



The *NEXUS* between MIGRATIONS and CLIMATE CHANGE

Max Fras & Francesca Vanoni,
DEAR Support Team



Terminology



Useful Glossaries

- International Organisation for Migrations
IOM Glossary (2019)
https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf
- Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy
MECLEP/IOM (2014)
www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/migrated_files/Country/docs/MECLEP-Glossary-EN.pdf
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHCR Master Glossary of Terms (ongoing)
<https://www.unhcr.org/master-glossary.html>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPCC - Sixth Assessment Report “Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability” (2022), Annex II

Human Mobility

A generic term covering **all the different forms of movement** of persons.

>> Human mobility reflects a **wider range of movements of persons than the term “migration”** (e.g. encompassing tourists that are generally considered as not engaging in migration). [IOM]



Climate Change



A change in the **state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. by using statistical tests) [...] and that persists for an extended period**, typically decades or longer. [IPCC]

>> The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its Article 1, defines climate change as: '**a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity** that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and **which is in addition to natural climate variability** observed over comparable time periods'.



Environmental Crises vs. Crisis vs. Climate Change

The plural form highlights the **mutually reinforcing climate, biodiversity, and pollution crises**



Migrant

A person who moves away from their place of usual residence, **whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently**, and for a variety of reasons. [IOM]

>> An **umbrella term**, not defined under international law.



Displaced person



A person who has been **forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence**, either across an international border or within a State

... in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of **generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters**. [UNHCR]

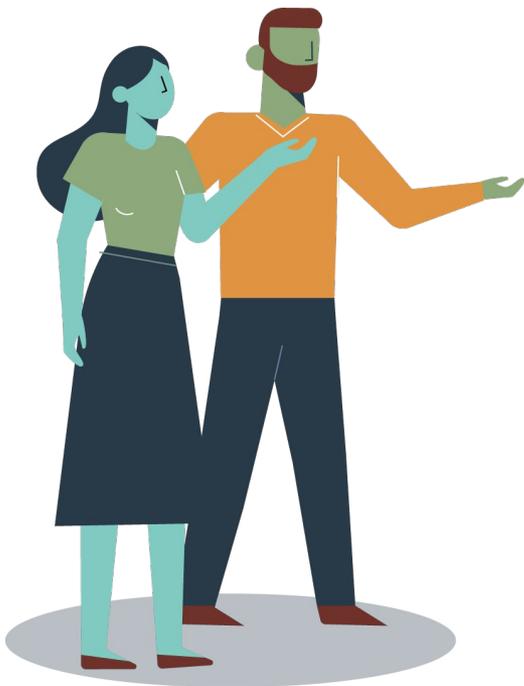
>> **Internally displaced person (IDP)**: as above, however he/she has not crossed an internationally recognised State border



Climate migration

The movement of persons/groups who, **predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment due to climate change**, are obliged to leave their habitual place of residence, or choose to do so - either temporarily or permanently, within a State or across an international border. [IOM]

>> Climate migration is a subcategory of environmental migration. Migration can also be a response to environmental stressors, helping to adapt to changes in the environment and to build resilience.

