



# YOUTH CLIMATE VOICES

YOUTH CLIMATE  
JUSTICE SURVEY  
2021



In collaboration with

**spunout**

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# INTRODUCTION

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) the climate has been changing since pre-industrial times, human activities have caused approximately 1°C of global warming; at current rates, this would reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052. The world is already seeing consequences for people, nature, and livelihoods. The impacts of climate change are being felt in different ways by different people and these profound and drastic changes raise several questions for climate justice.

In November 2021 as part of the 'Youth Climate Justice challenge', ECO-UNESCO in collaboration with SpunOut.ie, conducted an online survey with young people. The purpose of the survey is to highlight how young people of Ireland feel about climate change and climate justice issues, how they want to be involved in solving climate issues, how they are controlling their eco-anxiety, what actions they want to take, their interest in green jobs and how they desire to have climate action as part of their school curriculum. The survey took place between November 29th, 2021, to December 5th. The survey included a range of multiple-choice questions along with open-ended questions allowing for personalised responses.

This Project saw a significant response rate with over 1,200 participants. More than 63% of the participants were aged 16-19 years and more than 85% were students. 58% of participants are female, 36% male, 2% non-binary, and 2% participants categorize themselves through self-identity and others. This survey was part of a larger project called 'The Youth Climate Justice Challenge', funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. This project involved additional partners: The Irish Girl Guides; Gaisce President Award; The No Name Club; and the Young Irish Film Makers.

This report provides an analysis of the survey findings, highlighting how young people of Ireland feel about climate change and climate justice issues.

Answers to multiple-choice questions can be found in the appendix.

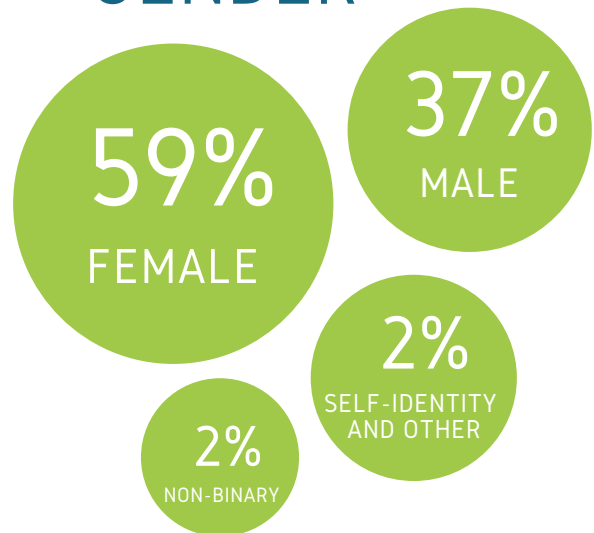
**SINCE PRE-INDUSTRIAL  
TIMES, HUMAN ACTIVITIES  
HAVE CAUSED  
APPROXIMATELY  
1°C OF GLOBAL WARMING.**

# WHO RESPONDED?

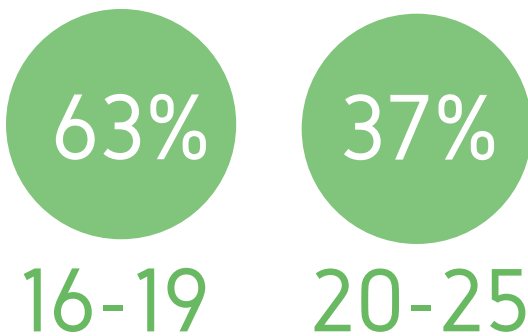
## SURVEY RESPONSES



## GENDER



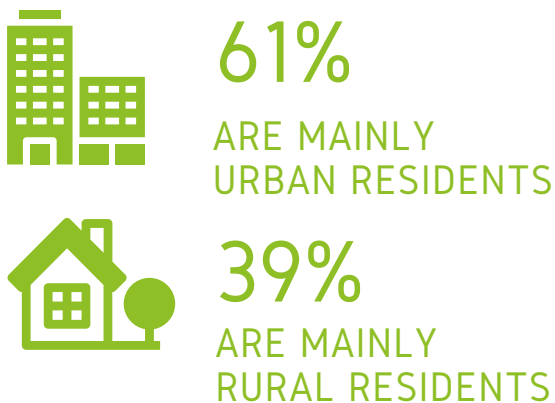
## AGE



## OCCUPATION



## LOCATION



# KEY FINDINGS

93%

of young people want climate action to become a bigger part of school life

88%

of young people are either **involved or want to get involved** with climate actions.

