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*Living Differently and Changing Society: The
Everyday Ecological Practices of Climate
Protesters in Italy and France*

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Abstract

This research contributes to the literature on everyday ecological practices (EEPs) within the framework of climate mobilization. While environmental politics has often framed sustainability as a matter of individual responsibility, the climate mobilizations emerging after 2018 refocused attention on the state's central role in addressing the climate crisis. This renewed emphasis on state responsibility coexists with an ambivalence among activists toward individual action. Research shows that while some activists see lifestyle changes as part of the solution, others consider them inadequate given the scale of the problem. This tension between practice and meaning lies at the core of my study. This study explores how ecological practices are adopted and justified by participants in climate protests. First, it examines whether the adoption of these practices is uniform across respondents and identifies the social traits most associated with their uptake. Second, it investigates the discursive frameworks used to justify these practices. The study focuses on Italy and France—two countries with broadly similar environmental trajectories, though recent mobilizations reveal some differences. It adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Surveys from 11 climate mobilizations (2021–2023, N = 1,646) gathered data on protesters' EEPs and their socio-political traits, while 51 semi-structured interviews provided insight into the reflexive foundations of these practices. The findings show that EEPs are shaped by socio-demographic factors—such as gender and family background—as well as political orientations and activist experiences. Activists justify these practices through various arguments (responsibility, guilt, alignment, exemplarity, preparation) that form broader systems of justification. The findings also point to potential connections between social traits and systems of justification—highlighting, in turn, possible links between reflexivity and social conditions. This thesis argues that the adoption and justification of EEPs among climate activists reflect both their underlying social dispositions and the socialization processes within activist circles. By linking individual life choices to political commitments, this research provides a lens to understand the co-evolution of everyday ecology and activism, while also seeking to integrate reflexive dimensions into a dispositional sociological framework.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The period 2018-2019 was marked by large-scale protests that spread across numerous countries and involved a wide range of social groups, with diverse claims and demands. In France, mobilizations had already begun by the end of 2018, when the Gilets Jaunes movement had emerged, shaking the national political landscape, with a wave of contentious actions, ranging from road blockades across provincial areas to mass demonstrations on the Champs-Élysées. At the same time, toward the end of the summer, other forms of protest began to take shape, particularly in major French cities, although less visibly. These included the first climate marches and sit-ins, launched in parallel with the school strikes inspired by Greta Thunberg in Stockholm and the non-violent civil disobedience actions of Extinction Rebellion in London. Together, these events marked the beginning of a transnational wave of climate justice mobilization that would reach its peak globally in 2019.

In this same context, the research collective *Quantité Critique* was founded, with the aim of investigating the social base and internal dynamics of these mobilizations. My involvement in the collective, beginning in early 2019, marked my first real entry into social research and laid the foundation for what would later become this dissertation — which, for me, represents above all a formative journey into the practice of research. From the very first data collected in 2018–2019 in France, an unexpected element began to emerge: as climate protests were gaining momentum, many activists—particularly those with more radical profiles—were also widely adopting ecological practices in their everyday lives. At a moment of intense collective mobilization, there was thus a strong individual internalization of ecological norms. Understanding the role of everyday ecological practices among climate activists appeared to me as a subtle yet important line of inquiry.

It is a complex and intricate issue: as ecological awareness deepened, an explicit critique of individual responsibility also grew within the movement, and the realm of personal choices gradually became a site of political and critical discussion. In 2019, it was still common to see protest signs bearing slogans such as “It’s not the climate that must change, but our habits”, like the one held by a young demonstrator standing behind Greta Thunberg during her intervention in the climate strike in Rome.¹ However, as the protest cycle progressed, such references became increasingly rare, while criticism of individual solutions gained traction. In 2020, for instance, the Italian magazine *Internazionale* ran the headline: “The Green Consumer Myth. Changing one’s habits is not enough: the only way to save

¹ <https://www.avvenire.it/attualita/pagine/greta-ambiente-roma-friday-for-future>

the environment is political action”². The magazine cover was shared on the social media accounts of Fridays For Future Italia, accompanied by captions such as: “Individuals are not the real culprits of the climate crisis [...] just 20 energy companies are responsible for 35% of all greenhouse gas emissions over the past 50 years. It’s clear that individuals can do little about it. Still, this doesn’t mean that some personal choices can’t have a meaningful impact”³. As a result, the issue of individual choices—regarding consumption, diet, and transportation—has become increasingly politicized, but also fragmented, generating a series of ambivalences that lie at the heart of this research.

One key to understanding this ambiguity lies in the fact that, for years—at least within Western political contexts—the dominant view has framed environmental sustainability primarily as a matter of changing individual consumption patterns, rather than questioning the development model itself. Over time, however, the environmental movement has progressively developed more radical counter-hegemonic visions, centered on concepts such as climate justice, system change, and the accountability of governments and public institutions. These perspectives have served to counterbalance the emphasis on individual responsibility that characterizes traditional environmental policy. This tension has been reflected in the everyday choices of individual protesters. As several studies have shown, while it is true that activists tend to strongly integrate ecological practices into their daily lives (Alexandre et al. 2021; Boucher et al. 2021; Martiskainen et al. 2020; Posmek 2023; Zamponi et al. 2022), the ways in which this practical commitment is interpreted vary considerably. Some activists view the reform of lifestyle habits as a pathway to the solution of climate crisis (de Moor et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019), while others highlight the inadequacy of individual solutions in the face of systemic problems (Pickard, Bowman, and Arya 2020; Stuart 2022; Trott 2023), as exemplified by Fridays For Future’s Facebook post cited above. It is precisely this articulation between practices and their meanings that lies at the heart of my research.

Certainly, the relationship between lifestyles and political participation is not limited to the environmental movement, but concerns all social movements. However, in the case of the climate movement, this relationship appears particularly salient. Analyzing how ecological practices are both enacted and interpreted by individual climate protesters can thus provide valuable insights into this tension—between the rejection of personal responsibility and the pervasive presence of ecological norms—and help illuminate a cleavage within the climate movement that has received relatively little attention. Are ecological practices adopted uniformly within the context of climate mobilization? If

² <https://www.internazionale.it/sommario/1372>

³ Il post è visibile sulla pagina Facebook di Fridays For Future Italia ed è datato 3 settembre 2020

adoption is uneven, what social characteristics help explain greater or lesser engagement in these practices? And what meanings do these practices take on within a movement shaped by political and social diversity? How is individual responsibility articulated in a context marked by the repoliticization of the climate issue and a growing emphasis on collective responsibilities? The aim of this research is not necessarily to provide definitive answers to all of these questions, but rather to offer as many insights as possible in order to contribute to ongoing reflection on these issues and to open up a broader inquiry into the role of everyday ecological practices within the context of climate mobilization. More specifically, the study highlights how different social and ideological characteristics among protesters are associated with varying levels of engagement in such practices. It then focuses in particular on how these practices acquire meaning through reflexive processes—that is, how activists justify their commitment to ecological living. Ultimately, the research explores how social background, political orientation, and activist experience are linked not only to different ways of adopting ecological practices, but also to different ways of making sense of them—practices that, notably, require a sustained investment of energy, time, material resources, and interpersonal effort. This research object—the adoption of ecological practices and their meaning within the context of climate mobilization—also offers an opportunity to engage with the tools of critical sociology, drawing from notions such as dispositions and habitus. At the same time, it allows for the integration of elements from the sociology of justification, which focuses on how individuals make sense of their actions. The aim of the research is to incorporate reflexive dimensions—such as justifications—into the critical sociological framework, as these have often been underexplored within this tradition.

I proceed as follows: in Chapter 2, I begin by examining the core object of my research—everyday ecological practices (EEPs). I review how the social sciences have conceptualized these practices, outlining key findings concerning the social factors associated with their adoption, as well as the ways they are motivated and justified. This section provides a conceptual framework for understanding the field of EEPs, which I later revisit in the empirical analysis. The chapter continues with an examination of concepts such as ecological modernization and individualization, which help explain how EEPs have become central to dominant visions of political ecology and have operated as tools of responsabilization—shifting the locus of responsibility from public institutions to private individuals. I also explore how the climate movement has sought to challenge and reframe this logic. I then present my research questions—namely, which social dispositions are associated with the adoption of ecological practices among climate activists, and which justifications they invoke to sustain them. Finally, I introduce the main theoretical tools I draw on—namely, the sociology of

dispositions and the sociology of justification—while also integrating insights from related fields such as social movement studies and critical consumption research.

In Chapter 3, I describe the research design. To capture the diversity of social and ideological profiles among protesters, I used protest surveys. To explore in greater depth the meanings and justifications activists assign to ecological practices, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with a subset of the survey participants. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, I collected data that directly address the research questions. I conclude the chapter with a description of the mobilization contexts under analysis—Italy and France—two countries where environmentalism has followed relatively similar trajectories, albeit with some differences in the development of the recent climate movement. Although this study does not adopt a strictly comparative design, the inclusion of both cases allows for a broader understanding of how ecological practices unfold within different mobilization contexts.

In Chapter 4, I present the results of the protest survey. I begin with a descriptive overview of the sample composition in Italy and France, focusing on sociodemographic characteristics, political orientations, and collective participation. I then examine the adoption of EEPs, showing that while activists are generally highly engaged in such practices, there are significant differences across types of practices. EEPs that are more accessible and less demanding are widely adopted, while those requiring greater investment of time, energy, or sacrifice are more limited to specific segments of the sample. In the second part of the chapter, I present the results of regression analyses (logistic and OLS) to investigate how social, political, and participatory factors relate to both individual practices and aggregated indices of ecological engagement. The findings show how the adoption of EEPs is shaped by specific social factors.