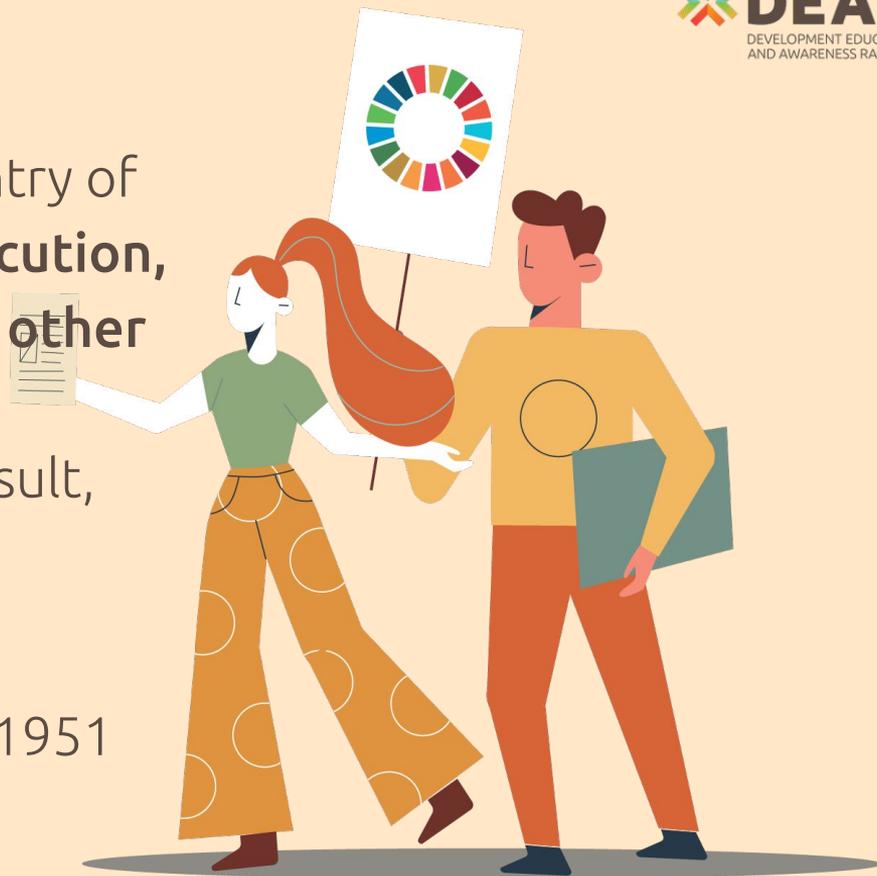


Refugee

A person who is outside their country of origin for reasons of **feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances** that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection.

[UNHCR]

>> It is a legal term defined in the 1951 UN Convention

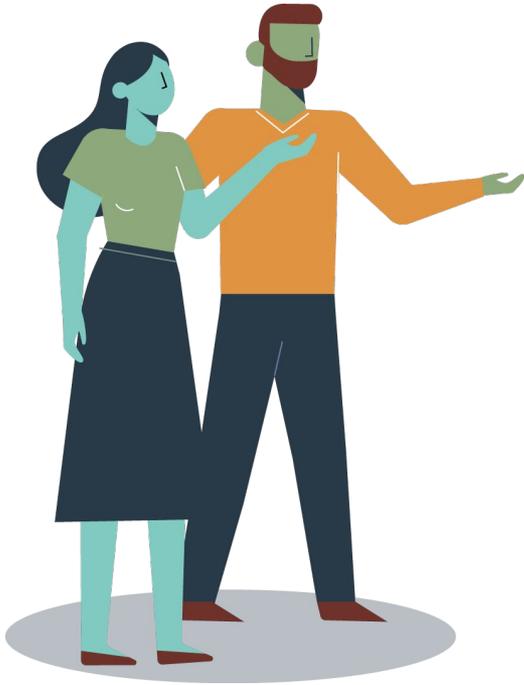


Climate/environmental refugee

The term is used to refer to a category of environmental migrants whose movement is clearly of a forced nature. Used by academia and advocacy groups to push for legal protection.

The term is **potentially misleading**.

>> The terms **“environmental migrant”** or **“displaced person”** should be used instead. They are not persecuted on any of the Convention’s grounds. [IOM]



Climate Justice

Justice that links development and human rights

...to achieve a human-centred
approach to addressing climate change

...safeguarding the rights of the most
vulnerable people

...and **sharing the burdens and
benefits of climate change equitably
and fairly.** [IPCC]



DEAR Project Research

- #ClimateOfChange
- ClimAct/SPARK



#ClimateofChange survey

A survey of young people (15 to 35 years old) was conducted in 23 European countries.

Between 29 October and 19 November 2020, in total 22,377 interviews were completed across the 23 countries.

In 21 of the 23 countries surveyed >1,000 interviews were conducted. In Cyprus and Malta >500 respondents were interviewed.



