ECO ANXIETY REPORT

ARGENTINA

2023

iRIS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Note from Iris Sustainable Development

Anxiety relating to a multitude of ecological crises, or eco-anxiety, is a subject of growing research significance. The main idea of the first report series is to establish an international overview of eco-anxiety rates in 20 countries utilizing the HEAS scale and correlate these rates with variables of geographical location (urban, rural), education as well as the type of experiencing climate crisis (indirectly via the media or public discourse).

More precisely, the main objectives of this report series is to:
- create an international overview of eco-anxiety rates in 20 countries
- contribute to the growing body of knowledge around to what extent the climate crisis affects mental health identifying possible differentiation on eco-anxiety determinants
- raise awareness on the impact of climate crisis on mental health

The target group of the Argentinian national report are citizens of Argentina and/or people (ages 18-50) that are/have been experiencing climate change in the country.

he majority of Argentina's climate is subtropical The Patagonian provinces: Neuquén, Río Negro, Chubut, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego, experience low rainfall, except in the strip adjacent to the Andes Mountains as well as in the southern end of the provinces of Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego. The contiguous strip of the Andes Mountains has abundant forests, glaciers and permanent snows, North of 40ºS, the climate is subtropical with hot summers. At the eastern end of this region there is abundant rainfall, which decreases towards the west and desert areas with very scarce vegetation, where cities and agriculture exist in the oases of the rivers fed by rainfall in the Cordillera; including provinces of San Juan, La Rioja, Catamarca and part of Mendoza. In the east, covering part of the provinces of Entre Rios, Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Córdoba, La Pampa and San Luis, due to the humid conditions, rain-fed agriculture and cattle raising is extensive. The region between the humid east and the west arid is semi-arid, whose vegetation, originally from the mountains, has been modified by cattle breeding. In this region, the precipitation occurs almost entirely during the summer period. In the north of the country, in the province of Misiones and on the eastern slopes of the Tucumán, Salta and Jujuy, the high temperatures and abundant rainfall results in tropical forests.

Argentina's climate features and seasonality are influenced by the presence of Los Andes Mountain extending along the west of the country as well as the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Indian Dipole. Sea surface temperature anomalies also influence Argentina's weather. Additionally, warm (cold) phase of El Niño and a positive (negative) phase of Indian Dipole are all related to increased (decreased) spring and autumn precipitation in northeastern Argentina and Central Andes and the signal decreases in summer and winter. (World Bank, 2023)

Greenhouse gas emissions

In 2021, explicit carbon prices in Argentina consist of carbon taxes, which cover 15.8% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in CO2e. In total, 17.2% of GHG emissions in Argentina are subject to a positive Net Effective Carbon Rate (ECR) in 2021, unchanged since 2018 (OECD, 2022)

Extreme weather events

Over the past decade, Argentina, with its vast landscapes stretching from the Andes to the Pampas, has found itself entangled in the unpredictable rhythms of climate change, experiencing extreme weather events that have disrupted the nation's environmental harmony. From prolonged droughts to intense floods and unrelenting heatwaves, Argentina's climate story is one of adaptation and resilience in the face of a changing world.

One of the most striking examples occurred in 2016 when Argentina faced one of the most severe droughts in its recent history. The agricultural heartland of the Pampas, known for its fertile soil and abundant crops, suffered as rainfall plummeted to critically low levels. This drought had far-reaching consequences, impacting the country's agricultural exports, particularly soybeans and corn, and affecting the livelihoods of countless farmers. The event served as a stark reminder of the vulnerability of Argentina's agrarian economy to the amplified extremes brought about by climate change.

Conversely, the flip side of Argentina's climate coin emerged in 2017 when the nation grappled with widespread flooding, particularly in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, and Entre Ríos. Intense rainfall led to swollen rivers, inundating towns and displacing thousands. The city of La Plata faced the brunt of the deluge, with neighborhoods submerged and infrastructure strained. The event underscored the dual nature of climate change, swinging between drought and flood, and the complex challenges it presents for communities and policymakers alike.

Argentina, known for its iconic wine regions, has also witnessed shifts in its viticultural landscape due to changing climate patterns. Unpredictable frosts, hailstorms, and altered growing seasons have challenged the traditional practices of winemakers in regions such as Mendoza. The delicate dance of cultivating grapes for Malbec and other renowned varietals has become more intricate, prompting vintners to adapt to the evolving climatic nuances.