In Chapter 5, I focus on the analysis of justifications, aiming to map the discursive space through which climate activists make sense of their engagement in everyday ecological practices. Respondents draw on a wide range of arguments to legitimize their actions which—consistent with the premises of the sociology of justification—are not mutually exclusive, but often combined in ways that reinforce one another. To analyze this plurality and produce an interpretable representation, I proceeded as follows: after conducting a content analysis of the interviews, I identify the main types of justification, recode them into a dataset, and then carry out a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) to explore how these justifications cluster together. After presenting the justification space, I move on to analyze the distinct clusters, or “systems of justification”, that emerge. I particularly

highlight the contrast between respondents who frame EEPs as instrumental tools to combat the climate crisis and serve as exemplary models for others—reflecting an eco-modernist understanding of individual responsibility—and those who de-emphasize instrumental utility and personal accountability. The latter tend to view their practices in normative or moral terms: as a matter of coherence between values and actions, or as a way of preparing for life in a post-crisis future—rather than as a direct solution to the crisis itself.

In Chapter 6, I explore how these systems of justification correspond to specific social and political profiles among activists. I examine the connections between dispositions and justifications, showing how social factors—such as class background or activist experience—influence not only patterns of conduct, but also the ways individuals reflect on and assign meaning to their ecological practices. A clear division emerges between those with a more moderate political orientation—who tend to align with a justification system centered on effectiveness, responsibility, and exemplarity—and more radical activists, who reject individual responsibility and legitimize their practices through alternative, value-driven or future-oriented narratives.

In Chapter 7, I draw conclusions based on the empirical findings and relevant literature, aiming to identify the broader implications of these results for the study of social movements, critical consumption, and critical sociology. I also address the limitations of the research and outline potential directions for future investigation. Ultimately, through this research—centered on the analysis of ecological practices within the context of climate mobilization—I seek to shed light on how individual practice and collective action intersect; how socialization processes, including those shaped by activist participation, influence everyday practices; and how social dispositions and individual reflexivity can be integrated.

Chapter 2. Everyday Ecological Practices: Defining Object, Questions, and Theories Behind Their Adoption

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I aim to outline the theoretical foundations that underpin this dissertation. To begin, I will define the object of this research: Everyday Ecological Practices. Following this, I will examine how the social sciences, in their various branches, have approached this object, highlighting the different theoretical frameworks that have been employed, the forms of operationalization, and the key findings—particularly those related to the determinants of such practices and the motivations behind their adoption. Subsequently, I will review the existing literature on forms of environmental *responsibilization* to explore the context in which these practices emerge. I will then introduce the research questions that guide this study and discuss the main theoretical paradigms I intend to employ in addressing these questions. Regarding the theoretical framework, I will present the paradigms I will use for my analysis, specifically the sociology of dispositions and the sociology of justification. I will provide a detailed explanation of how I plan to operationalize and combine the concepts derived from these paradigms, despite their inherent tensions, as well as the limitations and strengths of their application. Finally, I will also clarify the contribution my research seeks to make to the existing body of literature.

This study aims to analyze a relatively contained phenomenon, which can be summarized by the question: how do people who participate in climate marches behave in their everyday lives? Although this question may appear quite specific, it raises broader reflections on how collective action and individuality intersect, how socialization shapes everyday life, and how social dispositions and individual reflexivity interact. While I do not aim to provide definitive answers to all these issues, I hope to offer useful insights for future research and to shed light on a significant dimension of contemporary practices and dilemmas linked to the climate crisis.

2. Object and Research Questions

2.1 The Object of Study: What Are Everyday Ecological Practices?

Everyday ecological practices have emerged as a research topic in sociological and political science literature relatively recently, over the past few decades. This multifaceted object naturally intersects with a variety of research fields, ranging from sociological literature (e.g., Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Haluza-DeLay 2008) to political science (e.g., De Moor 2017; Micheletti 2003) and social

psychology (e.g., Onwezen, Antonides, and Bartels 2013; Pelletier et al. 1998), as well as studies on consumption (e.g., Stolle and Micheletti 2013) and social movements (e.g., Balsiger 2009; Bossy 2014). In this section of the chapter, I will outline some of the theoretical frameworks that have informed the analysis of this research object. While this paragraph does not aim to provide a comprehensive synthesis of all theories and approaches concerning ecological practices—given that, despite the relatively short time frame, the academic output on this topic has been extensive—I will attempt to chart a pathway through this literature. This will allow me to highlight key theoretical elements that I will rely on to interpret the data in the subsequent empirical chapters.

First and foremost, what do we mean when we talk about Everyday Ecological Practices? I use this term for two main reasons. The first is an operational one: numerous studies associate ecological practices to alternative consumption practices (Pattaro and Setiffi 2016), operationalized as boycott and buycott actions (Neilson 2010). This focus stems from the long history of such actions (Micheletti 2003), their prominence in media campaigns, and their frequent coverage in quantitative surveys (Copeland and Boulianne 2022). While alternative consumption is certainly an essential part of everyday ecology, it is too narrow a concept to adequately capture the variety of behaviors associated with everyday ecological practices. It also excludes other aspects of domestic life, such as dietary changes (Allen et al. 2000; Dietz et al. 1995; Faucher 1998), recycling (Schultz, Oskamp, and Mainieri 1995), anti-waste practices (Hajek 2020, 2023), frugality (Boucher 2017), energy-saving behaviors (Poortinga, Steg, and Vlek 2004; Saunders et al. 2016), and alternative modes of transportation (Barr, Shaw, and Coles 2011). Ecological behavior may also involve anti-consumption (Black and Cherrier 2010) and may include production-oriented activities rather than consumption, such as upcycling products (Sung, Cooper, and Kettley 2014) and self-production (Schlosberg and Coles 2016). While alternative consumption often focuses on “private” consumption practices, other environmental behaviors may involve more cooperative settings, such as community energy initiatives (Bomberg and McEwen 2012), alternative food networks (Huber and Lorenzini 2022; Seyfang 2009), and “Do-It-Ourselves” community-based politics (Pickard 2019). Therefore, alternative consumption is too limited a term to encompass the wide range of practices that individuals might adopt for ecological reasons. The term Everyday Ecological Practices better encapsulates the plurality of these actions.

This is not to say, however, that the literature on alternative consumption does not offer valuable theoretical insights for analyzing other ecological practices. One of the key debates within this literature is particularly relevant for understanding the ecological practices of climate activists: the

ambivalence between alternative consumption as a means of market reform and as a tool for criticizing consumer society. A significant part of this literature has conceived alternative consumption practices as ways through which consumers choose products and producers in order to promote market change (Copeland 2014; Copeland and Boulianne 2022; Micheletti 2003; Stolle and Micheletti 2013; Sung et al. 2014; Willis and Schor 2012). These studies primarily associate consumerism with efforts to drive market transformation, including its ecological reform. However, other scholars see consumption not only as a tool for market reform but also as a space for critiquing the market itself (Barnett, Cafaro, and Newholm 2005; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Fuchs and Lorek 2005; Sassatelli 2016; Seyfang 2009). Balsiger (2017, 195) identifies two interpretations of engaged consumption: one emphasizes “a relationship to the broader phenomenon of market contestation [...] whose common feature is to focus on the market, to inscribe their struggles in the market, to target companies, thus politicizing the market and the consumption of certain goods, but without necessarily adopting a critical ideology of consumer society.” The other reflects “a movement built around an ideology critical of consumer society and which politicizes consumption.” This perspective recognizes the dual capacity of consumption practices to function both as a critique within consumer society and as a critique of consumer society itself. Thus, although my research focuses on a slightly different object than alternative consumption practices, it still draws heavily on this body of literature to frame the analysis.

There is also a theoretical reason that leads me to adopt the term Everyday Ecological Practices instead of other terms commonly found in the literature. A term frequently encountered in the literature is “pro-environmental behavior” (Gifford and Nilsson 2014; K. R. Hamann and Reese 2020; Hunter, Hatch, and Johnson 2004; Kennedy and Kmec 2018; Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002; Onwezen et al. 2013; Pelletier et al. 1998, 1999; Reese and Junge 2017; Schahn and Holzer 1990; Shipley and van Riper 2022; Turaga, Howarth, and Borsuk 2010; Vicente-Molina, Fernández-Sainz, and Izagirre-Olaizola 2018; Zelezny, Chua, and Aldrich 2000). This term refers to deliberate choices made with the goal of reducing emissions and minimizing environmental harm. The literature on pro-environmental behaviors encompasses both private behaviors, such as those related to consumption and domestic decision-making, and public actions, such as participating in protests. This body of work is extensive and has yielded important findings regarding the determinants underlying such behaviors, as I will illustrate in a subsequent part of this chapter. However, I find that conceptualizing these practices as ‘behaviors’ inherently implies a psychological or behavioral scientific approach, which tends to associate actions with attitudes, beliefs, motivations, decision-making strategies, and knowledge acquisition. This perspective differs from the approach I take in this research, which is

grounded in a sociological lens. In my analysis, I focus on practices—understood as habitual, routinized actions—which are shaped not only by rational and deliberate decision-making but also by the weight of socialization. This perspective allows for a broader and more nuanced understanding of these actions compared to the behavioralist framework.