Climate change is a major concern

Views on most serious problems facing the world



Climate change and issues like drought, floods and fires



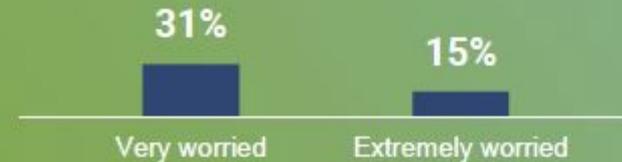
Environmental degradation



Spread of infectious diseases

CONTEXT

How worried are young people in EU23 about climate change?



Climate change not linked to migration

- Close to half (46%) of young Europeans consider climate change to be among the most serious problems facing the world
- 13% consider “large-scale migration” to be among the most serious problems facing the world.
- Climate change is not seen as a major cause of migration

DO YOUNG PEOPLE MAKE THE LINK BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION?

What are the most important reasons to migrate to EU23?



War and
armed violence



Pursuit of economic
opportunities



Climate change causing
extreme weather and
environmental changes



Climate migration: unknown, unequal

How much have young people heard about the term "climate migrants"?

A great deal/
A fair amount



32%

Not very much/
Nothing at all



68%

Should climate migrants have the same legal protection
as people fleeing war or persecution?

Climate migrants should have
the same legal protection
as people fleeing war
or persecution

50%

Agree
(strongly agree, agree,
tend to agree)

21%

Disagree
(tend to disagree, disagree,
strongly disagree)



ClimAct/SPARK

Communicating climate justice with young adults in Europe

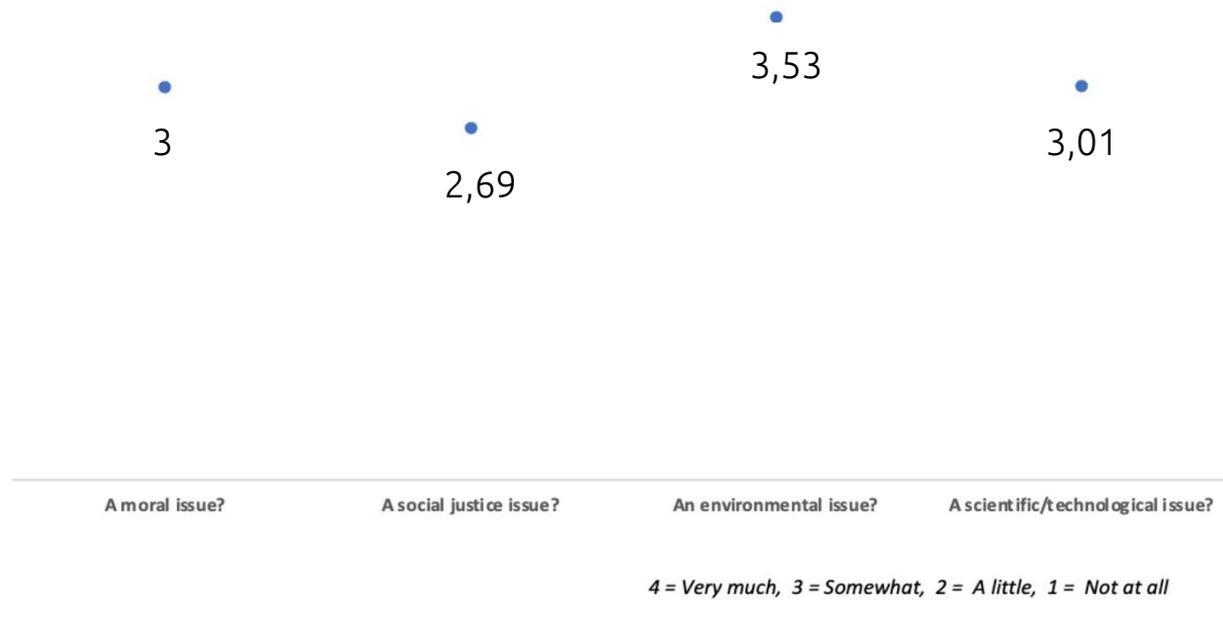
- **In April 2021 - A survey by Climate Outreach:** over 6,000 young adults aged 18–35 across 6 European countries *plus* 20 in-depth workshops in 9 European countries with young adults aged 18–29
- The survey **explored their perceptions and attitudes in relation to climate justice ideas**
- They **expressed concern about climate change but were largely not deeply engaged in taking action.** These **'persuadable' young adults** are a particular focus of this study - they are a core audience for climate advocates
- The workshops provided rich data on how **'persuadable' young adults in Europe respond to climate justice messaging and can be engaged** in climate justice arguments
- Data were used to create **a series of recommendations**, which are presented in the report (*to be published*)