Heatwaves, too, have left their mark on Argentina, affecting urban centers and rural communities alike. In 2020, Buenos Aires experienced scorching temperatures that surpassed 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit), leading to heat-related health concerns and straining energy resources. The intensity and frequency of such heatwaves pose not only immediate challenges but also long-term risks to public health and urban resilience.

Survey results

LOCATION

🏢 Urban Area █████████ 86%

🚜 Rural Area ████ 14%

EDUCATION

Elementary School Degree ████ 0%

High School's Degree ████ 23%

Bachelor's Degree █████ 44%
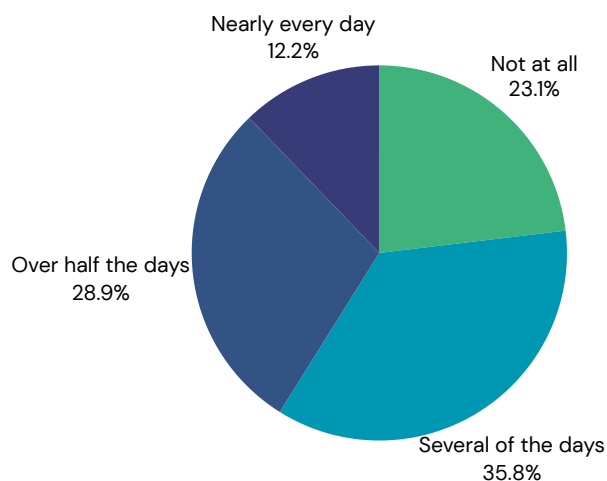
Master's Degree or higher █████ 33%

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?
Response scale: 0 = not at all, 1 = several of the days, 2 = over half the days, 3 = nearly every day.

Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge

Nearly every day
21.9%

Not at all
19.3%

Over half the days
22.1%

Several of the days
36.7%
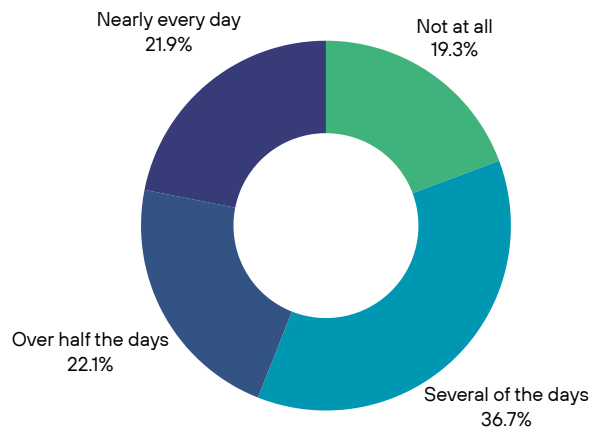
Not being able to stop or control worrying