Other ways of conceptualizing everyday ecology often reflect theoretical approaches from which my research departs. One frequently used term is “lifestyle politics” (Bennett 1998; De Moor 2017; Dobernig and Stagl 2015; Giddens 1991; Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012; Micheletti 2003; de Moor and Verhaegen 2020), which assumes that individuals’ everyday choices have global implications. According to de Moor (2017, 180), “Lifestyle politics are activities that advance change by fostering politically inspired lifestyle choices.” Similarly, Stolle and Micheletti (2013, 41) describe it as “the choice to use an individual’s private life sphere to take responsibility for the allocation of common values and resources, in other words, for politics.” Although the term lifestyle politics encompasses a wider range of activities than boycotting and buycotting—“including transportation, household waste disposal, the use of energy sources, fashion, housing” (De Moor 2017, 182)—and in this sense aligns with the multifaceted object of this research, I still find the term problematic. As I will elaborate further in the second part of this section, the term ‘lifestyle politics’ implies a form of individual responsibility that shifts the focus away from collective actors (Giddens 2009). In this dissertation, I do not assume that the primary reason for adopting an ecological lifestyle is necessarily its transformative implications. Instead, I take a step back to explore what drives and justifies its adoption. Portwood-Stacer (2013), who uses the terms lifestyle politics and lifestyle activism to describe the everyday behaviors of American anarchists in her study, argues that the lifestyle politics adopted by the anarchists she interviewed are not forms of responsibility-taking but rather acts of distancing themselves from the mainstream. Additionally, she shows that these behaviors combine lifestyle and political struggle. I find her conceptualization closer to the way I interpret the object of research. However, even in her case, lifestyle politics, though not framed as responsibility-taking, still carry an active political significance, embodying the belief that “one person can make a difference” through individual choices. For Portwood-Stacer, this belief “is pervasive not only among radicals such as anarchists but also among all who are interpellated by the ideology of neoliberalism” (Portwood-Stacer 2013, 9). In this sense, other studies on lifestyle politics also tend to characterize such actions as forms of political participation (De Moor 2017; de Moor and Verhaegen 2020). However, in my research, I do not assume aprioristically that these actions are inherently perceived as political by the individuals I analyze. Nor do I assume that they are adopted to influence politics or transform society, therefore I prefer not to use this term.

Moreover, building on the critiques of the concept of lifestyle politics — particularly regarding depoliticization, cooptation by the neoliberal market, and individualization (Blühdorn and Deflorian 2021; Kenis and Mathijs 2012; Maniates 2001)— other terms have been proposed. Pellizzoni (2022) proposes using the term “form-of-life”, borrowed from Agamben, to describe instances in which everyday behavior aligns with a particular inclination to be, detached from the idea of embodying responsibility through one’s actions and resistant to commodification. Examples of forms-of-life within the realm of everyday ecological practices include permaculture or participatory agricultural production systems (Centemeri 2018). Similarly, another effort to disentangle everyday ecological practices from the risks of depoliticization is reflected in the concept of sustainable materialism (Schlosberg 2019; Schlosberg and Coles 2016), which refers to collective action undertaken by groups aiming to emancipate themselves from unsustainable production systems by reconfiguring socio-material flows. While I acknowledge the theoretical advantages of these terms, I do not adopt them in this dissertation. These concepts seem more appropriate for analyzing collective, prefigurative ecological practices that are carried out in infrastructures external to the market. In contrast, my research examines a broader variety of practices, whose nature is not necessarily prefigurative, nor are they always collective or anti-consumerist. Nevertheless, these concepts will prove useful in interpreting certain findings, as I will show later in the analysis.

Studies on collective action have considered everyday ecology as a tool for the construction of collective identities within social movements (Melucci 1989, 1996; Pichardo Almanzar, Sullivan-Catlin, and Deane 2006). Collective action influences the individual identities of activists, who, in turn, contribute to and shape collective identity through their actions (Alteri, Leccardi, and Raffini 2017; Della Porta and Diani 2020; Melucci 1996; Snow and McAdam 2000). Everyday practices do not have tangible efficacy *per se*, but become a way to involve individuals in a social movement organization (Haenfler et al. 2012), making them join its claims and struggles (Dubuisson-Quellier 2015) or keeping them active in latency phases (Forno and Wahlen 2022a). Melucci considers this a prominent characteristic of contemporary movements, such as the environmental one, as they seek to foster a complementarity between private and public life: “There is [...] a complementarity between private life in which new meanings are directly produced and experienced, and publicly expressed commitments. Living differently and changing society are seen as complementary” (Melucci 1989, 2006). This gives rise to a prefigurative interpretation of individual practices, especially in the field of ecology (Bossy 2014; Monticelli 2022). In this process, ‘actors’ become ‘subjects’ and everyday practices become moments of self-construction as a principle of self-meaning (Dobré 2002; Pleyers

2010, 2016; Touraine 1984). Although the research does not specifically focus on the notion of identity, theoretical insights from these approaches oriented toward collective action will be adopted in the empirical analysis in the following chapters.

Building on these considerations, I prefer to use the term Everyday Ecological Practices (EEPs) to describe a set of routinized and habitual behaviors that people adopt in their daily lives for ecological reasons. These practices encompass various spheres of private life, including consumption, renunciation, and production, such as buying second-hand products, limiting domestic energy use, changing one's diet, giving up polluting means of transport, etc. The advantage of this term lies in its broad scope, which accommodates a wide range of domains, and its capacity to connect with several theoretical approaches and literatures, including the sociology of disposition, as well as consumption studies and collective action.

2.2. Determinants, motivations and justifications of Everyday Ecological Practices

Overall, regardless of the concept used to define them, EEPs have been the focus of a relatively extensive body of literature. A large portion of these studies has concentrated on the characteristics of individuals who report adopting such practices, with particular attention to the social determinants that contribute to their diffusion. These studies, which often focus on alternative consumption practices and are typically based on surveys conducted on representative population samples—mainly in Western countries—have revealed several important dynamics. Here I offer a review of the main findings produced by this body of research.

Many studies have shown that women tend to adopt Everyday Ecological Practices more frequently than men (Boström et al. 2005; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Gifford and Nilsson 2014; Hunter et al. 2004; Kennedy and Kmec 2018; Koos 2012; O'Shaughnessy and Kennedy 2010; Schahn and Holzer 1990; Stolle and Micheletti 2013; Zelezny et al. 2000). This gender gap persists even in developed macro- and microeconomic contexts (Hunter et al. 2004; Kennedy and Kmec 2018), though there are exceptions in cultural contexts with higher levels of gender equality (Vicente-Molina et al. 2018). This gender gap is evident across several behavioral domains, including domestic purchasing and consumption (Stolle and Micheletti 2013), as well as in other areas such as recycling (Hunter et al. 2004; Kennedy and Kmec 2018) and transportation (Vicente-Molina et al. 2018). The reasons behind this disparity remain debated. A traditional explanation frequently cited in the literature is the theory of gender socialization (Zelezny et al. 2000), according to which women are socialized to value the needs of others, while men are socialized to prioritize competition and individualism. From this

perspective, women would be more inclined to display helping behaviors and altruism, which in turn would translate into stronger pro-environmental habits. Stolle and Micheletti (2013) offer three additional hypotheses related with alternative consumerism: first, that shopping as a form of political engagement creates a space for women to participate in politics, as opposed to traditional political spheres; second, that women have greater concern towards environmental or social causes and therefore greater willingness to learn about labels and certifications; and third, that women have a heightened sensitivity to risk for themselves and family members. Effects of gender socialization has been supported by several empirical studies (Gifford and Nilsson 2014; Vicente-Molina et al. 2018), although alternative interpretations emphasize the need to consider broader structural and contextual factors. Following the ecofeminist literature, the domestic space is not merely a site of patriarchal oppression but also a ground for experimenting with revolutionary politics (MacGregor 2021). Consequently, this type of “domestic environmental labor” (Farbotko 2018), understood from an ecofeminist perspective, disrupts—rather than accommodates or mimics—dominant patriarchal and market relations, thereby creating spaces of resistance against the neoliberal framing of environmental issues (MacGregor 2014). Moreover, engaging in ecological practices can serve as a way for women to distance themselves from the hegemonic masculinity associated with environmentally harmful behaviors (O’Shaughnessy and Kennedy 2010; Stoddart and Tindall 2011). Conversely, men tend to adopt fewer ecological behaviors to avoid association with actions perceived as undermining their masculinity (Brough et al. 2016).

Several studies have shown that age is a significant determinant of ecological practices. Gifford and Nilsson (2014) found that older individuals are more likely to adopt pro-environmental behaviors compared to younger ones. Stolle et al. (2010) observed that political consumers tend to be middle-aged, typically between 30 and 40 years old. Similarly, Ward and De Vreese (2011) highlighted that this age gap is evident even among younger populations, with young adults being more likely to engage in alternative consumption than the youngest segments of the population. This phenomenon could be attributed to a higher degree of autonomy, both in economic matters and in domestic choices.

Education also plays a significant role. Increasing levels of education are closely linked to alternative consumption, as demonstrated by cross-national empirical findings (Koos 2012; Stolle and Micheletti 2013; Yates 2011). Similarly, other studies confirm this association for practices beyond consumption (Poortinga et al. 2004). This relationship suggests that higher education may foster critical thinking, awareness of social and environmental issues, and a greater willingness to engage in alternative practices.

Social class is also a significant determinant of ecological choices. Studies reveal an association between ecological practices and middle-class sectors (Gifford and Nilsson 2014; Johnston, Szabo, and Rodney 2011; Koos 2012; Stolle and Micheletti 2013). Yates (2011) reports a higher propensity among middle-class members to adopt critical consumption behaviors compared to the working class. However, this tendency is more pronounced for boycotting practices than for buycotting. While other studies, which will be discussed in greater detail later, employ the term “eco-habitus” to explain the propensity of individuals, particularly those from social sectors with high cultural capital, to adopt ecological practices (Carfagna et al. 2014).

