

# Peoples' Climate Vote

Reflections from the  
world's biggest public  
poll on climate change

PREPARED BY  
UNDP and the University of Oxford



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**Largest survey of  
public opinion  
on climate change  
ever conducted.**

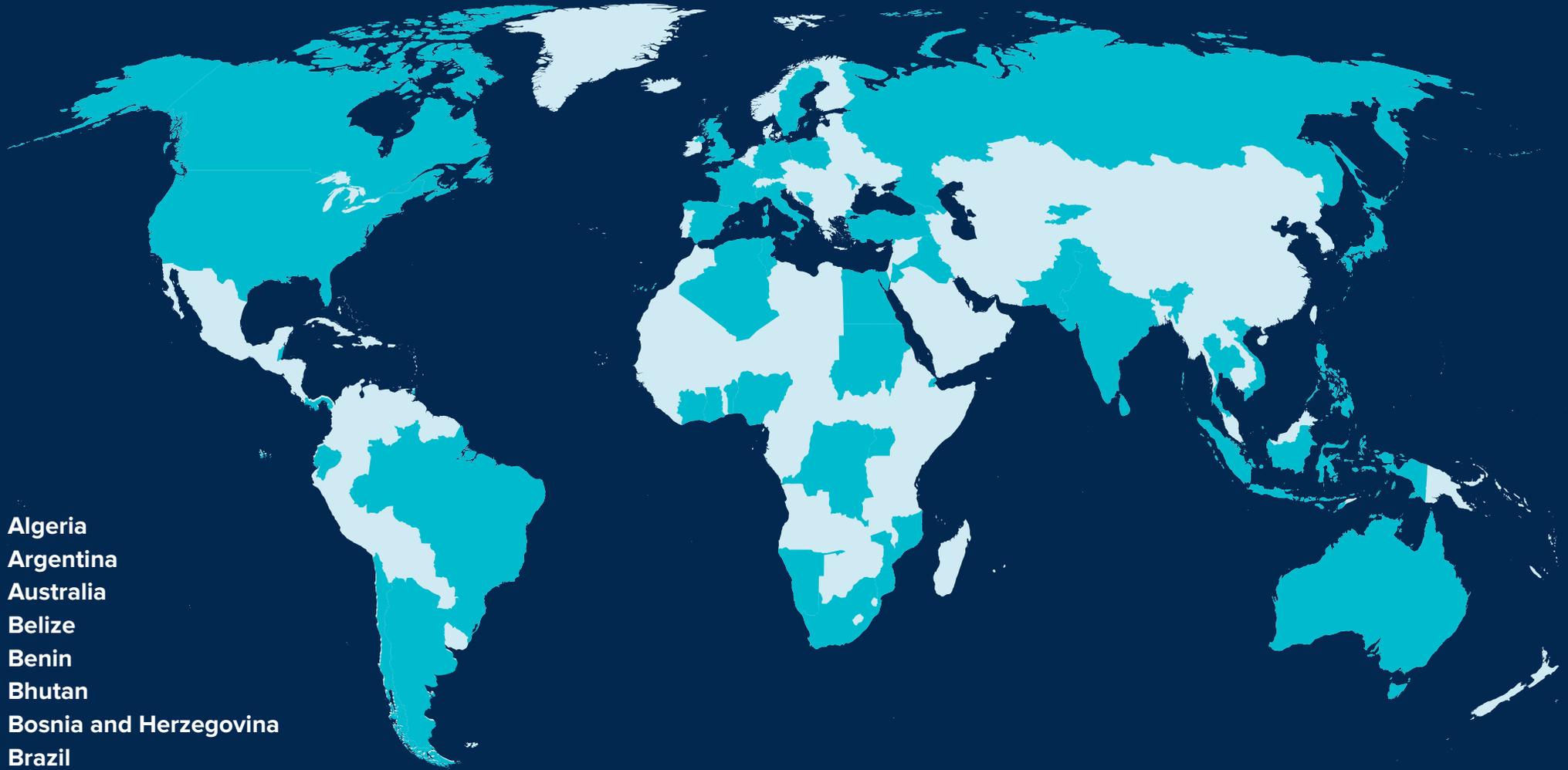
**1.2 million**  
**RESPONDENTS**

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**50**  
**COUNTRIES**

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**17**  
**LANGUAGES**



Algeria  
Argentina  
Australia  
Belize  
Benin  
Bhutan  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Brazil  
Canada  
Chile  
Democratic Republic of the Congo  
Cote d'Ivoire  
Djibouti  
Ecuador  
Egypt  
Fiji  
France  
Georgia