Young Europeans ready for action

- 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
- Respondents identified global corporations and multinational companies, 'capitalism' and 'economic growth', 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

Climate change - environmental, not social

Young Europeans 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.



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

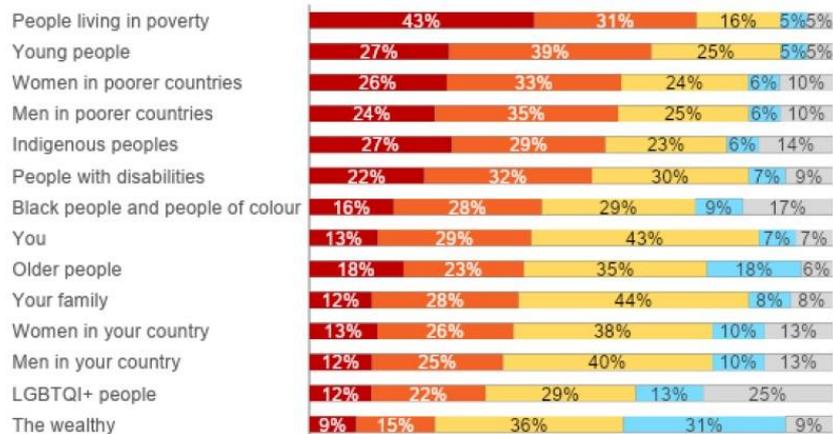


Climate change is more about poverty, less about race or gender

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.

Impact of climate change on different people

■ Extremely negatively ■ Very negatively ■ Somewhat negatively ■ Not at all negatively ■ Don't know



Long path to climate justice

- Many young adults in Europe are **aware of the need** for fundamental changes to society to tackle climate change
- The term **'climate justice' alone is not necessarily meaningful** – there is a need to explain certain key concepts clearly
- Most of the respondents couldn't define the term 'climate justice', but they were **receptive to core ideas** when presented with them
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents agreed that **those most affected by climate change should have more say** in decisions about climate



Effective approaches to GCE/DEAR

(a sample below: other recommendations in the report)

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 much 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>

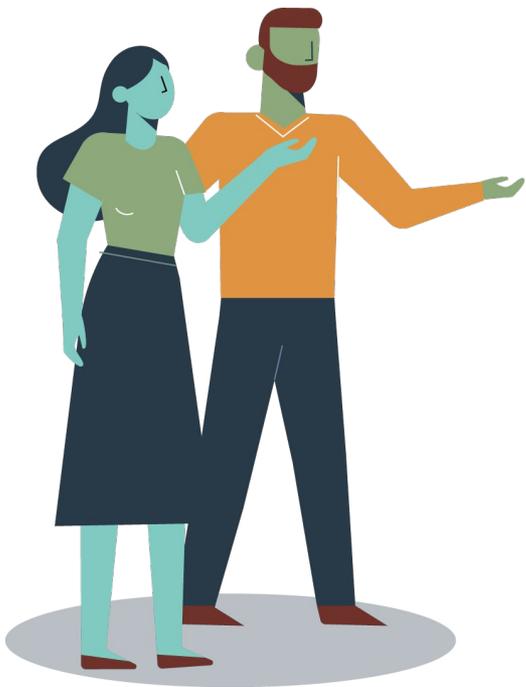
DEAR projects - Research takeaways

- Climate change is a major concern; migration is not
- Climate change's social aspects are generally under-explored
- Links between climate change and human mobility are not obvious to many young people
- Global solidarity is not extended to all aspects of climate change
- Awareness-raising and education are needed for a refined and tailored approach



Facts & Figures





FACT 1: Most people displaced in the context of disasters and environmental degradation are **internally displaced** (within borders of country of origin).

FACT 2: We lack comprehensive and systematic **data** collection and analysis **on cross-border climate-related displacement.**

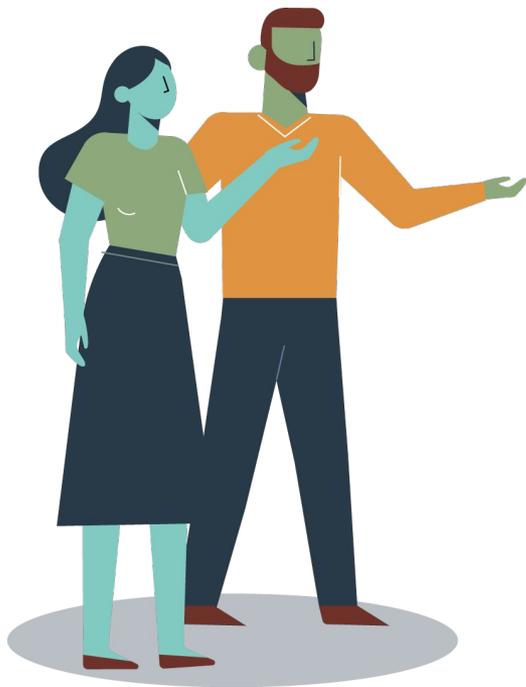
FACT 3: *Climate migrants* are **not legally considered refugees** according to international refugee law, as the 1951 UN Refugee Convention does not recognise the environment as a persecuting agent.

FACT 4: The **vulnerable** are most likely to feel pressure for climate-induced migration.

Countries with a combination of low adaptive capacities, vulnerable geographies and fragile ecosystems are more prone to environmental migration.

At the same time, often the most vulnerable people (poor, women, people of colour, indigenous communities, children) do not have the resources or capacity to leave.





FACT 5: There are **no reliable estimates of the number of people on the move** today or in the future as a result of environmental factors/stressor.

According to the World Bank, **climate change and environmental degradation could force 216 million people** across the world to move within their countries by 2050 unless decisive action is taken.

FACT 6: Today, one third of the world's public climate finance comes from the EU and its Member States

In 2020, the European Commission provided

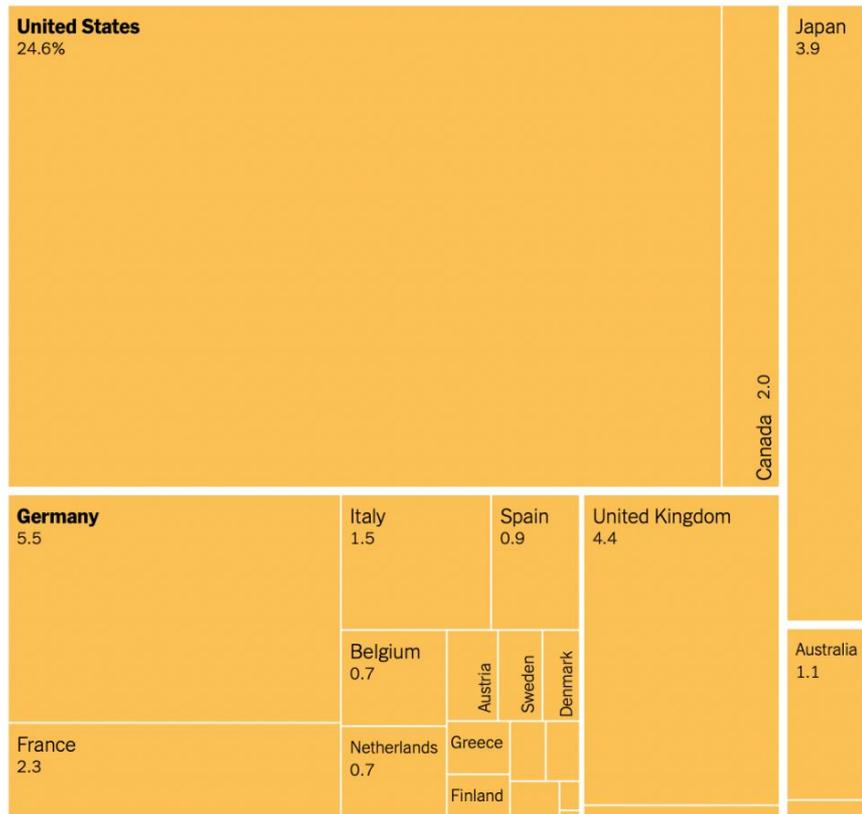
EUR 2.6 billion in climate finance to developing economies, the majority of which tackles climate adaptation activities.