Concerning the social capital, research has demonstrated that being a member of a voluntary organization increases the likelihood of adopting political consumption behaviors (Crépault 2013; Neilson 2010; Neilson and Paxton 2010). Other studies have identified significant relationships between alternative practices—including, but not limited to, alternative consumerism—and both institutional and non-institutional forms of political participation. For example, de Moor and Verhaegen (2020) find that the “gateway effects” on non-institutionalized political actions are strongest among activists who are most engaged in lifestyle politics. Similarly, Zhang (2015) argues that the determinants of engagement in individual practices align closely with those for other forms of political participation, emphasizing that the segment of individuals exclusively involved in alternative consumption without engaging in other traditional forms of political participation is marginal. Dubuisson-Quellier and colleagues further demonstrate that ecological practices can serve as recruitment channels for organizations and as tools for collective contestation (Dubuisson-Quellier 2015; Dubuisson-Quellier, Lamine, and Le Velly 2011). Even studies that tend to exclude the hypothesis that EEPs are related to resource-based theories conclude that organizational ties significantly increase the adoption of such practices (Copeland and Boulianne 2022).

Political orientations have been reported as potentially associated with the adoption of ecological practices. Studies indicate that ecological behaviors are more commonly associated with left-wing positions (Boström et al. 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2013) than with right-wing ones (Allen et al. 2000; Dhont and Hodson 2014). However, according to Neumayer (Neumayer 2004), left-wing positions are not universally linked to these practices; moderates, rather than radicals, tend to engage in ecological behaviors more frequently. Similarly, Stolle and Micheletti (2013) suggest that political consumers are rarely left-wing extremists. Samdahl and Robertson (1989) demonstrate that economic factors, such as “pro-regulatory liberalism” are reliable predictors of environmental behavior. In

contrast, Strømsnes (2005) finds that radical leftists are more actively engaged in political consumption practices than other groups. Furthermore, some theoretical research links ecological radical practices, such as veganism, to an anti-capitalist ethos (Dickstein et al. 2022). As discussed earlier, other studies interpret everyday ecological practices as a way of emancipating from capitalist socio-material flows (Schlosberg and Coles 2016).

Thus, gender, age, and social condition are key factors that influence the adoption of ecological practices. In addition, political factors—such as collective participation or political orientation—may come into play beyond primary socialization and contribute to shaping individual behaviors. Beyond these social factors, a significant portion of the literature has focused on the motivations behind the adoption of ecological practices. (K. R. Hamann and Reese 2020; Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002; Onwezen et al. 2013; Pelletier et al. 1998, 1999; Poortinga et al. 2004; Reese and Junge 2017; Shipley and van Riper 2022; Suchier, Demarque, and Girandola 2024; Turaga et al. 2010). Models analyzing motivational factors are often complex and take into account both internal and external motivations (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002; Suchier et al. 2024). The range of motivations associated with the adoption of ecological behaviors is broad and includes intrinsic motivations based on personal integrity (Pelletier et al. 1998), emotions like pride and guilt (Onwezen et al. 2013; Shipley and van Riper 2022), as well as extrinsic motivations such as social rewarding (Pelletier et al. 1998). These motivations can stem from purely ecological concerns (Kyroglou and Henn 2022) but may also be tied to other altruistic reasons not necessarily related to ecology (Gifford and Nilsson 2014). Motivations may involve an individual's self-efficacy—their belief in the effectiveness of their ecological behavior (Deisenrieder et al. 2020; K. R. Hamann and Reese 2020; Lee et al. 2014)—as well as collective efficacy, or the belief in the effectiveness of ecological actions when adopted collectively on a larger scale (Doherty and Webler 2016). Some studies also show that the tendency to consider these practices as effective is associated with lower levels of their adoption in daily life (Hanss and Böhm 2010; Reese and Junge 2017).

While most studies consider motivations as factors determining the adoption of ecological behaviors, a smaller body of research applies the concept of motivation to understand the ways of making sense of adopting certain behaviors (Balsiger, Lorenzini, and Sahakian 2019; Howell 2013; Portwood-Stacer 2013). Portwood-Stacer's (2013) study on the lifestyle politics of American anarchists, previously cited, also explores the reasons behind these behaviors. Many of the motivations identified in her study align with findings in the ecological literature. In the chapter on anti-consumption, the author categorizes the motivations for adopting anti-consumption practices into several types. These

include personal motivations, which are related to personal benefit; moral motivations, such as refusing to compromise with the system; activist motivations, where practices are used to enact change; identificatory motivations, which serve to solidify the anarchist identity of those engaging in them; and social motivations, which reinforce solidarity among members. This perspective highlights how motivations are not merely internal drivers of action but also narratives individuals use to frame their practices. Similarly, Howell (2013) inductively identifies, through interviews with individuals living low-carbon lifestyles, a range of values and motivations related to social justice, community, frugality, personal integrity, and climate change engagement. Additionally, Balsiger and colleagues (2019) emphasize two different ways respondents make sense of their environmental behavior: adaptation and transformation. Adaptation is linked to a reformist approach to the climate crisis, involving consensual individual practices (e.g., “turning off the light”), while the transformative stance advocates for more impactful prescriptions, such as voluntary simplicity. Johnston and colleagues (2011) study the way in which people from varied class positions and racial-ethnic backgrounds make sense of their ‘ethical’ eating in Canada. Privileged participants tend to present their ethical behavior as high quality, good and healthy practices “providing a sense of cultural distinction” (ibid, 312). Nonetheless, marginalized participants also employ discursive narratives to represent their behaviors as ‘ethical’. For instance, rather than focusing on the health and quality benefits, marginalized participants stress the effects of their behaviors on overconsumption and waste. Therefore, the authors conclude that whether a type of consumption is justified as ‘ethical’ depends on the social context. Through 40 in-depth interviews with individuals adopting green lifestyles, Lorenzen (2012) found that ecological practices are part of a process of gradual transformation that involves uncertainty and deliberation, requiring a constant process of making sense of everyday practices. According to Lorenzen, environmental themes emerge as “justifications” to provide a rationale for certain choices, rather than as initial motivations. Using a pragmatic approach, Lorenzen suggests that motivations (or rather justifications) follow rather than precede life choices. Shroeder (2013) applies Boltanski and Thévenot’s theoretical framework on justifications, which will be examined later, to the study of sustainable consumption in order to answer the question ‘how people justify their doings’. He discovers that people use multiple ‘orders of worth’ when justifying a sustainable practice, for instance becoming vegetarian may be justified as a practice that is worthy because it is cheaper, healthier and better. These justifications do not rely on the same order of worth but are compatible. All of these contributions—despite the diversity of theoretical perspectives employed and the variety of cases examined—align with my approach, which emphasizes how individuals construct meaning around their practices, rather than focusing primarily on their initial motivations. This perspective will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

This brief overview of the literature has highlighted some of the main thematic axes on which research on ecological practice has focused so far. However, the majority of the studies reviewed have either concentrated on samples of the general population or investigated segments of people who have undergone lifestyle changes. As I will elaborate in the following section, analyzing the spread of these practices in the specific context of climate mobilization is particularly compelling the movement's emphasis on public solutions rather than on the reform of consumption and lifestyle. However, studies examining the diffusion of such practices within the context of climate mobilizations remain relatively limited (Alexandre et al. 2021; Boucher et al. 2021; Martiskainen et al. 2020; Posmek 2023; Stuart 2022; Zamponi et al. 2022) and there is currently a lack of in-depth research on the social dispositions underpinning the adoption of these practices and the ways they are given meaning, particularly within a context where their effectiveness is debated within the movement. My research aims to address this gap.

Based on the findings from the literature, the empirical chapters of this dissertation will aim, on the one hand, to understand how dispositions, meaning factors related with primary and secondary socialization, as well as political orientations, are most closely associated with the adoption of EEPs within the context of climate mobilization (Chapter 4). On the other hand, in line with the points mentioned earlier, I will seek to identify the ways in which protesters “make sense” of these practices (Chapter 5 and 6). Rather than analyzing motivations as determinants of such practices, my focus will be on the justifications underlying their adoption.

Before delving into the theoretical approaches that will support the empirical analysis, it is necessary to examine one crucial aspect: the process of individual responsibility-taking as a response to the climate crisis. By highlighting “government inaction”, recent climate mobilizations reflect a crisis in framing the climate issue solely as a matter of individual responsibility (Comby 2015). In the following section, I will explore key aspects of the theoretical debate on this topic to better position my research questions.

2.3 Risk Society, Ecological Modernization, Individualization, Responsibilization

To understand the space that climate activism allocates to ecological practices, it is essential to consider how individual responsibility is framed within the ecological crisis. As demonstrated by several studies (Döbbe and Cederberg 2024; Kelly 2001; Lebedeva 2023; Melucci 1989; Soneryd and Ugglå 2015), personal responsibility has evolved into a means of addressing issues that affect the

collective sphere, including environmental protection. The issue of individual responsibility in ecological practices has been studied across various academic fields (Hiller 2011; Kent 2009; Sinnott-Armstrong 2005). However, a useful key to interpreting this phenomenon of responsabilization is to consider the concepts of risk society, ecological modernization, and individualization, whose combination has shaped climate policies by placing individuals at the heart of environmental governance. The following sections explore the intersections between these concepts.

2.3.1 Risk Society

According to Ulrich Beck, within modernity, industrialization has expanded to such an extent that it has introduced unprecedented environmental risks into society, including nuclear contamination, chemical pollution, and, ultimately, global warming. We are thus witnessing a new phase of capitalism, in which the institutional control mechanisms of industrial modernity can no longer contain the risks produced by industrialization itself (Beck 1992). Whereas industrial society was structured around conflicts over material “goods” (wealth, labor, social security), regulated by institutional structures, risk society is characterized by conflicts over “bads”—the negative externalities of industrialization. Risk, however, has democratizing effects: in a society where environmental damage has potentially devastating global consequences, risks transcend class boundaries. As Beck famously stated: “Poverty is hierarchical, smog is democratic” (Beck 1992, 36). Risk society provides a framework that reinforces individual responsibility: when institutions fail to provide security, individuals must self-regulate and assume personal responsibility for mitigating risk. Consequently, domains that were previously considered non-political—such as private life, everyday habits, business, and science—become deeply politicized.