74%

of respondents are interested in green jobs

60%

of young people feel **anxious** about climate change

55%

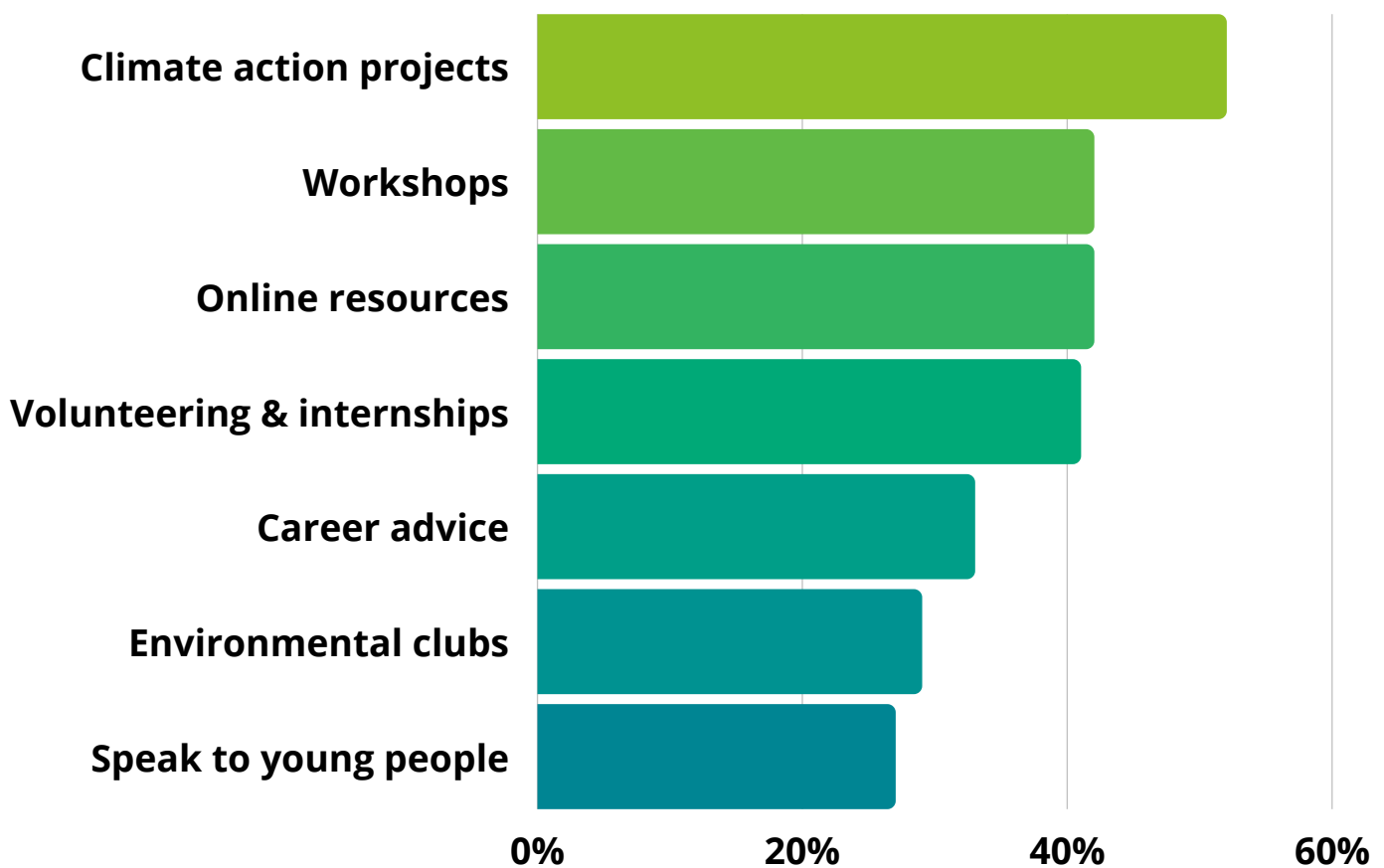
of young people feel like their current place of work or study is not doing enough to be more environmentally friendly

52%

of respondents want **opportunities to be involved** in climate action projects

# TOP AREAS YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO GET INVOLVED

When young people were asked what would help them to get involved in climate action, they answered that more opportunities to get involved in climate action projects, workshops, followed by access to online resources, internships, and volunteering opportunities. Young people also want more career advice, environmental clubs, and being able to speak to other young people.



# THINKING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

When young people were asked how do they feel when thinking about climate change, they feel mostly anxious, angry, fearful but also eager to act.

60%

ANXIOUS



54%

FEARFUL



44%

EAGER TO ACT



37%

ANGRY



# MANAGING ECO-ANXIETY

When young people were asked how they experienced worry about threats facing the earth as a result of climate change and environmental damage, they found helpful the following actions when it comes to managing their eco-anxiety or climate anxiety.

60%

of young people felt hearing about positive climate news from around the world was helpful.



46%

of young people felt learning about the solutions to climate change helped.



38%

of young people felt making changes to their lifestyle and habits to help the environment worked.



34%

of young people felt spending time in nature helped.



31%

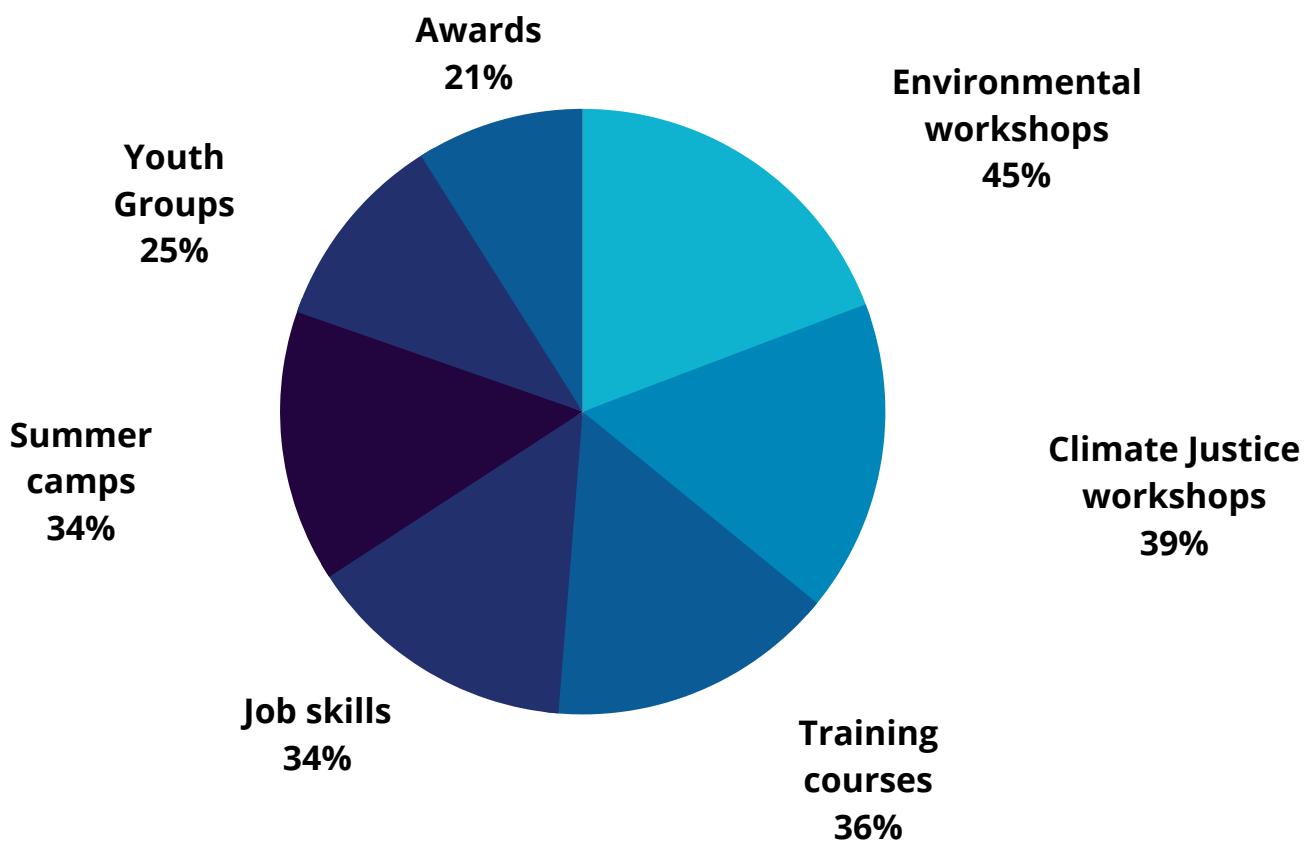
of young people felt taking part in climate action helped.