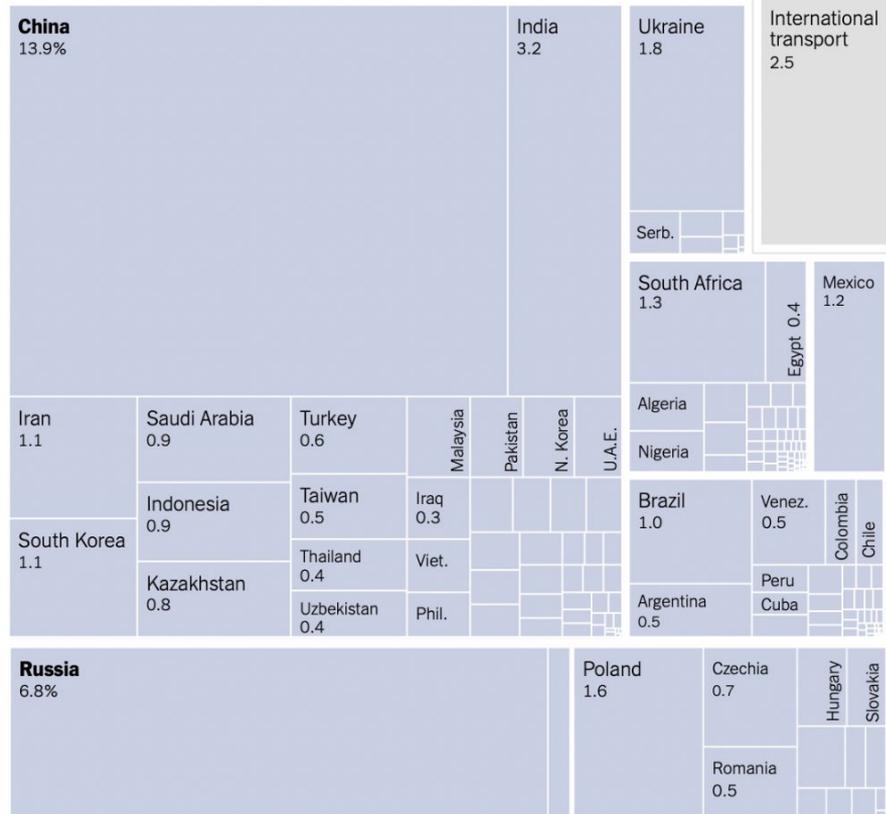
FACT 7: Rich countries bear the most of the historical responsibility for Climate Change

Rich countries (US, Canada, Japan and much of western Europe) account for 12% of the global population but are responsible for 50% of all the planet-warming greenhouse gases released from fossil fuels and industry over the past 170 years.

23 rich, developed countries are responsible for half of all historical CO₂ emissions.



More than 150 countries are responsible for the other half.



Source: [Global Carbon Project](#) - Note: The rich, developed countries group is based on the [United Nations'](#)

[Annex II definition](#). International transport is not counted as part of either group's total emissions.

Elaboration by NYT, 12 Nov. 2021

FACT 8: China, USA, India, and Russia have been the top greenhouse gas emitters in recent years

1. China
2. United States
3. India
4. Russia
5. Japan
6. Germany
7. South Korea
8. Iran
9. Canada
10. Saudi Arabia

Ranking of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by
Country - 2019 data

Source: *worldpopulationreview.com*



Thank you!