This increasing emphasis on self-regulation and the politicization of private life raises important questions about how environmental governance is framed in contemporary societies. One of the most influential theoretical responses to these challenges is ecological modernization, which posits that environmental sustainability can be achieved within the existing structures of industrial capitalism. As with any mode of production, capitalism requires an environmental reform program to remain viable, consequently, eco-modernists believe that capitalism can be reoriented toward environmental protection. The next section examines how ecological modernization conceptualizes the relationship between economic development, environmental risk, and individual responsibility.

2.3.2 Ecological Modernization

Ecological modernization theorists propose that capitalism itself can adapt to environmental concerns. Hajer (Hajer 1997, 25) defines ecological modernization as “the discourse that recognizes the structural character of the environmental problematique but nonetheless assumes that existing political, economic, and social institutions can internalize the care for the environment.” This perspective frames environmental protection as a mutually beneficial endeavor for both the market and society, making the reconciliation of economic growth and ecological sustainability appear not only possible but advantageous. According to Buttel (2000), the success of the term “ecological modernization” is due less to its conceptual clarity than to its compatibility with the socio-ecological thinking of the 1990s. It provided a framework for diagnosing environmental problems and offering solutions tailored to advanced industrial economies in the Global North. In fact, ecological modernization supports the belief that further modernization itself provides the solution to the problems generated by modernization. The industrial system generates environmental damage that can be mitigated by capitalism itself. Rather than requiring a departure from economic growth, ecological modernization promotes a development model driven by scientific research, technological advancement, and the financialization of environmental solutions (Mol, Spaargaren, and Sonnenfeld 2009). Ecological modernization has provided the hegemonic theoretical foundation for transnational environmental governance, shaping the core frameworks of most environmental policies (Brand 2010; Dryzek 2005). One of the most well-known examples is the policy framework introduced by Chapter 4 of Agenda 21, adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which set out sustainability guidelines for governments, communities, households, and individuals (Dobré 2002). Within this framework of environmental governance, consumption thus emerges as a prominent conceptual frame for policymakers (Cohen 2001). However, this process has not only resulted in changes to environmental policies and transnational governance strategies; it has also had an impact on environmental movements.

Mol and Spaargaren (2000) argue that ecological modernization theory arose as a response to counter-modernization theory, which had gained traction in the 1970s within the environmental movement, with key theorists such as Barry Commoner. While counter-modernization theorists advocated for a radical break from industrial society, arguing that modern structures were inherently unsustainable, ecological modernization theorists took a different stance. They contended that while modern society needed transformation, this did not require abandoning its fundamental structures, such as the market and consumption. Instead, modernization itself could be reoriented toward ecological sustainability.

According to Arthur Mol (2000), environmental movements have undergone three major transformations between the 1970s and the late 20th century, largely due to the dominance of globalization and the modernization paradigm. The first transformation concerned the ideological shift within the movement. While early environmentalism often positioned itself in opposition to industrialization and capitalism, over time, ideologies that framed environmentalism and the market as compatible became hegemonic. Although radical critiques of capitalist accumulation and industrialization persisted, they have largely moved “from a core position to the periphery” (Mol, 2000, 48). The second transformation involved the changing role of environmental movements in shaping policy agendas. Whereas environmental movements once played a central role in setting environmental policy priorities, by the end of the century they began to compete with a broader network of actors, including state bureaucracies, corporations, and consultants, who also sought to influence decision-making. This shift is also confirmed by empirical analyses of the environmental movement in Western countries (Ollitrault 2008; della Porta and Diani 2004). The third transformation concerned the relationship between environmental movements and the market. In the past, environmental movements primarily saw the state as their key ally in driving ecological change. However, in the modern era, the market itself has increasingly been viewed as a potential partner in advancing environmental objectives. Mol argues that these transformations are not temporary or contingent but rather stem from the process of reflexive modernization.

Therefore, in contrast to radical environmentalism that challenges the structures of industrial capitalism, ecological modernization seeks to integrate environmental concerns within existing economic and political frameworks. However, this integration also implies a redistribution of responsibility, shifting the burden from collective institutions to individual actors. According to Spaargaren (2000), ecological modernization is closely intertwined with the processes of individualization within society. Ecological modernization requires both a macro-social transformation of production processes and an adjustment in consumers’ daily choices. Consumer behavior represents one of the main levers through which producers can be pushed to transform their production processes (Dubuisson-Quellier 2016). At the same time, through their purchasing decisions, consumers shape their own biography and thus become agents of ecological reform (Mol 2000). Therefore, the eco-modernist paradigm promotes a decentralization of responsibilities, shifting part of the burden from the state to market actors, including producers and consumers. This transition underscores the relevance of individualization, a process that not only shapes personal identity but also redefines the way responsibility is assigned within contemporary environmental discourse. The following section develops further the notion of individualization, and its intersections with

ecological and reflexive modernization, shedding light on its implications for climate action and everyday ecological practices.

2.3.3 Individualization

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim define individualization as the consequence of the disintegration of the social aggregates characteristic of industrial modernity, such as social classes. In this new context, they state that “demands, controls and constraints are being imposed on individuals” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002, 2). As a result, individuals are increasingly called upon to assume responsibility for both collective and personal risks: “The reflexivity and uncontrollability of social development thus encroaches upon the individual subregions, breaking up regional, class-specific, national, political, and scientific jurisdictions and boundaries. [...] This also implies that everyone under this threat is needed as a participant and affected party and can appear equally self-responsible” (Beck 1994, 11). This assumption of responsibility is the most defining feature of individualization. Zygmunt Bauman describes it as follows: “‘Individualization’ consists in transforming human ‘identity’ from a ‘given’ into a ‘task’—and charging the actors with the responsibility for performing that task” (Bauman 2002, XV). Giddens suggests a mutual relationship between “globalizing influences [that] intrude deeply into the reflexive project of the self, and conversely [the fact that] processes of self-realization influence global strategies” (Giddens 1991, 214). According to Gozzo and Sampugnaro (2016) it is a process of “gradual self-direction of subjective identities.” Beck (1994, 13) adds that “‘Individualization’ means, first, the disembedding and, second, the re-embedding of industrial society ways of life by new ones, in which individuals must produce, stage, and cobble together their biographies themselves. [...] ‘Individualization’ therefore means that the standard biography becomes a chosen biography, a ‘do-it-yourself biography’”. Individualization therefore places on individuals the burden of self-constructing their identity through their own actions.

A key step in the construction of one’s personal biography is the way one acts in daily life, an aspect that has strong implications for environmental behavior. According to Giddens, a lifestyle is not merely a set of practices that fulfill utilitarian needs but also a way of constructing and expressing self-identity. Personal decisions are not isolated but have repercussions on a global scale, therefore, addressing environmental degradation requires adopting new lifestyle models that integrate ecological awareness into daily practices (Giddens 2009). Beck argues “The ecological crisis [...] transforms everyday, trivial, unimportant things into tests of courage in which heroism can be exhibited” (Beck 1994, 50). Therefore, according to Beck, individual consumers hold the most influence in demanding environmental action in a globalized world. Unlike striking workers, whose

actions are risky and easily suppressed, individual consumers are anonymous, face no repercussions, and are therefore more effective in shaping corporate production choices (Beck 2010).

Individual consumers thus represent the key actors at the crossroads of these social transformations. Stolle and Micheletti (2013) suggests that a reconfiguration of political responsibility is underway, leading to a transformation in political participation. Social phenomena such as globalization, risk society, and the declining influence of the nation-state are increasingly compelling individuals to assume responsibilities that once fell under the jurisdiction of the state, which now lacks the authority to manage them—particularly in areas such as human rights and environmental risks. This shift represents a new political phenomenon that the authors define as “individualized responsibility-taking.” Political consumerism, in its various forms—including boycotting, buycotting, discursive political consumerism, and lifestyle politics (such as vegetarianism)—constitutes the main expression of individualized responsibility-taking. Through individual, voluntary actions, primarily carried out within the private sphere, individual consumers are called upon to take responsibility for action and to drive social change, addressing their claims directly to market actors, beyond the state.

2.3.4 Responsibilization

The preceding sections have shown how risk society, ecological modernization, and individualization have converged in placing the individual at the center of environmental governance. This process, that has been developed since the 1990s, has implicated institutionalizing ecological norms, primarily through the development of public strategies aimed at environmental protection by regulating individual behaviors (Dubuisson-Quellier 2016). This governance model hinges on *responsibilization* (Thörn and Svenberg 2016), aims to cultivate “citizen-consumers” who are proactive and self-reliant, reducing pressure on environmental resources while ensuring economic growth. This convergence has paved the way for a governance model that increasingly relies on individual responsibility as the primary means of addressing collective risks such as climate change (Döbbe and Cederberg 2024; Giddens 1991, 2009; Kelly 2001; Lebedeva 2023; Soneryd and Uggla 2015). While this model promotes individual autonomy and proactive citizenship, it simultaneously functions as a governmental strategy to shift responsibility for collective risks onto individuals (Soneryd and Uggla 2015), thereby legitimizing state intervention into personal behaviors (Dubuisson-Quellier 2016). The objective for the State is not to blame individuals but to make them reflect on the collective effects of their actions in order to legitimize a governance of conduct. This is characteristic of the environmental governance model, which promotes mechanisms of self-regulation and voluntary action in place of traditional top-down regulatory approaches (Pellizzoni 2004).