Nearly every day
12.2%

Not at all
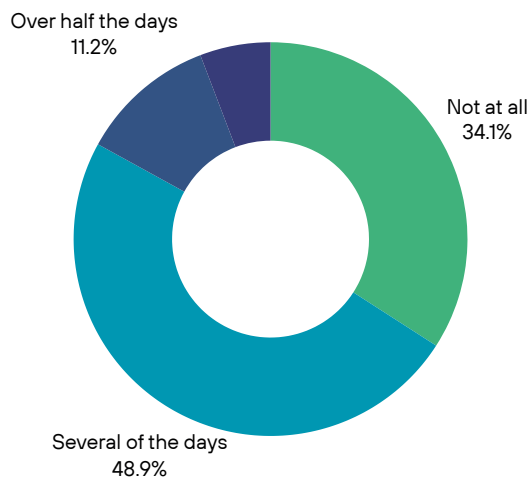23.1%

Over half the days
28.9%

Several of the days
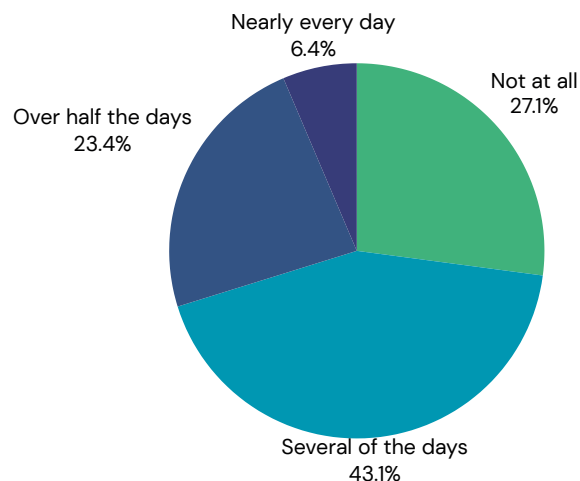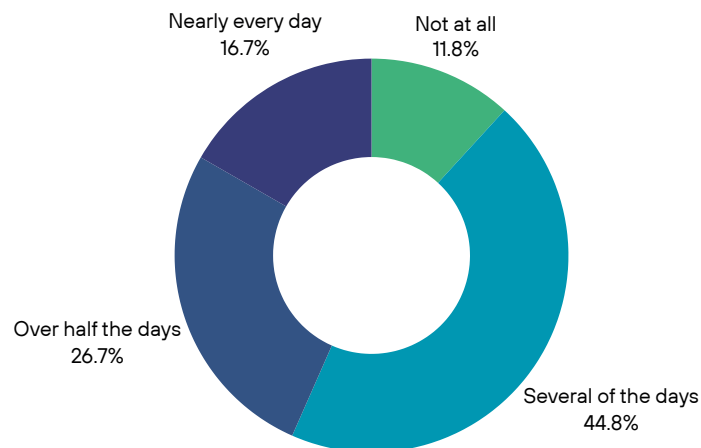35.8%

Survey results: The Hogg Scale

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?
Response scale: 0 = not at all, 1 = several of the days, 2 = over half the days, 3 = nearly every day.

Worrying too much

Over half the days
11.2%

Not at all
34.1%

Several of the days
48.9%

Feeling afraid

Nearly every day
6.4%

Not at all
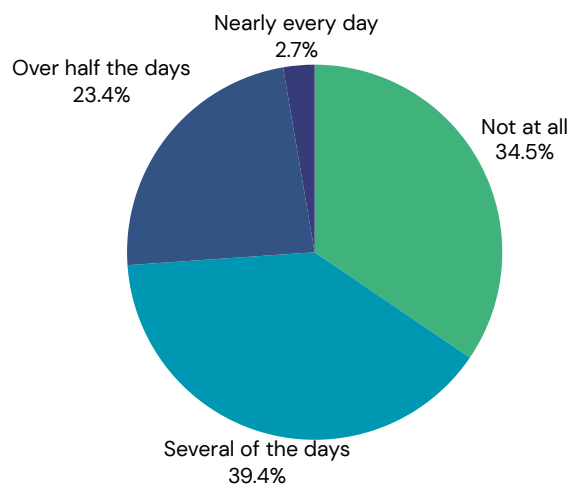27.1%

Over half the days
23.4%

Several of the days
43.1%

Survey results: The Hogg Scale

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?

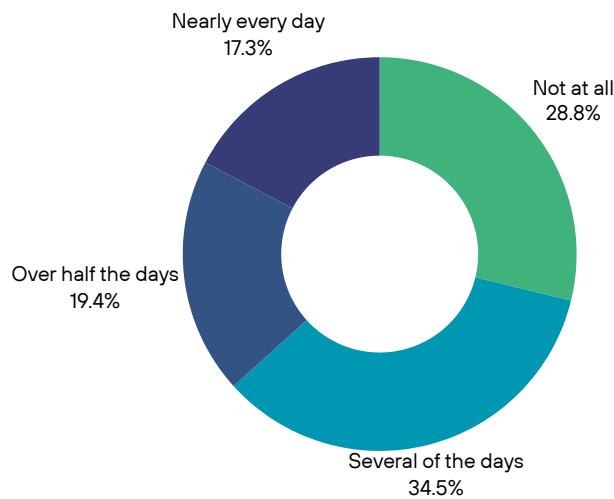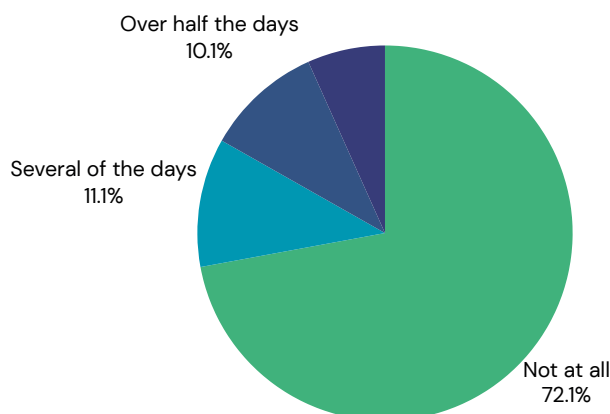## Unable to stop thinking about future climate change and other global environmental problems

Nearly every day 16.7%
Not at all 11.8%
Several of the days 44.8%
Over half the days 26.7%

Unable to stop thinking about past events related to climate change

Nearly every day 2.7%
Over half the days 23.4%
Not at all 34.5%
Several of the days 39.4%

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?"

