

Communicating climate justice with young adults in Europe



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Climate Outreach

Climate Outreach is passionate about widening and deepening public engagement with climate change. Through our audience research, practical guides and consultancy services, we help organisations engage diverse audiences beyond the usual suspects. We focus on building and sustaining cross-societal support for climate action, overcoming political polarisation, and turning concern into action. We have nearly two decades of experience working with a range of global partners including government, international bodies, media and NGOs.

We'd love to hear any feedback on this resource at info@climateoutreach.org.

Project team

Authors and research

Jenny Gellatly, Advocacy Communications Coordinator and Assistant Researcher, Climate Outreach

Robin Webster, Senior Programme Lead, Advocacy Communications, Climate Outreach

Amiera Sawas, Programmes and Research Director, Climate Outreach

Dwan Kaoukji, Consultant Researcher

Bec Sanderson, Consultant Writer, Researcher and Editor

Susie Wang, Senior Research Consultant, Climate Outreach

Briony Latter, Research Assistant, PhD Placement, Climate Outreach

Chris Shaw, Senior Programme Lead, Research, Climate Outreach

Daniel Chapman, Consultant Researcher, Centre for Science Communication Research, University of Oregon

Kim Titlestad, Consultant Researcher

Editing and production

Abishek Maroli, Project Manager, Climate Outreach

Tara Bryer, Senior Project Management Lead, Climate Outreach

Martha Wiltshire, Project Manager, Climate Outreach

Léane de Laigue, Communications Lead, Climate Outreach

Noora Firaq, Interim Executive Director, Climate Outreach

Alvin David, Head of Finance, Climate Outreach

Adam Bradbury, Consultant Editor

Rebekkah Hughes, Consultant Designer

Toby Smith, Senior Programme Lead, Visuals and Media, Climate Outreach

Alastair Johnstone, Climate Visuals Advisor, Climate Outreach

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Cover photo(s): Protest during the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in November 2021 in Glasgow, UK. Photo credit: ANDY BUCHANAN/AFP via Getty Images

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Executive summary

Concern about climate change is rising and across Europe younger people in particular are worried. Younger people are also expressing an interest in social justice issues. The Covid-19 pandemic, global economic disruption, the Movement for Black Lives and #MeToo have brought many social justice issues to the forefront of public debate, particularly with regard to gender and racial injustices – creating a moment of reckoning with harmful systems and reflection on how those systems have impacted societies.

The climate justice analysis brings the lens of social equity and historical responsibility to the climate debate. It recognises that climate change exacerbates existing injustices, having a disproportionately high impact on poor and marginalised people and communities and those who are least responsible for the problem. It sees climate change as a systemic problem and advocates changes to social, political and economic structures to address historical and present injustices, redistribute power and centre the people who are most affected.



In April 2021 Climate Outreach and the SPARK consortium conducted a **survey** of over 6,000 young adults aged 18–35 across six European countries. The survey explored their perceptions of and attitudes to climate justice ideas.



The topics in the survey were then investigated further in 20 in-depth **workshops** in nine European countries with adults aged 18–29. The workshop participants were nearly all politically centre or left of centre, expressed concern about climate change but were largely not deeply engaged in taking action. This audience is a particular focus of this study as they are a core audience for climate advocates. The workshop data were used to create a series of recommendations, which are presented throughout the report. They are referred to as 'concerned young adults in Europe' throughout the remainder of this report.

Fridays for Future protestors – Madrid, Spain, September 2021
Photo credit: Alejandro Martinez Velez / Europa Press via Getty Images



Perceptions of climate justice among young adults in Europe



The **survey** found that most young adults in Europe want to be involved in action to tackle climate change, with some willing to go to great lengths to do so. Almost one in 10 respondents said they would be prepared to break the law to tackle climate change.

The young adults responding to the survey identified global corporations and multinational companies, along with systemic causes, such as 'capitalism' and 'economic growth', as among the main drivers of climate change, above governments or individuals. A large majority (81%) agreed that we need a social transformation – changing our economy, how we travel, live, produce and consume – in order to tackle climate change.

Although most of the respondents could not define the term 'climate justice', they were receptive to core ideas when presented with them – for example, that the least responsible are the most affected and that climate change increases injustices in society. Solutions that are often seen as more radical also attracted support among the respondents: four in 10 said that climate change can only be solved if resources are redistributed from the wealthy to those who have less. Nearly three-quarters of respondents agreed that the people and communities most affected by climate change should have more say in decisions about climate solutions.

However, there were also some contradictions and gaps in their understanding of the issue. Respondents reported seeing climate change as first and foremost an environmental issue, then as a scientific/technical or moral issue, before considering it as a social justice issue. Most did not draw a connection between someone's gender or racialisation and their likelihood of being impacted by climate change.

The survey results indicate that many young adults in Europe are well aware of the need for fundamental changes to society to tackle climate change. But the findings also point to the importance of not expecting the term 'climate justice' alone to be meaningful or an effective rallying call for this audience – there is a need to explain certain key concepts clearly.

Concerned young adults' responses to climate justice messaging



The **workshops** revealed many similarities in thinking between the survey respondents (a general selection of young adults aged 18–35) and the workshop participants (young adults aged 18–29 who are concerned about the issue of climate change and centre or left of centre politically).

These workshops helped paint a more in-depth picture of how to engage this audience. The box below highlights several important tensions in the way concerned young adults in Europe think and feel about climate justice.

- ▶ **Concerned young adults agree that climate change is a systemic problem but may struggle to know what the solutions are and to see themselves in them.**

The workshop participants agreed that environmental problems are connected to social, political and economic structures but, for many, it was harder to imagine what structural changes are needed, or what strategies could be implemented to get there. The specific solutions they proposed often revolved around how the current system might be improved and individual lifestyles changed, even when this did not match the scale of change they appear to believe is necessary.

- ▶ **Concerned young adults think the status quo isn't working and want to see big changes, but frequently feel powerless to bring this about.**

Many workshop participants conveyed a strong sense of their own powerlessness within these systems. They were motivated by the prospect of citizen-led action on climate change, and responded well to examples of this, but expressed doubts about the extent to which citizens can make big changes happen, and the ability of young people to contribute to those changes.

- ▶ **Concerned young adults care about social justice issues like racism and sexism, but don't readily connect them to climate change.**

When asked to identify which groups of people are most impacted by climate change, workshop participants talked about poverty as a major issue – for example, that poorer people or countries have fewer options in how to respond. Few spontaneously made a connection between climate change and gender and racial injustices. These results point to a gap in understanding among some young adults about how aspects of marginalisation and discrimination – such as barriers to participation and to basic rights and opportunities – are connected with climate change. Without this understanding young adults can easily reject social justice concerns as being a time-consuming side issue or distraction.

- ▶ **Concerned young adults think responsibility lies at the top but don't believe their government will do the right thing.**

Participants in this study reported that they think governments and the EU should be doing more. They saw big corporations and wealthy country governments as both culpable for harm and responsible for taking action. But they also expressed cynicism about whether these powerful actors will do what is needed. And although the workshop participants freely expressed criticism of those with a lot of wealth and power, many reacted against messaging that expressed this view – believing that blame or guilt is counterproductive to global collective action because it creates division rather than unity.

- ▶ **Concerned young adults want more balance in who has power and voice, but don't like language about taking power or resources away from anyone.**

Participants in the workshops agreed that inequality of wealth and power is a big problem, but they didn't like the sound of 'taking away' decision-making power and resources from the wealthy and powerful – responding much more positively to language around 'balance' and 'redistribution'. They also expressed the belief that communities

most affected by climate change should have more say in solutions, but didn't want this to come at the expense of technical and scientific knowledge. Some participants in the study tended to privilege technical and scientific knowledge over other forms of knowledge, and reported feeling that those who are most impacted by climate change may not have the understanding or expertise needed to contribute to solutions.

► **Concerned young adults can see that climate change has roots in the past but many want to look forward rather than back.**

Participants in the workshops could see that climate change is connected to the carbon emissions of past industrialisation, but otherwise they frequently didn't appear to have a strong understanding of the historical roots of the climate crisis. Across the 20 workshops, no one spontaneously raised the history of colonialism, and its relationship to climate change. When prompted to consider this, some acknowledged the connection and demonstrated an openness to discussing it. Others, however, were resistant to looking at the past, preferring to focus on what's happening today and the future.

► **Concerned young adults believe some actors are more culpable than others but often raised questions about the theory and reality of paying compensation for loss and damages resulting from climate change.**

The concept of paying compensation met with mixed responses. Some participants were immediately supportive, while others asked practical and philosophical questions – for instance, whether compensation would be accompanied by changes that prevent harm continuing. Some expressed concern because they didn't see the relevance to the solutions that are needed now, and worried that establishing historical responsibility could create divisions or delay action. This suggests that communicating about reparations may involve addressing some of these questions and concerns. Some young adults don't see, and perhaps have not been exposed to information about, how focusing on past events and historical responsibility can help address climate change now. Instead, they see this as a distraction.

These findings show that when a climate justice analysis is presented to them, the views of young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change align with many aspects of that analysis. However, there are gaps in their understanding, as well as resistance to some climate justice principles.

Engaging concerned young adults in this set of issues is a complex task, and one that climate justice advocates and analysts have already made headway on. Although there is still a lot more research to do, the findings suggest that more progress in communicating with this audience about climate justice can be made by using the following principles as a guide.

Principles for communicating with concerned young adults about climate justice



MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH	LEAST EFFECTIVE APPROACH
<p>The problem is unjust political, economic and social systems</p> <p>Young adults have an instinct that the problem lies in systems, and identify capitalism, economic growth and consumer society as among the main drivers of climate change. Naming systemic root causes helps to make the case for systemic solutions, which they are less clear about.</p>	<p>The problem is about who is emitting the most carbon now</p> <p>Framing the problem in terms of the countries and corporations emitting carbon dioxide now can narrow people's focus to, for instance, China and India, as the main culprits, and can make it harder to talk about global systems and historical responsibility.</p>
<p>Bad behaviours, poorly designed systems</p> <p>Framing political, economic and social systems as tools designed by people also makes clear that they can be reconfigured, by choice, in the interests of human and planetary wellbeing. Damaging behaviours can then be situated within the systems that encourage or reward them. This highlights the need for systemic change and the scope that such change could open up for people to act differently.</p>	<p>Bad people, entrenched systems</p> <p>If people are bad and the systems are entrenched then all the big problems in society are intractable. Reinforcing such ideas about human nature or the natural order of things makes it harder to inspire hope in climate justice solutions.</p>
<p>Climate and social justice issues are inseparable</p> <p>The challenge is not only to build concern about climate change and social justice, but to link young adults' existing concerns about these two issues. This means being clear about the ways in which climate change is a social justice problem, and making the case that social justice is not just something that is nice-to-have but is a necessary part of developing solutions.</p>	<p>Climate change is an isolated technical challenge</p> <p>If the solution is merely a technical challenge – how to make better electric cars, for instance, or decarbonise home heating – then justice issues can be perceived as a distraction or side issue. Especially when communicated in a tone of urgency, it can trigger responses like “we simply don't have time for that”. It can also encourage young adults to privilege certain forms of knowledge (for example, western, scientific knowledge) over others (for example, indigenous knowledge).</p>
<p>Climate change impacts are unequal because of sexism, racism and other kinds of discrimination</p> <p>Young adults tend not to readily connect gender or racialisation with vulnerability to climate change. When talking about this the reasons for unequal impacts need to be made clear – for instance, by explaining how women's voices are excluded and how gendered roles and sexism limit their options. Or it can mean explaining that racist exploitation and colonialism form the backdrop of climate change impacts in some countries in the global south.</p>	<p>Climate change impacts some groups of people more (without explaining why)</p> <p>Without an explanation of the reason <i>why</i> climate change impacts some groups harder than others, young adults can fill in the gaps with partial or unhelpful explanations. Talking about impacts in the global south, for instance, can trigger responses like “it's because they're poor or less educated” and “they get harder hit because of their geography”.</p>

MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH	LEAST EFFECTIVE APPROACH
<p>Discrimination and exclusions caused by sexism and racism heighten a person's vulnerability to climate impacts locally as well as globally</p> <p>Imagery and authentic stories can be used to show how some people – including women, non-binary, trans, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) – are affected more than others as a result of unequal power relations. Talking about how more women than men died during the 2003 European heat wave, for instance, and connecting this with experiences around the world, could show how this is happening on our doorstep, while helping build a sense of shared experience and solidarity.</p>	<p>It's just poor people in faraway countries who are more affected</p> <p>Young people often cite poverty as the central explanation for some groups being harder hit than others. Understanding a climate justice analysis requires a clear explanation of how structures drive poverty and inequality through discrimination and barriers to participation and to basic rights and opportunities – and how this plays out in Europe as well as in the global south.</p>
<p>Affected communities are agents of change and experts and leaders in their own right</p> <p>Marginalised groups may be unequally impacted but that doesn't mean they are passive. Communicators can share stories of people as agents, experts and first-responders. This could mean, for example, sharing the stories of collectively led actions carried out by women and indigenous people – like the contribution of indigenous land management practices to building Africa's Great Green Wall.</p>	<p>Affected communities are passive victims without the right kind of knowledge</p> <p>Depicting women as victims who need rescuing reinforces gender stereotypes. If indigenous people are portrayed as passive or silent their knowledge and leadership is undermined.</p>
<p>The past has led to the present situation through legacies, and continued practice of, colonialism and extraction</p> <p>Concerned young adults often talk more fluently about the exploitations of today than those of the past. Explaining how extraction and exploitation in the past shaped what is happening today, and framing them as root causes of the crisis, helps make the past relevant in regard to developing today's solutions.</p>	<p>The past is the past and is not relevant to the solutions we need now</p> <p>If the connection between past and present isn't made, it is easier for young adults to reject arguments about historical responsibility or solutions like reparations with responses such as "the past isn't relevant to what we do now" and "we can't hold people in the past responsible".</p>
<p>Reparations as a part of wider systemic solutions</p> <p>Concerned young adults are more likely to support reparations if they are given explanations of how they could work in practice, and how they could address system-wide problems in the present – for instance, as part of a guarantee to not repeat harms to people and nature.</p>	<p>Reparations as an isolated solution</p> <p>If the concept of reparations is presented without context or information that addresses their concerns, young adults are likely to be confused or sceptical.</p>

MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH	LEAST EFFECTIVE APPROACH
<p>Rebalance and redistribute power, voice and resources fairly</p> <p>'Righting the balance' is a promising frame. Young adults who are concerned about climate change acknowledge that inequality of wealth and power is part of the problem and respond well to the idea that rebalancing and redistributing wealth and power can address the problems of today. This could be one way, for instance, to connect young adults with the demand for climate finance and the transfer of resources from the global north to the global south in tackling climate change.</p>	<p>Take away power, voice and resources from some groups and give them to others</p> <p>For some young people, 'taking away' is associated with the illegal expropriation of resources, of revolution or revolt, or taking away people's rights – in other words, something undemocratic or violent.</p>
<p>Affected communities should have a voice, both in principle and because their knowledge is valuable</p> <p>The idea that we all have something important to learn from people with experience of climate change is compelling. Some workshop participants pointed out the principle, which is core to a climate justice analysis, that affected people and communities also have a right to a say in decisions that affect them – emphasising that it is right in principle as well as useful in practice.</p>	<p>Affected communities should have a voice only because their knowledge is valuable</p> <p>Framing this idea instrumentally can reinforce the thinking that people should only have a say in decisions if they have something important to contribute. It can also imply that the burden is on their shoulders to solve the problem.</p>
<p>Young people can play an important role</p> <p>Concerned young adults want youth and affected communities to have more of a say on the climate crisis but at the same time frequently feel powerless to influence change. Presenting specific ways that younger people can be involved in organising and mobilising, while building a sense of solidarity between them and the groups who are most impacted by the climate crisis, could help counter this.</p>	<p>Young people carry the burden of responsibility on their shoulders</p> <p>Some young adults express resistance to the implication that they are the ones who should fix the problem, arguing that, although they can contribute, the responsibility should not be laid on them.</p>
<p>Power and change are achieved through long-term organising and collective action</p> <p>Concerned young adults respond well to examples of people and communities taking action together to bring about change. Communicators can widen young adults' idea of the scope of the scale of change that is possible with stories of popular struggle and of how social movements and citizen-led action have, over time, enabled significant change in the past, by giving examples and showing how barriers have been overcome.</p>	<p>Fixes rather than transformative change</p> <p>Despite largely understanding the problem as systemic, and wanting proportionate solutions, young adults concerned about climate change tend to propose solutions that involve fixes to markets, infrastructure, behaviours and technologies. If this tendency is reinforced, it risks dampening imagination and resolve to participate in collective action and system change.</p>

MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH	LEAST EFFECTIVE APPROACH
<p>Transformation is possible</p> <p>Communicators can connect with young adults' instincts that systems are at the root of the problem and can couple this with information about the possibilities for transformation and change. The study results suggest that young adults may be more likely to respond to solutions underpinned by principles of social justice and equity that are proportionate to the scale of the problem; alongside strategies and ways to contribute to these 'big picture' solutions, particularly where those actions feel like a joint endeavour.</p>	<p>Too much emphasis on the problem and not enough on how to respond</p> <p>The goals of climate justice may feel distant and difficult to achieve, while small-scale behaviour changes may feel insufficient – both of which can lead to a sense of powerlessness. Acknowledging the scale of the task at hand may feel more authentic to younger people, but it can also lead to a sense of helplessness. Too much emphasis on the problem and on how powerful other actors or systems are, with too little emphasis on alternatives and solutions and how they can be achieved together, risks deepening young people's sense of helplessness.</p>
<p>Dramatic emissions reductions and socially just solutions</p> <p>Conveying why justice is integral to climate solutions is a significant communications task. Concerned young adults recognise that the status quo isn't working and want to see visions of a future that can provide a dignified and fulfilling life for all people, living within Earth's ecological limits. Communicators can emphasise that social and environmental justice is integral to this vision and that there's hope in building that future together.</p>	<p>Dramatic emissions reductions at any cost</p> <p>If the only goal is a particular emissions target, and it's urgent, then we need to get there by any means necessary – even at great cost to human life and liberty, and to the natural world. This framing can take young people even further away from climate justice as it implies that social justice is a distraction.</p>

1. Introduction

Climate groups around the world, including youth movements like Fridays For Future, are increasingly calling for climate justice.¹ Climate narratives are changing to embrace a more profound explanation of climate change and where it comes from, acknowledging intersecting issues of, for example, inequity and environmental racism and seeking to address the root causes behind these.² But as the term 'climate justice' has moved into mainstream media discourse over the past five years³ there appears to be no consistent understanding among journalists or activists, let alone the wider public, of what it entails.⁴

Some researchers have warned of climate justice becoming “(mis)appropriated as a trope”, with principles like inclusivity more likely to fall by the wayside.⁵ This creates a significant need and potential for climate justice communicators to fill gaps in understanding and to build support for climate justice solutions based on the principles of equity, fairness and justice.

Where does the term 'climate justice' come from?

Climate justice as a concept has been developed and spearheaded by activists in the global south⁶ as “an extension of the struggles of [global] southern, Indigenous and local communities for land, resources, sovereignty and anticolonialism”.⁷ The origins of the term 'climate justice' are widely cited to be the 1982 environmental justice projects in North Carolina, where Black communities' water was being deliberately contaminated with industrial waste containing Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) toxins.⁸ However, indigenous struggles against environmental degradation emerged long before the 1980s and have not always been credited in the discourse.⁹

Members of the Krenak indigenous community in Brazil are seeking billions in damages from Anglo-Australian mining giant BHP Group Ltd. for a dam collapse that released toxic waste onto their land.

Photo credit: Jonne Roriz/Bloomberg via Getty Images



What does climate justice mean?

There is no single definition of climate justice. This project drew on a number of sources to create a definition alongside SPARK partners for the purposes of this research. Sources included the following: academic and grey literature; previous climate justice communications research, such as the UK-based Framing Climate Justice project; and training, workshops, and conversations with partners during the inception phase of the SPARK project. This means that the definition is specific to this project – it's likely that not everyone will agree with every element and there may be omissions that others would consider important, but it provides a starting place for this research. Outlined below are some of the key concepts employed by this study. More detail can be found at the start of each subsection of section 4 of the report.

Instead of treating climate change mainly as a technical challenge to reduce emissions, climate justice advocates integrate this challenge with an understanding of structural inequality, human rights violations and historical responsibilities.¹⁰ At the core of the idea of climate justice is the understanding that climate change has a disproportionately high impact on poor and marginalised communities who also have the least responsibility for causing the problem.

The climate justice lens encompasses an understanding of the legacy of colonialism and imperialism, and their influence on the global economy. It describes how these systems have contributed to vast differences in power and wealth between the global north and south – through a reliance on resource extraction underpinned by slavery and precarious labour. In a climate justice analysis, the problem of emissions and environmental degradation is inseparable from the problem of human exploitation.¹¹

Applying a climate justice lens means applying the principle that addressing the climate crisis requires dealing with the systemic roots of the crisis and the inequities they cause.¹² Climate justice solutions locate responsibility primarily with some countries and companies; suggest fundamental shifts in the way power and resources are distributed; honour reparations for past, present and unavoidable future harm; foreground the most affected groups in decision-making; and ultimately aim to allow everyone to live a life with basic rights and freedoms without relying on fossil fuels or unsustainable extraction of natural resources.

Climate Outreach and climate justice

Climate Outreach's mission is to support a social mandate for climate action across a breadth of society, through evidence-based approaches to public engagement.¹³ Narratives based on the need for climate justice are becoming more popular among civil society generally, while across Europe progressive political actors are increasingly grappling with questions of embedded power relations, the legacy of colonialism, and racial and gender justice.¹⁴

This creates a need to research and understand how public audiences respond to those narratives. Are climate narratives understood in the way they are intended? Do they make sense? Do they engender motivation and agency to act on climate change? Or do they have the potential to drive disengagement or polarisation in public responses to climate change?

Why focus on young adults in Europe?

Despite a significant increase in academic work on climate justice, a literature review found very little audience research exploring how people respond to messaging on climate justice themes. The limited prior research in this area suggests that the concept is poorly and inconsistently understood but that, when given the opportunity, many people are open to the profound questions posed by a climate justice analysis.

Younger people in Europe tend to be more concerned about climate change than older age groups¹⁵ and the limited research available suggests they may be more aware of the connection between climate change and social justice.¹⁶ Young people participating in activism have a more justice-oriented understanding of climate change than their predecessors, according to some research.¹⁷ Younger people may therefore be more open to messages about the ethics of climate change and the call for socially just, transformative change.

If humanity is to respond to the challenge of climate change in any meaningful way, young adults who are alive today are a key demographic. They are also part of a generation that is likely to be profoundly impacted by the climate crisis and that has a right to understand what is happening in its fullest form. Finally, previous research with children and young adults has shown that learning about and connecting with other young people's experiences of climate change in the global south can heighten young people's awareness of the idea of climate justice, and their sense of solidarity and responsibility to act.¹⁸

However, little is known about what young adults across Europe think about climate justice, and whether the ideas it raises resonate or move them to action.

What are the aims of this research?