However, climate justice movements that have emerged in recent years strongly challenge this process of responsabilization. As Goodhart (2023) observes—referring, among others, to acts of civil disobedience carried out by Greenpeace—environmental protest seeks to politicize responsibility, turning the allocation of responsibility to specific actors into a political issue. Activists have questioned the effectiveness of solutions rooted in ecological norms and institutionalization, instead advocating for a systemic and global understanding of environmental issues—one that accounts for power inequalities. In the next section I will discuss this counter-hegemonic frame emerging within the climate justice movement.

2.4 Responsibility and the Climate Movement

Up to this point, I have outlined how key processes of late modernity— ecological modernization, and individualization—have intersected with one another. As highlighted by extensive literature (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand 2006; Buttel 2000; Pellizzoni 2004; Soneryd and Uggla 2015), major environmental policies in the West have been shaped by these principles, with elements such as individual responsibility and action through everyday practices playing a significant role in this context. However, beside these theories and approaches, the climate mobilizations that emerged after 2018, particularly the school strikes and civil disobedience campaigns, with their renewed focus on the state’s central role in addressing the climate crisis—echoing claims made during the mobilizations around COP15 in Copenhagen and COP21 in Paris—are demanding something different from ecological modernization and situate responsibility in places other than individuals. In the following paragraph, I will develop some historical considerations concerning the development of the climate movement in the Global North and the issue of individual responsibility.

2.4.1 The Emergence of the Climate Issue

In the Global North, concern about climate change among environmental movements and NGOs developed gradually. Although climate change was primarily framed as a scientific issue in the 1970s (the first World Climate Conference took place in Geneva in 1979), environmentalists did not seem particularly interested in global warming, as they considered it too ‘technical’ and not directly relevant to quality of life (Nulman 2022). Scientific activists sought to influence environmentalists and NGOs, aiming to redefine environmental protection. Their efforts focused on shifting the perspective from a conservative and superficial concept of quality of life—generally linked to urban pollution—to an approach that integrated climate issues and referred to “food, water, and other natural

resources essential to life itself” (Howe 2010, 169). As a result, early reflections on climate issues attracted sporadic interest from environmentalists during the 1980s. At the beginning of the 1990s, only a few civil society organizations prioritized climate politics (Dietz and Garrelts 2013a). At the same time, the ‘Conferences of the Parties’ (COPs)—the annual negotiations between the states and territories that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—began in 1995. Within this framework, the Climate Action Network (CAN) emerged as the largest climate advocacy platform. However, it focused mainly on lobbying international decision-makers and developing and implementing market-based tools to limit greenhouse gas emissions (Dietz and Garrelts 2013b, 238).

This represented a constant feature in the dynamics of non-governmental organizations and actors that joined the first COPs in the mid-1990s. In fact, 65% of all NGOs registered for the 1995–1997 COPs were primarily active in the energy and environmental sectors (Hadden 2015, 20). Their main objectives were to promote new managerial tools for carbon-emitting countries based on scientific evidence and to support the monitoring activities of the IPCC—the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change established by the United Nations to provide policymakers with summaries of current knowledge on the climate crisis and possible solutions. Climate activism in the 1990s was therefore predominantly shaped by a technocratic and eco-modernist vision, centered on the role of science, technology, and market actors as key stakeholders, in line with what has also emerged from the literature on ecological modernization and its connections to environmentalism, as discussed above. However, at the beginning of the 2000s, the entire environmental movement underwent profound transformations.

2.4.2 Climate Justice as a Central Frame

Globalization had exacerbated inequalities, not only in economic terms but also in terms of vulnerability and exposure to environmental and climate risks. The Alter-globalization movement—spanning from Seattle to Genoa and Porto Alegre—broadened the diagnostic perspective on ecological issues by highlighting the new forms of inequality and domination experienced by the most peripheral and precarious social strata. Ecological injustice came to be understood as a multifaceted phenomenon intertwined with a classist, patriarchal, and colonial system of oppression that fueled global resource extraction (Moore 2016). New actors, such as indigenous communities, became involved in the movement (Smith and Patterson 2019). The interaction between different social movements during the World Social Forums (della Porta and Mosca 2012) laid the foundation for truly transnational ecological action for the first time (Giugni and Grasso 2015). The alter-globalization movement not only provided marginalized populations with the opportunity to

participate in global contestation (della Porta and Diani 2004; Smith and Patterson 2019) but also infused environmentalism with new materialist demands (Schlosberg 2019).

Beyond this ‘insider’ role, climate NGOs also recognized the need to mobilize outside the negotiation arenas. Therefore, they started to organize and promote counter-summits and demonstrations on the occasion of COPs (Nulman 2022). These cyclical gatherings provided support and continuity for the climate movement. The 2009 Copenhagen counter-summit at COP15 marked a turning point between traditional environmentalism and new ecological demands. These new demands were globally represented by emerging platforms such as Climate Justice Now! (CJN), which had split from CAN two years earlier (Dietz and Garrelts 2013c; Hadden 2015). Climate justice—defined as the idea that social justice and a post-carbon society are interconnected and that polluting countries must compensate vulnerable communities for climate damage based on historical responsibility—quickly became a central framework of the climate movement (Gach 2019; della porta and Parks 2014; Schlosberg and Collins 2014).

For almost two decades, the climate movement was characterized by the dominance of mainstream environmental actors who focused on influencing decision-makers to adopt new measures to curb global warming—often through market-based solutions and efforts to reshape individual consumer behavior. This approach reflected the position taken by a significant segment of Western environmentalism in the late 1980s, aligned with the global hegemony of neoliberalism (Van Der Heijden 1999), and was echoed in the discourses of COP delegates (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand 2006, 2019). The emergence of the alter-globalization and global justice movements in the late 1990s and early 2000s disrupted this hegemonic framework. These movements challenged the dominant environmental narrative, shifting the focus from technocratic reform and market-driven ecological solutions to a broader critique of systemic inequalities. In this context, the growing climate justice movement moved beyond individual responsibility and eco-reformism to address class, gender, racial, and geographic inequalities exacerbated by climate change, advocating for a more radical and justice-oriented approach (Chatterton et al. 2012). The roots of contemporary climate mobilization can be traced not only to environmentalism, but also to the alter-globalization movement (Chatterton, Featherstone, and Routledge 2012; Wahlström and Wennerhag 2014).

2.4.3 The Contemporary Climate Movement and the Return of State-Centered Responsibility

After the failure of COP15 in 2009, COP21 in Paris was unanimously seen as the last chance to transform the transnational system of climate governance, which had essentially stagnated (Keohane

and Oppenheimer 2016). The Paris Agreement, adopted at COP21, promised to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C and to provide more democratic and polycentric tools to mitigate climate change (Jordan et al. 2018; Lawrence and Schäfer 2019). However, the agreement resulted in a shift in the responsibility for solving climate change. As Aykut, Morena, and Foyer (2021, 26) point out: “From a system organized around the production of legal documents to be transposed into national law, global governance shifted towards a system grounded on the definition of shared goals, voluntary commitments by state and non-state actors, and global review and monitoring processes.” Furthermore, analyses of the mechanisms of the Paris Agreement show that it expanded the use of carbon market models (Leonardi 2017). Therefore, in response to the unsuccessful outcomes of transnational climate governance, new trends emerged within the movement. Already in Paris, some sectors of the movement advocated moving beyond annual counter-summits held during international negotiations (de Moor 2021a). Counter-summits were increasingly seen as ineffective in reorienting decisions made within the COPs. Thus, instead of attempting to influence official negotiations as in the past, some actors chose to adopt new repertoires of contention and to move beyond the temporality of the COPs (ibidem). Direct actions to block polluting infrastructures were carried out by new groups such as Ende Gelände in 2015-16 (Temper 2019). More prominently, these efforts to push the movement beyond the logic of the COPs also contributed to the new waves of mobilization that emerged in 2018.

As already mentioned, the period between 2018 and 2019 witnessed a new wave of climate mobilizations around the world, driven by several factors: the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, the growing sense of urgency conveyed by climate scientists—as highlighted, for example, in the 2018 IPCC report—and the widespread disappointment following the high expectations raised by COP21 in Paris. Actors such as Fridays for Future and Extinction Rebellion became central to this new cycle of protest. Fridays for Future (FFF) was born after the student strikes initiated in August 2018 by sixteen-year-old activist Greta Thunberg in front of the Swedish parliament in Stockholm. The movement focused primarily on organizing global climate strikes. Since 2019, FFF has regularly organized global climate strikes in March and September each year, in addition to hundreds of actions led by numerous local groups. In March 2019, the global climate strike brought 1.6 million people to the streets (Wahlström et al. 2019), while in September 2019, 7.6 million demonstrated against climate inaction (de Moor et al. 2020). The overarching goal of Fridays for Future is to combat climate inaction by governments and policymakers. Initially, the movement appeared to be rooted in two main pillars: a profound generational critique against adult inaction and the promotion of science as a tool for addressing climate issues. However, over time, FFF

reconfigured its positions, incorporating the claims of the most vulnerable communities in the Global South and adopting a more overtly anti-capitalist stance than in the past.