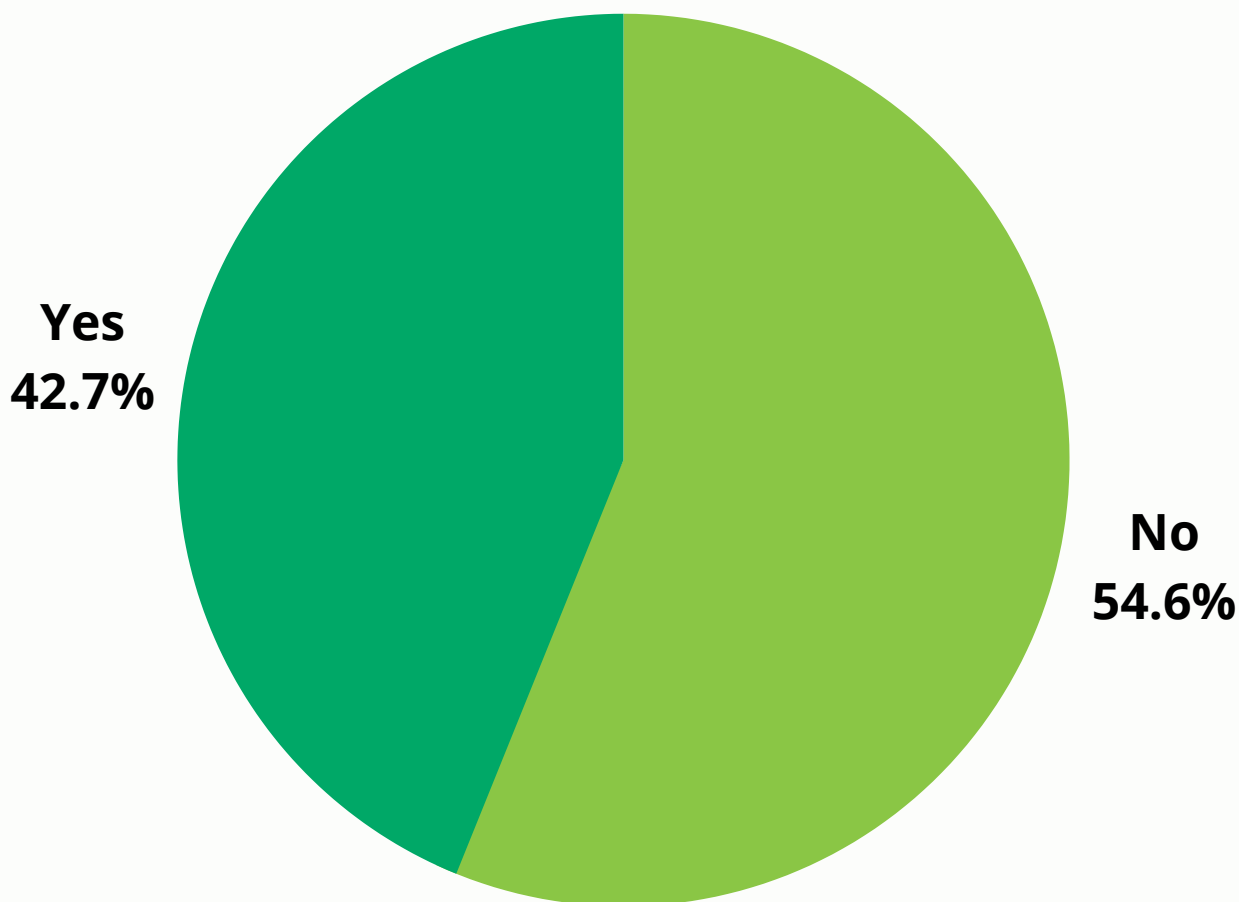
# TAKING PART TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

When young people were asked which activities would they like to participate in to help the environment, they mentioned environmental workshops, training courses on environmental topics, followed by employment programmes developing jobs skills, summer camps with day trips with outdoor workshops, and environmentally focused youth groups. Respondents also showed an interest in the ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards.

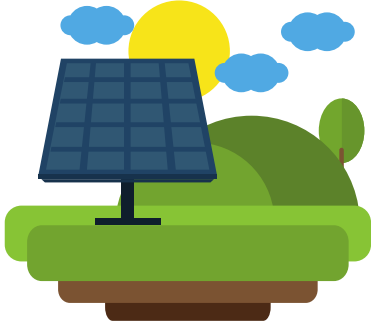


# ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

When young people were asked if they feel their current place of work or study is doing enough to be more environmentally friendly, the majority of respondents mentioned that their current place of work or study is not doing enough to be environmentally friendly.