-  Understand how young adults aged 18–35 across the EU think about and respond to climate justice messaging, identifying the barriers and opportunities for climate communicators trying to engage younger audiences.
-  Test the hypothesis that concerned young adults may be open to a framing of climate change that is focused on ethics, justice and the need for transformative change.
-  Support advocates and campaigners who are newer to the field in sharpening their understanding of what it means to communicate some of the radical analysis embedded in the term 'climate justice'.
-  Use Climate Outreach's global narratives approach – previously applied in northern India, Alberta, Canada and North Africa¹⁹ – to build the capacity of civil society partners to deliver a robust research project, as part of an EU-wide four-year project motivating and empowering young people across Europe to act on climate change.

The research builds on UK-based Framing Climate Justice research carried out by the Public Interest Research Centre (PIRC), 350.org and the New Economy Organisers Network (NEON).²⁰ It replicates some aspects of their research design, using some similar survey questions, narrative themes and structures, but with a different audience and approach to testing the narratives. It forms part of SPARK, a four-year European Commission-funded project which aims to build the awareness, capacity and active engagement of EU citizens, particularly young people, with efforts to tackle climate justice.²¹

2. Background

Young people take climate change seriously

Young people in Europe think climate change is happening now, that it is entirely or at least partly caused by humans, and that it is a serious problem.²² But, beyond that, their understanding of its causes and effects are more mixed.²³ Being informed and concerned about climate change is also not necessarily sufficient to galvanise someone to take personal or collective action.²⁴

The UK public agree with some climate justice principles but not all

The Framing Climate Justice project explored a UK general audience response to a number of climate justice frames. Its results suggest that people in the UK understand and agree with some of the basic principles of climate justice – for instance, that global industries are damaging the environment, that consumer capitalism is exploitative, and that climate change hits some people and countries harder than others.

But the research also points to differences between climate justice messaging and public perceptions. According to the findings, people in the UK don't have a strong understanding of the historical roots of the crisis, or why reparative solutions might be needed, don't see how social inequalities like racism and class privilege are connected to climate change, and don't tend to believe that a just solution to climate change is possible in theory or practice.²⁵

Most people in the UK don't see that climate change increases existing inequalities in society, according to the research. Participants in the study tended to agree that the least responsible are those who are most affected, but this wasn't something they reported feeling strongly about and they found it hard to identify who would be most affected, citing factors like age and poverty, but not racialisation, gender or class. In recent Climate Outreach research right-leaning British audiences also struggled to give examples of groups who might be worse off due to climate impacts.²⁶

Younger people may be receptive to climate justice principles

The younger European citizens are, the more likely they are to say that climate change is the biggest issue facing the EU and the world, according to Eurobarometer surveys.²⁷

Nearly one in four Europeans aged 15–39 believe that governments are not doing enough to tackle climate change according to a 2021 Eurobarometer survey,²⁸ substantiating earlier research showing that young people in Europe think that not enough is being done by government, business, industry, and the EU to protect the environment.²⁹ In a survey of almost 2,000 Fridays For Future protesters across 13 EU countries, respondents were extremely sceptical about relying on companies and the market to solve environmental problems.³⁰

The Framing Climate Justice project found that young people in the UK were the most likely to think that marginalised groups will be most affected and the least likely to believe that climate change will have no impact on injustice and inequality.³¹ When asked to rank the impact of political and economic systems – capitalism, colonialism and socialism – on climate change, young people were also more likely than older age groups to say that “capitalism and colonialism have more impact on climate change.”

Young climate activists associated with Fridays for Future and other movements report being motivated by ideas of fairness and global justice,³² and link climate change to capitalism.³³

Young people feel powerless, and sceptical about change coming from the political system

Research with young people has consistently uncovered a “widespread scepticism from formal political parties, distrust in political figures, and a general sense of alienation from mainstream politics.”³⁴ Young people often report feeling powerless and unable to make a difference.³⁵ This is the case even for participants of the officially recognised children and youth constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), YOUNGO, who have reported not being properly recognised by other stakeholders or able to take part on equal footing.³⁶

Several sources show that young people may feel like they haven’t been allowed to participate in debates or decision-making processes around climate change – or they have only been able to do so tokenistically.³⁷ A lack of investment in youth-led capacity building, and a lack of access to financial resources, can stifle young people’s ability to participate or take action.³⁸

Society sometimes labels young people a symbol of hope on climate change even while portraying them as apathetic and indifferent, complacent and subordinate – viewing them as the leaders of tomorrow rather than of today.³⁹

The importance of peer influence

Young people are inspired by the different approaches of their peers to climate action. This applies to courageous actions – for example, protests or civil disobedience or successful campaigns run by other young people – as well as to thought leadership. Engaging with the work of inspiring people and peers, especially through social relationships, is key in many young people’s journey towards taking and maintaining action and involvement.⁴⁰

Previous research demonstrates the power and potential of young people identifying with their peers around the world as a way to better understand and be motivated to take action to achieve climate justice. When relationships are built, young people have a window onto the lives of others and can become more deeply aware of the unequal impacts of climate change, the types of actions being taken in response, and what they themselves can do.⁴¹

Key gaps in the research

Although the existing literature yields some useful insights, the review of the literature conducted for this study found very little published research exploring specifically how younger people in Europe think about climate justice, or how climate justice narratives resonate with them. In the following areas in particular, research appears to be scarce or non-existent:

Young people’s views about

- the root causes of climate change
- the relationship between climate change and gender or racial injustices
- which actors and systems are most responsible for causing climate change and why
- solutions and who should be involved in developing them
- appropriate mechanisms or systems (political, social and economic) for addressing climate change and the justice dimensions of climate change

3. Method

About the approach

The study’s research process consisted of three key stages, as set out in the table below:

	DESK REVIEW	SURVEY	NARRATIVE WORKSHOPS
Methodology	A desk review of available research. This identified gaps in the research in relation to young people in Europe’s attitudes and perceptions around climate justice.	An online survey of 6,038 young adults aged 18–35 in six European countries to capture their understanding of climate change and climate justice more broadly.	Values-based focus groups (narrative workshops) with 138 young adults aged 18–29 in nine European countries to examine their responses to a series of questions and narratives on climate justice.
Demographics	A total of 79 articles were reviewed, predominantly academic papers, but also a number of organisational and governmental reports, case studies and surveys.	Just over 1000 survey respondents were selected in each country to be representative of 18–35-year-olds in terms of age, gender, and region within the country, as well as ethnicity in the United Kingdom. ⁴²	Participants in the workshops were selected based on their being 'persuadables' – young adults who were nearly all politically centre or left of centre, expressed concern about climate change but were largely not deeply engaged in taking action. ⁴³

Desk review

The desk review was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, existing literature reviews of young people's attitudes to climate change and climate justice were analysed. The literature search that followed used search terms that allowed the gaps that existed between the existing reviews and the overall project aims to be explored.⁴⁴ Articles were found using academic databases such as Google Scholar and Web of Science and search terms such as “climate AND justice AND young people OR youth”.

The 2020 Framing Climate Justice project,⁴⁵ coordinated by the PIRC, 350.org and NEON was a key reference. It explored thinking on climate justice with a UK general audience and tested a range of frames. This project builds on the Framing Climate Justice research. It replicates some aspects of its research design, using some similar survey questions, narrative themes and structures, but with a different audience and approach to testing the narratives.

Online survey

The survey was developed by Climate Outreach working with SPARK partners in each of the target countries. The survey was designed to provide insights into the attitudes and perceptions of young adults in Europe in relation to climate justice. It was delivered by Qualtrics in April 2021 in each

target country's primary language. Just over 1000 people took part in each of the six countries: the Czech Republic (1005), Germany (1006), Spain (1000), the UK (1007), Romania (1010) and Italy (1010). The survey participants were selected based on their being broadly representative of young adults aged 18–35 across gender, age and region within the country (and ethnicity in the UK). Further details on the demographics of the survey respondents can be found in Appendix 3.

Global narratives methodology

The project used the global narratives methodology. This is a qualitative participatory approach to climate change public engagement research that has been developed and applied by Climate Outreach in a number of different countries (India, Canada, Mauritania, Egypt and Tunisia) over the past decade.⁴⁶ Using this approach, local partner organisations are professionally trained to deliver values-based focus groups, known as narrative workshops, which test specific language around climate change.

A total of 138 participants took part across 20 narrative workshops in nine countries. Partners contributed to both the design of the narrative workshop script and the narratives to be tested. The workshops were designed to gain a richer understanding of concerned young adults' responses to some of the topics explored in the survey and their responses to short passages of narrative text with different framings in relation to climate justice.

In each country, between two to three narrative workshops were carried out in the country's primary languages. After all workshops were complete, the partners reconvened in a two-day evaluation workshop. This formed the first stage in a multi-stage analysis process.

Young adults participating in the narrative workshops.
Photo credit: Javier Gacio/Oxfam Internon



Young adults

The project follows the European Commission definition of young people: that is people aged 15–35, although for legal reasons the research did not include anyone below the age of 18. For clarity, survey respondents and workshop participants are therefore referred to as ‘young adults’ in the text. The study does not draw out demographic differences – for instance, in terms of gender, age, level of education, or ethnicity. Instead, it treats young adults in Europe as one undifferentiated group, drawing on common themes from across the sample as a whole. Further analysis could be carried out to nuance the findings further, and to draw out conclusions and recommendations for different demographics.

Target audience

The survey and the narrative workshops targeted two different audiences. Survey respondents were selected based on their being broadly representative of young adults aged 18–35 in each of the target countries across gender, age, and region within the country (and ethnicity in the UK). Participants in the workshops were selected on the basis of their being ‘persuadables’ – young adults aged 18–29 who were nearly all politically centre or left of centre, expressed concern about climate change but were largely not deeply engaged in taking action.⁴⁷ Given the difference in these two audiences, the survey and workshop findings have been set out separately throughout the report. The recommendations are made on the basis of the workshop findings only, as this is a key audience for partners in this project and for advocates more generally.

Participating countries

The survey took place in the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, the UK, Romania and Italy. The workshops took place in the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Romania, Belgium, Portugal, France, Hungary and Latvia. The study sought to include a range of northern, eastern, western and southern countries within the EU. Which countries the survey and narrative workshops took place in within those regions was largely determined by the ability of local partners to participate. Where there was a choice between countries within a particular region, the country with the largest population was chosen.

The final analysis largely draws on common themes from across the pan-European sample. It was not possible within the scope of this study to draw meaningful country- or regional-level conclusions, though this could be a key area for further investigation.

Appendices 2, 3 and 4 provide further details on the research methodology and limitations, and the audiences reached.

4. Young adults' understanding of climate change as a global justice issue

This section summarises the key findings of the research. It is divided into eight sub-sections, each focusing on a particular aspect of climate justice. Each sub-section starts with an introduction to the topic, followed by a summary of the findings from the survey and then from the narrative workshops (largely part one of those workshops). For a focused analysis of part two of the narrative workshops, which tested specific climate justice messaging, see Section 5.

The survey and narrative workshops targeted different audiences. The survey aimed to be broadly representative of 18–35-year-olds in Europe, while the narrative workshops recruited 18–29-year-olds in Europe who were nearly all politically centre or left of centre, expressed concern about climate change but were largely not deeply engaged in taking action (for more information about the audience and approach see Section 3 and the Appendices). For this reason the survey and workshop findings are set out separately throughout this report.

Each sub-section ends with a summary for communicators and a series of recommendations in relation to engaging concerned young adults in Europe with climate justice.

- 4.1 Concern about climate change and understanding of the term climate justice
- 4.2 Climate change as system change
- 4.3 Impact of climate change on existing injustices
- 4.4 Historical responsibility for climate change
- 4.5 A just process: procedural justice
- 4.6 A just response: reparations and redistribution
- 4.7 A just response: action by individuals, national governments and the EU
- 4.8 A just future: visions for the future

4.1 Concern about climate change and understanding of the term climate justice

“We’re not going to ‘one weird trick’ our way out of the climate crisis because it isn’t made of one simple, isolable problem.” – Professor Olúfẹmi Táíwò⁴⁸

A climate justice analysis recognises climate change not only as an environmental issue but as an ethical, political and social justice issue. It sees climate change as a symptom of a larger crisis, with deep systemic and historical roots in colonialism, slavery, and extractivism – roots that also underlie other social and environmental issues facing society. A climate justice analysis seeks to expose and address these root causes, arguing that climate change cannot be solved through minor alterations to markets, infrastructure, behaviours and technologies, but requires more profound changes to the way society and the economy are organised and run.⁴⁹



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

- **Are concerned about social and environmental issues but understand climate change more as an environmental and technical issue than a social justice issue**

The young people surveyed in this research expressed relatively high levels of concern about both social and environmental issues – and said that they would want to be perceived as caring about these issues by family and friends.⁵⁰

But while they reported being concerned about both, they see climate change first and foremost as an environmental issue, then a scientific/technological or moral issue, before considering it a social justice issue.

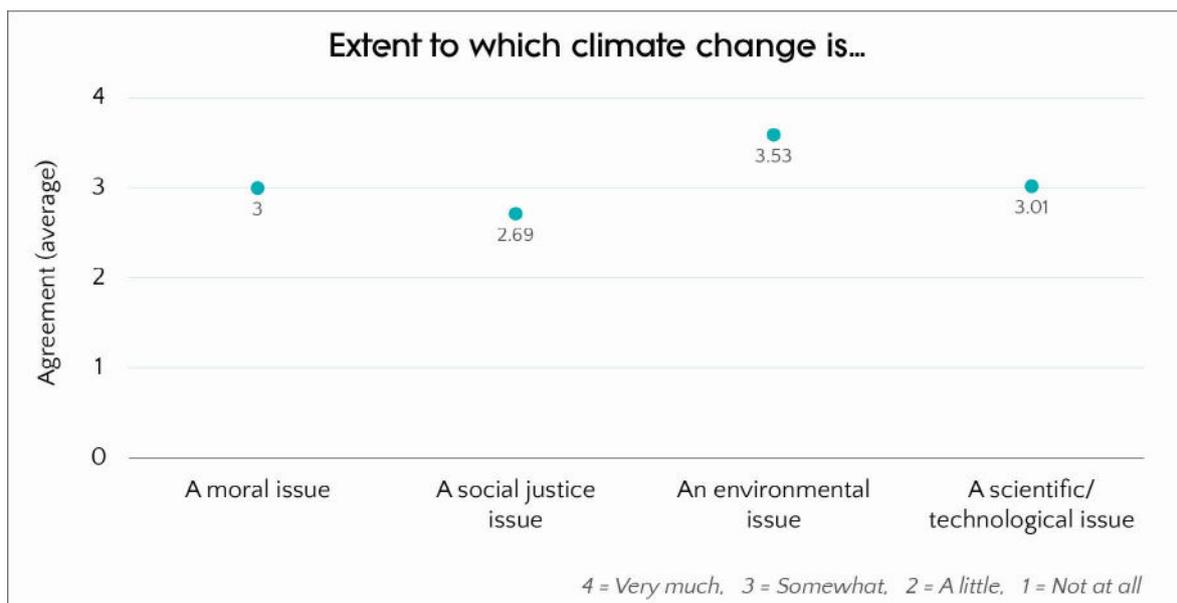


Figure 1: Survey respondents perceptions of the extent to which climate change is a moral, social justice, environmental and scientific / technological issue (represented as an average)

► Often aren't able to define the term 'climate justice'

A majority (72%) of survey respondents said they were familiar with the term 'climate justice' – but they struggled to define it, often saying “don't know”, or giving a vague or partial definition or one not closely aligned with that employed by this study.⁵¹ Although many recognised that it meant something to do with climate change, reducing emissions, or cleaning up pollution, for example, most didn't make an association with social or historical justice.

Respondents gave various definitions of climate justice – for example, that it is related to protecting the climate or environment, or that it is about nature or the climate taking revenge on humans for the damage they have caused.

► Are unsure what justice means in the context of climate change

Most respondents made no reference to the word 'justice' when asked to define 'climate justice'. When they did, most said it has something to do with implementing (unspecified) environmental laws, legislation, taxes or regulations.

Very few spontaneously mentioned global history (for example, colonialism), structures (for example, capitalism) and inequities around class, racialisation⁵² or gender in their definitions of climate justice.

On the relatively rare occasions when survey respondents gave a definition of climate justice that was more closely aligned to that employed by this study, they understood climate change as an ethical, moral or social justice issue, acknowledging that it does not affect everyone equally. They reported seeing wealthy actors, industry and corporations as more responsible for causing climate change and therefore responsible for carrying more of the cost.

“*For me, according to the polluter pays principle, countries bearing the main responsibility for global warming are responsible for standing up globally for the consequences and damage due to climate change*”
Survey, Germany

In the 600 analysed responses to this question only one mentioned colonialism and one capitalism. A few referred to climate change as a human rights issue. One explicitly mentioned racial justice and no one mentioned gender justice. Some talked about intergenerational justice but referred to climate change as a future problem – protecting the environment for future generations – and not one already being experienced by people today.

“*Leave future generations a non-destroyed environment so they can enjoy it*”
Survey, Spain

These results add weight to the idea that climate justice is a fairly commonly used term, but it tends not to be used with a consistent understanding of what 'justice' refers to.

► Are open to the principles of climate justice when these are introduced

In other parts of the survey many survey respondents were supportive of ideas behind climate justice when presented with them, such as that the least responsible are the most affected (55%) and that wealthy countries should pay compensation for damages caused by the climate crisis (58%). These ideas were not politically polarising and were supported, or at least not rejected, across the political spectrum.



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Are in many cases deeply worried about climate change

Although the workshop participants were selected for their concern about climate change, the extent of that concern was noticeable and moving. Some expressed it using spectacular terms such as “catastrophe”, “apocalypse” and “the end”.

“ I too am concerned about the environment; I think that is the case for everyone here. It's really something that's on my mind every day, especially in the context of the fires of the past few days. I am under the impression that every day we are reminded – but that's normal – that we live with a Damocles' sword hanging over our heads.”

Workshop, France

► Often support the ideas behind climate justice – even if they aren't familiar with the term

Many workshop participants had heard the term ‘climate justice’ – but, as with the results from the wider survey, weren't familiar with what it meant.

Despite not being familiar with the concept, many workshop participants supported the principles behind climate justice when they were presented, agreeing that climate change should be considered a social, economic and political issue.

“ I like this definition because it shows who is liable and where the greatest responsibility lies and who the greatest sufferers are.”

Workshop, Hungary

“ Climate change without economic and ethical anti-capitalist criticism will not work. That is why I think this term goes a long way towards accurately covering the implications [climate change] has and the measures that should really be taken to tackle the issue.”

Workshop, Spain

► Sometimes push back against connecting climate change and social justice

Some workshop participants argued that environmental issues and social justice are separable – for example, that we can get good environmental solutions without considering social justice, or that addressing social justice issues adds a burden which humanity doesn't have time to deal with.

“ With the urgency of making a difference now, I would say that the question of that justice should be left for later and let's save the environment now and then we'll see.”

Workshop, Czech Republic

“ I don't really believe in the convergence of struggles, in the fact that including feminism and racism in ecology and all that, I find that it blurs the lines, it makes the discourse less clear and less perceptible.”

Workshop, France

What do these findings mean for communicators?

The **workshop results** suggest that there is a significant opportunity for communicators to get the core ideas of climate justice across, but that they should not rely on the term alone to convey those ideas. Without careful explanation and illustration, concerned young adults may see environmental issues as separate from social justice issues. This has the potential to turn young people in Europe against the concept of climate justice, because their concern about climate change is channelled into the argument that there is no time to waste.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Take care using the term climate justice without explanation** – Climate narratives that start with the ideas behind climate justice and the changes that are needed may be more successful than those that use the term climate justice as a starting point. When using the term climate justice, communicators are likely to benefit from defining the term clearly.
- **Explain how climate change and social justice are intimately bound up** – The communication challenge is not only to build more concern about climate change or social justice, but also to link young people's existing concerns together.
- **Lean into broad concern about climate change and social justice** – Reinforcing positive social norms and shared compassionate values⁵³ – for example, the level of concern that exists about environmental and social justice issues and the support there is for core climate justice principles – demonstrates that other people care too and generates hope in human nature and each other.⁵⁴ Conversely, research shows that the belief that others are self-interested leads to greater alienation and less civic engagement.⁵⁵
- **Steer clear of language that reinforces the idea that climate change is an isolated technical challenge** – The more communicators talk to young people about climate change only in terms of urgently getting emissions down or developing better technologies, the more they risk reinforcing the belief that climate justice is a distraction.

4.2 Climate change as system change

“It is time for justice, accountability and a complete overhaul of economic systems. Our collective survival depends on it.” – Myriam Douo⁵⁶

A climate justice analysis looks at the underlying causes of climate change, tracing the crisis to systems based on continuous economic expansion and resource extraction, such as capitalism and colonialism. It explores the drivers behind those systems that have led to exploitation of largely marginalised BIPOC in the global south in service of mostly wealthier, whiter people in the global north.

According to this analysis, approaching climate change simply as a technological problem that can be solved through science and technology alone results in climate solutions that perpetuate harm to people and nature. For example, mining of metals in the global south in the drive for green energy sources in the global north has the potential to continue a pattern of transferring resources and wealth from one part of the world to another, exploiting labour, destroying land and nature and dispossessing people of their land.

This perspective sees shifts in energy use and supply as part of deeper changes that need to take place, broadening the debate from a narrow focus on topics such as emissions targets or green technologies. It encompasses solutions that involve the transformation of economic, political and social systems to models that are ecologically and socially just, including redistributing power so that the most affected communities have voice and leadership in the response to climate change.⁵⁷



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

- **See social structures and systems as the underlying drivers of climate change, requiring large-scale changes in response**

The survey respondents identified the top six drivers of climate change as industrialism, followed by global corporations and multinational companies, economic growth, capitalism, wealthy country governments and the world’s wealthiest people. Another way of expressing this is: the current dominant economic system (capitalism), followed by its logic or engine (economic growth), one of the main ways it reproduces itself (industrialism), and the main beneficiaries of this global system (global corporations and the wealthy).