Between October and November 2018, the emerging Extinction Rebellion (XR) movement organized a series of actions in London, mobilizing several thousand activists (Farrer, Doyle, and Smith 2023). By 2019, the movement had expanded across 79 countries (Gardner, Carvalho, and Valenstain 2022). Extinction Rebellion pursues three main objectives: ‘Tell the Truth’—to push institutions to communicate the extreme danger that society is facing, the injustices this situation entails, and the urgent political and economic measures that need to be taken. ‘Act Now’—to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025. ‘Decide Together’—to establish Citizens’ Assemblies, selected by lottery, to produce recommendations for parliaments and policymakers. XR’s strategy is based on non-violent civil disobedience, with a particular focus on the practice of mass arrest (Saunders, Doherty, and Hayes 2020). Fridays for Future and Extinction Rebellion have been the most visible actors in the new cycle of climate protests that began in 2018. Yet, this wave of mobilization also encompasses a wide range of other actors. Some emerged directly from the momentum of these protests, such as the A22 Network—which includes groups like Ultima Generazione in Italy and Dernière Rénovation in France—or Youth for Climate, the main actor behind climate strikes in France. Others precede this cycle and come from broader contexts not necessarily rooted in climate activism, including student networks, trade unions, and various civil society organizations.

The failure of transnational climate governance has therefore led to a repositioning of climate mobilization around the state. Although already at COP15 in Copenhagen protesters “protested at the failure of governments to take meaningful, urgent and coordinated policy action to address climate change” (Chatterton et al. 2012, 602), the new cycle of protests has placed even greater emphasis on government inaction and has moved beyond previous mobilization patterns tied to the temporality of international negotiations. According to de Moor et al. (2021), this new cycle of climate activism represents a ‘return to the state,’ with primary demands that governments act decisively to halt climate change. This view is supported by other studies (Farrer et al. 2023; Parks, Porta, and Portos 2023). Parks, della Porta, and Portos (2023) argue that while in the 1990s, with the structuring of transnational climate governance, the environmental movement mainly relied on transnational advocacy as its core strategy, since the 2010s a new phase of activism has emerged that focuses primarily on holding governments accountable. As a result, recent climate mobilizations have called for a shift beyond eco-modernist reforms toward systemic change, demanding that governments take responsibility for addressing the crisis and protecting people (de Moor and Wahlström 2022).

2.4.4 The Ambivalence of Responsibility

This renewed call to the State therefore raises questions about the role of individuals in addressing the climate crisis. As mentioned, solutions based on empowering citizens as agents of ecological transformation have been promoted for decades in Western countries as a central strategy for tackling greenhouse gas emissions and have been supported by segments of the environmental movement (Ollitrault 2008). However, the environmental movement has gradually embraced more radical and counter-hegemonic perspectives, focusing on ideas like climate justice, systemic transformation, and the responsibility of governments and public institutions. These approaches have acted as a counterweight to the strong focus on individual responsibility that has long shaped mainstream environmental policies. However, individual responsibility within the movement appears to play an ambivalent role. Emblematic in this sense is a sentence that is mentioned in Extinction Rebellion Italy's website: "We value making changes to our lifestyle, such as changing our diet, holiday destinations, consumption styles and so on (however, personal responsibility can be overstated and is based, to some extent, on privilege)"⁴. This tension has been reflected in the everyday choices of individual protesters. Do the climate mobilizations that emerged from strikes and civil disobedience actions in 2018 resolve the tension between individual responsibility and state responsibility? The answer remains unclear, particularly in light of data on individual activists.

For example, 'Protest for a Future', the largest study of climate protests conducted during the global strikes of 15 March 2019 and 27 September 2019, shows that a significant percentage of young participants agreed with the statement that 'Stopping climate change must be primarily accomplished through voluntary lifestyle changes by individuals' (de Moor et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019). In contrast, Svensson and Wahlström's study (2021), which used the same database but analyzed open-ended responses to the question 'What should be done to address this issue?' (referring to climate change), found that only 17% of climate strikers in 2019 believed that behavioral changes by individuals should be a primary means of addressing the climate crisis. Instead, 48% of protesters believed the issue should be tackled through a 'top-down' approach, while 13% supported a more radical way of addressing the problem. Other studies indicate that this division still exists, though it is more pronounced when comparing the perspectives of leaders and rank-and-file activists. Marquardt (2020) highlights that while leading figures of FFF in Germany promote ecological modernization discourses—focusing on technology, economic progress, and the regulatory role of the State—rank-and-file protesters advocate for an alternative vision. This example illustrates how

⁴ <https://extinctionrebellion.it/chi-siamo/extinction-rebellion/> (accessed 4 february 2025).

the re-centralization of responsibility on the State creates a contradiction regarding the accountability of protesters for their individual behavior.

But how does this contradiction manifest in practice? Have climate protesters abandoned ecological lifestyles now that their primary concern is urging governments to act? Existing studies indicate they have not. In France, Alexandre et al. (2021) found that while ecological practices are widespread among climate activists, they are more common among active participants than among loose sympathizers who are not actively engaged in protests. Similarly, Zamponi et al. (2022) conducted the largest quantitative study to date on the ecological lifestyles of climate activists, using data collected across 15 European countries. Their findings show a significant adoption of ecological practices, such as boycotting, reducing air travel, changing diets, and reusing objects, among protesters. They also reveal that these practices are associated with a high level of commitment to political action. A survey of 367 climate activists in 66 countries shows that most engage in ecological practices such as limiting waste, conserving energy, and reducing meat consumption (Boucher et al. 2021). Posmek (2023) reveals that German Fridays for Future activists tend to adopt ecological lifestyles to address the normative issue of aligning their support for the cause with changes in individual behaviors. In this way, they maintain an appearance of adherence to ecological norms in certain aspects while deviating from them in others.

However, a segment of the literature, using extensive qualitative analysis, highlights that in the context of recent environmental mobilization, these practices are being questioned. In a study based on interviews with 60 climate strikers and Extinction Rebellion activists aged 11-34, Pickard et al. (2020) show that while younger generations are highly engaged in ethical consumption and political consumerism—such as boycotting and buycotting, recycling, and veganism—they believe these individual behaviors, including electoral participation, are insufficient to halt the climate crisis. Instead, they consider collective non-violent direct action, which they regard as ‘radical,’ to be necessary. Trott (2023), analyzing 16 young activists aged 15-17 from various U.S. cities, argues that unlike climate change education programs that often emphasize ‘small steps’ like individual behavior changes and technological development as solutions, the young interviewees find such approaches inadequate. While they recognize the value of ecological lifestyles, they perceive individual action as insufficient and believe that collective action is necessary for systemic change. These studies on the ambiguity of practices within climate mobilization align with previous findings regarding earlier ecological movements. Kenis (2016), in a study of two organizations—Transition Town and Climate Justice Action in Flanders—highlights a critique of the sustainable consumption paradigm, finding

that individuals collectively engaged in achieving ecological goal do not oppose individual ecological practices *per se* but regard them as self-evident aspects of daily life without assigning them a strategic purpose. In another study, Kenis and Mathijs (2012) explore why environmentally concerned individuals choose either to change their individual lifestyles or to engage in collective action. Their findings show that it is difficult to draw a clear line between these two approaches, as all interviewees who participated in collective action also reported making individual behavioral changes. Moreover, “almost none of the respondents said that they believe that individual behavioral change could make a real contribution to tackle climate change” (Kenis and Mathijs 2012, 51). The authors conclude that climate-conscious individuals “seem to do things in which they do not really believe” (ibid., 51), indicating that those focused on environmental issues generally lack faith in the effectiveness of individual action. Stuart (2022) finds that Extinction Rebellion activists tend to reject the strategic importance of everyday practices, while nonetheless strongly adopting ecological lifestyles in their private lives. They justify these behaviors as motivated by ethical reasons rather than by any expectation of direct impact. Although the existing literature on this topic is not extensive, it highlights that for a segment of activists the core value of individual action is not strategic but moral—an insight I will also demonstrate in detail in the empirical analysis.

2.5 Research Questions

To summarize, the literature shows that in recent history a specific logic of individualized responsibility—linked to an eco-modernist vision that frames ecological issues as solvable through market mechanisms and actors—has emerged within environmental governance. This approach has positioned individuals as key agents tasked with responding to global challenges such as environmental risks through their personal practices. The climate movement initially aligned with this eco-modernist and individualist perspective. However, the failure of transnational climate governance—rooted in this vision—combined with the rise of a climate justice frame within the movement, led new climate mobilizations to emerge in opposition to this technocratic and individualist model, placing state responsibility back at the center of climate action. This shift, however, did not erase the diffusion of ecological practices within the context of climate mobilization. Rather, it raised new questions about their role, value, and meaning for climate activists.

Climate activists find themselves at the center of a contradiction: they are engaged in a movement that assigns responsibility for climate action primarily to governments, yet they have grown up in a context that for decades has promoted the notion that individuals must bear responsibility through their consumption patterns, choices, and lifestyles. This tension is reflected at the individual level,

where a divide emerges between those who see lifestyle transformation as an important form of action and those who question the significance of such efforts in light of the scale and urgency of the climate crisis and the perceived need for collective and political solutions. Against this backdrop, the persistence of everyday ecological practices among climate activists raises significant questions about their underlying determinants and broader implications. Examining how individual climate protesters both engage in and make sense of ecological practices can therefore shed light on this tension—between the critique of personal responsibility and the enduring influence of ecological norms—and reveal a division within the climate movement that has so far been largely overlooked.

Engaging with the studies mentioned above, this research explores how contemporary climate activists relate to everyday ecological practices. My objective is to examine both the material and social dispositions that underlie the adoption of these practices, and to understand the systems of justification that activists employ to sustain them. Everyday life remains the primary space in which activists choose to engage in ecological practices, allocating their time, resources, and energies—but what are the reasons behind these choices? What drives climate protesters to adopt ecological behaviors? To operationalize these inquiries, I pose the following research questions:

RQ1. What are protesters' dispositions related to the adoption of everyday ecological practices?