# GREEN JOBS



Green jobs are jobs that aim to reduce environmental damage, restore nature, reduce emissions and protect the environment. This can include sustainability roles like sustainable business or sustainable agriculture; jobs in renewable energy and energy efficiency; jobs in electric transport and electric cars; or nature protection or eco-friendly tourism.

56%

WANT TO HAVE A GREEN JOB BUT NEED MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO ACHIEVE THIS.

12%

WANT TO HAVE A GREEN JOB AND HAVE A PLAN TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL.

5%

HAVE A GREEN JOB.

# CLIMATE ACTION A BIGGER PART OF SCHOOL LIFE

When young people were asked if they would like Climate Action to become a bigger part of their school life, 93% of respondents agreed on having climate action as part of their school curriculum.

## TO ACHIEVE CLIMATE ACTION AS A BIGGER PART OF SCHOOL, YOUNG PEOPLE WANT:

60%

WANT IT PART OF A FEW DIFFERENT SUBJECTS

23%

WANT IT AS A STAND-ALONE SUBJECT

15%

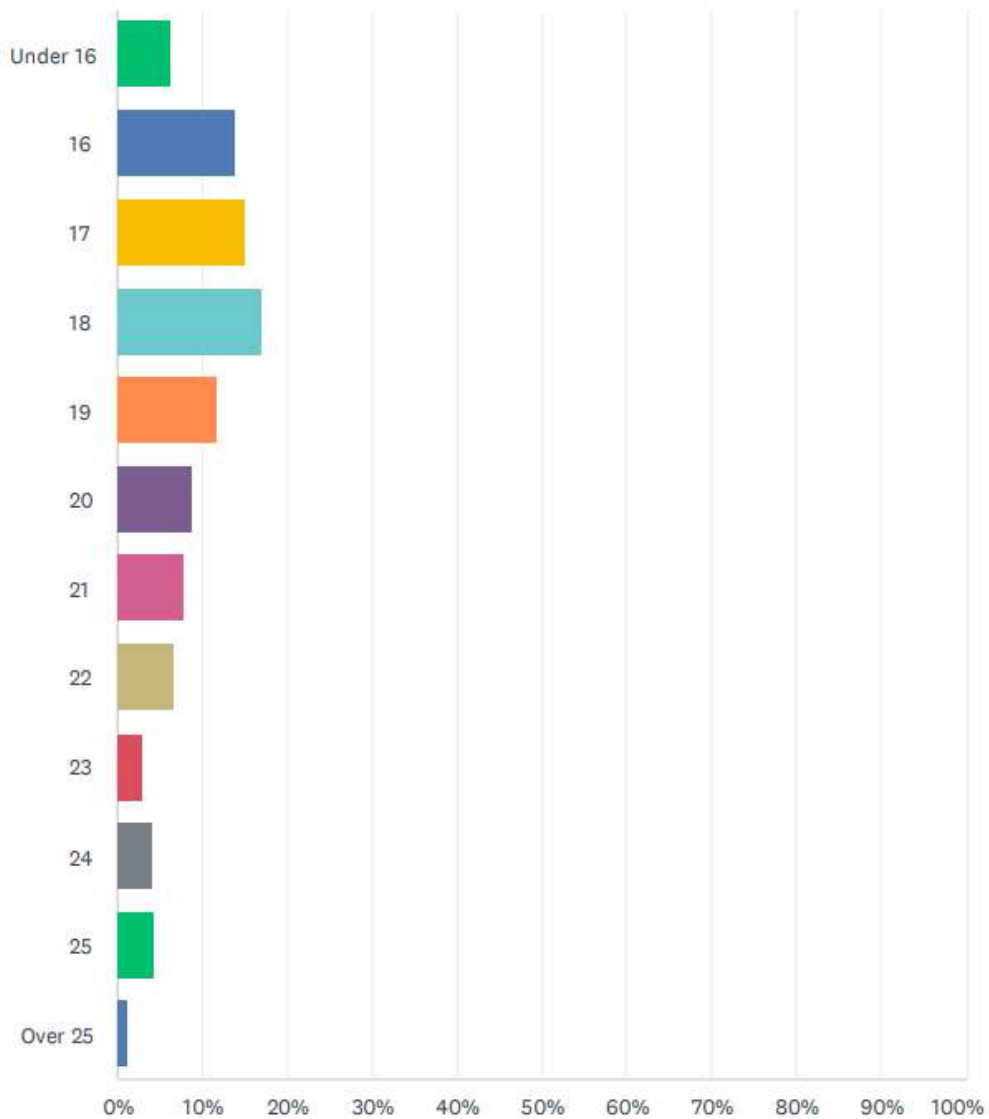
WANT IT AS AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY

# APPENDIX

These are young people's closed answers. Open ending responses are not included.

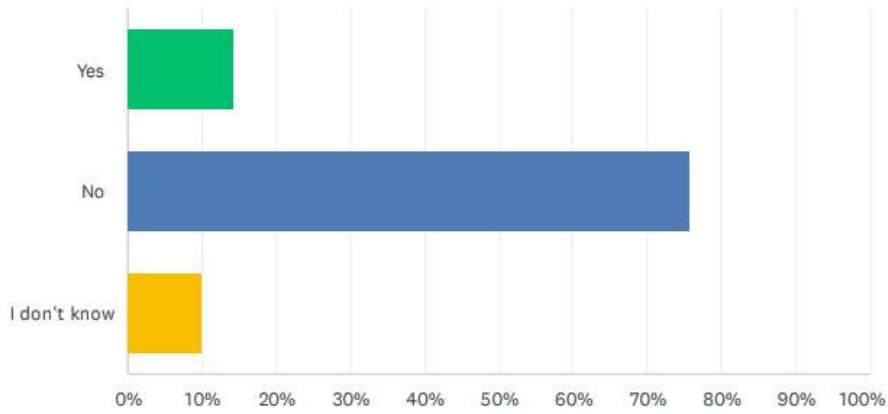
## Q1 What age are you?