Germany  
Ghana  
India  
Indonesia  
Iraq  
Italy  
Japan  
Jordan

Kyrgyz Republic  
Moldova  
Morocco  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Nigeria  
Pakistan  
Panama

Philippines  
Poland  
Russia  
South Africa  
Spain  
Sri Lanka  
Sudan  
Sweden

Thailand  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Tunisia  
Turkey  
Uganda  
UK  
USA  
Viet Nam

# A new and unconventional approach to polling.

Poll questions were distributed through unique invitations in mobile game apps around the world.

When a person played a game like Words with Friends or Angry Birds, the poll would replace the traditional in-game advertisement. This resulted in a huge, randomized sample. To our knowledge, this has never been tried before.

The survey produced data in many countries where similar polling results have never been available until now. It also reached hundreds of thousands of young people, a group hard to reach with traditional polling.

Data was collected by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and processed by the University of Oxford to represent 56% of the world's people over 14 years old.



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## What did the survey ask?

- In the vote, people were asked about their belief in the climate emergency and what kinds of policies – across energy, economy, transportation, farms and food, protecting people, and nature – that they would like their government to enact.

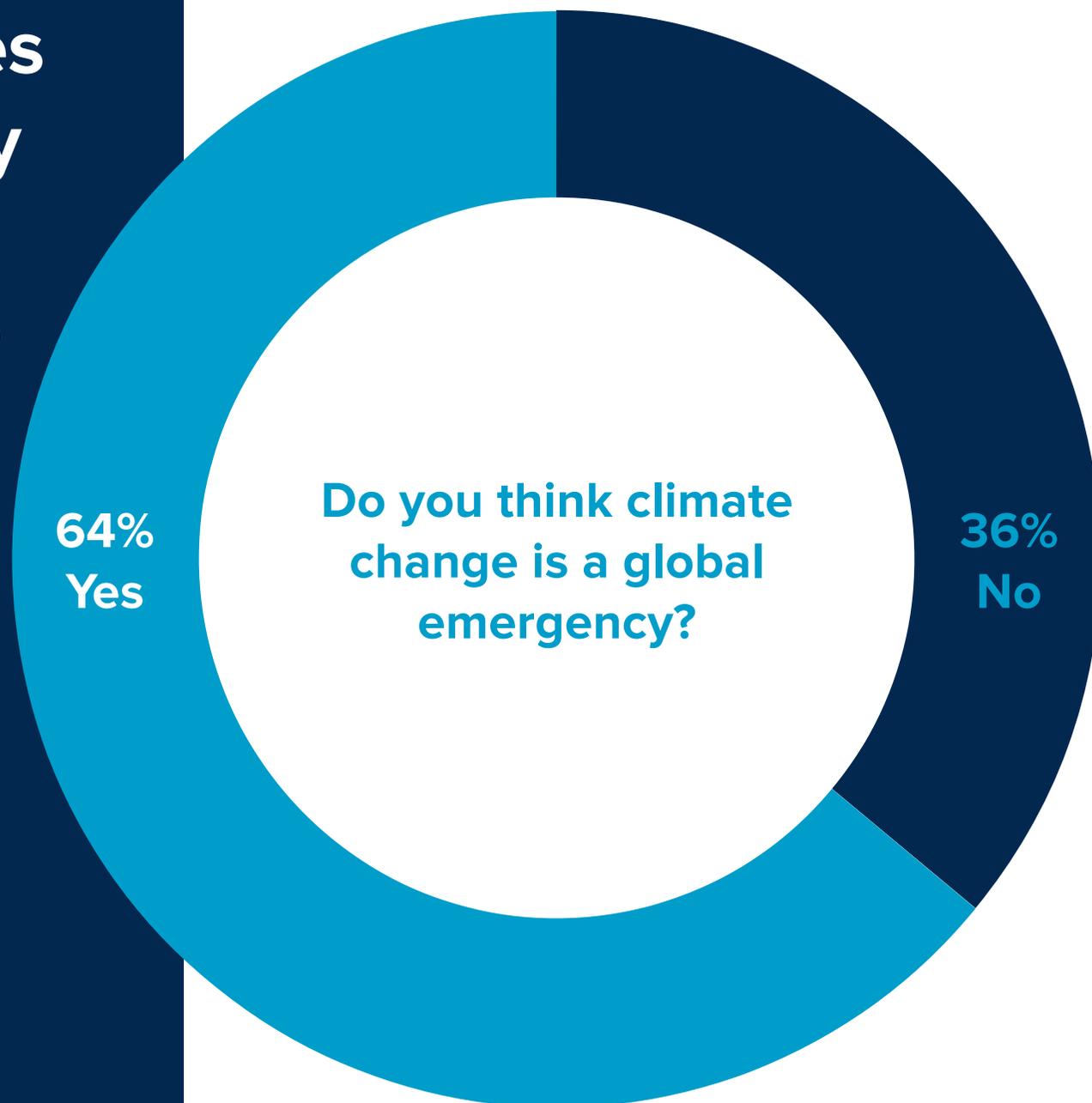
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## Why does the survey matter?