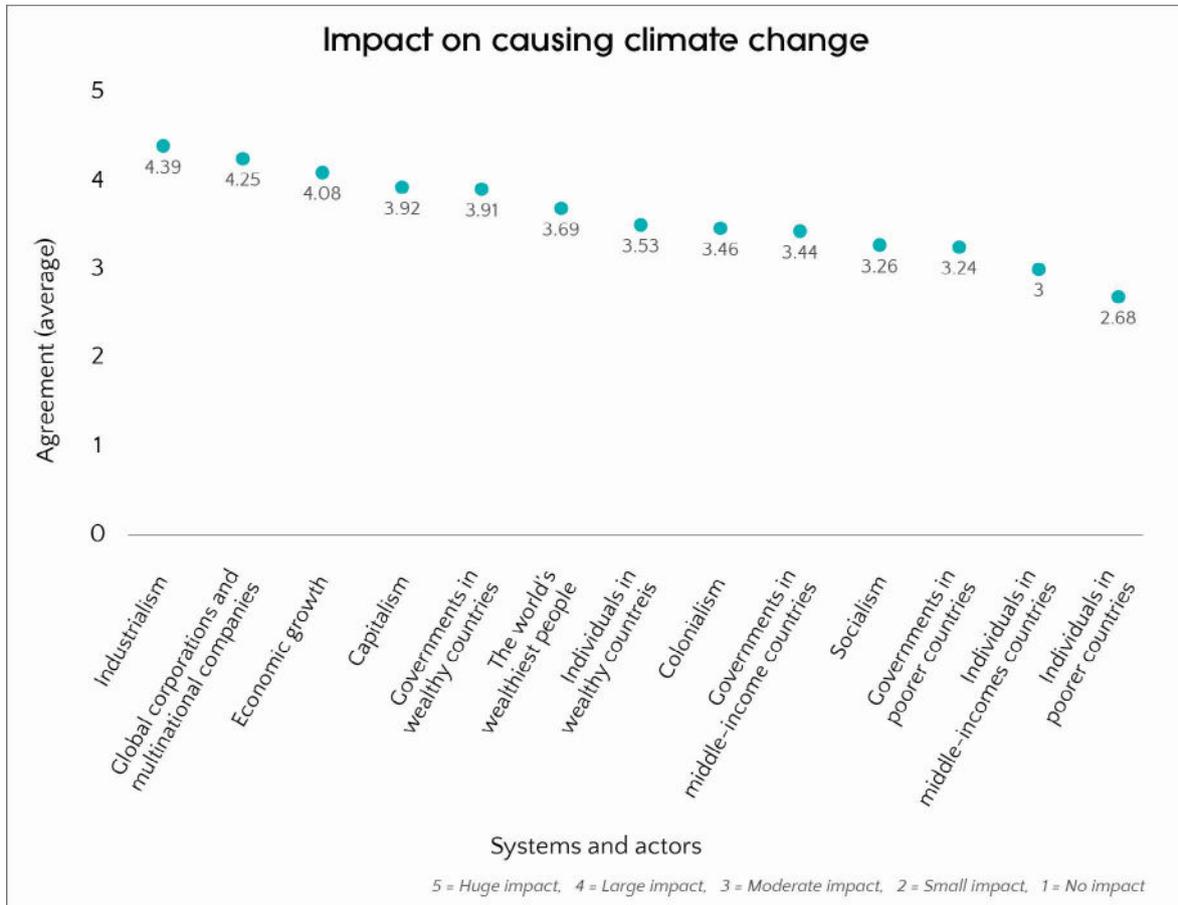


Figure 2: Survey respondents' responses to questions about the impact that different systems and actors have had on causing climate change⁵⁸ (represented as an average)

A further step of analysis⁵⁹ shows that young adults most frequently rate economic, political and social systems, like industrialism or capitalism, as the main drivers of climate change, followed by governments and then individuals.

Four out of five young adults surveyed agreed that we need to transform society and change how our economy works if we are to tackle climate change.

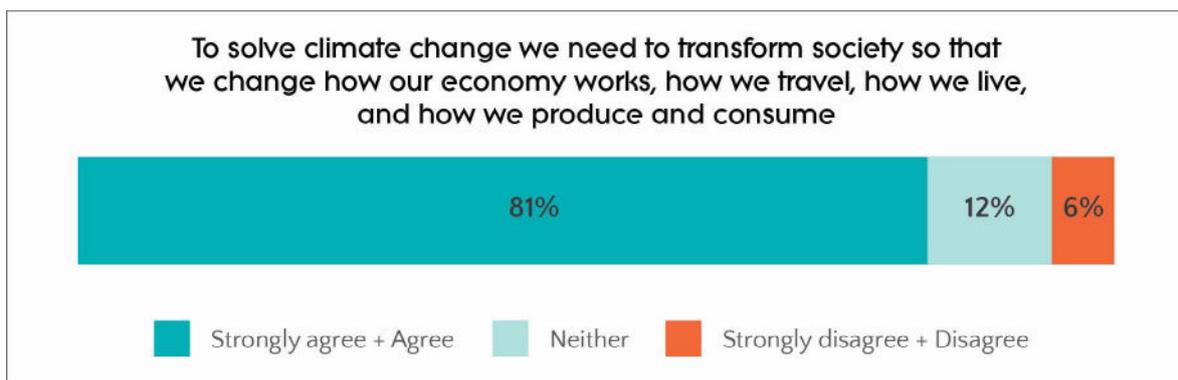


Figure 3: Survey respondents perceptions of the need to transform society and the economy to address climate change⁶⁰



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Believe climate change is rooted in the way society is organised and that large-scale change is needed

Echoing the results from the wider survey, the majority of workshop participants said they believe climate change is rooted in the way society is organised, and that large-scale rather than incremental change is needed.

“ I think that this is only possible with very significant changes. What we are trying to achieve now is small steps over a long period of time, where people should change their daily habits in a not very drastic manner. As a result, many scientists have written that nothing can be achieved in this way”

Workshop, Latvia

► May feel powerless to bring about change at scale

Many workshop participants conveyed a strong sense of their own powerlessness within the system, talking about the significant barriers individuals face in trying to influence change on a larger scale. They reported feeling that power lies primarily with governments and big companies but expressed doubts about these more powerful actors taking action on the scale required.

“ I can say that I wish that we would just make a big change... some sort of a reduction of capitalism and creating some sort of new system of society that puts people and the environment empathetically at the forefront... which is what I would like to see, and I think a lot of people would like to see, but it's not a realistic thing that's likely to happen in any near future.”

Workshop, Czech Republic

“ I believe that big changes are needed, but they cannot be achieved, however, they should be.”

Workshop, Latvia

Nonetheless, participants reported feeling that it is important that citizens, including young people, take action, particularly collective action, to try to bring about change.

► Express scepticism about individual behaviour change as a strategy

Many young adults in the workshops expressed the belief that lifestyle change is an important and necessary part of the response to climate change but participants also argued that changes to individual behaviours aren't possible or won't be effective as a strategy unless they are accompanied by much more significant changes by governments or companies, or wholesale transformation of the economic system.

“ We can have the most virtuous behaviour possible and the lowest carbon impact, but that won't be enough if it's not the whole system that changes.”

Workshop, France



Young woman waters plants in an urban garden in front of a power station
Photo credit: fotografixx/iStock

A number of participants argued that the system has a major influence over the way in which people behave and what choices they have – for example, by encouraging overconsumption, and limiting both the possibilities for living in an ethical way and citizens' influence over how society is organised. They pointed to, for instance, subsidies to damaging industries and the cost barriers that individuals face in making ethical lifestyle choices.

“ Although each one of us has a role, I think that... we have to see it in a much more macro way and, above all, political and economic... which then influence those choices, which are also the choices that we make every day in our purchases, how we travel, but also in our political choices, for example.”
Workshop, Portugal

Participants occasionally expressed annoyance at individual behaviour change being used as a way of deflecting attention from changes that more powerful actors need to make or the larger systemic changes that are needed.

“ Stop constantly telling me ‘X newspaper says: here are your tips for recycling...’ Yes, that’s important, 100% important, but my carbon footprint is nowhere near the carbon footprint of people who have much more power, a lot more wealth... everything is reduced to capitalism: the game that has boosted climate change to the levels we see today.”
Workshop, Spain

► May struggle to envision systemic solutions that meet the scale of the problem

In the workshop discussions it wasn't always clear what participants meant by 'the system'. They referred variously to capitalism, consumer society, neoliberalism, the free market, economic growth, and the economy – but there was little sense of shared understanding.

The same applies to discussions during the workshop about solutions and how society might change. Some of the participants' responses indicated that large-scale changes could happen through fixes to the existing structures and systems. Others indicated that transformation is not compatible with the way things are run now and that alternative systems are needed.

“ *The system, which is capitalist, has to be fixed somehow, so it's actually on the biggest companies.*”
Workshop, Czech Republic

“ *Capitalism, the current economic system, cannot solve the current climate problems.*”
Workshop, France

However, most of the specific solutions participants proposed⁶¹ consisted of fixes to markets, infrastructure, behaviours and technologies, rather than changes that would fundamentally transform the system or the drivers behind it.

“ *Incentivise the purchase of electric vehicles.*”
Workshop, Spain

This often seemed to be incongruent with the participants' analysis of the root causes of climate change and the scale of change they appear to believe is necessary.

► **Don't have solutions centred around social justice and historical responsibility in the front of their minds**

A climate justice analysis explores how responses aimed at reducing emissions can perpetuate existing models of resource extraction and unjust power relations, and it proposes solutions that have the potential to change these. This level of analysis was rarely reflected in the workshops.

When participants generated solutions, they mostly focused on emission reductions, and it wasn't clear whether they see ecological and social justice or historical responsibility as relevant. Occasionally participants proposed related measures such as changes to the development model, how decisions are made, or how wealth is distributed, but this was rare.

What do these findings mean for communicators?

The **workshop results** suggest that young adults see climate change as a big, systemic problem, but describing solutions that match this in scale is challenging – perhaps because it is difficult to think in terms of systems and it is hard to imagine how something so complex can be transformed.⁶² Participants named capitalism and consumer society as among the main drivers of climate change but suggested smaller-scale changes to markets, infrastructure and technology, for example, as solutions. The solutions they offered mostly did not focus on social justice or redressing historical injustices. And they expressed a strong sense of powerlessness in terms of what they can do to effect change.

The results indicate that there is an opportunity for climate justice communicators to talk about climate change as a systemic issue that is rooted in the way society and the economy are organised. They also suggest that there are some key challenges: first to spark people's imagination about, and understanding of, system-level change; second to demonstrate why social justice must be a core part of those changes; and third that young adults see themselves in those solutions.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Talk about systems** – Young adults are open to conversations about how climate change is rooted in the way society and the economy are organised. Terms such as ‘economic growth’ and ‘capitalism’ are key references. There are, however, regional differences in these responses, as young adults living in eastern Europe are more likely to associate critiques of capitalism with Communist propaganda.⁶³
- **Raise awareness of the role of social injustice in driving climate change** – This could mean explaining clearly, using examples, how the history of colonialism and global capitalism are linked to extractive economies today and ultimately climate change – and why, therefore, the solutions to climate change need to address harm and injustice if they are to be effective.⁶⁴
- **Present systems as open to pressure and change** – Many young adults in this research appear to see systems as powerful and inevitable forces that are too difficult to change. Climate change communicators seeking to challenge this could present these systems as human-made tools with the potential to be redesigned and managed for human and planetary wellbeing, proposing transformative solutions that meet the scale of the problem, rather than solutions that sit within those systems.⁶⁵
- **Offer big-picture solutions and strategies to get there** – The goals of climate justice may feel distant and difficult to achieve, while small-scale behaviour changes may feel insufficient – both of which can lead to a sense of powerlessness. Follow young people’s instinct that systems are at the root of the problem and connect this with solutions that involve system change (and are underpinned by social equity and justice). Accompany this with information about opportunities to enact and be part of these solutions. These could cover specific, detailed actions that young people can take together including, ideally, the opportunity to critically and strategically reflect and decide on courses of action together.⁶⁶
- **Offer different visions of the future** – Lean in to young people’s concern that the global economy is driving climate change and offer alternatives. Highlight the need to move from economic models based on exploitation of people and unsustainable extraction of natural resources to models where people locally and globally live a meaningful, equitable and fulfilling life within the Earth’s ecological limits.⁶⁷
- **Talk about power and change** – Trajectories of popular struggle, and stories of when and how people without power have changed the world, demonstrate what’s possible.⁶⁸ Show how collective action, through long-term organising and mobilising, can build political power and transformative economic infrastructure. For example, talk about the past as a source of hope and inspiration: we fought slavery and the wins have been ongoing – now it’s time for reparations. This is the next step and to solve climate change it is necessary. Or point to examples of mutual aid and solidarity initiatives, such as grassroots-run food systems, which support communities through multiple crises resulting from the intersections of climate change and inequality.
- **Emphasise that it’s not too late** – Examples of long-term organising and mobilising from the past illustrate that large-scale change is possible, but also that it takes time and requires perseverance. This may not sit comfortably with young people’s sense of urgency in relation to climate change – so it may help to emphasise that change takes time, is messy and imperfect, but that it is never too late to build relationships and work in solidarity with others – that this has been and always will be necessary in facing ecological and social challenges.⁶⁹

4.3 Impact of climate change on existing injustices

“We are confronted by intense droughts, heatwaves, and then, all of a sudden, by floods. This is climate change and its social, economic and cultural consequences are hitting my community hard. That’s why I have decided to fight. Because if we don’t take action against climate change, it’ll be my people who will disappear and disappearing with them will be not just their culture but also their precious knowledge of the environment.”

– Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim⁷⁰

A climate justice analysis recognises that gender, age, class, disability, racialisation and national or social origins all affect the likelihood of someone being negatively affected by climate change. The analysis looks at how structures and systems drive poverty and inequality through both discrimination and creating barriers – to participation and to basic rights and opportunities. This culminates in marginalised groups having less opportunity to withstand or respond to the impacts of climate change. As a result, climate change is exacerbating the existing suffering of people who are already disadvantaged, whereas those with more power and resources are better able to cope with the impacts and shape the response to climate change.⁷¹

As one key example, women, non-binary and trans people are disproportionately affected by climate change, experiencing impacts that are exacerbated by other inequities such as racial injustice. There is nothing innate about this vulnerability: rather it is a result of social and cultural factors such as gendered roles, their voices being excluded or less valued in society, and increased likelihood of experiencing gender-based violence when there is a disaster.⁷²



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

- **Agree that the people who are least responsible are suffering the worst impacts and that climate change will increase existing inequalities.**

Over half (55%) of the young people surveyed agreed that the people who are the least responsible for causing climate change are suffering the worst impacts. The results suggest that this is not a particularly controversial or polarising idea, but neither is it strong and established, as indicated by the sizeable group of people who remained unsure.

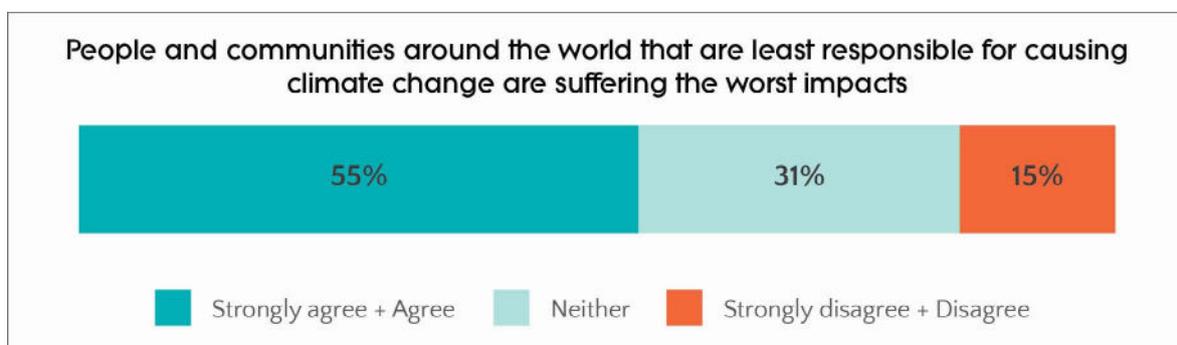


Figure 4: Survey respondents’ perceptions about whether the people and communities who are least responsible for causing climate change are suffering the worst impacts⁷³

An even bigger majority – almost two-thirds of respondents – agreed that, around the world, climate change will increase existing inequalities.

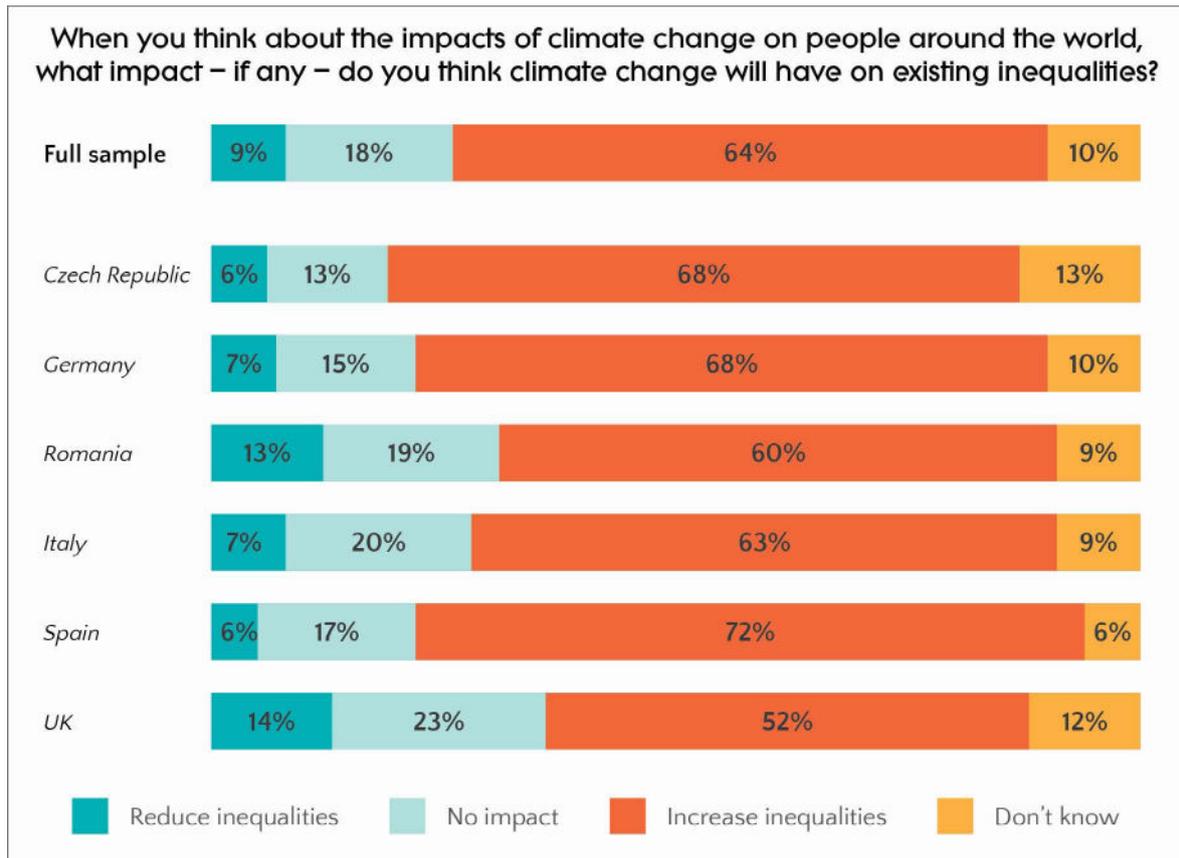


Figure 5: Survey respondents' perceptions of the impact of climate change on existing inequalities for the full sample and by country

This attitude varied across countries, however. In the **UK** around half said they believe climate change will increase existing inequalities – the lowest of all the countries surveyed. By contrast, in **Spain** almost three-quarters of young adults said that climate change will increase existing inequalities.

Two men carry a mattress over their heads past a terraced house, Leeds, UK.
Photo credit: Daniel Harvey Gonzalez/In Pictures via Getty Images



► **But don't connect many social issues with climate change**

While young adults agree in principle that climate change will increase existing inequalities, they tend to understand this primarily through the lens of age and income inequalities. They don't readily connect climate change with other social issues such as racial and gender injustices.

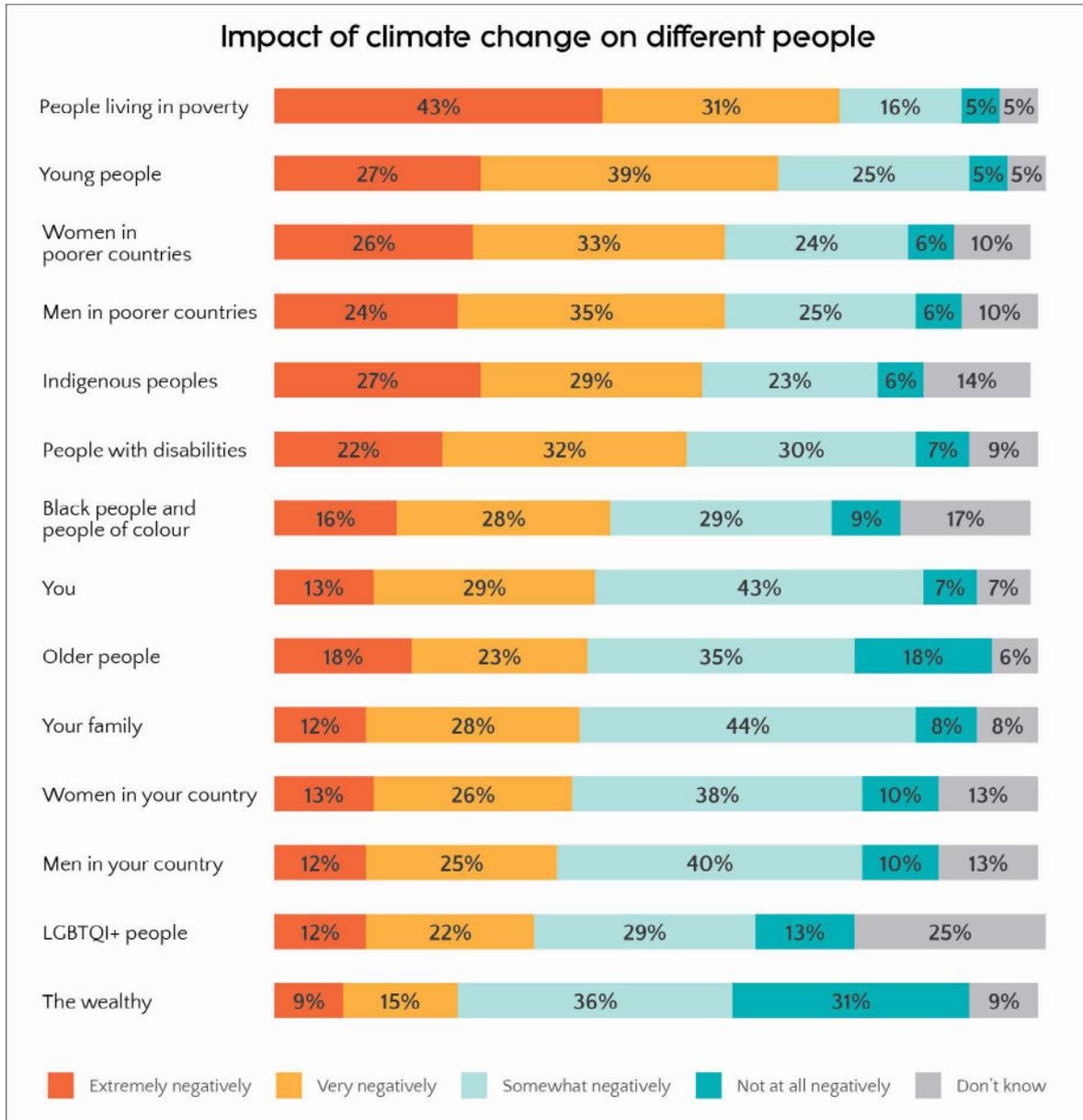


Figure 6: Survey respondents' views about how negatively climate change will affect different people²⁴

For example, participants identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) people as one of the groups least impacted by climate change, followed only by 'the wealthy'. A quarter of participants said they didn't know what the impacts of climate change would be on LGBTQI+ people.



Mother and baby seated on a bed above a flooded floor in their home in Bengal, India.
Photo credit: Joydeep Mukherjee / Climate Visuals Countdown

And despite burgeoning literature and campaigning on the relationship between climate change and gender inequalities, a third (33%) disagree and almost half (47%) neither agreed nor disagreed that women are more affected by climate change than men.