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



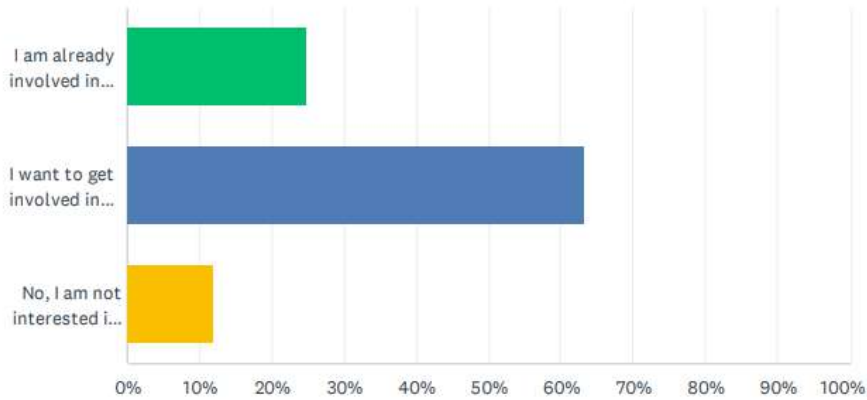
## Q2 Do you feel that Ireland has made enough progress in the past year on environmental and climate issues?

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



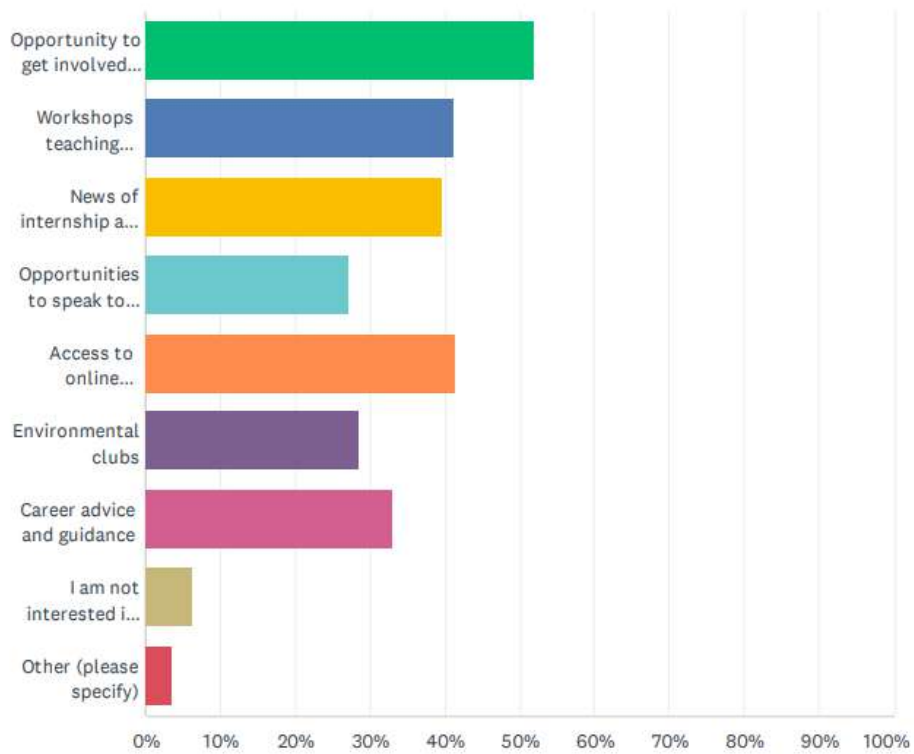
## Q3 Are you interested in getting involved in climate action?

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



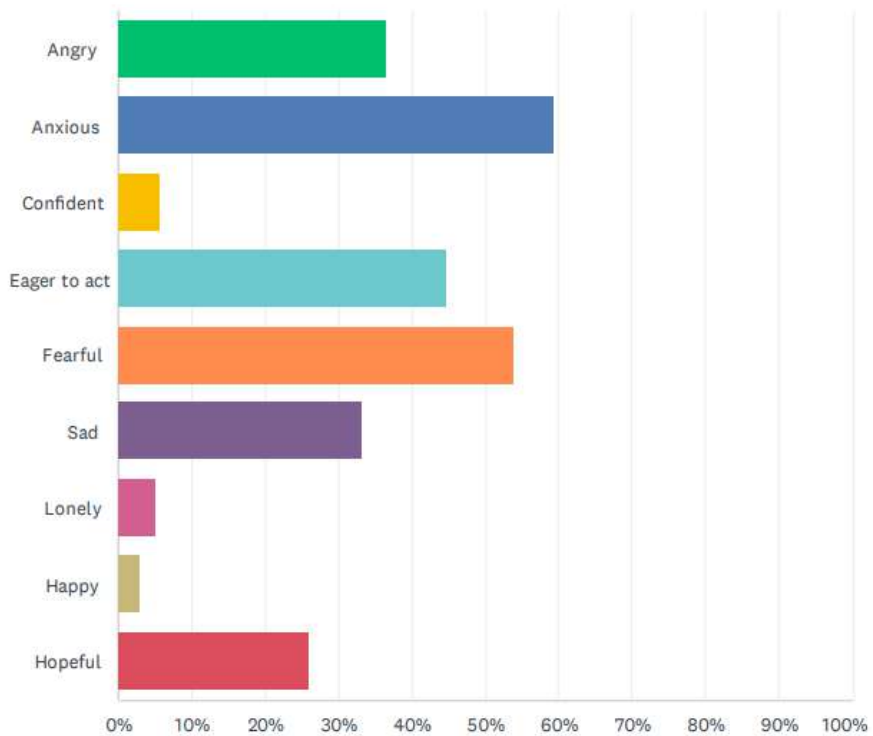
### Q4 What would help you to get involved in climate action? You can select multiple answers