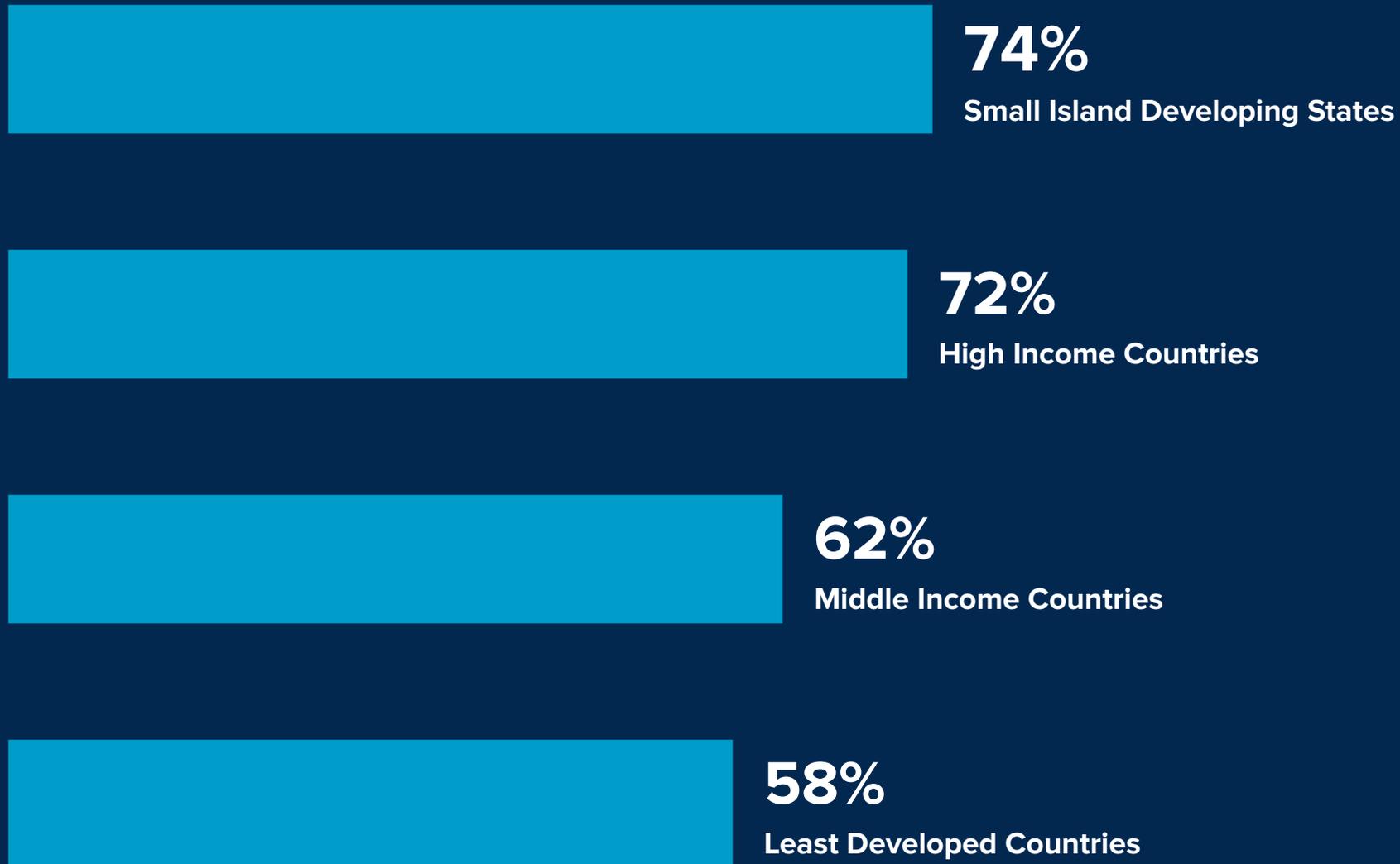
- Countries around the world are in the process of developing their national climate pledges under the Paris Agreement. The world is making policy choices to recover from COVID-19. Both will impact generations to come.
- Results from the Peoples' Climate Vote can help to inform governments as they make high-stakes decisions on climate and COVID-19 recovery.