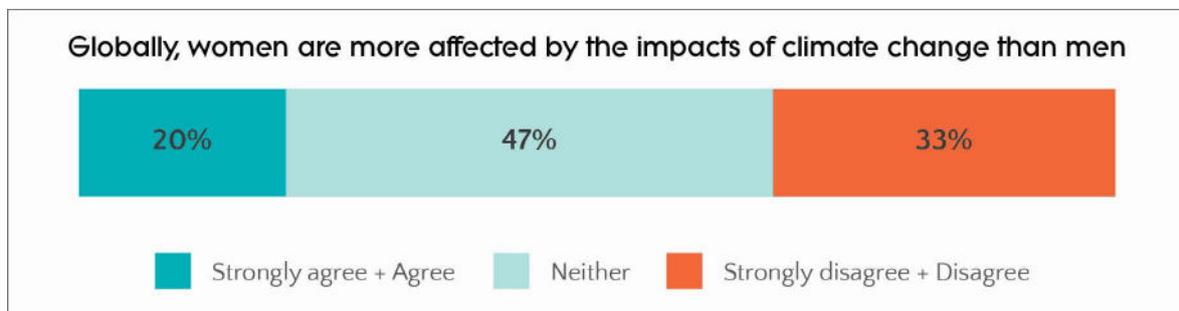


Figure 7: Survey respondents' perceptions of the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women compared to men⁷⁵

Moreover, participants were likely to reach for inaccurate explanations for such inequalities – for instance, that women are more emotional and physically vulnerable. When respondents who did agree were given a list of possible reasons why women are more affected, a similar percentage chose physical and emotional vulnerability as chose each of the wider structural issues presented – for example how much power women have in society. This reasoning conforms to harmful gender stereotypes that lead to the exclusion of women from opportunities and resources that result in them being disproportionately impacted by climate change.⁷⁶

Overall, right-leaning participants and men were more likely to attribute the greater impact of climate change on women to their physical and emotional vulnerability. There were also some regional differences: young adults in the Czech Republic and Romania chose 'physical and emotional vulnerability' most frequently whereas young people in Spain, Italy, the UK and Germany chose wider structural issues.



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

- ▶ See a link between poverty and a person's vulnerability to climate change, but most don't readily make a connection with other social issues

Discussions in the workshops reflected a similar pattern to the survey responses. Many participants reported seeing a link between poverty and a person's vulnerability – as a result of, for example, having less purchasing power, worse homes, or fewer options.

“My answer isn't 'everybody', but 'only the poor people'. Their houses are not well-built. They are more likely to suffer the consequences. Eventually everyone will bear the consequences of climate change, but for now I say only the poor.”
Workshop, Belgium

But workshop participants rarely spontaneously made a connection between climate change and other social issues, such as racism and sexism. And some actively rejected narratives that focused on this.

“It seems a bit of a special snowflakes hysteria to me ... about men. Because they had to force things like LGBTQ and whatever into it, which is alright but it has little to do with climate change.”
Workshop, Hungary

“Being a black person or a person of colour doesn't take away from the fact that that person is financially or materially able to respond to these climate changes.”
Workshop, Belgium

Most workshop participants didn't explicitly connect climate change with racial inequalities, though race and racism were sometimes implied, rather than talked about directly. Participants acknowledged that climate change has a disproportionate impact on people in poorer countries and people in the global south and, to a lesser degree, on indigenous communities and religious minorities.

“I would rather say that it will hit third-world countries harder first.”
Workshop, Hungary

The main explanation given for this was that people in these countries or regions are more geographically susceptible to impacts like flooding or drought, and have less resources, such as funds or infrastructure, with which to respond. But aspects of racism such as prejudice, disempowerment and discrimination, and how these might compound climate impacts, were rarely mentioned. Young people might, for example, recognise that indigenous communities in the global south have access to fewer resources and life options associated with being poor, but not that they have less political voice or are discriminated against by authorities.

Occasionally, participants made reference to intersecting inequalities, but this was rare.

“Women, minorities, young people and elderly people, were much more susceptible to any type of harm from climate change, whether from having no food, or having their home blown away and, if they asked the government for help, it would help the rich who had suffered minimal damage, not them. Particularly for ethnic minorities: if you didn't practise the same religion, or you had a different culture you didn't get the same help.”
Workshop, Spain

One exception was in Spain, where a number of participants showed a sophisticated understanding of the connection between vulnerability to climate change, gender and racial injustices.

What do these findings mean for communicators?

The young adults **in the workshops** largely recognised that climate change disproportionately and unfairly impacts some groups in society more than others, but most didn't readily make a connection between structural racism and sexism and the likelihood of someone experiencing climate change impacts, or the structural barriers they may face in being able to respond – for example, in regard to access to physical and financial resources, social networks, and time.

Participants tended to focus on economic disparities and geographical vulnerabilities and were less likely to connect vulnerability to climate change with other aspects of marginalisation, such as experiences of discrimination or disempowerment in society – and, therefore, had a harder time understanding why racialisation or gender are relevant. Some actively rejected narratives around this. A key challenge for communicators is to spell out clearly not only that this connection exists but why it exists.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Build awareness of how climate change exacerbates gender inequalities** – Don't assume people know a lot about the relationship between vulnerability to climate change and gender. Find ways of making the impacts on women, for example, visible, through authentic imagery⁷⁷ and real stories that young Europeans feel they can connect with.
- **Show the effects, locally and globally, using real-world incidents** – For example, talking about how more women than men died during the 2003 European heatwave.⁷⁸ Connecting this with the disproportionate impacts experienced by women around the world as a result of unequal power relations may help to build a sense of affinity and solidarity without diminishing the experience of those living on the frontlines of climate change.
- **Avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes** – Rather, tell stories that portray the underlying reasons why women, non-binary and trans people are more impacted by climate change. For example, seek to illustrate the established barriers (in education, income, social and political networks and so on) to these groups' inclusion in climate analysis and solutions; and how this means understanding of and responses to climate change often don't reflect their experiences and needs.⁷⁹ But avoid casting women, non-binary and trans people as passive victims. Instead, highlight how they are responding as agents and experts in their own right, and how their leadership is critical to solving the problem.⁸⁰
- **Build affinity with impacted people** – Previous research suggests there is a need to build a sense of affinity and identification with the people who are the most impacted.⁸¹ The Framing Climate Justice project proposes focusing on “solidarity and shared humanity”, avoiding describing the people who are most impacted as “out there for us to help” – and instead focusing on “experiences, identities and concerns in common”, using language like “standing shoulder to shoulder” and “working together”⁸².

- **Show how people affected by racism and racialised inequalities are more impacted in European countries, as well as across countries affected by poverty in the global south** – This helps to introduce an analysis of inequality that is closer to home and connected to racialisation that goes beyond the lens of income inequalities and the global north versus global south. Introduce explanations of how racial injustices affect not only access to economic resources but also representation in the political system, power and voice, service provision, and treatment by authorities. Use relatable case studies, for example the case of Hurricane Katrina in the USA in 2005, when Black women were severely disproportionately affected.⁸³
- **Introduce the notion that histories of colonialism and resource extraction have driven global emissions and climate impacts across the world** – Sensitively bring the issues of colonial histories and models of resource extraction into the picture when talking about the disproportionate impacts of climate change on people in countries of the global south, connecting with young people’s pre-existing understanding that the global economy today is harming people and nature. Share that this is evidence-based – and is, for example, highlighted in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report.⁸⁴ This has the potential to empower young people to move beyond explanations connected to poverty and geography into a deeper analysis.

Protest during the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference in November 2021 in Glasgow, UK.
Photo credit: ANDY BUCHANAN/AFP via Getty Images



4.4 Historical responsibility for climate change

“The fossil fuel industry was born of the industrial revolution, which was born of slavery, which was born of colonialism. It’s no accident that the map of climate change’s worst wrath to date looks like a coloniser’s playground.” – Mary Annaise Heglar⁸⁵

Climate justice analysis has emerged from the idea that wealthy and powerful people, and the systems that support them, are disproportionately responsible for creating the climate crisis. It traces the historical roots of climate change from colonialism and slavery to the global fossil fuel-based economy that grew out of the industrial revolution and that continues to transfer large amounts of resources from poorer to richer countries.

The rich world has benefited hugely from this process as well as from the direct emissions associated with industrialisation. As a result these countries have more resources and power to respond to the climate crisis, while colonised people and countries are experiencing its worst consequences.⁸⁶

A climate justice analysis therefore recognises a historical responsibility for the impacts of climate change – both now and in the future – and its advocates call for reparations to be paid.⁸⁷



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

► Don’t have a strong grasp of the idea of historical responsibility

In the 600 definitions of climate justice analysed, respondents mostly didn’t refer to the levels of responsibility that different people, places or systems carry for causing or acting on climate change. Where this was mentioned, the focus tended to be on the present, rather than the past. Very few respondents spontaneously mentioned global history, and there was only one mention of colonialism.

When identifying the main drivers behind climate change, respondents rated colonialism less frequently than many other drivers, such as, for example, capitalism, global corporations, and wealthy country governments. Colonialism was rated as having the eighth largest impact on causing climate change, out of 13 drivers – see Figure 2.



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Don’t have historical responsibility in the front of their minds

When discussing who bears the main responsibility for climate change, the workshop participants rarely referred to the past. They mostly talked about what’s happening now – suggesting that ‘everyone’ or ‘all countries’ are responsible, but also that big corporations, governments, fossil fuel companies, big emitters, global north, industrialised countries, China and India, and powerful and rich people bear particular accountability.

Across the 20 workshops, no one spontaneously raised the history of colonialism and its relationship to climate change. When prompted to consider historical responsibility, however,⁸⁸ some workshop participants – mostly in Spain⁸⁹ – demonstrated a sophisticated analysis of the role of historical exploitation.

“It is very good that climate change has a political perspective because it is actually caused as part of a concrete ideology, namely imperialism and colonialism, without which all this would not have happened.”

Workshop, Spain

“Because if we look at who caused climate change historically, it's also people who profited a lot from it and still profit from it today through post-colonial structures and still sit in power today.”

Workshop, Germany

► Gave mixed responses to the idea of establishing historical responsibility

For some workshop participants it is an attractive idea

Many participants embraced the idea of establishing historical responsibility when they were presented with it. They acknowledged that richer countries had a much more significant role in causing climate change in the past, and therefore have a different responsibility now and in the future.

They particularly supported the idea of bringing **ethics and morality** into discussions about the climate crisis, and suggested mechanisms like the ‘polluter pays’ principle as a way of establishing responsibility.

“I think it's interesting that it's an ethical question, because there's an idea of responsibility, it's a moral responsibility, so I think it's an interesting notion.”

Workshop, France

“In the same way that we can be fined if, for example, we don't clean up after our dog, companies and individuals who have been overexploiting natural and human resources must also be fined or there must be a way of providing redress on a social level.”

Workshop, Spain

Many participants' **connected past industrialisation with responsibility for climate change**. Occasionally, participants demonstrated a sophisticated analysis of the role of colonialism and imperialism – as discussed above – and the implications of this in terms of responsibility today.

But it was a contested idea among other workshop participants

Not all young people accept the principle that those who have created the greatest damage in the past should bear the most responsibility now. Some participants raised practical and philosophical objections, including the following:

‘The past isn't relevant to what we do now’: Several participants didn't see the relevance of the past to solutions today, emphasising that we should look forward rather than back – and focus on who has the ability to act now, rather than who is historically responsible.

“ I don't really like this definition. I have a feeling that it's about the past and a little bit about the present. I don't feel it's about the future.”
Workshop, Hungary

'It's hard to identify who is responsible': Some participants argued that it's hard to blame specific people or places because we are all collectively responsible. Others suggested that it isn't immediately obvious who is responsible and that figuring this out would require research and analysis, which could be impractical or could delay action.

“ Yes, but that requires a good analysis of who really is responsible and to what extent.”
Workshop, Latvia

The ethics of such a process were also brought into question, with fears that it could easily be twisted and taken advantage of.

“ Well, to me at least it seems quite controversial... who's going to decide it's fair? That's even when we have courts and things like that.”
Workshop, Czech Republic

'We shouldn't play the blame game': Some participants suggested that establishing who is to blame would be a time-consuming distraction. A number argued that we are all responsible, or that we should all work together, rather than blame some people and let others off the hook.

“ We are all human beings and we are one world. One earth. When it comes to climate warming, we are the earth! The globe. I don't think we should be pointing fingers at people.”
Workshop, Belgium

'Climate justice will take too long': Some participants saw establishing historical responsibility as a hindrance to or distraction from dealing with climate change now. There was a sense that climate justice will take too long and that the justice aspect can be left for later.

“ We have to be careful that instead of fixing it... that we don't spend a long time figuring out who's to blame.”
Workshop, Czech Republic

'We can't hold people in the past responsible': Some argued that people can't be held responsible if they're no longer alive, or if they didn't know that their actions were causing climate change.

“ The people who are to blame are those who knew that this led to climate warming; I'm not going to blame someone who wasn't so aware [of this]. It has taken all of us time to understand the concept, and I think it's not right to say 'this person is to blame, the rest are not.'”
Workshop, Spain

'We can't ignore the role of BRICS countries today': Some participants voiced concern that a focus on the past would let BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) off the hook.

“ Looking at the world's biggest players, China is now the largest emitter in the world and the US and Europe are historically responsible. If we want to tackle climate change we also need to get the BRIC countries on board. Otherwise, we will continue to hit a wall.”
Workshop, Belgium

What do these findings mean for communicators?

The young adults **in the workshops** believe that some actors hold more responsibility for causing climate change than others. Their focus, however, tended to be on the present rather than the past, unless prompted to consider the past. Colonialism, in particular, tended to be omitted from their analysis.

The idea of holding some countries or people accountable for their actions historically met with mixed responses. Some participants were attracted to the idea of 'polluter pays', for example, but others felt that establishing historical responsibility may become a hindrance or distraction from dealing with climate change now. Some argued that people can't be held responsible if they're no longer alive, or if they didn't know that their actions were causing climate change.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Explain how the past has led to the present** – Young adults in the workshops believe the current global economy is harming people and nature but many didn't readily connect this with the past. Use relatable examples that explain the connection between past and present with reference to legacies of colonialism and resource extraction and how these have, and continue to, shape practices today. For instance, the example of poor conditions and precarious work in factories in the global south producing cheap clothes for people in the global north can illustrate the legacy of colonial extraction and how it still leads to exploitation that harms people's basic rights and the natural world today. Young people's belief that wealthy countries are more responsible for climate change can form a basis for understanding how this has arisen from past practices as well as current emissions.
- **Extend and adapt the 'polluter pays' principle to historical responsibility** – Many young people understand the 'polluter pays' principle as offering a way of establishing responsibility. Extending this, for example, to 'extractor pays' or 'exploiter pays' could be one way of incorporating responsibility for wider harms to society and the environment. Further research could test the effectiveness of this approach.
- **Talk about how the past can provide important learnings to inform solutions and ensure harm isn't repeated** – The concept of historical responsibility incorporates the idea of looking back to look forward. This means that it could be useful to draw on arguments about learning from the past and ensuring harmful practices don't continue.⁹⁰
- **Make the case for concepts such as reparations through arguments about social justice** – Many young people in this research did not show a strong understanding of solutions that are socially just or that repair past injustices. Making the case for reparations therefore means building this understanding first, connecting the dots between how past harm is linked to extractive economies today, and how solutions like reparations can address environmental and social injustices and promote equity.
- **Address particular confusions and concerns, such as questions of trust** – Communicators can tell the story of how the past has led to the present, while addressing young people's confusions and concerns. This could include for example explaining scientifically where responsibility lies for the climate crisis, why the past is relevant to what happens now, and how to trust a process that helps define who is responsible.

4.5 A just process: procedural justice

“Climate Justice affirms the rights of indigenous peoples and affected communities to represent and speak for themselves” – Bali Climate Justice Principles⁹¹

Climate justice proposes solutions that redistribute power and centre the people and communities who are most affected. It encompasses the idea of procedural justice, which focuses on the fairness of the decision-making process rather than the outcome. For instance, people may be more likely to accept the outcomes of climate negotiations if they believe they were arrived at fairly – for example, if the people and places most impacted by climate change have a voice in the decision-making process.⁹²



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

► Often think communities should be directly involved in decisions that affect them

Almost half (47%) of the young people surveyed said they think the best form of governance for tackling climate change would be a system where power is decentralised, with communities directly involved in decision-making. This was the most frequently chosen form of governance across all countries, political leanings, genders and age groups.

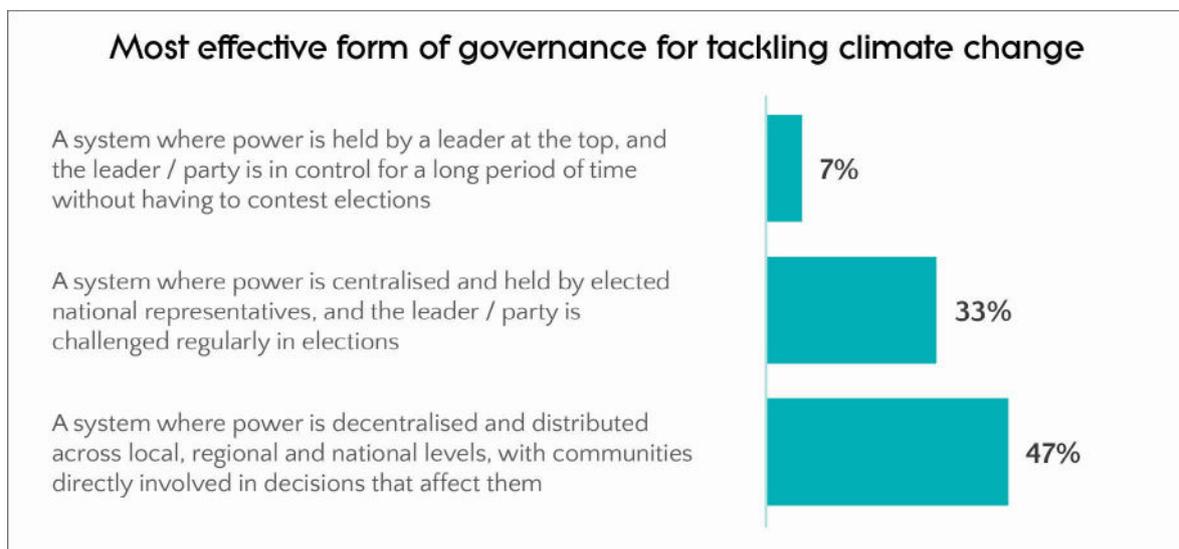


Figure 8: Survey respondents' views about which form of governance would be better at tackling climate change⁹³

► Believe scientists and experts, and people who are most impacted by climate change should have more of a say

The survey results suggest young people want most groups across society to play a bigger role in addressing climate change than they do at present. Most notably, respondents pointed to scientists and experts (75%), people and communities most affected by climate change (72%), social justice

and environmental organisations (68%), and young people themselves (63%) as the groups who should have a more significant say in climate change decision-making.

These attitudes reflect a general sense among the young people in this research that action on climate change needs to be escalated across the board.

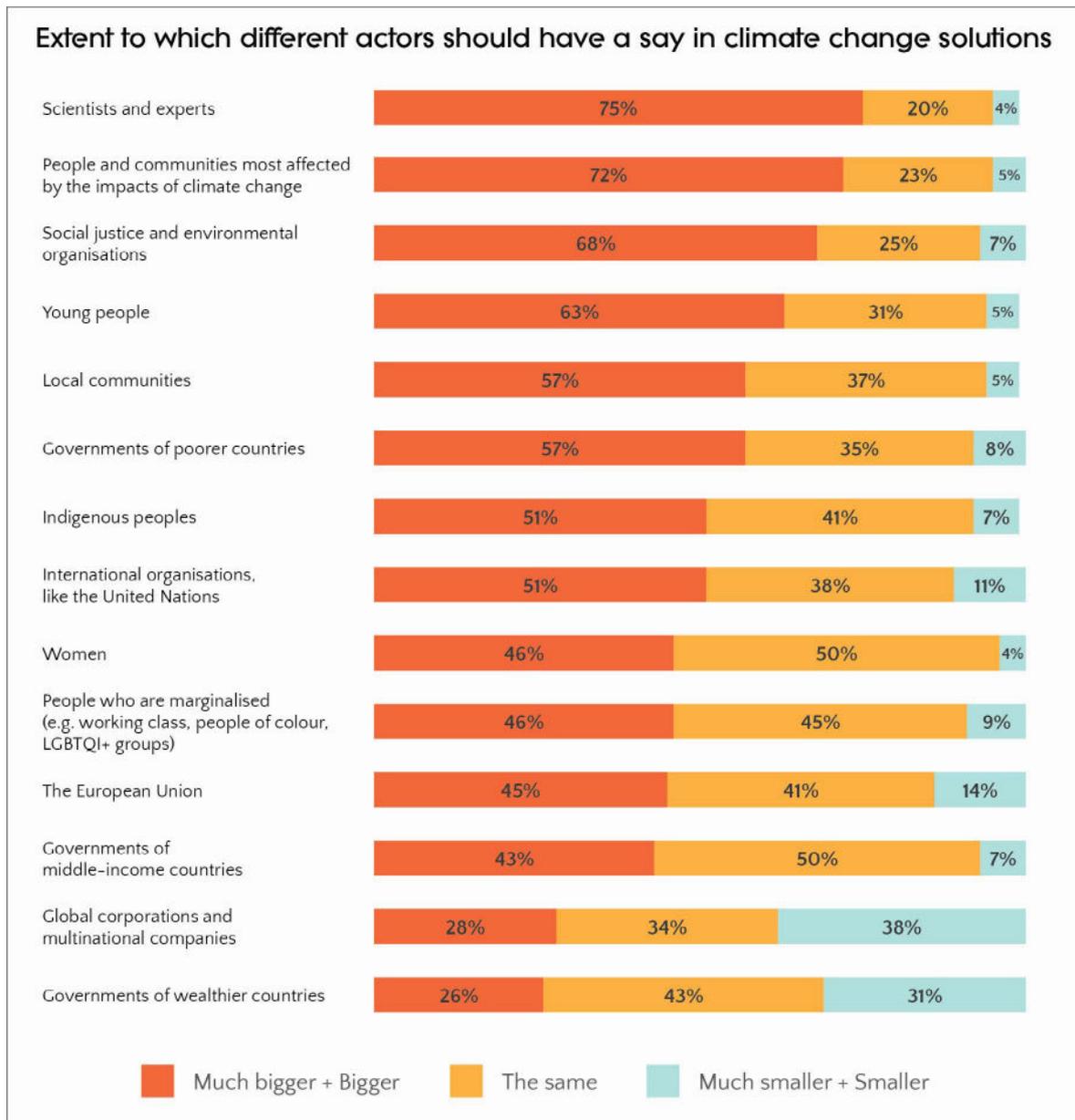


Figure 9: Survey respondents' views about whether different actors should have a bigger or a smaller say than they do now in decisions about tackling climate change⁹⁴

► **Believe wealthy country governments and corporations already have enough or too much power**

Respondents to the survey think that governments of wealthy countries and multinational corporations should have the same or less say. Almost three-quarters of respondents supported this idea – possibly because they think governments and companies have too much say already, or because they don't believe they will do the right thing on climate change.



Volunteers from Jal Saheli Friends of water participate in the construction of a check dam on dried up Bachedi stream in Agrotha village, in Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh, India in June 2022
Photo credit: SANJAY KANOJIA/AFP via Getty Images

► **But many don't make a connection between being excluded in terms of power and voice and being more impacted by climate change**

This research suggests that young adults believe that those with knowledge about climate change, either through formal education or training or as a result of experiencing climate change impacts, should have a greater say.

But their understanding of who is more impacted by climate change appears to be limited. Survey respondents were split on whether they'd like to see a similar or bigger role for women, indigenous people and people who are marginalised.

This suggests that young adults don't necessarily see a connection between being systematically discounted, in terms of power and voice, and being more impacted by climate change. Moreover, it suggests that many don't value indigenous knowledge highly.



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Believe the people who are most affected should have more of a say

Echoing the survey respondents, the workshop participants largely agreed that those who are most affected should have more of a say, because, for example, this would lead to better solutions as they have important knowledge and experience to contribute.

“*They have simply had other experiences and are therefore perhaps better able to assess what is important and what is not.*”
Workshop, Germany

Some appealed to the principle that everyone has a right of representation and there is a moral imperative to consult those who are most affected by a decision.

“*They have just as much right of co-determination as others.*”
Workshop, Germany

“*Imagine that I am a girl from a poor family in Peru, and a large company comes to extract resources from my land, taking away my food so that there is one more apple in [the supermarket]. And they say, I want the apple, and I say, yes, but that means you're taking everything away from me. Clearly, the girl from Peru should have more choice than the company.*”
Workshop, Spain

► Want young people to have more of a say, but not the burden of responsibility

Workshop participants also believe young people should have more power and voice in climate change solutions.

“*Give young people the opportunity to be closer to the decision-making because the future is essentially for us and I think it's time to get young people involved.*”
Workshop, Portugal

Occasionally, however, they expressed resistance to the idea of being the ones who should bear the burden of responsibility for fixing the problem (see Section 5, Narrative 2).

“*I'm tired of always being targeted, as young people... ultimately, many of these things should not be our responsibility...*”
Workshop, Spain

And while some suggested that change can only come from young people, others questioned the power that young people have.

► Some are less likely to value lived experience as a form of knowledge

While many workshop participants think that the people who are most impacted should have more of a say, they don't necessarily believe that leadership should come from the frontlines. Some pushed back altogether against the idea of those with first-hand experience of climate change

impacts having more of a say. These young adults seemed to privilege technical and scientific knowledge, and suggested that the people who are most impacted may lack the necessary expertise to make good decisions.

“...those people are often poor as well, they just don't have the money to educate themselves and they probably can't solve such a complex problem.”
Workshop, Czech Republic

“...it really is a bit of a question of making decisions on the basis of competence, not on the basis of who comes from a more disadvantaged position, because even if he or she experiences first-hand how bad climate change is, it is not necessarily the case that he or she is the most competent to make decisions on this issue.”
Workshop, Hungary

What do these findings mean for communicators?

The **workshop results** indicate that there is an opportunity to speak to young adults' desire for those who are most impacted to have more of a say in climate solutions. Communicators could both highlight the need to stand in solidarity with and how much there is to learn from indigenous people, people and communities in the global south, and those with direct experience of climate change.

However, in accordance with climate justice principles, this needs to be done without giving the impression that they should be included only because their knowledge is valuable – it should be emphasised that it is right in principle as well as useful in practice.⁹⁵

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Speak to young adults' desire for those who are most affected to be directly involved in decision-making on climate change** – Paint a picture of what democratic governance could look like if it included the voices of those who currently have less power. This can help highlight what's not currently working, according to the climate justice analysis, and generate a sense that alternatives are possible.⁹⁶
- **Make the case for lived experience as a valuable form of climate expertise** – for instance, by sharing examples of where communities have played a critical role in observing local climate impacts or contributing to successful and relevant solutions. Emphasise not only the need to stand in solidarity but also how much there is to learn from those with direct experience of climate change. Framing suggested by the Framing Climate Justice project “*We have something important to learn from people with direct experience of climate change*”⁹⁷ could be effective with young adults.
- **Appeal to the right to have a say** – Lean in to young people's belief that people and communities having a say is intrinsically important. Framing suggested by the Framing Climate Justice project “*It is intrinsically important that affected groups have voice*”⁹⁸ could be effective with young adults.

- **Avoid images or frames that cast marginalised people as passive victims**⁹⁹ – instead demonstrate that they are agents and experts in their own right, and show how their leadership is critical to solving the problem.¹⁰⁰ For example, highlight collective actions, protest, advocacy or campaigns led by women and indigenous people, especially from the global south and young people, or emphasise the critical role and knowledge of indigenous people in protecting 80% of global biodiversity despite comprising only 5% of the world's population.¹⁰¹
- **Young people can play an important role, but should not be expected to carry the whole burden** – Emphasise the important role that young people have to play and specific ways they can be involved, but take care not to place the burden for addressing a problem they largely haven't caused on the shoulders of youth alone. Some young adults in this research emphasised that responsibility for addressing the crisis shouldn't sit disproportionately with them. They suggested that change needs to happen at every level, from the individual to government to systems, and that it must be an intergenerational effort.

A police officer removes a rock to clear a road during a protest against privatization of water resources in 2009 in Ecuador.

Photo credit: ANDY BUCHANAN/AFP via Getty Images



4.6 A just response: reparations and redistribution

“What we are asking for is repayment... We are not begging for aid. We want developed countries to comply with their obligation and pay their debt.” – Angelica Navarro¹⁰²

The principles of reparations and redistribution in climate policy are based on the idea of returning wealth that has been extracted from colonised people and global majority countries, largely to serve the rich world. These principles recognise that colonised people and communities are suffering the worst impacts of climate change, despite bearing the least responsibility for it. Advocates call for reparations from wealthy countries for the climate change-related damages and loss of life and livelihoods that people and communities in the global south are experiencing. This is expressed in important debates around loss and damage and financial compensation at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) level.¹⁰³



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

- **Are mostly in favour of richer countries compensating poorer countries that are facing loss and damage as a result of climate change**

The majority of survey respondents supported the idea that wealthy countries should compensate poorer countries for damages caused by the climate crisis. This applied across the political spectrum: although fewer right- than left-leaning participants agreed, the majority did not disagree.¹⁰⁴

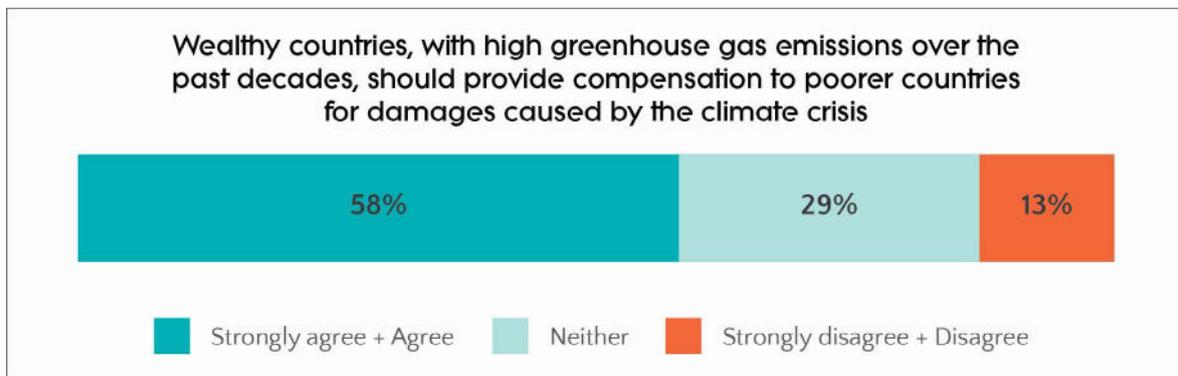


Figure 10: Survey respondents' views about whether wealthy countries should provide compensation for damages caused by the climate crisis¹⁰⁵

► Two-fifths also feel that resources should be redistributed

Some 40% of the respondents to the survey agreed that climate change can only be addressed if resources are redistributed away from the powerful and wealthy to those who have less.

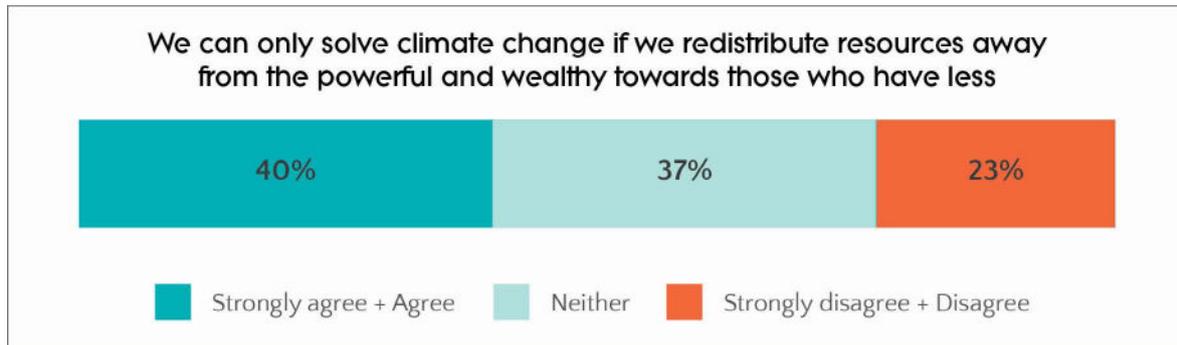


Figure 11: Survey respondents' views about the necessity of redistributing resources to address climate change¹⁰⁶

However, many respondents were unsure about both compensation and redistribution.¹⁰⁷ This indicates that many young adults either aren't aware of these ideas or haven't yet formed strong views about them.



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Show support for wealthy countries paying for climate change damages

The workshops gave more insight into how young adults grapple with the concept of compensation. Many participants were supportive in principle, recognising it as a way of, for example, acknowledging wrongdoing, giving back money owed, taking responsibility for harm and preventing future harm.

“... what speaks to me is the concept of ecological debt and compensation... We have economic debts, so why shouldn't we establish ecological debts? Rich people... I mean, rich countries, sorry, would have debts towards poor countries and therefore there would be debt repayment systems, just as there could be a payment for damages and interest when you are responsible for an accident.”

Workshop, France

► But some also expressed concerns about the notion of compensation and how this would work in practice

Young adults in the workshops raised a number of practical and philosophical questions or concerns including the following:

The types of compensation that would be appropriate and fair, and whether money is enough

“And what kind of a compensation, and what would be fair (not sure), so when there's a wildfire then the compensation is about helping the soil or nature to recover or moving people to another place and providing them with new housing or I don't know. 'Cause it matters.”

Workshop, Hungary

“ The word ‘compensation’ makes me laugh... what are you going to give? Money? A few flats? What are you going to give [as compensation] for destroying something?”
Workshop Spain

Compensation should be accompanied by wider systemic changes that will prevent harm being done at all

“ Some oil company has polluted the environment and compensation can be requested from them, but the system should be shaped so that the probability of pollution would be minimal or impossible.”
Workshop, Latvia

“ I was just thinking about one particular problem, the Amazon rainforest, they're just completely pillaging that, but they can't give [indigenous people] money for that. The best solution is to stop doing it”
Workshop, Czech Republic

Workshop participants were sensitive to the contradiction inherent in providing compensation while continuing to cause harm. Occasionally, participants raised the concern that compensation could even be treated as permission to continue to harm, in effect paying for a licence instead of stopping the harmful practice.

“ If you do that, then we have to deal with a certain mentality ‘I break the pot, I pay for it and done! Everything is fine again’”
Workshop, Belgium

They wanted compensation to be accompanied by wider structural changes that prevent harm.

Whether compensation is possible given how much harm has been done and the fact that it is ongoing

“ We have done so many wrong things in those countries, we are not able to give them compensation.”
Workshop, Belgium

“ Western colonial countries haven't ‘left’ these territories yet, they are still trying to control them. How do you expect them to compensate them if they don't leave these countries? Or if they don't give them back what they owe them?”
Workshop, France

► Some reject the idea of compensation outright

Participants raised objections similar to many of those discussed in Section 4.4: that present generations can't be held responsible for the past; it's too complicated and the environmental crisis is too urgent to work out who is culpable; and that it would be better to focus on unity, solutions and the future.

What do these findings mean for communicators?

Although ideas such as the polluter pays principle seemed to be familiar to the **workshop participants**, the notion of compensation seemed less well understood and met with mixed responses, ranging from supportive to questioning, to actively opposed. Many participants raised practical and philosophical questions and concerns – for example whether compensation would be accompanied by systemic changes that prevent harm continuing. Others didn't see the relevance to current solutions, and worried that establishing historical responsibility may create division or delay action. There appears to be room to explore such questions and concerns, and potential to build support among concerned young adults on future compensation mechanisms.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Talk about problems with harmful systems in the present and connect these with the past** – Talking about the harmful nature of the economy today is likely to be well-received, whereas talking about the past or reparations requires more explanation. Make the connection between past and present by explaining the throughline from systems of the past to systems of today and why this means understanding the past is relevant to solutions that can address the root of the problem today.
- **Provide concrete explanations of how compensation would work in practice** – Address particular confusions or concerns, such as how to ensure that the compensation is appropriate. Further research could explore whether sharing past examples¹⁰⁸ of successful reparative policies or current examples of people and communities seeking compensation today¹⁰⁹ helps people embrace this as a climate policy. Examples could help to illustrate why compensation is needed and how it could work in practice, and could help to make the concept more relatable.
- **Link compensation with a guarantee that harm will not be repeated** – Young adults in this research were sensitive to the contradiction inherent in providing compensation while continuing to inflict harm. Linking compensation with wider changes that guarantee that the harm to people and nature will stop is likely to make the idea more convincing.¹¹⁰

People wade past stranded trucks on a flooded street in Sunamganj, Bangladesh.
Photo credit: MAMUN HOSSAIN/AFP via Getty Images



4.7 A just response: action by individuals, national governments and the EU

“For far too long, European governments and companies have wreaked havoc across the world... In order not to fall into climate colonialism, the European Green Deal” needs a clear plan to eradicate harmful extractive models, recognise its historical responsibility in the climate crisis, and provide accountability for the damage EU companies cause in the Global South... Only by acknowledging that it is perpetuating colonial capitalism, and committing to ending this approach, can the EU’s Green Deal be truly effective in addressing climate change.” – Myriam Douo¹¹²

A climate justice analysis locates responsibility for the climate crisis with national governments and multinational companies rather than with individuals. It recognises that individuals play their part but that this part is limited, particularly for people living poverty and in poorer countries and communities.¹¹³

Climate justice advocates call for Western governments and the EU to move beyond a narrow focus on emissions targets and green technologies and acknowledge historical responsibility for the climate crisis and for environmental and social harms perpetuated today through unequal power relations and harmful extractive models. They seek a clear commitment from governments and the EU to addressing climate change in a way that ensures that social, ecological and historical justice are at the heart of solutions.¹¹⁴



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

- ▶ **Want to take action to tackle climate change – including almost one in 10 who reported being drawn to civil disobedience**

Young people want to do something in response to the challenge of climate change. In the survey, only 4% of respondents said they didn’t want to take any action at all. At the other end of the scale, almost one in 10 said they would be willing to break the law to tackle climate change. More than 25% of respondents said they would want to be involved in a legal protest.

Climate change activists from the Extinction Rebellion (XR) group blocking the street.
Photo credit: Marcos del Mazo/LightRocket via Getty Images



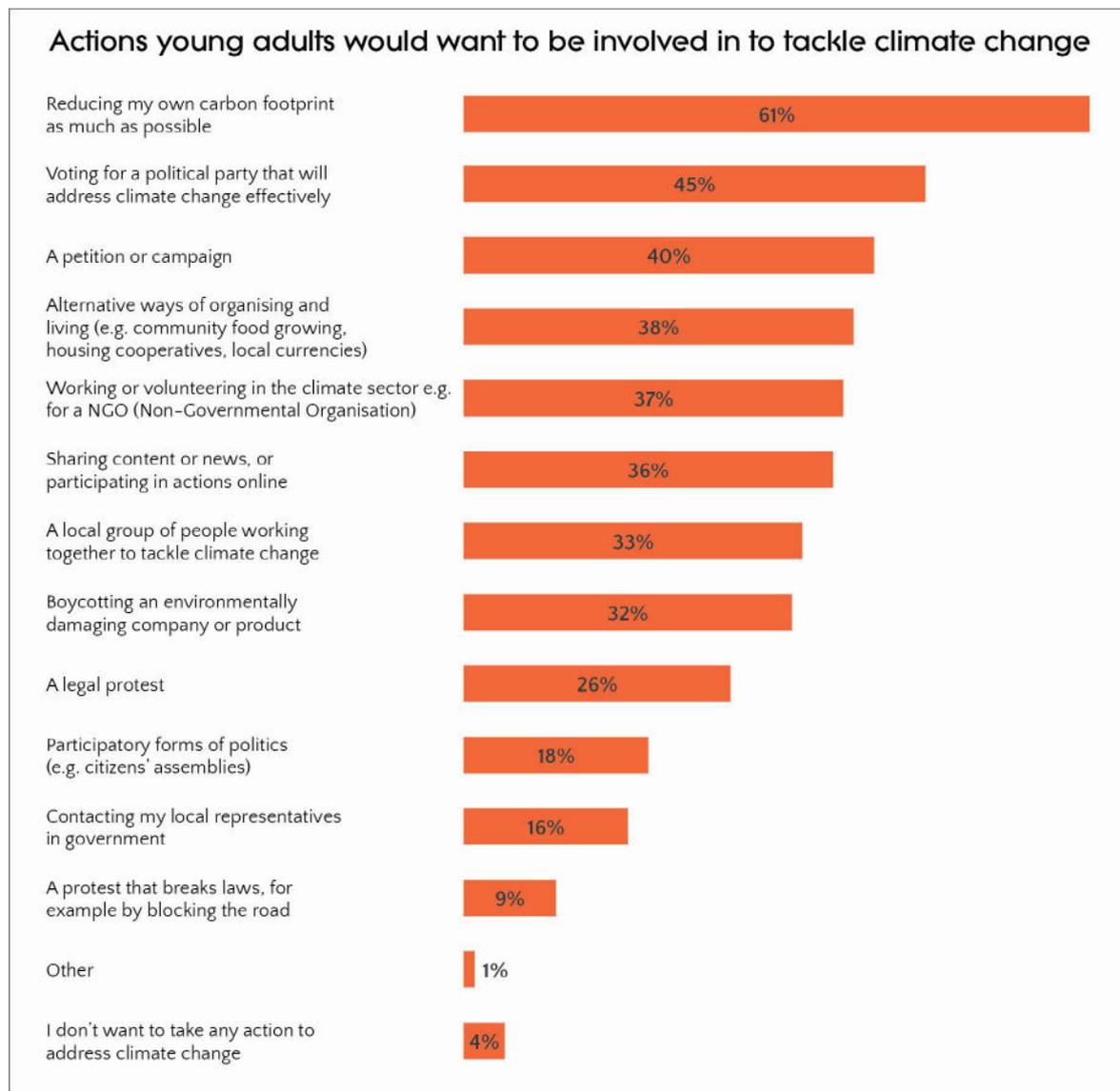


Figure 12: Frequency with which survey respondents selected different actions they'd like to be involved in to tackle climate change (respondents selected the actions from a list)¹¹⁵

However, 'reducing my own carbon footprint' was the most commonly chosen action young people said they would want to be involved with.¹¹⁶ This reflects previous findings that when asked about how they respond to climate change, young people have a tendency to choose behaviours that feel within reach – like small-scale behaviour change – even when they believe engaging in collective social action would be the most effective way to respond.¹¹⁷ Previous research suggests they may lack the information on how to take part in other forms of action, or be unsure about alternatives to the status quo and the best strategies to get there.¹¹⁸

► Think governments should be doing more to tackle climate change

The vast majority of survey respondents agreed that governments should do more to support citizens to make the transition to a climate-friendly lifestyle and said they would like to see governments enact tougher measures on corporations. Many feel their country isn't currently doing its fair share to cut emissions.

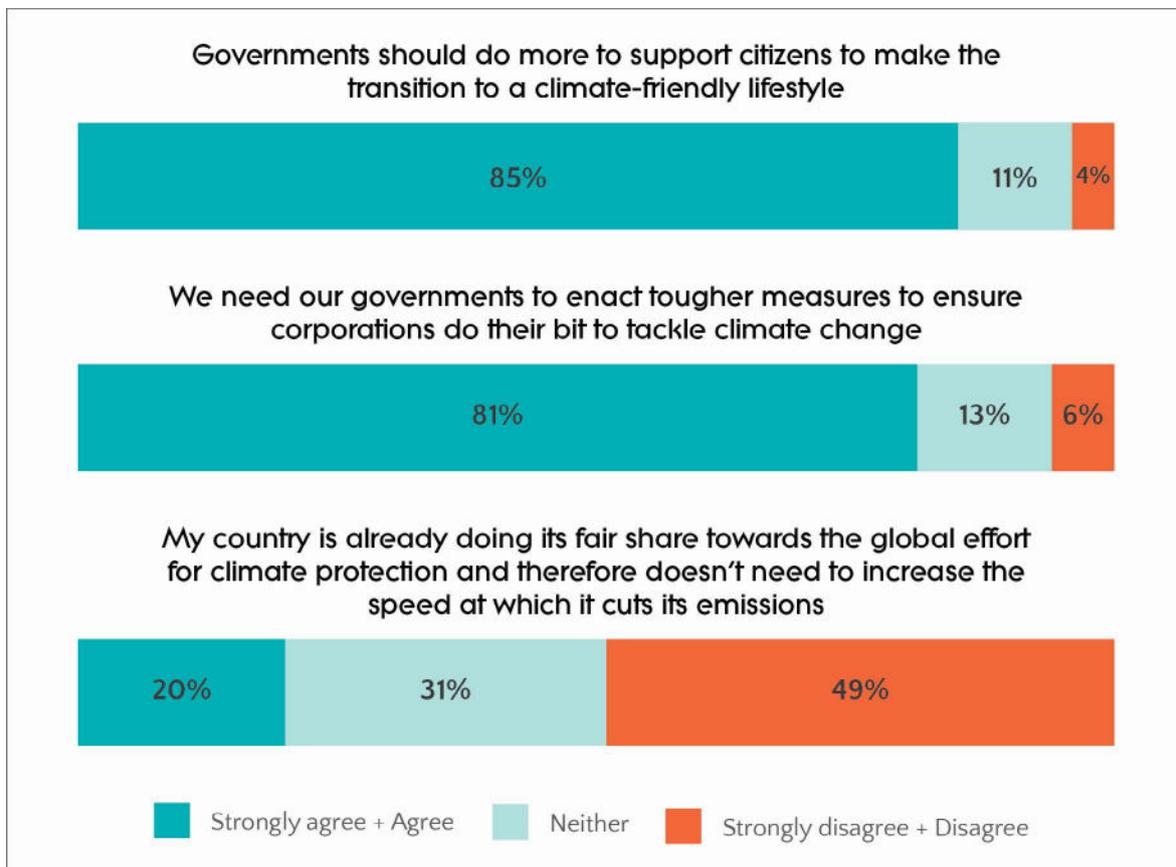


Figure 13: Survey respondents' views about a variety of different measures their government and country could take to tackle climate change¹¹⁹

► Express distrust in governments

The vast majority of survey respondents reported politicians, alongside celebrities, as their least trusted source of information on climate change. This is in line with previous research that has shown that distrust in political figures, scepticism about political parties and a sense of alienation from mainstream politics are common among young people, particularly young women.¹²⁰



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Think responsibility for tackling climate change lies at the top

The workshop participants thought that, while individuals have a role to play, the responsibility primarily lies with governments and big companies. They especially expressed the view that governments should be enacting tougher measures on corporations and multinational companies, which they saw as responsible for creating and continuing to drive much of the damage.