Answered: 1,252 Skipped: 10



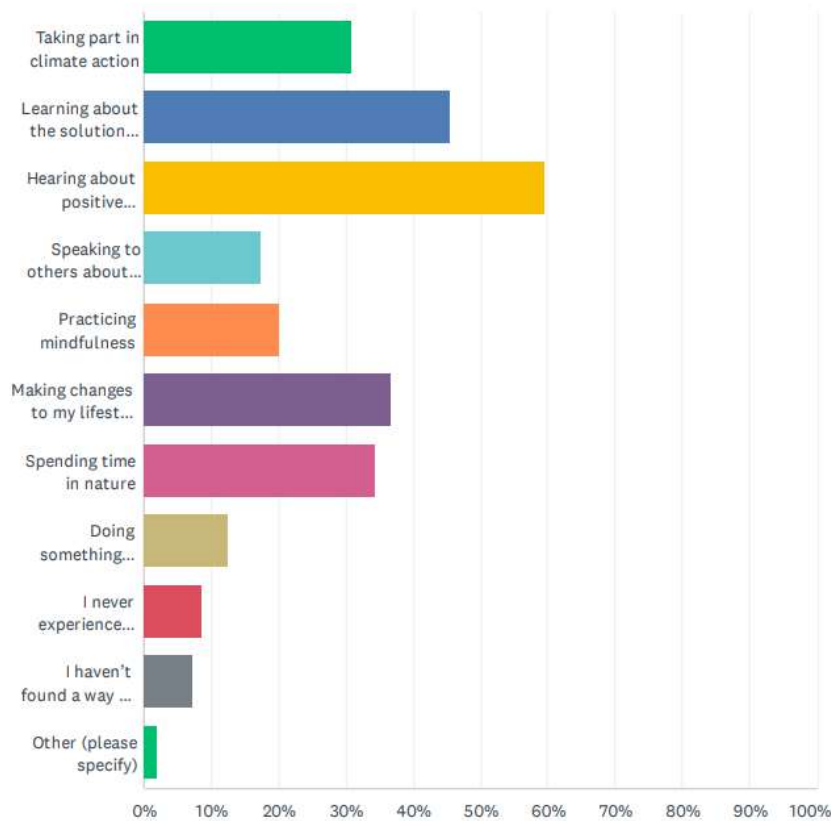
### Q5 How do you feel when you think about climate change? You can select multiple answers

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



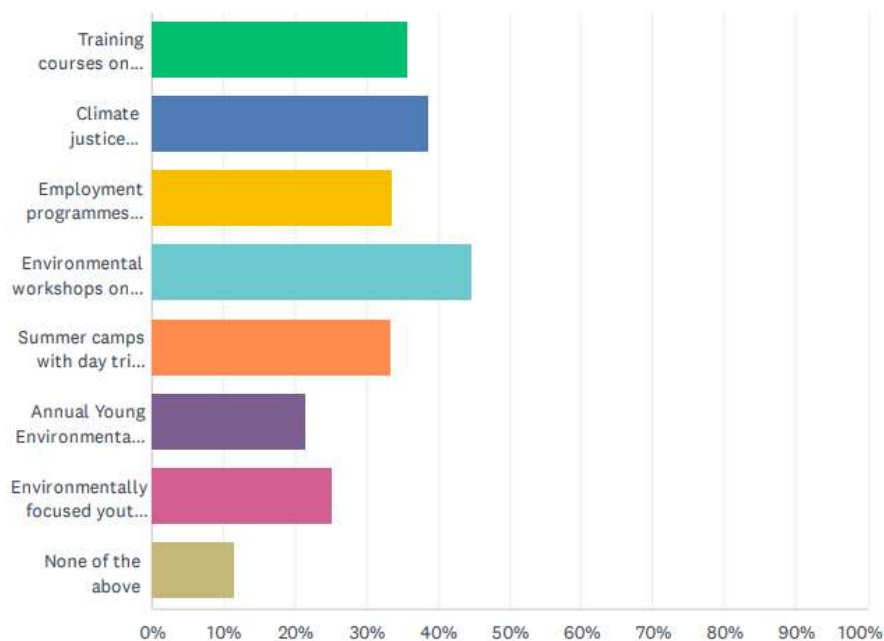
**Q6 Climate anxiety or eco-anxiety can be experienced when you worry about the threats facing the earth as a result of climate change and environmental damage. What do you find helpful when it comes to managing your climate anxiety or eco-anxiety? Select as many options as you want.**

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



**Q7 Which activities would you like to participate in? You can select multiple answers**

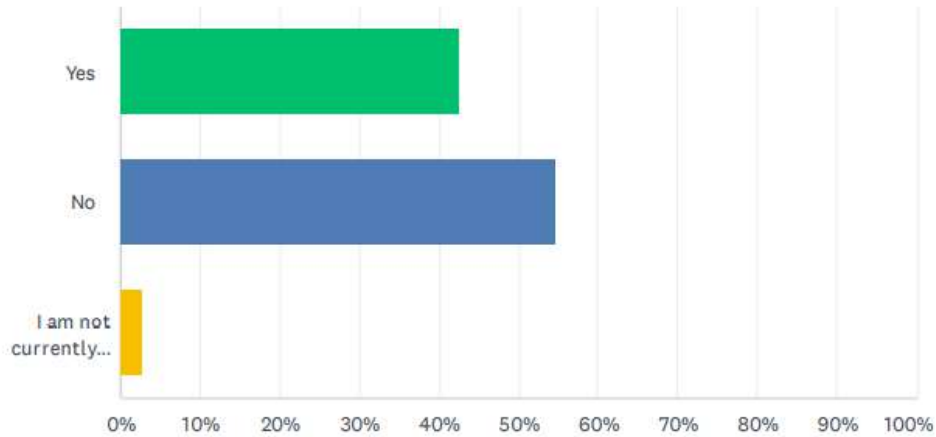
Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0