Here's what we found.

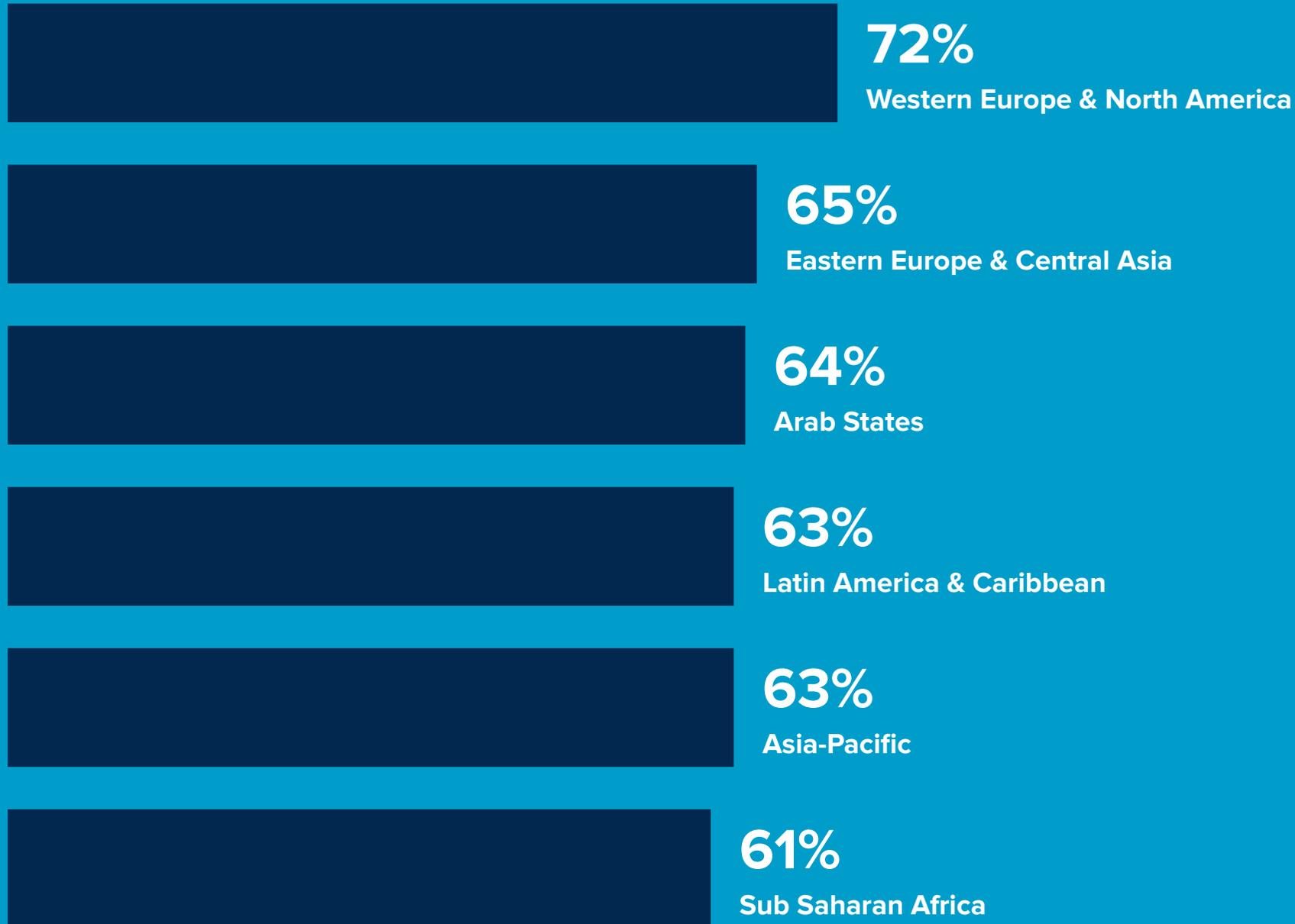
**Across 50 countries  
polled, the majority  
of people believe  
we are in a climate  
emergency.**



# What percentage of people believe climate change is an emergency?



# Belief in the Climate Emergency, by UNDP region



# What policies should governments enact to address the climate emergency?

We listed 18 policy options and gave respondents the chance to click up to three preferences each for energy, economy, transportation, farms and food, protecting people, and nature.

A wide range of policy solutions were supported. Here are the top four:



Conserve forests  
and land

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**54%**



Invest in solar, wind  
and renewable power

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**53%**



Promote climate-friendly  
farming techniques

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**52%**



Create green  
businesses and jobs

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**50%**

# Education makes all the difference.

Our data showed that the most profound socio-demographic driver of belief in the climate emergency and climate action is a person's education.





## Attitudes based on gender vary country by country.

While the gender gap was found to be small overall (4%), in some countries the gap was substantial.

For example, among some countries, there was a much stronger belief – by more than ten percentage points – in the climate emergency by women and girls. In others, it was the other way around with 10 percent more men and boys being receptive to the idea of a climate emergency.

# The next generation gives us hope.

In every country, more young people (under 18) than older people believe climate change is an emergency (69%). However, other age groups were not far behind with 65% of those aged 18-35, 66% aged 36-59 and 58% of those over 60 believing in the climate emergency.



# 10 key insights of public support for climate policies

## 01 In countries with high emissions from deforestation and land-use change, there is strong backing for conserving forests and land.

Among them are Brazil (60%), Indonesia (57%) and Argentina (57%).

## 02 Clear calls for renewable energy in higher-emitting countries.

The list includes Australia (76%), Canada (73%), Germany (71%), South Africa (69%), Japan (68%), U.S. (65%), Poland (57%), and Russia (51%).

## 03 Strong global support for climate-friendly farming.

This was the third most popular climate policy overall, with Indonesia (60%), Philippines (56%) and Ecuador (53%) and Egypt (51%) among those with a large dependence on the agriculture sector.

## 04 There is majority support in nearly all G20 countries in the survey for investment in green businesses and jobs.

Led by the United Kingdom (73%), Germany (68%), Australia and Canada (68%), followed by South Africa (65%), Italy (64%), Japan (59%), the U.S. (57%), France, (56%), and Argentina, Brazil and Indonesia (all on 51%).

## 05 Making companies pay for pollution has high support in seven of twelve high-income countries.

However, support fell when asked about requiring companies to communicate on how products are made.

# 10 key insights of public support for climate policies

## 06 Nine out of ten of the countries with the most urbanized populations back clean transport.

The list includes Chile (58%), Japan (57%), and the U.S. (56%). Clean transport was also the fifth most popular climate policy overall.

## 07 Infrastructure to protect people from extreme weather events is the seventh most popular climate policy across all countries.

Support for early warning systems was at roughly the same level.

## 08 The largest gap in public opinion regarding climate policies is on protecting the ocean and waterways.

The policy has high support from Small Island Developing States and high-income countries, but dropped for middle-income countries and Least Developed Countries.

## 09 Wasting less food is more popular than wasting less energy.

There was notable support to reduce food waste among high-income countries and South Africa (53%). Yet despite cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency measures, wasting less energy is less popular as a policy.

## 10 The least-popular policies overall are plant-based diets and affordable insurance.

Only 30% of people surveyed supported the promotion of plant-based diets, while public backing for affordable insurance was just 32%. The low scores do not signify that people are against the policies, since not endorsing a policy could also be due to indifference to it. This could be an important opportunity for further education on the topics.

# Methodology

The vote was designed as both a standalone survey and as part of the Mission 1.5 game where a person could learn about the policy options before voting.

As part of the People's Climate Vote, we asked two overall "big picture" questions and six policy questions where the respondent could click up to three preferences per question (18 total).

The first two "big picture" questions asked the respondent if they thought climate change was a global emergency and, if so, the urgency of action required to address it. The second part of the survey asked respondents which of the 18 policies they favoured to tackle climate change. The policy options were framed around six of the most impactful solution areas: energy, economy, transportation, farms and food, protecting people, and nature. The content draws from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), portfolio and approaches by the United Nations and UNDP, analyses conducted by the IPCC and NASA, and NGOs such as Project Drawdown. The content was simplified to enable mass participation and reviewed by some of the world's leading experts on climate policy.

The respondent was also asked to self-identify their gender, age group, and education level. For demographic information, respondents were asked to identify their gender from male, female or X, their age as under 18, 18-35, 36-59, and 60+, and when they left their education.

## **SURVEY DELIVERY**

The survey was distributed to people via advertising on mobile gaming networks. This meant invitations to participate popped up as adverts as people were playing the most popular mobile games such as Words with Friends, Angry Birds, Dragon City, Temple Run, or Subway Surfers. Instead of seeing a traditional advert in their game, the player would be invited to participate in the Peoples' Climate Vote. The look and feel of the vote was developed as an inviting, fun, and playful way for people to engage on climate change.

The adverts were placed randomly and served only once to each individual by the mobile gaming network. No personally identifiable information was collected by UNDP or any Mission 1.5 partner. With 30.7 million invitations were issued, the survey yielded 1.4 million responses, a response rate of 4.6% across the 50 countries. This report is based on analysis of the 1.2 million respondents who answered all three demographic questions and at least the first question on climate change.

## **PROCESSING**

As there were more responses from some demographic groups than others, the 'votes' from the survey were not representative of the population of any of the countries. A team from the University of Oxford weighted (or rebalanced) the data to generate estimates that are as representative as possible of the joint distribution of age, gender and education in each country. As a result the huge sample now represents 56% of the world's population, with a small margin of error of +/- 2%

These more representative estimates can tell us much about public opinion overall in each participating country.

## LIST OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. **Do you think climate change is a global emergency?**
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
2. **If yes, what should the world do about it?**
  - a. Do everything necessary, urgently
  - b. Act slowly while we learn more about what to do
  - c. The world is already doing enough
  - d. Do nothing
3. **Energy: To address the climate crisis, what should your country do about energy?**
  - a. Use solar, wind and renewable power
  - b. Waste less energy in homes, buildings, factories
  - c. Stop burning fuels that pollute
  - d. None of the above
4. **Economy: To address the climate crisis, what should governments do about the economy?**
  - a. Invest more money in green businesses and jobs
  - b. Require more information on how products are made
  - c. Make companies pay for their pollution
  - d. None of the above
5. **Transportation: To address the climate crisis, how should your country improve transport?**
  - a. Use more clean electric cars and buses, or bicycles
  - b. Transport good on planes, ships, trains and trucks that run on clean energy
  - c. Improve the design of cities and rural communities
  - d. None of the above
6. **Farming: To address the climate crisis, what should governments do about farms and food?**
  - a. Use climate-friendly farming techniques
  - b. Reduce food waste
  - c. Promote plant-based diets
  - d. None of the above
7. **Protection: How can your country better protect people from extreme storms, flooding, droughts, forest fires and other climate impacts?**
  - a. Install more early warning systems for disasters
  - b. Provide good and affordable insurance
  - c. Build infrastructure and conserve nature to protect lives and livelihoods
  - d. None of the above
8. **Nature: To address the climate crisis, what do you think your country should do about nature?**
  - a. Conserve forests and land
  - b. Keep the ocean and waterways healthy
  - c. Support local communities, indigenous peoples and women that are environmental stewards
  - d. None of the above

# Many thanks to our [mission1point5.org](https://mission1point5.org) partners:



# UNDP

## Climate Promise

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[www.undp.org/climatepromise](http://www.undp.org/climatepromise)

[www.ndcs.undp.org](http://www.ndcs.undp.org)

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