## Unable to stop thinking about losses to the environment

Nearly every day
17.3%

Not at all
28.8%

Over half the days
19.4%

Several of the days
34.5%

Difficulty sleeping

Over half the days
10.1%

Several of the days
11.1%

Not at all
72.1%

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?"

## Difficulty enjoying social situations with family and friends

Over half the days
6.9%

Several of the days
14.5%

Not at all
74.1%
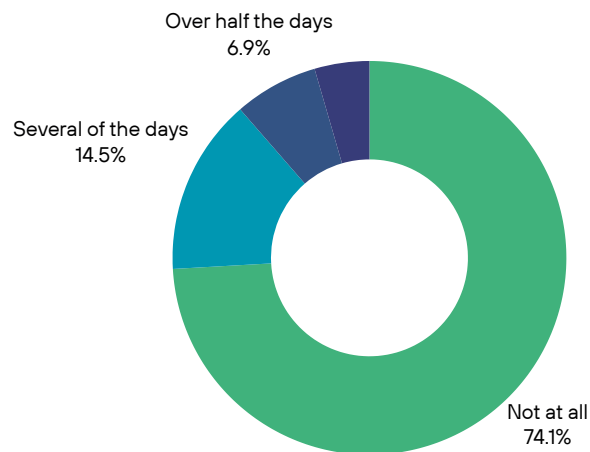
Difficulty working and/or studying
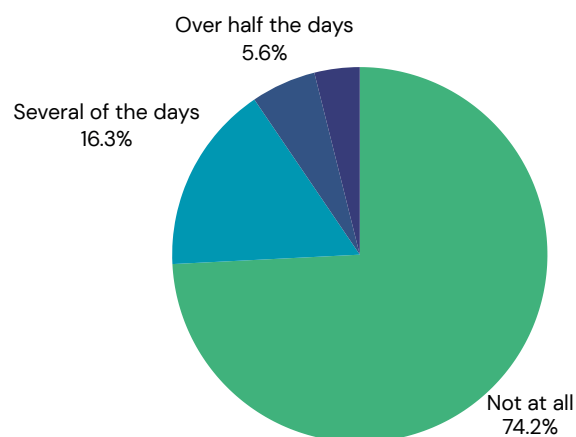
Over half the days
5.6%

Several of the days
16.3%

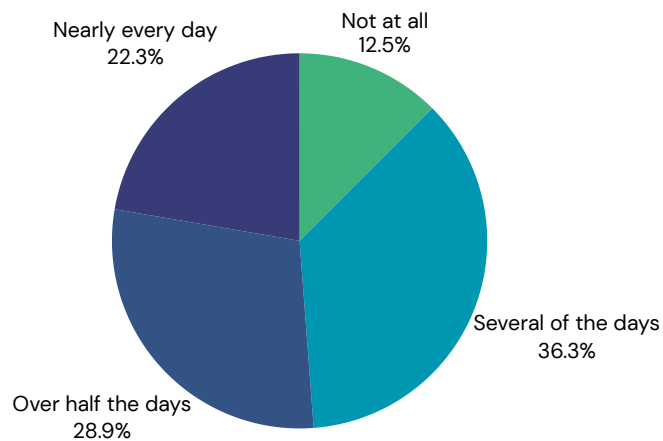Not at all
74.2%

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?

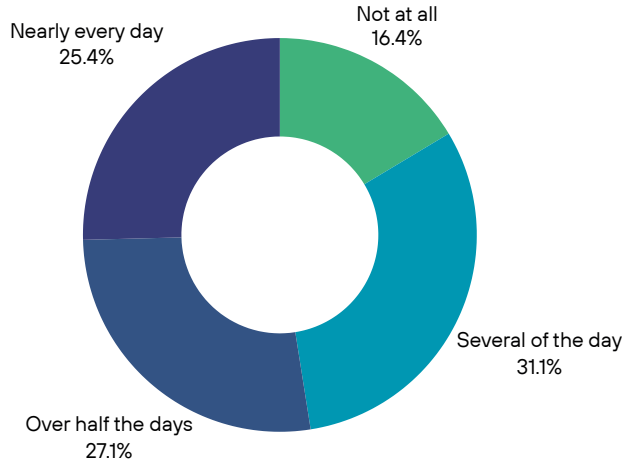## Feeling anxious about the impact of your personal behaviours on the earth