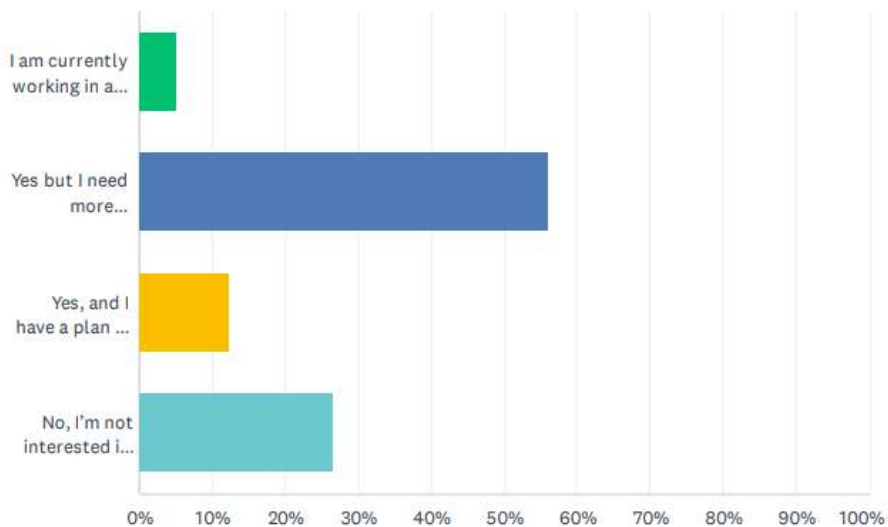
Q8 Do you feel that your current place of work or study is doing enough to be more environmentally friendly? (For example, eco-education, recycling systems, plastic free campaigns etc.)

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



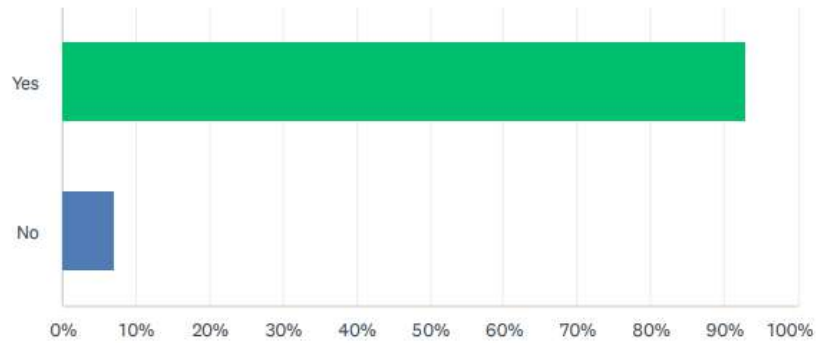
Q9 'Green jobs' are jobs that aim to reduce environmental damage, restore nature, reduce emissions and protect the environment. This can include sustainability roles like sustainable business or sustainable agriculture; jobs in renewable energy and energy efficiency; jobs in electric transport and electric cars; or nature protection or eco-friendly tourism. Are you interested in a 'green job' or a sustainability or climate-related career?

Answered: 1,262 Skipped: 0



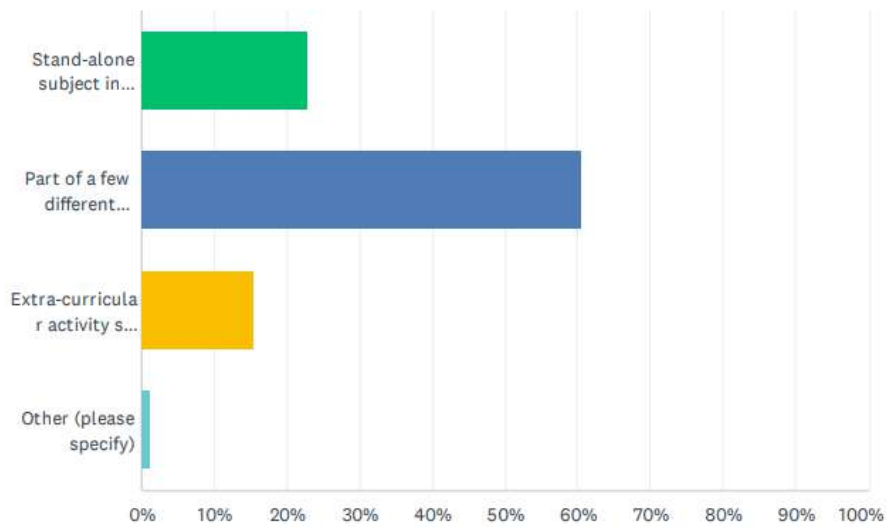
## Q10 Would you like Climate Action to become a bigger part of school life?