“ The government is responsible for defining public policies and regulating the market itself and defining the rules for companies, so they have that main responsibility. In other words, companies never or rarely decide to do things spontaneously. Like ‘let’s reduce production.’”
Workshop, Portugal

► **But that governments can’t be trusted or relied on to do the right thing**

“ [I want governments to be] much more honest with people. To say what they’re actually doing. Let’s not be lied to and disrespected.”
Workshop, Romania

Many participants across different European countries voiced doubts about whether politicians will do what they promise. They expressed a desire for their political leaders to act with more integrity.

“ I think I would start by asking [the government] to demonstrate that people can really believe in leaders... that they are concerned about a problem that society is concerned about and that they are actually working and trying to do something to change the direction that we are going in.”
Workshop, Portugal

► **Many are sceptical about the role of the EU in taking action on climate change**

The workshop participants largely reported thinking the EU cannot be relied on to act on climate change. They gave a variety of reasons for this – including the EU’s size, problems with achieving consensus, vested or conflicts of interest and the role of financial interests. Many recognised that the EU has a lot of power but expressed doubts that it would use that power or use it to move in the right direction.

Some suggested the EU could or should be relied upon, but frequently this seemed to be out of necessity – because the EU has a lot of power and therefore has to be relied upon – rather than out of optimism that the EU will do what is needed.

The participants expressed various concerns including whether promises will be kept, where the burden will fall (will it be on individuals or ‘less developed countries’, for example) and whether this will be fair. They also expressed concern about whether measures will be just greenwashing – for example, transferring EU emissions to the global south.

► **And think the EU implements change – but not transformative change**

“ I fully understand the importance of acknowledging [colonialism’s link to climate change] but are European leaders or even the various states of the European Union psychologically and intellectually capable of acknowledging that?
At least publicly, I don’t think so.”
Workshop, Belgium

When it comes to what the EU can achieve, the workshop participants referred to measures like taxing and spending or making laws to regulate business, but rarely more transformative actions. Their suggestions covered a range of climate policies, but they were mostly about reforms to the existing system. Very few participants suggested that the EU could be involved in driving significant change that would transform the system itself, centring social and environmental justice, and

redistributing power and wealth. This reinforces the findings of a study in Australia, which found that most people think the role governments can play is limited.¹²¹

“ I think that it would be very difficult for the old men sitting in the EU Parliament to perceive such a very complex definition.”

Workshop, Latvia (referring to a definition of climate justice)

One possible explanation is that young people may not perceive the EU as capable of more profound change – because of the way it is set up or the people who are in power, or because they see it as embedded in the system that has led to climate change in the first place.

“ But the trouble with the EU is that if it comes out that the only way to save the Earth is to stop doing things right now, and that means that it's not good for them financially, they're not going to do it anyway. So, if the only way to save the environment is to dismantle capitalism, then the EU won't be like, yeah, let's do that, that would be cool.”

Workshop, Hungary

What do these findings mean for communicators?

Many young adults **in the workshops** seemed to think that climate change is a systemic problem – but struggled to imagine the solutions that match this problem in scale, and what role individuals, governments and institutions might play in those solutions.

While they look to governments to act, they also don't trust that their governments or the EU will steer things in the right direction. They don't think powerful institutions like the EU can or will make changes beyond reforming the existing system – for instance, through subsidies or fines. And they expressed concern that governments don't demonstrate an interest in the transformative changes needed to tackle systemic issues like the climate crisis. Underneath this all there seems to be an undercurrent of fatalism – a sense that individuals are powerless, and that those in power can't be trusted.

The workshop findings suggest there is a significant opportunity for communicators to appeal to young adults' desire for action, and also a dual challenge: to show what a just response looks like in theory and to inspire the conviction that it is possible in practice.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Focus on the changes that are needed, rather than the people in the way** – Young adults in this research expressed scepticism about formal political parties and institutions, but it's not necessarily helpful to reinforce this scepticism. A study in Australia¹²² has shown that highlighting what governments can and should do helps demonstrate what they're not doing currently, while also encouraging people to believe change is possible, whereas focusing only on what governments are failing to do pushes people towards the belief that business or the free market could do better.

- **Include the possibility of transformation and change** – Identify opportunities for overcoming the problem and bringing about change – for example, what the principles, structures and features of a better economic system would be or what good, caring governance that takes into account human and planetary wellbeing could look like.¹²³
- **Appeal to young people’s instinct that multinational corporations are a major part of the problem** – The young adults in this research see multinational corporations as a major driver of climate change – see section 4.2 – and believe governments should enact tougher measures on them. Further research could test whether messages such as “good governments can change the rules and stand up to powerful corporations”,¹²⁴ and that describe how corporations are using their money and power to influence climate negotiations and to exclude less powerful voices, resonate with young people’s conviction that they’re a major part of the problem while generating hope that this could change.¹²⁵
- **Appeal to values such as fairness and equality** – Show how these values shape actions on emissions. For instance, be specific about the desirable outcome, and define a fair share with reference to historical responsibility and current global differences in power and resources.
- **Leverage the desire that young adults have to take action** – Broaden the scope of possibilities for action and make the case for action being underpinned by social equity and justice. Show that there are many strategies for change and that it’s possible to choose where you wish to apply your efforts, but that action should be in accordance with the principles of social equity and justice. The Movement Generation Strategic Framework for a Just Transition, for example, could be useful for understanding different approaches. The toolbox and network Beautiful Trouble also provides many case studies from around the world.¹²⁶
- **Show the power that citizens have when they act together** – and how to get involved. For example, show how collective action can challenge institutions, build new institutions, influence decision makers, and alter power relations.

The front line of demonstrators during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Washington DC, August 28, 1963.

Photo credit: Steve Schapiro/Corbis via Getty Images



4.8 A just future: visions for the future

“We can reorganise the economy around meeting human needs rather than elite consumption and capital accumulation. We need to be clear that people will not be hurt by this and in fact will stand to gain significantly from this transition that they can fight for.” – Julia Steinberger¹²⁷

The global response to climate change is often framed as a sacrifice that will reduce people’s quality of life.¹²⁸ Climate justice advocates start from a different premise – arguing that it is possible for everyone to live a meaningful and fulfilling life within the ecological limits of the planet if there are fundamental shifts in the way power and resources are distributed, and dramatic reductions in global inequality.¹²⁹



The survey found that young adults across Europe:

- **Think the future is bleak but agree action on climate change could improve quality of life**

Respondents to the survey are pessimistic about the future. Nearly 60% said they expect society to have become worse in 10 years’ time. However, a similar proportion also said they believe that quality of life will improve if the world acts to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Perceptions of the future among young adults in Europe



Figure 14: Survey respondents’ views about whether society will be better or worse in 10 years’ time¹³⁰



Figure 15: Survey respondents’ views about the impact the world acting to avoid the worst impacts of climate change will have on quality of life¹³¹

■ Better ■ Worse ■ The same



The workshops found that young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change:

► Envision principles of an ideal society based on compassionate values, such as equality, care and cooperation

“ *In a fairer world, we would live better.*
Workshop, Spain

Asked about their ideal society, the workshop participants said it would be more equal – for example in relation to opportunities, decision-making power and wealth.

The participants also spoke about their ideal society involving an overhaul of some of the current dominant systems, including the economic, political and educational systems.

“ *Let it not be the big race after money, let it not be the goal of making money, let it not be corporations.*
Workshop, Latvia

“ *It is this economic system that makes us have a selfish mentality. I think that if we want a change in the future on all issues, racial justice, gender justice, climate justice... everything depends on the economic system.*
Workshop, Spain

The participants expressed a desire for a greater sense of community and of care for one another and the natural world; more cooperation and civic engagement; and a more sustainable and environmentally friendly society

“ *... be more self-organising, more proactive, what we're involved in is likely to be more important to us, and we understand how the community works, and how nature and the environment works.*
Workshop, Hungary

When presented with them, the participants found solutions to climate change that are underpinned by principles of equality and solidarity particularly appealing – see Section 5, Narrative 1.

► Envision a good life in material terms

When asked what a good life could look like in a caring, more equal world many of the workshop participants talked about basic needs, such as food and shelter.

“ *I think the monetary condition, to afford to pay the bills, to have good food, and not to be counting the change at the end of the month. To have what we need to live without being overly consumerist, so we have the essentials... neither too much nor too little.*
Workshop, Portugal

Some participants appeared uncertain about what a ‘good life’ could mean, or suggested it is too subjective to define.

“Honestly, it is very hard for me to answer what a good life is.”
Workshop, Latvia

A subset of participants focused more on individualistic aspects of a good life – such as financial stability and the pursuit of personal goals.

Some suggested that they have been too entrenched in the current system to consider what a ‘good life’ could really mean, or haven’t had much opportunity to think about what an economy or society oriented towards generating wellbeing, rather than profit, could look like.

“I’ve been so immersed in the capitalist city... but I understand that there are other visions and I want to change my vision of a good life.”
Workshop, France

The young adults in the workshops generally seemed to believe that a certain standard of material wellbeing is necessary for a dignified life, but that wealth doesn’t bring happiness. Few discussed other aspects of quality of life – such as community, health, or having a voice or a sense of safety. It is worth noting, however, that had this question been framed differently, talking about a good society rather than using the more individualistic term ‘a good life’, it may have generated different responses oriented more towards these other aspects of quality of life.

What do these findings mean for communicators?

Young adults in the workshops articulated compassionate values that their ideal society would be based on, such as equality and care for each other and the natural world, but they focused more on material components when it came to describing what a ‘good life’ could look like. They seemed to find it more difficult to envision the tangible specifics of how the principles they had articulated could shape society or the economy – for example, what a more equal society with care at the centre would look like in practice.

There is an opportunity for communicators to connect with young adults’ desire for a more equal and caring world, and to articulate examples of what this could look like and how it could be achieved in practice, using local and global examples of where this already exists. There could also be an opportunity to create spaces for young adults, particularly marginalised people who are, and have been, excluded from these conversations, to imagine the future they want and how to go about shaping this together.

The **workshop results** suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Avoid only pointing out the problem, also help people imagine solutions** – Appeal to the idea that life can be better. Consider leading with a vision that appeals to the compassionate values that young people said they want to underpin their ideal society, and that shows the economy can be reorganised around meeting human needs rather than elite consumption and capital accumulation. Follow this with what is getting in the way of that vision (the problem and its cause), how this could be overcome (solution and strategy), what this would mean for people’s lives and the planet (outcome)¹³² and how to contribute (action).

- **Connect with young people's desire for a more equal and caring world** – Articulate solutions underpinned by principles of social equity and justice, and show how these can be achieved in practice. Give local and global examples of where these already exist – for example, in solidarity economics initiatives in Europe, the US, Asia, Latin America and Africa. This may help to generate hope in human nature, and the possibility of alternatives.

Informal settlers of the San Roque village tend to their crops in a community farm set up in a vacant lot. Strapped for cash and food, Filipinos have begun converting vacant spaces in urban areas such as football fields, basketball courts, and parking lots into community farms, securing their own food supply and providing an alternative livelihood.

Photo credit: Steve Schapiro/Corbis via Getty Images



5. Narratives

This section of this report deals with part two of the narrative workshops, which tested participants' responses to short passages of narrative text with different framings or themes (see Appendix 1 for more details about the approach).

Twenty in-depth narrative workshops were carried out with young adults in Europe aged 18–29 who were nearly all politically centre or left of centre, expressed concern about climate change but were largely not deeply engaged in taking action.¹³³

Part one of the narrative workshops led participants through a series of questions relating to different climate justice topics; the findings from part one of the workshops are discussed in Section 4, above.

In part two of the workshops, the participants were given copies of the narratives and asked to mark the words or sentences that resonated with them in green and the ones that didn't in red, leaving the ones they were indifferent about unmarked. The facilitator led a discussion about why certain texts resonated or didn't and drew out the general conclusions of the group.

The three narratives explored the following themes:

- 1 **Narrative 1:** Addressing imbalances of wealth and power
- 2 **Narrative 2:** Grassroots action
- 3 **Narrative 3:** Taking responsibility for exploitative systems

Summary of findings from part two of the workshops: responses to test narratives

Below is a summary of the workshop participants' responses to three pieces of narrative text, followed by recommendations about communicating with concerned young adults on these themes.

The young adults in the **workshops** liked text that highlighted inequalities of wealth and power, and the exploitation of people and nature, as big problems. They found solutions underpinned by principles of equality and solidarity appealing. They supported the idea of more equal power in decision-making about tackling climate change, but tended to think of this in terms of increasing the power and voice of actors who currently aren't being heard, rather than diminishing the power and voice of those who currently have too much influence (despite the end result being the same). Language that spoke of 'taking away' resources and power was generally rejected; the young adults themselves suggested using language like 'redistribution' and 'rebalancing'.

The participants wanted an end to the present-day exploitation of people and nature. Many appreciated the description of the history of exploitation and the connection between harmful systems of the past and present. Others didn't see the relevance of the past to today, or preferred to focus on the future. There was some resistance to blaming elites and to locating responsibility for damages.

Communicators may have a harder job appealing to notions of responsibility (as in Narrative 3) than to more aspirational visions of solidarity and working together (as

in Narrative 2). A line seemed to be drawn between acknowledging collective but differentiated responsibility, which participants responded positively to, and targeting one particular group, which many responded more negatively to.

Finally, there is an opportunity to connect with young adults' understanding that systems are at the root of the problem. Acknowledging this and the scale of the task at hand may feel more authentic to young people. However, it can also lead to a sense of helplessness in the face of big systemic problems. This research reinforces previous findings that people can cope with a lot of difficult information about climate change, but that they need to feel they can respond in a way that makes sense to them.¹³⁴ Overemphasising the problem and the power of other actors or systems, and underplaying solutions and how to achieve them together, risks deepening young adults' sense of helplessness. Stressing the power of people coming together to bring about change could help to counter this. The workshop participants appreciated examples, visions, solutions and strategies – including concrete actions – that suggest change is possible and is happening.

The **workshop** results suggest that when engaging young adults in Europe who are concerned about climate change, communicators should do the following:

- **Talk about inequality of wealth and power as the problem, and redistribution as the solution** – In the workshops the idea of restoring balance was a promising frame; for example, presenting solutions as rebalancing or redistributing power and resources to address division and inequality, rather than using the language of taking away from some groups. Further research could test the exact wording that could be used.
- **Talk about compensation as a form of reconciliation and part of wider systemic solutions** – Language around compensation as a form of reconciliation, of repairing relations ('reparative'), alongside a guarantee that harm won't be repeated,¹³⁵ could help to counter the view that it is necessarily divisive and make the idea more convincing for young adults – see also Section 4.6. Further research would be needed to test these ideas.
- **Build a sense of solidarity** – Appeal to young adults' desire for greater solidarity. *"It's time to stand with people and communities on the frontlines of climate change to bring about system change"* (Narrative 1) and *"From all around the world, on all continents, young people are speaking up about climate change and forming alliances"* (Narrative 2) are framings that were effective with young adults' in this research. Further research could test the effectiveness of appealing to solidarity when talking about reparations.
- **Avoid implying human nature is fundamentally flawed** – Many participants in the workshops reacted badly to finger-pointing or the suggestion that individuals or a somewhat undefined group (e.g. the wealthy and the powerful) are to blame or are inherently bad. It could be more effective to stress that it is the system – rather than human nature – that is at fault, since this is something participants raised themselves. It may also help to describe specific behaviours and their consequences rather than use generalisations (see detailed analysis for Narrative 1).¹³⁶ Behaviour and badly designed systems can change, whereas human nature and entrenched systems feel more intractable.¹³⁷
- **Avoid ambiguous descriptions such as 'the wealthy and the powerful'** – Being specific about who and what is causing the problem helps locate responsibility and identify what needs to change.¹³⁸

See Section 4, particularly 4.2, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 for further relevant recommendations.

Detailed analysis of responses to test narratives

The three narratives below appear exactly as they were tested in the workshops.¹³⁹ The text in each has been highlighted according to the following schema:

Green = popular in most countries
Orange = disliked in most countries
Blue = controversial – mixed responses across the countries.

Surrounding each test narrative is brief commentary about participants' responses to that text. Below each narrative is a more detailed commentary and quotes to illustrate certain points.

Narrative 1: Addressing imbalances of wealth and power

Text throughout the narrative that acknowledges imbalances of wealth and power and calls for great equality and solidarity tended to be received well.

But the language of 'should' and 'must' was rejected by some participants in Belgium, Germany and Portugal.

We should all have a say in decisions that affect us. We should all have a safe and healthy place to live, now and in the future. But climate change means droughts, hurricanes, floods and fires are increasing around the world, destroying lives, cultures and ecosystems.

And while we are all experiencing the same storm, not everyone is in the same boat. **The impacts of climate change do not affect everyone equally.**

The dominant economic, political and social systems privilege a few at the expense of the many, like a rigged game where the same people always win and lose.

Now, around the world, the existing suffering and struggles of people who are already disadvantaged by these systems – **women, people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, people living in poverty, working class people, young people, older people, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour** – are being made worse by climate change, because they have less resources and power to respond.

At the same time, the lifestyles of the world's richest people create 100 times more emissions than the lifestyle of someone in the poorest half of the world. In Europe, the richest 1% create ten times more emissions just flying than the poorest people create in an entire year, mostly for basic necessities.

Young people responded particularly well to appeals to universal aspirations such as 'we should all have a say in decisions that affect us' and 'we should all have a safe and healthy place to live, now and in the future.'

Many participants were confused by or rejected the idea that there is a connection between a person's race, gender, sexual orientation or identity and their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

Globally, those who are least responsible for causing climate change are suffering the worst impacts, but people and communities on the frontlines of climate change are also claiming their power, driving solutions, and demanding change. Yet their voices, experiences and solutions are being excluded or sidelined from the decision-making process.

Participants strongly disliked this sentence and it appeared to affect how the narrative as a whole was received and understood. The objection didn't seem to be to the notion of power and wealth being redistributed, but to the way in which this was expressed as 'taking away' power and resources.

The idea of the voices of people who are most affected being at the forefront met with mixed responses.

This is not right and it's not fair. It is time to change, to create a more balanced world. It shouldn't just be those who are wealthy and powerful who can afford to avoid the worst impacts of climate, or who have a say in how the world responds to climate change. The voices and solutions of people and communities who are most impacted by climate change should be at the forefront of the decision-making process.

Some participants asked who are 'the wealthy and powerful'? Using this somewhat ambiguous terminology confused participants, or they had different interpretations of what it meant – for example, that it referred variously to political elites, people living in wealthy countries, people like themselves, and people not like themselves.

The term 'give' power and resources to those who are most affected implies a hierarchical relationship and puts people in the position of vulnerable victim in need of saving. The next line about standing in solidarity with people most affected was more effective with young people.

It's time to take decision-making power and resources away from the wealthy and powerful and give it to the people and communities who are most affected by climate change. It's time to stand with people and communities on the frontlines of climate change to bring about system change.

Women from the Masai community take part in a Global Climate Strike organised by Fridays For Future, to demand climate reparations and action from world leaders.
Photo credit: TONY KARUMBA/AFP via Getty Images



Headline findings for Narrative 1

Young people agree that inequality of wealth and power is a big problem, and embrace the values of solidarity and equality as guiding the solution. But they struggle with blaming elites, and dislike language associated with taking away resources and decision-making power from anyone.



In more detail, young adults in the narrative workshops:

► Agree that inequality of wealth and power is a big problem

“ I think that what's really good in this text is that we talk about imbalances, about power and that there are many more people who don't have power than those who do and that leads to a lot of problems that are in fact linked to climate change.”
Belgium

The participants responded particularly well to text that recognises inequality of wealth and power as a big problem – for example “*the dominant economic, political and social systems privilege a few at the expense of the many.*” They also responded positively to solutions that reflect principles of equality and solidarity – for example “*We should all have a say in decisions that affect us*”, and “*It's time to stand with people and communities on the frontlines of climate change.*”

► Think power should be redistributed not taken away

“ ...even though there are a few ideas in there that I think are good and right, I don't agree with the way it's presented... Maybe just the phrasing, ‘It's time to take...’ that's just too much for me.”
Czech Republic

Young adults in the workshops strongly disliked the way in which the second-to-last sentence was phrased: referring to ‘taking away’ decision-making power and resources from the wealthy and powerful. Some participants specifically equated ‘taking away’ with the illegal expropriation of resources, of revolution or revolt, or taking away people’s rights – in other words, something undemocratic, or violent.

Some participants understood the last sentence to mean that currently represented voices would be marginalised and vice versa – in other words, a situation where oppressed people become the oppressors.

“ Taking away someone's decision making power and resources and completely overweighing it to the other side, I have a problem with that.”
Czech Republic

Had this been phrased differently, it would probably have changed the way in which the whole narrative was received and understood. For example it could have been phrased as redistributing power and resources, which was a suggestion made by the participants themselves.

► **Think those who are most affected should have more say, but that leadership shouldn't come from the frontlines**

“ *People who face these problems can also better identify what needs more attention.*”
Latvia

The large majority of participants agreed that those who are the most affected by climate change should have more voice. Several, however, objected to the idea that affected people's voices and solutions should be at the forefront of, or take a lead in, the decision-making process. Participants were concerned that this might exclude other voices.

“ *I disagree that 'the voices of people most affected should be a priority'. More than they have now, of course, but then, is their voice now the only voice to be heard? What about those who have more knowledge on the issue? Does their voice not matter anymore? It should be a mix of ideas.*”
Spain

A minority did support the idea that affected people should lead – but also raised concerns about burdening them with finding solutions.

Some suggested that richer countries have more knowledge, or that those on the frontlines of climate change lack the necessary knowledge to contribute, and that scientists and experts would make better decisions (these views echo findings discussed in Section 4.5).

“ *The groups mentioned above in the text would certainly not be the most educated and suitable groups to deal with this problem.*”
Latvia

► **Don't want to blame elites because it might create division**

“ *An us versus them story. There are two camps. You are dividing the population into two. That is what this text is about. It starts out promising: we should be all, everybody, now, in the future. When you read further, you accuse a certain group. Us and them.*”
Belgium

The participants reacted negatively to narratives blaming elites and were concerned that blame could create a sense of 'us vs them'. They worried that it would pit one group against another – for instance, marginalised groups or those most impacted by climate change versus the wealthy and the powerful.

“ *If someone is trying to find other people who support them by looking for a common enemy, I think that's a very, very bad method. I think it's the worst possible, because it's about creating tension between people, and I think it's very unworkable, it's been done a few times by humanity and it didn't turn out right.*”
Hungary

The young participants' unease on this topic may reflect another significant concern they expressed – that society is becoming more polarised and divided.

► Don't like labelling people or groups as intrinsically 'bad'

Some participants didn't like text generalising 'the wealthy and powerful' as inherently 'bad.' Some of the comments in this respect seemed to contradict an earlier finding in the workshop, where participants themselves called out wealthy individuals, the ruling elite, and people in positions of power. They may prefer to situate the behaviour of these individuals or groups inside a system that encourages this harmful behaviour, rather than implying it's 'greedy human nature.'

“ Even though there are individuals now who are a few people, like the billionaires, who are most involved in creating the climate crisis, it's the system that has allowed them to have so much power and so much influence on the planet and on society, and nothing really limits them. And individuals, not the billionaires, but other mortals, they can try to do something and they have to try to do something, but it is a systemic problem and unless we change the system we will not solve the crisis.”

Czech Republic

This reflects findings from a study in Australia¹⁴⁰ that people don't like generalisations and labels that describe groups or individuals as 'bad' in some way ('greedy', for example); instead it's more effective to describe behaviours, connecting the dots between the behaviour and the issue. For example, they might prefer to describe *how* corporate elites have used their wealth and power to unfairly influence the climate agenda, rather than simply labelling them as corrupt. Being specific about who or what is causing the problem rather than using the somewhat ambiguous term 'the wealthy and the powerful', which is open to different interpretations, would also be likely to help.

► Don't connect existing social issues, such as racialisation and gender, to climate change

“ I do not see a logical link between those who are at a disadvantage in terms of climate change, such as women or LGBTQI+. I do not understand why exactly these groups are named in this regard.”

Latvia

Many workshop participants questioned or were confused by the idea that a person's gender, sexuality or racialisation has any connection to their experience of climate change impacts, or their ability to respond. Occasionally, participants became defensive or rejected the idea.

As discussed in Section 4.3, they tended to connect vulnerability with lack of material resources but not with experiences of discrimination or disempowerment, for example.

A few recognised the connection when it was presented to them and felt it was important that the text acknowledged this, but this wasn't the dominant position.

Narrative 2: Grassroots action

Green = popular in most countries

Blue = controversial – mixed responses across the countries.

Every year the earth warms further, and we go well **beyond the limits** of what **our earth** can handle. People around the world are suffering, ecosystems are collapsing. We can't keep doing things that harm people and the earth. But **ordinary people** can lead the way, together.

Participants appreciated that the text included young people but also questioned how much power young people really have.

The word 'demand' was controversial in Hungary and Belgium.

Participants liked the invitation to re-think what a good life looks like. A few said they didn't want to be told what it should look like or for this to be imposed.

School strikers have shown that young people have power. **From all around the world, on all continents, young people are speaking up about climate change and forming alliances to demand and create change.**

Participants liked the message of acting together but questioned how much change citizens can really bring about. They felt the text played down the responsibility of governments, big companies and the system itself.

Text that speaks to the values of equality and solidarity was particularly well received throughout the text.

It's time to change how we live, eat, travel, and organise as a society. No one needs a billion dollars and multiple empty homes around the world. No one needs new phones every year, and new clothes every week. **We need to rethink what a 'good life' looks like, and it shouldn't be about getting money or possessions, but about making sure everyone, locally and globally, has a decent quality of life, without destroying the planet.**

People and communities around the world are demonstrating what's possible: from restoring damaged land, to taking governments to court to demand action; from protesting on the streets, to setting up community energy cooperatives; from planting trees, to securing community and indigenous land rights; from sharing items instead of owning them, to fighting for changes in laws and policies; from setting up neighbourhood food-growing initiatives, to resisting fossil fuel companies. **Together, we can create a better, more equal and caring world.**

Participants particularly liked the message about acting together to bring about change, and liked that the narrative included examples.

We can build a different horizon, a different future that puts care for life and people at the centre of society, the economy and politics. Every one of us can play a part. Every action matters. Let's join with people locally and globally to build a future where people, communities and the planet come before profit. Let's demand that our governments and the European Union do the same.

It will be difficult, and at times we might not know what to do but we have each other and **when we act together we are powerful.** Together we are rising up to demand and build a resilient and fair future **that works for everyone, locally and globally.**

The notion of locally and globally seemed to resonate well.

Headline findings for Narrative 2

Young adults are motivated by the prospect of citizen-led action on climate change, and respond well to examples. However, they question whether this can achieve the scale of change needed, and some are sceptical about their own role, as young people, in leading the way.



In more detail, young adults in the narrative workshops:

► Respond well to the idea that together we can create change

“ For me [the part I really liked was]: together we can create a better, more equal, more loving world... Because you can't do anything alone without anyone else.”
Romania

Many participants found the narrative motivating. They liked the fact that the text conveyed the idea that change is possible, emphasised what citizens can achieve when they act together, and offered solutions and a positive vision of the future that is different to the status quo.

“ For me it would be more effective in getting me out of my chair, in making me want to do something. It's because it's not focused on the what but on the how as an individual with no economic power we can really act as citizens in civil society. Personally, I think it would be more effective in mobilising communities. There is the use of the 'we' and there is a whole list of ideas.”
France

► Embrace the opportunity to rethink what the good life looks like

“ What I like in this text is the question of redefining, of rethinking the question of good living... which I don't yet feel is echoed in public debates and in society where there is not yet this question which allows us to redefine, at the collective level especially, what we want in society, what's important.”
Belgium

Many participants appreciated the invitation within the text to rethink what a good life could look like, on an individual and collective level. A few specifically remarked that they liked the idea within the text that it's possible for everyone to have a decent quality of life without destroying the planet.

“ I like the sentence where the reader is made to think about what a good life is. It motivates me to think about whether this “American dream” is what I want.”
Latvia

► Don't want to blame individuals or neglect the role of powerful actors and systems

“ I miss the fact that it's the capitalist economy and therefore the big industries and everything that have enormous power. I think it just lacks the power that these companies have.”

Belgium

Some participants felt the narrative lays too much responsibility on the individual – for example, for buying new clothes every week – and doesn't sufficiently address the importance of wider economic systems or powerful actors.

“ I think the responsibility shouldn't be placed on private individuals, rather on companies, their role should be emphasised more.”

Hungary

Some young adults didn't like the criticism of the pursuit of money or possessions, because they felt it was unfair given the social and economic pressures to pursue these things or because it sounds like it will require individual privation.

“ Sometimes people really need money. I know a billion is an exaggeration of the text, but it's like telling people 'Stay poor, it'll be fine, but stay poor'. This doesn't appeal much sometimes either. But I get it.”

Spain

“ There are people who suffer from inequalities and there are parents who will work themselves to death to be able to offer iPhones to their children. It's a bit complicated to blame people who have never enjoyed the consumer society for wanting to implement this model.”

France

► Find tangible and inspiring examples helpful – particularly ones that meet the scale of the task at hand

“ It's a good thing that, in addition to providing alarming data, we also give examples of things that are happening through collective action.”

Spain

Many participants particularly liked that the narrative offered solutions and gave examples of initiatives taken by citizens, such as protesting on the streets, setting up community energy cooperatives, planting trees, or securing community and indigenous land rights. A few, however, felt that particular examples could be read as naive because they didn't match the scale of change needed.

“ The fact that neighbours just grow tomatoes in their backyard doesn't seem like it solves the problem to me. So I'm more anxious about it.”

Czech Republic

► Think young people should have more power, but not the burden of responsibility

“ Yes, I identify more with this one because the words ‘young people’ are mentioned and it focuses very much on us.”
Spain

While some liked the focus on young people, others questioned whether young people actually have the power described in the narrative. Some participants – particularly in Spain – felt the text places too much burden on young people to fix the issue of climate change.

“ I’m tired of always being targeted, as young people... ultimately, many of these things should not be our responsibility. Yes, it’s my responsibility not to buy clothes by the truckload, but it is the government’s responsibility that all people have access to decent clothes, or food.”
Spain

“ I crossed one thing that I didn’t like, and it was about young people having power. I don’t think they have. And it’s not worth pretending as if they have.”
Hungary

► Want alternative visions - and strategies to get there

“ It says, ‘we have to change the system’ but what do we do? How do we do it? How do we change the system? I think that it deserves to be a little more argued, not justified but completed.”
France

In discussions across all three narratives participants generally acknowledged that addressing climate injustices requires change on an unprecedented scale. But this acknowledgement of the scale of the task at hand was often accompanied by a sense of being overwhelmed or of helplessness – not knowing what to change or what they, as individuals, can do to bring about those changes. A few participants mentioned feeling disillusioned following the Fridays for Future movement because, although it had raised awareness, they felt it hadn’t brought about any real change.

“ I’d rather have at least one solution in there, like a how-to, how we can do it, beyond just working together.”
Czech Republic

The workshop participants felt that this narrative, as well as Narratives 1 and 3, outlined the issues but lacked sufficient information about the change to aim for and how to achieve it. They wanted specific goals or visions, and strategies to reach these big-picture solutions, with some understanding of the role they might be able to play.

Narrative 3: Taking responsibility for exploitative systems

Green = popular in most countries
Blue = controversial – mixed responses across the countries.

Action on climate change means taking responsibility for past and current wrongs.

Some participants, especially in Romania and Spain, liked the idea of taking responsibility for past and present wrongs.

Participants in most countries liked this text – the only exceptions were in Romania and Portugal, where it was controversial.

The wealth of Western Europe is built on the exploitation of people and the earth. Slavery and colonialism created wealth and resources for the industrial revolution in Western Europe, while destroying ecosystems, livelihoods and societies in other parts of the world. Today the same Western economic model that fuelled colonialism continues to take huge amounts of materials, energy and resources from other people and places, and to pollute people's land, territories, the earth and the atmosphere.

Now, the suffering of millions of people, forced to live with hundreds of years of exploitative systems – such as capitalism and colonialism – is being made worse as a result of climate change. Western Europe has benefited hugely from historic and current greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change. But around the world the impacts of climate change are falling hardest on the people, communities and countries who are least responsible.

Many participants were reluctant to blame elites, and some asked who is being referred to as the 'wealthy and powerful'. They felt this was ambiguous.

For too long the wealthy and powerful have profited through plundering the planet and destroying the lives and territories of people around the world. Now it is time to make amends and take responsibility.

Ecological debt was a popular term among many participants, though it was controversial in workshops in Latvia and Belgium where participants didn't like the use of the word debt.

Many participants held the view that the global economy exploits land and people.

Taking responsibility means ending the unjust treatment of people and territories in other parts of the world, and recognising the ecological debt owed to those people and places. It means giving agency and compensation to those who are least responsible but worst affected by climate change. It means moving away from an economy based on pollution and extraction, of taking from the natural environment without thought, to an economy based on respecting the earth and people's rights.

This text was popular among participants because it proposes a new kind of economy. A few participants, however, commented that although it is a nice idea, it isn't concrete enough. Some weren't sure what it would look like in reality.

Let's join together with people and communities around the world who are calling on wealthy governments and the European Union to make amends, to take responsibility for past and current wrongdoing, and to compensate those who have suffered for their gain.

Headline findings for Narrative 3

Young adults find the explanation of the connection between past and present injustices helpful, and agree that exploitation is at the root of the problem. However, they find the question of blame controversial and struggle to see the relevance of compensation.



In more detail, young adults in the narrative workshops:

► Agree that exploitation of people and nature is a big problem

“The rich and powerful have plundered for far too long. Everyone has a smartphone. Cobalt is scraped from mines by African children. The text says that this is our fault. The fault of the rich. I like that. It makes us think.”
Belgium

Many participants agreed that it is important to focus on inequality of wealth and power, and the problems that are created through the exploitation of people and nature.

Indigenous Mundurucu men survey the quarry site for the Belo Monte Dam construction sites in Brazil. On 27 May 2013, an indigenous group made up predominantly of Mundurucu occupied Belo Monte and halted construction on the main turbine site.

Photo credit: Taylor Weidman/LightRocket via Getty Images



► Many think it's helpful to explain the link between past and present injustices

“...there are many things that speak to me enormously... the West has really enriched itself at the expense of others through slavery and colonialism... and this continues to do damage today because everything we need, all the rare earths and everything we need for our telephones, our computers, our technology, our car batteries and all that, is mostly taken from those countries and there are many people who suffer because of it.”
Belgium

Many young adults appreciated that the text took a historical perspective, helping to explain the link between past and present injustices and exploitation.

“ I liked the idea that today the same Western economic model that fuelled colonialism continues to take huge amounts of materials, energy and resources. It is a continuous process, so to speak, which is still the case today.”
Romania

Some of these participants believed that talking about colonialism and slavery will enable a better understanding of what needs to change.

“ I think this is really good, because we have to take into account what has happened so far in order to understand how we can change the future. We have to consider the past. I have seen this, here in Europe, many people who are unaware of the impact and damage that has occurred in the world because of slavery, colonialism...”
Spain

► Some don't think the past is relevant to today

“ I always have a hard time when people say that you have to compensate for a past injustice. For me it only has relevance if it has an impact on the current situation, on the present. So, who today still benefits from the past?”
Germany

Several participants resisted the emphasis on the past within the narrative, for a number of reasons, including the following:

- It would be better to focus on what's happening today and the future.
- Present generations shouldn't or can't take responsibility for the actions of past generations.
- The past isn't relevant because the harmful systems of the past aren't connected to those of today.

“ It is so difficult: how can you take responsibility for something that happened in the past?”
Belgium

“ How can it state that the same economic model is working right now as it did 100 years ago. Well, no, a completely different economic model is working.”
Hungary

► Some like the idea of accepting responsibility

Some participants – mainly in Spain and Romania – liked the idea referred to in the text of accepting responsibility for past and present injustices and the suggestion that some countries have an ecological debt.

“ *I like the appeal to accountability and the overall explanation of the ecological debt.*”
Czech Republic

However, responsibility was also conflated with blame and guilt among other participants.

► Others respond negatively to finger-pointing

The participants in the workshops generally acknowledged that wealthier people and countries carry greater responsibility for causing the climate crisis. But where the narrative highlighted this, it provoked a surprising resistance from a number of participants, particularly in Portugal and Hungary, but also across a range of European countries.

Although the narrative was deliberately focused on responsibility, rather than guilt or blame, these participants seemed to conflate these concepts. They reacted negatively to what they saw as blaming the rich and powerful or certain countries or regions. They also raised concerns that blame or guilt might make global collective action less likely because it would create division, or make people feel attacked and therefore less willing to respond.

“ *Let's admit when we've done something wrong, but not to punish or make us feel bad about it. It's really not constructive.*”
Hungary

Some participants interpreted the attribution of responsibility as negative and even, in a few cases, vengeful or malicious. Instead of spending time working out who is responsible, participants thought the focus should be on looking for ways forward together. Some of their responses suggested that they thought it would be difficult to identify who is responsible and, ultimately, not helpful to finding solutions.

“ *If we are trying to solve a problem then we should not look for the guilty ones and try to force them to make up for any damages. When trying to solve a problem, we should try to look towards the future and look for solutions and that is the most effective way.*”
Latvia

► Confused about what compensation means in practice

The concept of compensation was met with mixed responses. Participants in nearly all the countries had questions about what it would mean in practice – which is discussed further in Section 4.6.

“ *I think it's too idealistic at the end, because I don't know if it could work – the part about reparations for the damage done by colonialism and centuries of exploitation – but I think the text is smart also for highlighting that historical part, that one should not forget.*”
Portugal

Appendices

Appendix 1: About narrative workshops and the approach of this project

The narrative workshop methodology developed by Climate Outreach is a form of qualitative participatory research that explores the language and narratives around climate change and its solutions.¹⁴¹ It aims to produce insights into how best to talk about climate change in a given region or country.

Two aspects of the methodology distinguish narrative workshops from other forms of focus group research:

1. use of a structure and format that promotes peer-to-peer dialogue
2. grounding the dialogue in participants' values and identities, which are the sources of their attitudes

This methodology is designed to allow participants to engage in conversations about climate change and to respond to narratives provided in their own terms with reference to the things that matter to them, rather than seeking to generate a debate on the basis of complex and abstract science. A narrative workshop follows a script, leading participants through a series of successive topics. In the case of this research, the topics differed somewhat from previous narrative workshops conducted by Climate Outreach and included:

1. values, concerns and perspectives on the future
2. perspectives on climate change
3. perspectives on climate justice
4. the role of the European Union in addressing climate change
5. message testing: testing narrative text

The final activity tests short passages of narrative text with different framings or themes. Participants are given printouts of the narratives and asked to mark the words or sentences they like in green and the ones they dislike in red, leaving the ones they neither like nor dislike unmarked.

This method highlights the words or phrases that work best and enables an easy comparison between the findings of different narrative workshops. The facilitator, scanning the marked copies, then leads a discussion about why people like or dislike specific narratives and draws out conclusions from the group.

In this project, partner organisations were professionally trained to deliver narrative workshops, testing specific language. Climate Outreach has used this approach in previous projects in northern India (2017), Alberta, Canada (2018), Tunisia, Mauritania and Egypt (2020).¹⁴²

By involving national partners in all stages of design, content and implementation, and passing on professional public engagement and research skills to climate advocates, this approach aims to strengthen capacity – making high-quality research more affordable, building confidence and supporting current and future public engagement.

The ultimate aim is to apply learning and insights from the research to inform the public engagement approaches of international advocacy organisations and climate institutions around the world.

The present research tested three narratives. They were developed around themes that partners expressed an interest in testing, and partners assisted with their development.¹⁴³ Each narrative dealt with a different issue or problem statement and its cause, revolved around a particular set of values, and included a solution and orientation towards action.

The narratives themes were:

1. addressing imbalances of wealth and power (values: self-determination, freedom, equality)
2. grassroots action (values: people power, hope, care)
3. taking responsibility for exploitative systems (values: responsibility, respect)

The text of the three narratives is provided in full in Section 5.

Appendix 2: Narrative workshop demographics

The target audience for the workshops was identified in conjunction with local partners (see Section 3 for more details). Screening questions were designed to recruit this target audience and with the aim that groups be broadly balanced in terms of gender, age and age on completing education (this wasn't always achieved – see limitations below).

Local partner organisations ran 20 narrative workshops across nine European countries with 138 participants in total between July and October 2021. Some of the countries covered were different to those covered by the survey – the UK and Italy, for example, were covered by the survey but not the workshops. This was a result of the capacity of the partners being worked with.

There was a mixture of online and in-person workshops following restrictions and risk mitigation measures applied as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Young adults participating in the narrative workshops.
Photo credit: Javier Gacio/Oxfam Intermon



Table 1: Demographics of participants in the narrative workshops.

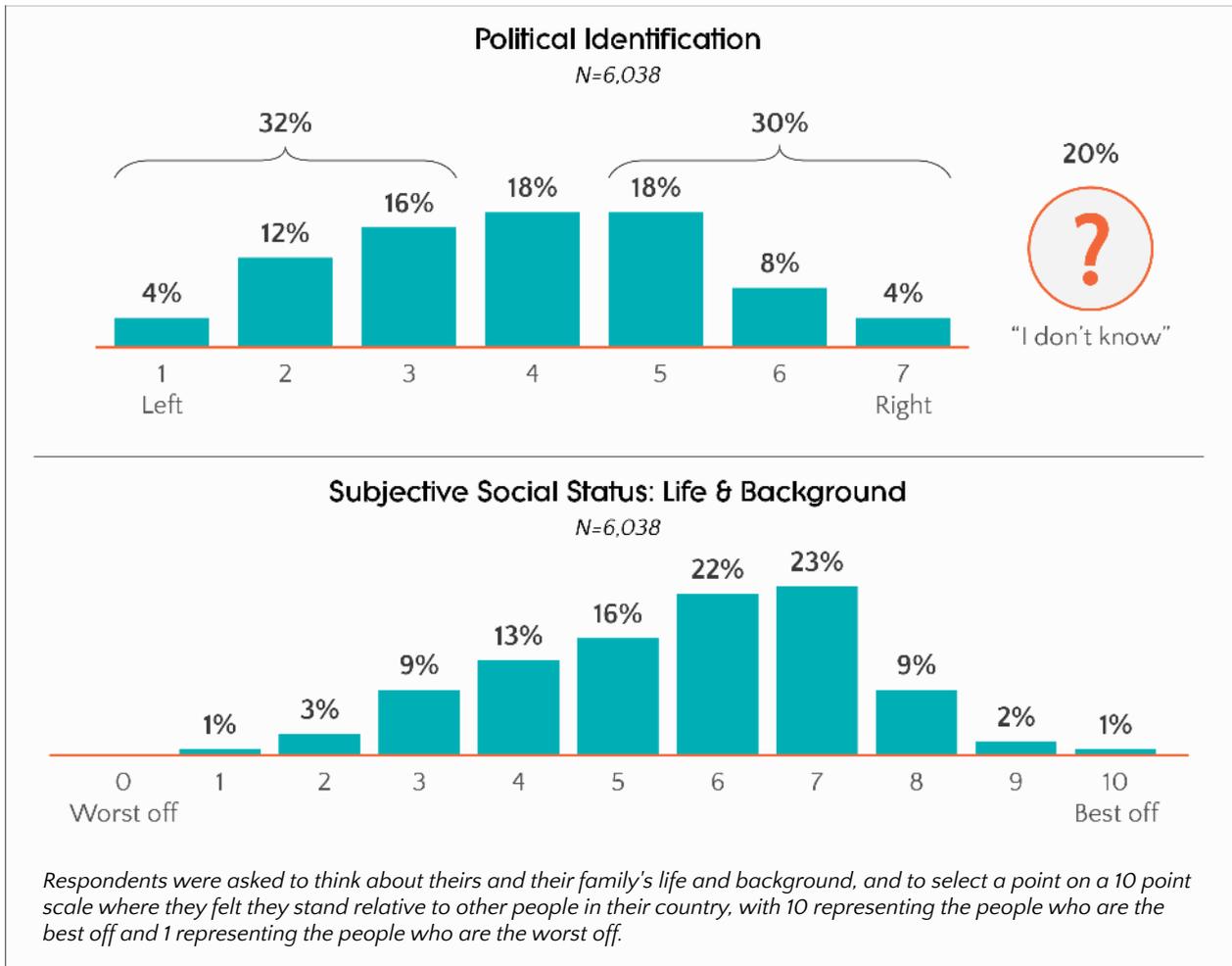
	Belgium	Czech Republic	France	Germany	Hungary	Latvia	Portugal	Romania	Spain
Total number of workshop participants	16	17	10	11	17	20	10	15	22
Age (years)									
18–23	10	8	7	3	10	14	3	11	13
24–29	6	9	3	8	7	6	7	4	9
Concern about climate change									
Not at all	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Slightly	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	2
Concerned	3	4	0	2	3	5	1	4	8
Very concerned	6	9	6	5	6	5	4	3	11
Extremely concerned	7	4	4	4	8	7	5	3	0
Number of environmental actions¹⁴⁴									
None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
One	3	9	0	5	2	2	2	1	4
Two	4	8	0	6	11	4	4	11	5
Three	5	0	1	0	4	6	2	3	3
Four or more	4	0	9	0	0	8	2	0	10
Gender									
Female	11	12	6	6	11	10	5	8	15
Male	5	3	4	4	6	9	5	7	7
I prefer to describe my gender another way	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age when completed education									
15 years or younger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16–19 years	2	0	0	3	3	4	0	0	13
20+ years	4	5	4	2	3	9	6	3	9
I am still studying	10	12	6	6	11	7	4	12	0
Politics									
Very left-wing 0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
1	1	1	4	1	3	3	0	0	5
2	1	0	0	2	2	4	2	0	3
3	6	5	3	2	4	3	2	0	3
4	5	5	1	3	3	1	1	1	3
5	2	6	1	2	2	3	3	12	4
6	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
7	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
8	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Very right-wing 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix 3: Survey demographics

Quotas were implemented for country, age, gender and region (and ethnicity in the UK). Additionally, respondents provided information about whether they lived in a rural or urban area, their level of formal education, their political identification and their subjective social status. The responses indicate that the sample was balanced in terms of political identity, and included a reasonable mix of people living in rural and urban areas. It was somewhat biased towards people with higher formal levels of education and subjective social status.

Responses were collected among target respondents (screeners below) via an online survey with the goal of understanding target respondents' views of society, climate change, and the future.

INTERVIEW LENGTH 15 minutes	Screening Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ≥18 to ≤35 years old• Currently resides in one of the target countries		
SURVEY TYPE Online Quantitative		Markets Included	Quotas Implemented
SURVEY FIELDDED April 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Czech: n=1,005• Germany: n=1,006• Italy: n=1,010• Romania: n=1,000• Spain: n=1,000• UK: n=1,007	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Country• Age• Gender• Region• UK Ethnicity
PANELISTS Sourced via Qualtrics			
RESPONSES N=6,038			



Appendix 4: Limitations of the methodology

Demographics

For the survey, budget constraints meant that it was not possible to recruit nationally representative samples across the six countries surveyed. The samples were balanced in terms of age, gender, country, region within the country, and political identity, and included a reasonable mix of people living in urban and rural areas. However, the sample was somewhat biased towards people with higher levels of formal education and subjective social status. For legal and logistical reasons it was not possible to implement quotas for ethnicity in most countries, other than the UK. Difficulties in measuring social class, particularly among younger age groups, meant subjective social status was used, which relies on self reporting.

Limitations encountered by local partners in recruiting for the workshops meant that the groups were not always representative of the intended audience. The overall sample included a higher than intended number of women, of participants aged 18–23, and of participants with higher levels of formal education.

The intention was to recruit participants who were politically centre or left of centre and this was largely achieved. This audience was targeted specifically because it is of particular interest to Spark partners and advocates more generally. However, it does mean the recommendations throughout the report, which are created in response to the workshop findings, are relevant to politically centre and left of centre audiences, and may not be applicable to right leaning audiences. As people from across the political spectrum are increasingly concerned about climate change, this is a gap in this research that merits further investigation¹⁴⁵.

Responses to the screening questions indicated the groups were made up of participants who were more engaged in action on climate change than was originally intended. Participants were asked to indicate which actions they'd taken in the last three years from a list – for example 'joined an environmental protest', or 'consciously reduced your carbon footprint'. The aim was to select participants who had taken two or fewer actions. However, partners found it difficult to recruit in line with these criteria and the final sample included around 60% who selected two or fewer, while the remainder had taken more actions. In Latvia and Spain, 40% of participants said they had taken all four actions in the last three years, and in France 90% said they had.

The overall score, however, was 2.4 actions taken in the last three years – suggesting that participants were not deeply engaged in climate action. Participants may also have had a tendency to indicate a higher number of actions when self-reporting via the screening questions, and conversations in the workshops suggested many participants weren't very engaged in action.

Finally, it was not possible to recruit enough participants to run the workshops in the Netherlands as had originally been planned.

Working across multiple countries and languages

Cultures and histories vary enormously across European countries. However, this research was designed to make it possible to compare results across the entire European sample. This meant it was not possible to develop and test culturally and historically specific survey and workshop questions and narratives for each country. Instead, the same questions and narratives were used across countries. Local partners delivering the narrative workshops reported that, despite this, the questions and narratives worked well.

It also was not possible to draw out the differences between countries. A larger sample size would be needed for each country to be able to draw meaningful country-level conclusions from the narrative workshops. Instead, the results in the report draw on common themes from across the entire sample. The limited country-specific analysis does, however, suggest that there are country and regional differences that would be worth investigating further.

The survey questions, narrative workshop scripts, narratives, and the participants' responses were professionally translated, and checked by partners. In a project focused on language, however, the translation and subsequent analysis by researchers not from the countries where the research took place introduces the potential for misinterpretation, loss of meaning, and limitations on the depth and richness of the conclusions. Working with local partners throughout ameliorates this to some extent, but not entirely.

Climate justice communications research

Climate justice is a new area for Climate Outreach and the desk review indicated there is very little previous communications research on this topic. This meant that the team and partners were on a steep learning journey throughout the project, investigating a relatively unexplored area.

Due to the limited prior research, some of the insights in this report are based on only one or two questions, and would benefit from further investigation. In particular, in their workshops not all partners managed to cover the section on the role of the EU in addressing climate change, which means there were less data to draw on for this part of the report.

In the survey, it was only possible to analyse 600 responses in total (100 responses per country) to the question 'What does "climate justice" mean to you?'. It is likely that analysis of all of the responses would reveal new insights.

It also meant that, for some topics, the research explored attitudes and drew insights from these attitudes but didn't test messaging specifically. Problems arise when there is a difference between someone's attitude and their responses to messaging on the same topic. For example, in some workshops participants expressed a view on a topic but responded negatively to messaging expressing the same view. Further research could test messages based on insights and recommendations in the report in some of these less explored areas.

There is huge scope for further research in this area in general and for refining and improving the research approach. For example, working more closely with and following the leadership of those with lived experience and knowledge of climate justice during the project design and execution. One area that particularly warrants further exploration is intergenerational justice, especially with the target age group for this project – for example, looking at messaging in relation to intergenerational understanding and solidarity between groups who have been and will be most impacted by the climate crisis.

Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

After the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic in March 2020, the research approach for this project was reassessed and some adjustments were made. The order of the research, which was originally intended to start with the narrative workshops and follow them with a message-testing survey, was revised and instead the online survey was conducted first but without the message-testing element. This was in the hope that it would be possible to run in-person narrative workshops at a later date. In the end, despite the delay, the narrative workshop approach was adapted to an online approach, and local partners ran a mix of online and in-person workshops, depending on national guidelines. The narrative workshops followed WHO and national guidelines for gatherings.

The online and in-person workshops were structured identically and partners did not report any particular difficulties or differences in delivering the workshops online. However the project has not explicitly taken into account any differences between the two, or any shifts in cultural attitudes as a result of the pandemic, although this has been explored in other Climate Outreach reports.

Other communication guides related to climate justice

Climate Outreach is aware of the following guides. The authors are conscious that this list is in English which may exclude some important work, and are very open to recommendations about publications about how to communicate climate justice in other languages – and particularly led by people and organisations from the global south.

Framing Climate Justice Research Briefing: How People in the UK Think About Climate Justice (2020) by PIRC, 360.org and NEON <https://framingclimatejustice.org/>

How to Talk About Economics: A Guide to Changing the Story by Australian Progress <https://www.australianprogress.org.au/resources/how-to-talk-about-economics>

A Practical Guide for Communicating Global Justice and Solidarity: an alternative to the language of development, aid and charity (2019) by Health Poverty Action <https://www.healthpovertyaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/A-Practical-Guide-For-Communicating-Global-Justice-and-Solidarity.pdf>

Framing the Economy: How to Win the Case for a Better System (2018) by NEON, New Economics Foundation, Frameworks Institute and PIRC <https://neweconomics.org/2018/02/framing-the-economy-2/>

The Narratives We Need: Strengthening the Stories that Unite Us (2018) by PIRC <https://publicinterest.org.uk/narratives-we-need/>

Common Cause Foundation <https://commoncausefoundation.org/>

Recommendations for Engaging Young People with Climate Change Campaigns (2019) by Climate Outreach <https://climateoutreach.org/reports/engaging-young-people-with-climate-change-campaigns>

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42. For legal and logistical reasons it unfortunately was not possible to ensure the sample was representative in terms of ethnicity in the other European countries surveyed.
43. Recruitment limitations meant that a few participants identified as right of centre. The cohort was slightly more engaged in climate action than originally intended, particularly as a result of a significant number of more engaged participants in workshops in France, Latvia and Spain. Overall, however, the workshop participants were not deeply engaged in climate action (see Appendices 2 and 4 for more details).
44. This method of identifying and analysing the relevant articles draws closely on the recommendations provided by Nielsen and D'haen (2014): 'reviewing documents according to clearly formulated questions by using systematic and explicit criteria for selecting and appraising relevant research'. See: Nielsen, J. and D'haen, S. (2014) 'Asking about climate change: Reflections on methodology in qualitative climate change research published in *Global Environmental Change* since 2000', *Global Environmental Change* 24, pp. 402–409.
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51. Of the 4,000 survey respondents who said they could or might be able to define climate justice, 100 responses in each of the six countries surveyed were analysed – see Appendix 4 for more detail. Of these 600 responses, only a small proportion gave a definition that resembled some element of the definition of climate justice that is employed in this study.
52. Racialisation is the "process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics, etc." and "on that basis are subjected to differential and unequal treatment". The term is used throughout the report because "it is more accurate to say racialised as it is the process and enactment of racism." Canadian Race Relations Foundation (2015) 'Racialisation'. [Online] Available at: <https://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/en/resources/glossary-a-terms-en-gb-1/item/22873-racialization> [Accessed 14.09.2022]; Calgary Anti-Racism Education (2021) 'Racialisation'. [Online] Available at: <https://www.aclrc.com/racialization?rq=racialization> [Accessed 14.09.2022]; Centric Lab (n.d.) 'Right to Know: Key terminology for environmental and health justice'. [Online] Available at: <https://right-to-know.org/resources/the-language/> [Accessed 14.09.2022].

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58. Combined data from two questions: 'How much impact, if any, do you think the following groups have had on causing climate change? Global corporations and multinational companies, the world's wealthiest people, individuals in wealthy countries, individuals in poorer countries, individuals in middle-income countries, governments in wealthy countries, governments in poorer countries, governments in middle-income countries', and 'How much impact, if any, do you think the following have had on causing climate change? Economic growth, colonialism, capitalism, socialism, industrialism'. Answered on a scale of 1–5, where 1 is no impact and 5 is huge impact. Question adapted from the following study: PIRC, 350.org and NEON. (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished.
59. The analysis involved aggregating responses into systems, governments and individuals. Systems (mean 3.8) included capitalism, socialism, colonialism, industrialism, economic growth; governments (mean 3.5) included wealthy, middle-income and poorer country governments; individuals (mean 3.1) included people in wealthy, middle income and poorer countries.
60. Strongly agree and agree responses combined; strongly disagree and disagree responses combined.
61. Participants' solutions were drawn from their responses to a number of questions during the workshop, rather than to one specific question.
62. This corresponds with research which has found that people can often identify problems in society, such as inequality, but may struggle to articulate how the problem came about or what can be done about it. Spencer, L. (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics: A Guide for Changing the Story*. [Online]. Australian Progress. Available at: <https://www.australianprogress.org.au/resources/how-to-talk-about-economics> [Accessed 14.09.2022].
63. In Eastern Europe, young people may be more amenable to critiques of the excesses of big companies (in terms of pollution etc.) since this was something participants from Eastern Europe brought up themselves. Connecting the dots between this and the systemic drivers, using explanations and examples, may be one avenue for talking about root causes.
64. Previous research has found that 'priming subjects to consider the collective causes of climate change pushed respondents to give more in support of climate action' (p.3). Obradovich, N. and Guenther, S. M. (2016) 'Collective responsibility amplifies mitigation behaviours', *Climatic Change* 137, pp. 307–319.
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73. Strongly agree and agree responses combined; strongly disagree and disagree responses combined. Question adapted from the following study: PIRC, 350.org and NEON. (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished.
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77. For example, see Climate Visuals: <https://climatevisuals.org/>
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86. Sultana (2021) 'Critical climate justice'; Equinox (2021) 'Towards climate justice: Rethinking the European Green Deal from a racial justice perspective'; Hickel, J. (2017). *The Divide: A Brief Guide to Global Inequality and its Solutions*. London: Windmill Books; Mercer, H. (2022) 'Colonialism: Why leading climate scientists have finally acknowledged its link with climate change'. [Online] *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/colonialism-why-leading-climate-scientists-have-finally-acknowledged-its-link-with-climate-change-181642>
87. Perry, K. (2021) 'The new 'bond-age', climate crisis and the case for climate reparations: Unpicking old/new colonialities of finance for development within the SDGs'. *Geoforum*, 126, pp. 361–371
88. Participants were given the following definition of climate justice: 'Climate justice is a term used to frame climate change as an ethical and political issue, rather than one that is purely environmental or physical in nature. Climate justice examines concepts such as equality, human rights, collective rights, and the historical responsibilities for climate change. It looks at who and where are most responsible and have benefited most from causing climate change, as well as who is suffering the worst impacts and who should be involved in decisions about solutions'. They were then asked if they thought this was a useful way of thinking about climate change. Definition adapted from Wikipedia. (n.d.) 'Climate Justice' [Online] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_justice and Carbon Brief (2021) 'In-depth Q&A'.
89. It is worth noting that Spanish workshops also had a significant proportion of participants who were more engaged in climate action.

90. Young adults' may be particularly drawn to a reconciliation model that is also 'forward-looking and concerned with the methods of deterring future bad acts' (p. 2). See Burkett, M. (2006) 'Reconciliation and Non-Repetition: A New Paradigm for African-American Reparations.' [Online] University of Colorado Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 06-35, Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=936738 [Accessed 18.09.2022]. Further research could test this approach.
91. The Beam (n.d.) 'Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, the woman putting up a global fight to preserve indigenous communities' [Online]. Available at: <https://the-beam.com/female-empowerment/hindou-oumarou-ibrahim-the-woman-putting-up-a-global-fight-to-preserve-indigenous-communities/> [Accessed 19.09.2022]
92. PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Framing climate justice research briefing'; Schleich, J., Dütschke, E., Schwirplies, C., and Ziegler, A. (2016) 'Citizens' perceptions of justice in international climate policy: an empirical analysis', *Climate Policy* 16(1), pp. 50–67.
93. Survey respondents were asked 'Which of the following forms of governance do you think would be better at tackling climate change?'. They chose one of the three responses shown in the figure. Question adapted from the following study: PIRC, 350.org and NEON. (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished.
94. Survey respondents were asked 'Do you think each of the following groups should have a bigger or a smaller say than they currently do in decisions about tackling climate change, or should it be about the same?' Responses were on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = much smaller, 2 = smaller, 3 = the same, 4 = bigger, 5 = much bigger. In the figure, bigger and much bigger are combined, as are smaller and much smaller. Question adapted from the following study: PIRC, 350.org and NEON. (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished.
95. Bali Climate Justice Principles (2002).
96. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
97. PIRC, 350.org NEON (2020) 'Framing climate justice research briefing'. p. 18.
98. Ibid.
99. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following studies: Health Poverty Action (2019) 'A Practical Guide For Communicating Global Justice & Solidarity' [Online] Available at: <https://www.healthpovertyaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/A-Practical-Guide-For-Communicating-Global-Justice-and-Solidarity.pdf>; PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Framing climate justice research briefing'.
100. Framing people as victims puts them in a 'hierarchical dependency relationship of charity offered to "victims"' (Dreher, T. and Voyer, M. (2015) 'Climate refugees or migrants? Contesting media frames on climate justice in the Pacific', *Environmental Communication* 9, pp. 58–76). Dreher and Voyer found that people in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) tend to be framed as 'proof' of climate change, 'victims' of climate change, and 'refugees'. This undermines their desire to be seen as 'proactive, self-determining, and active agents of change' (p. 58).
101. Amnesty International (n.d.) 'Indigenous peoples'. [Online] Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/indigenous-peoples/> [Accessed 14.09.2022].
102. Democracy Now (2009) "'We are not begging for aid'"—Chief Bolivian negotiator says developed countries owe climate debt'. [Online] Available at: https://www.democracynow.org/2009/12/9/we_are_not_begging_for_aid
103. See for example Climate Action Network International (2022) 'Over 400 organisations demand that loss and damage is on the agenda for COP27' [Online]. Available at: <https://climatenetwork.org/2022/09/06/over-400-organisations-demand-that-loss-and-damage-is-on-the-agenda-for-cop27/> [Accessed 18.09.2022]
104. The average left-leaning respondent selected 'agree', whereas the average centre- and right-leaning respondent fell between 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'agree'.
105. Strongly agree and agree responses combined; strongly disagree and disagree responses combined.
106. Strongly agree and agree responses combined; strongly disagree and disagree responses combined. Question adapted from the following study: PIRC, 350.org and NEON. (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished.
107. Indicated by the relatively large proportion who neither agree nor disagree. For both statements, the average respondent sits somewhere between 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'agree', indicating that, while there is support for both ideas, young adults don't feel strongly about either.
108. Major compensation programmes, such as the Slave Compensation Scheme, illustrate that there is a precedent and that there is infrastructure for such initiatives, though in that case compensation went to the wrong people.
109. For example, the case of Saúl versus RWE: Germany Watch (n.d.) 'The climate case: Saúl versus RWE'. [Online] Available at: www.germanwatch.org/en/huaraz

110. Burkett, M. (2006) 'Reconciliation and Non-Repetition: A New Paradigm for African-American Reparations.'
111. The European Green Deal, adopted by the European Commission, is a set of proposals relating to climate, energy, transport and taxation policies that aim to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. European Commission (n.d.) *A European Green Deal*. [Online]. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en
112. Douo (2021) 'Climate colonialism and the EU's Green Deal'.
113. PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Framing climate justice research briefing'.
114. Douo (2021) 'Climate colonialism and the EU's Green Deal'; Equinox (2021) 'Towards climate justice: Rethinking the European Green Deal from a racial justice perspective'; PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Framing climate justice research briefing'; Martí Comas, J. (2020) 'Ecofeminist review of the proposals for a Green New Deal' [Online] Accessed at: https://www.transform-network.net/fileadmin/user_upload/epaper_ecofeminism-end.pdf
115. Survey respondents were presented with the statement 'In order to tackle climate change, I would want to be involved with...', and were provided with a list of potential actions to tackle climate change. They were asked to tick all actions that applied to them. There may be actions survey respondents would have chosen that were not included in the list and it's also possible that some of the listed actions (e.g. participatory forms of politics) weren't well understood and could have benefited from greater explanation. Further research could investigate young people's propensity to get involved in different types of action.
116. This research didn't explore why young people chose this as their preferred form of action – for example, whether it was because it is the only form of action that feels within reach or because they feel it is the most effective form of action. Further research would be needed to understand this.
117. Corner et al (2015) 'How do young people engage with climate change?'
118. Kenis and Mathijs (2012) 'Beyond individual behaviour change'.
119. Strongly agree and agree responses combined; strongly disagree and disagree responses combined.
120. Corner et al. (2015) 'How do young people engage with climate change?'; European Commission, Eurobarometer (2019) 'Europeans in 2019'; Harris et al. (2010) 'Beyond apathetic or activist youth 'Ordinary' young people and contemporary forms of participation'; Briggs, J. E. (2009) 'Young women and politics: an oxymoron?' *Journal of Youth Studies* 11, pp. 579–592; Bowman, B. (2019) 'Imagining future worlds alongside young climate activists: a new framework for research.' *Fennia – International Journal of Geography* 197, pp. 295–305
121. Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
122. Ibid.
123. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
124. Suggested framing in the following study: Spencer, (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*. p. 10.
125. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
126. Movement Generation (n.d.) From Banks and Tanks To Cooperation and Caring: A Strategic Framework for a Just Transition. [Online] Available at: https://movementgeneration.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/JT_booklet_English_SPREADs_web.pdf [Accessed 30.09.2022]; Beautiful Trouble (n.d.) Creative tools for a more just world. [Online]. Available at: <https://beautifultrouble.org> [Accessed 30.09.2022]
127. COP26 Coalition (2021) 'Our Time Is Now #3' [Online] Available at: <https://cop26coalition.org/talk/our-time-is-now3/> [Accessed 23.09.2022]
128. Atkin, E. (2019) You will have to make sacrifices to save the planet. *The New Republic*. [Online] Available at: <https://newrepublic.com/article/154036/will-make-sacrifices-save-planet> [Accessed 18.09.2022]
129. Millward-Hopkins et al (2020) 'Providing decent living with minimum energy: A global scenario'; PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Framing climate justice research briefing'.
130. Scored on a 7-point Likert scale. 1 = much worse, 2 = worse, 3 = slightly worse, 4 = the same, 5= slightly better, 6 = better, 7 = much better (all 'worse' responses combined and all 'better' responses combined).
131. Scored on a 7-point Likert scale. 1 = much worse, 2 = worse, 3 = slightly worse, 4 = the same, 5= slightly better, 6 = better, 7 = much better (all 'worse' responses combined and all 'better' responses combined).
132. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.

133. Recruitment limitations meant that a few participants identified as right of centre. The cohort was slightly more engaged in climate action than originally intended, particularly as a result of a significant number of more engaged participants in workshops in France, Latvia and Spain. Overall, however, the workshop participants were not deeply engaged in climate action (see Appendices 2 and 4 for more details).
134. Corner, A., Webster, R. & Teriete, C. (2015). *Climate Visuals: Seven principles for visual climate change communication (based on international social research)*. Oxford: Climate Outreach.
135. Burkett, M. (2006) 'Reconciliation and Non-Repetition: A New Paradigm for African-American Reparations.'
136. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
137. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: PIRC (2018) 'The narratives we need'.
138. This recommendation reflects similar recommendations made in the following study: Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
139. The narratives were inspired by and / or drew from a number of sources, including but not limited to: text provided by SPARK partners for testing during the workshops; narratives tested during the UK-based Framing Climate Justice research carried out by PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished; speeches by Greta Thunberg and other Fridays For Future (FFF) activists. Stubbs, P. (2020) 'Greta Thunberg - The Future Speaks' [Online] Available at: <https://www.environmentshow.com/greta-thunberg-speeches/> [Accessed 23.09.2022] and Fridays For Future (2022) 'Activist Speeches' [Online] Available at: <https://fridaysforfuture.org/what-we-do/activist-speeches/> [Accessed 23.09.2022]
140. Spencer (n.d.) *How to Talk About Economics*.
141. Shaw & Corner (2017) 'Using Narrative Workshops to socialise the climate debate'
142. Climate Outreach (2021) 'Communicating climate change in Egypt, Tunisia and Mauritania'. [Online] Available at: <https://climateoutreach.org/reports/communicating-climate-tunisia-egypt-mauritania-north-africa-levant/> [Accessed 14.09.2021]; Climate Outreach (2018) 'Communicating climate change and energy in Alberta'. [Online] Available at: <https://climateoutreach.org/reports/alberta-narratives-project-core-narratives/> [Accessed 14.09.2021]; Climate Outreach (2018) 'Communicating climate change in India'. [Online] Available at: <https://climateoutreach.org/reports/global-narratives/> [Accessed 14.09.2021].
143. The narratives were inspired by and / or drew from a number of sources, including but not limited to: text provided by SPARK partners for testing during the workshops; narratives tested during the UK-based Framing Climate Justice research carried out by PIRC, 350.org and NEON (2020) 'Climate Change Polling and Message Testing'. Internal document available on request via framingclimatejustice.org. Unpublished; speeches by Greta Thunberg and other Fridays For Future (FFF) activists. Stubbs, P. (2020) 'Greta Thunberg - The Future Speaks' [Online] Available at: <https://www.environmentshow.com/greta-thunberg-speeches/> [Accessed 23.09.2022] and Fridays For Future (2022) 'Activist Speeches' [Online] Available at: <https://fridaysforfuture.org/what-we-do/activist-speeches/> [Accessed 23.09.2022]
144. Participants were presented with a list of actions and were asked to indicate which actions they'd taken in the last three years – for example, 'joined an environmental protest', 'consciously reduced your carbon footprint.' The aim was to select participants who had taken two or fewer actions. Partners found it difficult to recruit participants who fulfilled these criteria and the final sample included around 60% who selected two actions or fewer. The average score for workshop participants was 2.4 actions.
145. See for example Wang, S., Corner, A., and Nicholls, J. (2020). *Britain Talks Climate: A toolkit for engaging the British public on climate change*. Oxford: Climate Outreach.