Nearly every day
16.6%

Not at all
12.1%

Several of the days
33.2%

Over half the days
38.1%
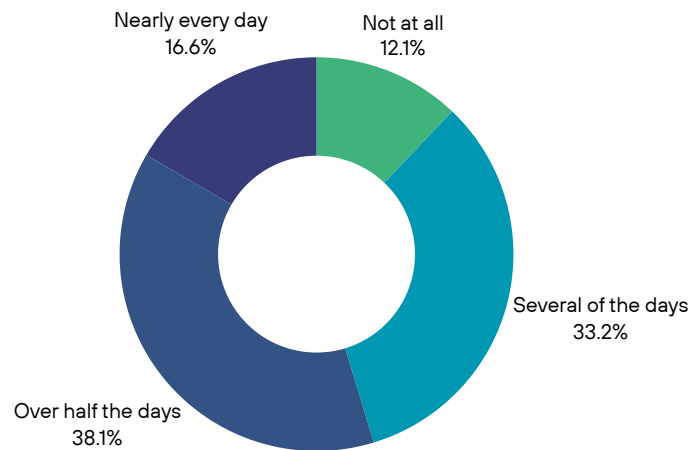
Feeling anxious about your personal responsibility to help address environmental problems

Nearly every day
22.3%

Not at all
12.5%

Several of the days
36.3%

Over half the days
28.9%

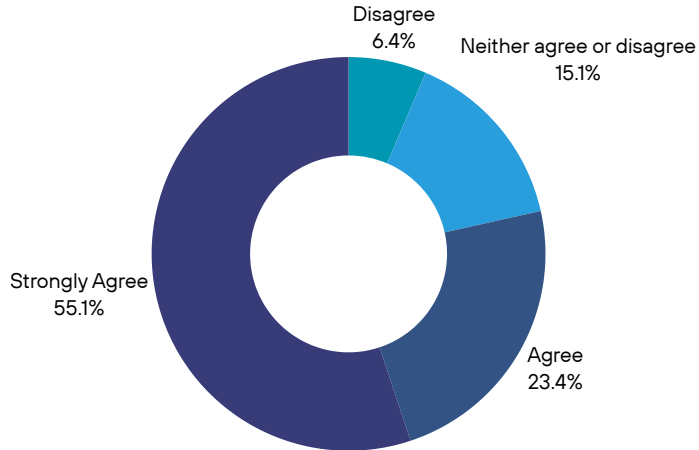# Survey results: The Hogg Scale and Beliefs about climate change

"Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems, when thinking about climate change and other global environmental conditions (e.g., global warming, ecological degradation, resource depletion, species extinction, ozone hole, pollution of the oceans, deforestation)?

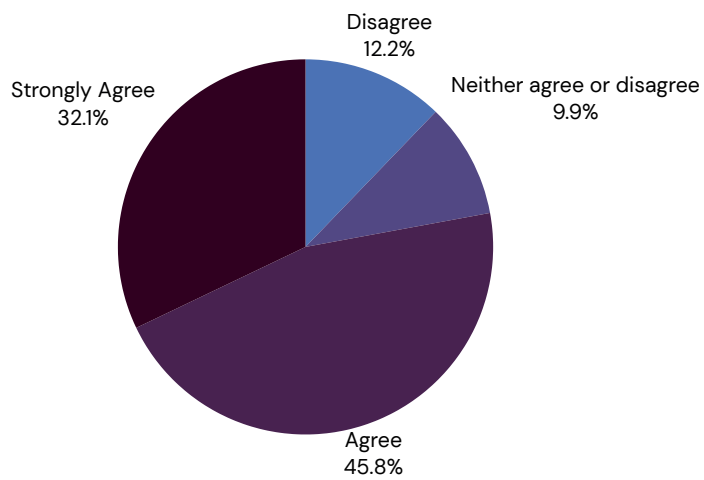## Feeling anxious that your personal behaviours will do little to help fix the problem