Answered: 1,249 Skipped: 13



## Q11 If yes, please finish the sentence. I would you like Climate Action to be a...

Answered: 1,207 Skipped: 55



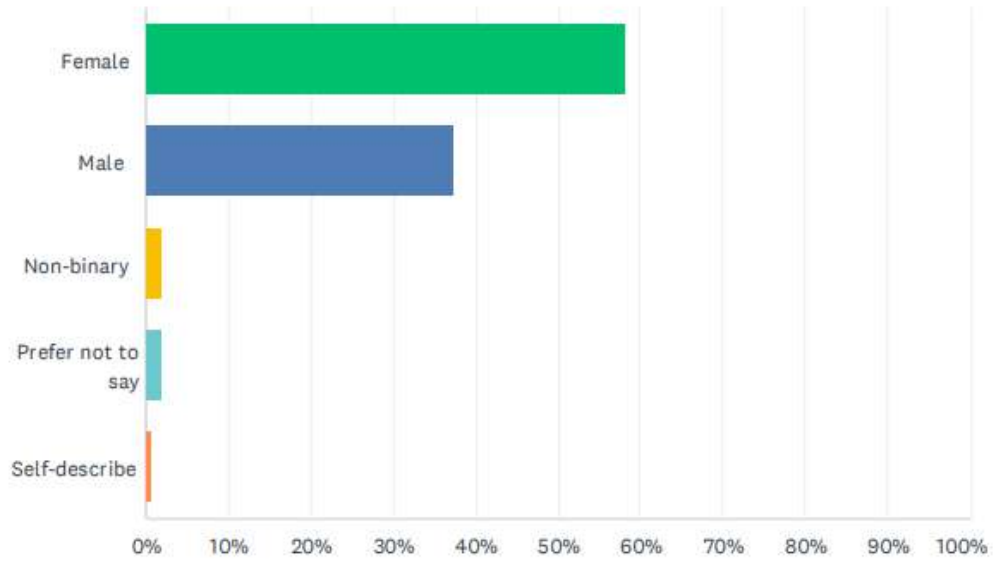
# Q12 Where do you live?

Answered: 1,200 Skipped: 62



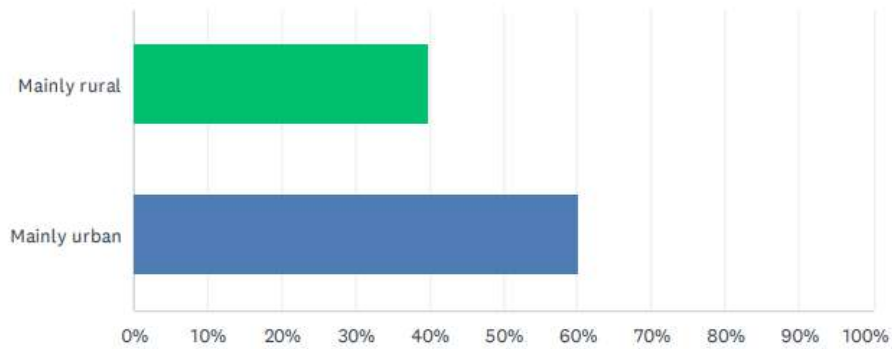
### Q13 What is your gender?

Answered: 1,200 Skipped: 62



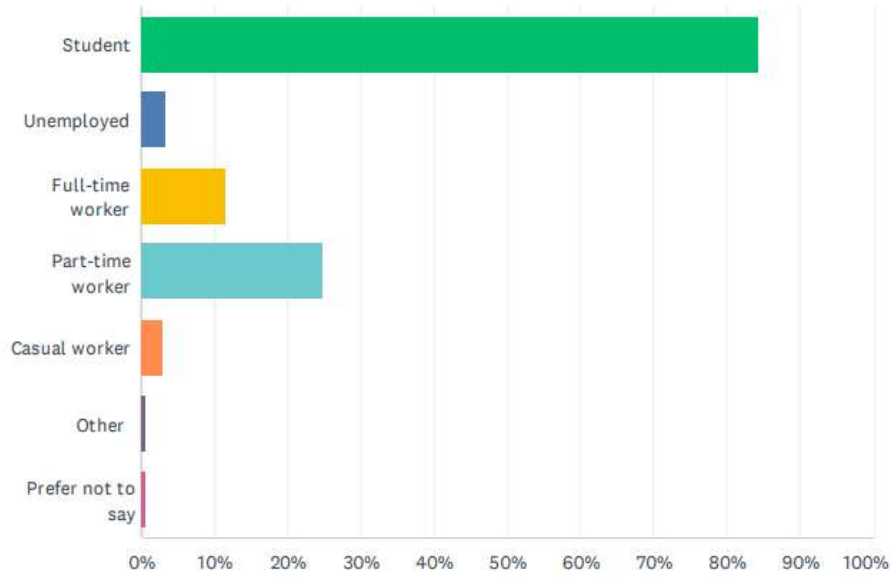
### Q14 How would you describe the place where you spend the majority of your time?

Answered: 1,200 Skipped: 62



### Q15 Which of these options best describes your current occupation? You can select multiple answers

Answered: 1,200 Skipped: 62



# ABOUT ECO-UNESCO



ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation that works to empower young people and conserve the environment. We are a key partner of UNESCO's Global Action Programme on ESD and is a QQI accredited training centre.

## **PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

ECO-UNESCO works with young people, educators and youth leaders on environmental projects across Ireland, helping to protect and conserve the environment. Each year our programmes, workshops, events and training programmes inspire environmental action at a local level among young people, their peer groups, communities and beyond.

## **EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE**

Through our innovative peer education programmes and youth-led events, ECO-UNESCO continuously strives to better achieve our mission of using environmental education as a means of empowering young people and supporting positive personal development.

For more information visit [www.ecounesco.ie](http://www.ecounesco.ie)

# ABOUT SPUNOUT

SpunOut.ie is Ireland's youth information website created by young people, for young people.

They provide information to more than 180,000 active readers each month. Established in 2005, their vision is to help create an Ireland where young people aged between 16 and 25 are empowered with the information they need to live active, happy, and healthy lives.

SpunOut aims to educate and inform their readers about the importance of holistic wellbeing and how good health can be maintained, both physically and mentally.

They believe we should have easy access to relevant, reliable, and non-judgemental information and they are proud to provide their readers with a dynamic, responsive website full of up-to-date, factual information, free of any shame or bias.

For more information visit [www.spunout.ie](http://www.spunout.ie)



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In collaboration with

**spunout**

This survey was part of the Youth Climate Justice Challenge 2021, a project led by ECO-UNESCO in collaboration with Gaisce, the Irish Girl Guides, No Name Club, and the Young Irish Filmmakers, and was funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth. The survey was carried out with the assistance of Spunout.ie



**An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth