A more in-depth evaluation would be required to observe any effect within the private third sector.

Lastly, a unique methodology has been developed to analyse the impact of the SCCA on the **media**, through which we have been able to estimate the level of coverage, reconstruct the communication strategy and obtain a basic understanding of the level of engagement with the news published about the SCCA. One of the lessons learned is that if the objective of the communication strategy is to get people talking about the assembly, efforts must be more focused on attracting attention rather than achieving high coverage in terms of the number of entries in digital media. In this sense, it has been observed that the most shared news pieces are those where the headline or main topic was not the assembly itself but another subject matter instead. However, we must avoid practices in which information about climate assemblies occupies a very small percentage of the news as a whole. These types of practices can distort the real coverage of the assembly, in quantitative terms.

Assessing conceptual impacts on society

Impact 12: *'Changes to key actors' knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives on climate policy issues'.*

Impact 13: *'Changes to key actors' understanding of and attitudes towards climate change and climate action'.*

Impact 14: *'Clarification of roles and responsibilities for climate action'.*

It is obvious that the impact of a climate citizens' assembly on the understanding of the diverse perspectives on climate action will be direct in the case of its members and indirect - and influenced by different factors - in the case of other key social actors. That is, a conceptual impact on other key actors (including members of the broader public, the third sector and the media) will most likely not occur through four independent paths that emerge from the assembly itself. A hypothesis that emerges from the analysis of interviews and documents is that assembly members collectively serve as a transmission mechanism. That is to say, any effect that the SCCA may have had on the third sector - though undetectable to us - likely occurred as a consequence of the subsequent organised action of the assembly members. In the case of the SCCA, this action has primarily been organised through formal meetings with regional administrations and representatives from the third sector. The following section addresses how the work carried out by the members of the assembly and the communication team could be coordinated in order to enhance the impact of their actions.