Nearly every day
25.4%

Not at all
16.4%

Several of the day
31.1%

Over half the days
27.1%

Beliefs about Climate Change

Climate change is real

Disagree
6.4%

Neither agree or disagree
15.1%

Strongly Agree
55.1%

Agree
23.4%

Beliefs about Climate Change

Climate change is caused by humans

Disagree
12.2%

Neither agree or disagree
9.9%

Strongly Agree
32.1%

Agree
45.8%

Climate change is reversible

Strongly Disagree
0%

Disagree
30.9%

Strongly agree
34.6%

Neither agree or disagree
8.9%

Agree
25.6%
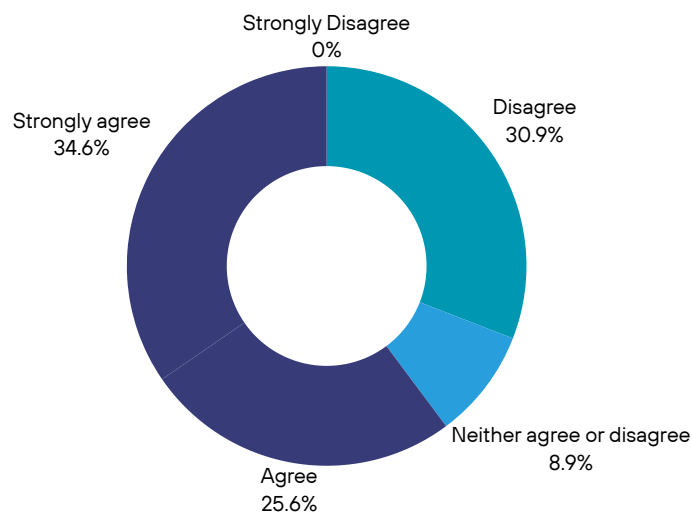
Survey results: Beliefs about climate change

Do you have direct experience of environmental crisis?

NO

YES

77%
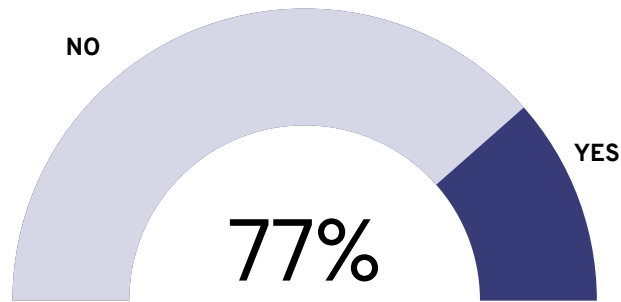
I am experiencing climate crisis indirectly via the media or public discource

88%

YES   NO

Which climate disaster made you feel nervous (in your country or globally), if any

Floodings

Wildfires

Deforestation

Key Conclusions

Our research reveals a notable prevalence of eco-anxiety among the Argentinian population, reporting varying degrees of eco-anxiety. This underscores the significance of the issue and the need for further investigation and intervention.

In terms of the interplay between eco-anxiety and specific variables, significant differences in eco-anxiety rates were observed across various demographics. Notably, the geographical location of participants was strongly linked with eco-anxiety. It is important that the 86% of the respondents are urban residents and they are exhibited higher levels of eco-anxiety compared to their rural counterparts. Additionally, while a slight connection with education was observed, we address that eco-anxiety can be experienced via media and public discourse, since the 88% has expressed that is experiencing eco-anxiety indirectly. This indicates that the media and information consumption play a substantial role in shaping eco-anxiety levels since participants who reported frequent exposure to alarming environmental news or content experienced higher levels of eco-anxiety. Simultaneously, the study found a strong interplay between eco-anxiety and heightened concerns about environmental issues. Respondents who expressed high levels of eco-anxiety consistently cited factors and events such as wildfires, ice melting, and deforestation as major sources of distress.

The findings of this research underscore the urgency for policymakers to address eco-anxiety as a public health concern. Developing sustainable environmental policies, educational campaigns, and psychological support services can help mitigate eco-anxiety and its associated mental health issues. This study provides a foundation for future research on eco-anxiety. However, further investigations into the long-term consequences of eco-anxiety, the effectiveness of interventions, and potential policy changes are essential for a comprehensive understanding of this emerging issue.

In conclusion, our research highlights the significant eco-anxiety rates in Argentina and the need for multidisciplinary efforts to address this concern. Addressing eco-anxiety is not only crucial for the mental well-being of individuals but also for the sustainable future.

References

World Bank. (2023). Climate Data Historical - Argentina. Climate Knowledge Portal. Retrieved from https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/argentina/climate-data-historical

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2022). Carbon Pricing in Argentina. Retrieved [insert the date you accessed the information], from https://www.oecd.org/tax/tax-policy/carbon-pricing-argentina.pdf

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