RQ2. What justifications do protesters deploy when referring to their everyday ecological practices?

Under the term 'Everyday Ecological Practices,' I include a range of practices that individuals adopt in their daily lives for ecological reasons, encompassing various spheres of private life: consumption, renunciation, and production. These practices primarily involve alternative consumption patterns but also extend to diet, waste reduction, and product upcycling, among others.

In this sense, the research object is not entirely new, as previous studies have attempted to analyze ecological practices using a dispositional framework (Carfagna et al. 2014; Kasper 2009). However, my research diverges from these studies in two key ways. First, it focuses specifically on the ecological practices of climate activists—a group in which the consonance or dissonance between belief and action takes on a distinct significance compared to the general population. In fact, as I will illustrate in the following sections, beyond the social dispositions rooted in ordinary social experiences and contexts, my analysis places particular emphasis on those dispositions that emerge directly from the process of activist socialization. Second, in addition to the structural notion that the

habitus—the system of embedded dispositions shaped by socialization processes—determines the emergence of practice, I introduce the element of justification. I analyze how activists critically assess and give meaning to their actions. The goal is to show that individuals who engage in ecological practices draw on a system of justifications to reinforce and sustain their commitments. I aim to unpack these mechanisms of justification, which can be broken down, articulated, and categorized in various ways. Theoretically, my approach combines elements of theory of practice (social dispositions) with reflexive dimensions drawn from theory of action (justifications). It is precisely this articulation between practices and their meanings that lies at the heart of my research.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Theory of practice and theory of action

Therefore, this research aims to explore how ecological practices are adopted and justified by climate movement protesters. These two questions engage with two different theoretical paradigms: one pertaining to the theory of practice and the other to the theory of action. As summarized by Vandenberghe (2016, 109): “action presupposes reflexivity and conscious deliberation about conditions, ends, means and ultimate values, whereas practices are more about the ordinary capabilities and tacit knowledges that allow actors to go through their routines without having to think all the time about how to proceed. Whereas the theory of action presumes that subjects are capable of conscious reflection and deliberation, the theory of practices assumes that agents are driven primarily by internalized dispositions.” My first research question aims to measure how dispositions and incorporations resulting from a given socialization process influence the adoption of practices. Therefore, to answer this first research question, I will mobilize elements from the ‘sociology of dispositions’ (Bourdieu 1990). Conversely, the second research question relies on the critical capacity of actors to become aware of their practices, which are assumed to be reflexive ‘actions’ to which meanings and justifications can be assigned. Here, I enter the realm of the theory of action and specifically from the ‘sociology of justification’ (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Swidler 2001). While the former is the study of underlying factors—often not explicitly conceptualized by the agent—that lead them to act in a certain way, the latter, instead, examines the explanations that the agent provides for their own behaviors. Therefore, my aim is to study which social properties are most closely associated with acting in a certain way and how such action is justified or explained. In other words, I seek to conceive practices first as ‘practices’ and then as ‘actions.’ After examining which social factors are associated with these practices and what reflexive elements underlie them as actions, I will then seek to trace the social dispositions that give rise to these reflexive elements. I assume that

reflexivity does not emerge in a social vacuum, but is instead the expression of internalized social dispositions shaped by lived experience. Therefore, the theoretical framework of my research is thus rooted in critical sociology, and more specifically in the sociology of dispositions, while also drawing on elements from the sociology of justification as well as insights from related fields such as social movement studies and research on critical consumption. In the following sections, I will examine the theoretical foundations on which this study is built.

3.2 Sociology of dispositions

First, this research examines how the adoption of everyday ecological practices (EEPs) is distributed among climate activists and identifies the individual factors most strongly associated with these practices. In addressing the first research question, I draw on specific theoretical frameworks. My approach to understanding and socially situating these ecological practices involves uncovering the underlying social dispositions that drive their adoption. To this end, I engage with the sociology of dispositions.

This paradigm, as exemplified in the work of one of its most prominent figures, Pierre Bourdieu, seeks to explain how social structures reproduce themselves at the micro level through norms that are internalized by individuals. One of Bourdieu's most significant innovations is to demonstrate that tastes, lifestyle preferences, and aesthetic judgments are not neutral, disinterested, or 'Kantian' objects detached from society, nor are they solely interpretable through a psychological lens. Rather, they are socially situated phenomena that can be analyzed through sociology. To explain this process, Bourdieu introduces the concept of habitus.

3.2.1 Habitus

The concept of habitus was already employed by Émile Durkheim (1938), Marcel Mauss (Mauss 2021 [1934]), and Max Weber (Weber 1993 [1922]). It refers to the reproduction of social structures through the habits, practices, and cognitive frameworks individuals use to interpret the world. According to Bourdieu (1990, 53), habitus is a system of "durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them." In other words, individuals do not behave uniformly across different contexts; rather, they act in specific ways because they unconsciously reproduce what they have internalized

through their social experiences. An individual develops a preference for a particular type of art not because the artwork possesses intrinsic qualities of beauty or pleasure, nor because the individual is rationally capable of assessing its attributes. Rather, this preference stems from the social transmission of aesthetic values they have internalized over time. In this sense, an individual's actions, perceptions, and tastes are products of past socialization. Forms of socialization can be ranked in terms of influence. The earliest and most powerful form of socialization occurs within the family and domestic environment, which plays a crucial role in shaping individual behaviors and ways of acting (Bourdieu 1990).

As Philippe Corcuff summarizes, dispositions are “inclinations to perceive, feel, do, and think in a certain way, embedded and internalized—often unconsciously—by each individual through their objective conditions of existence and social trajectory. [They are] durable because, although they may evolve over time, they remain deeply ingrained and tend to resist change, ensuring a degree of continuity in a person's life. [They are] transposable because dispositions acquired in one domain (such as the family) can influence behavior in other spheres (such as professional life). Finally, [they form a] system, as these dispositions tend to interconnect and function as a unified whole.” (Corcuff 2011, 28). Understanding habitus as a system of internalized dispositions allows us to grasp its dual nature as both a product of social structures and a mechanism that reproduces them.

Habitus, therefore, functions as a generative principle for both practices and the classification systems through which individuals interpret those practices. This is why social agents not only engage in certain behaviors but also associate specific practices with particular social positions. Habitus is therefore both a structuring structure, as it determines practices, and a structured structure, since the perceptual schemes it generates are the result of the internalization of social positions (Bourdieu 1977). The practices of an individual appear harmonious and coherent without requiring a conscious effort to maintain consistency. This is why Bourdieu describes habitus not only as a generative principle but also as a unifying force across all practices. One concrete example of this can be found in patterns of consumption, where social class trajectories influence lifestyle choices beyond purely economic factors. For example, income alone does not fully explain the persistence of certain consumption habits in social groups that have become wealthier but continue to consume in the same ways as before. This persistence is primarily driven by habitus. As Bourdieu states: “Since the history of the individual is never anything other than a certain specification of the collective history of his group or class, each individual system of dispositions may be seen as a structural variant of all the other group or class habitus, expressing the difference between trajectories and positions inside or

outside the class” (Bourdieu 1977, 86). The body serves as the primary site of inscription for distinction, reflecting social position through dietary habits, speech patterns, gestures, and movements.

According to Bourdieu, habitus “enables an intelligible and necessary relation to be established between practices and a situation, the meaning of which is produced by the habitus through categories of perception and appreciation that are themselves produced by an observable social condition” (Bourdieu 2010a, 95). In other words, habitus “produces individual and collective practices” (Bourdieu 1990, 54). Furthermore, and this is why habitus and, more broadly, the sociology of dispositions are well suited to my research, habitus “enables practices to be objectively harmonized without any calculation or conscious reference to a norm” (Bourdieu 1990, 58). Thus, by analyzing socialization processes, we can identify the factors that are associated to the adoption of specific practices. This perspective highlights the importance of examining not only early socialization but also how habitus evolves over time in response to new social contexts, such as activism.

Bourdieu states that: “Thus, for example, the habitus acquired in the family underlies the structuring of school experiences (in particular the reception and assimilation of the specifically pedagogic message), and the habitus transformed by schooling, itself diversified, in turn underlies the structuring of all subsequent experiences (e.g. the reception and assimilation of the messages of the culture industry or work experiences), and so on, from restructuring to restructuring.” (Bourdieu 1977, 87). Therefore, although Bourdieu primarily refers to habitus formed in the domestic and familial environment during early socialization, he does not exclude the possibility that other forms of habitus may emerge at later stages. This insight is particularly relevant to my research, as it compels me to consider how habitus may be restructured through later social experiences and how these transformations shape specific practices.

3.2.2 Radical Habitus and Ecological Habitus

Being an activist within a social movement, for example, is one of the secondary socialization experiences that can generate a set of durable and transposable dispositions. Nick Crossley (2002, 2003) has extensively explored how Bourdieusian theory can be applied to social movement studies, specifically analyzing the forms of habitus produced within activist environments. According to Crossley, Bourdieu’s theory of practice is highly valuable for understanding the ways in which activists operate in their daily life, particularly through the concept of habitus, which links structurally situated socialization processes with individual agency. As Crossley (2016) suggests, practices and

protest are inherently interconnected, as seen in experienced activists who shape their lives, families, and jobs around their involvement in movements. However, daily practices can also become a form of protest. Just as family and school socialization shape individuals by instilling norms and practices that they later reproduce in other domains (e.g., cultural choices, consumption habits, daily routines), activists undergo a similar process of socialization upon joining a movement. This socialization process fosters a distinct form of habitus, which Crossley terms “radical habitus”. Like other forms of habitus, radical habitus influences individual choices by shaping their political, personal, and even professional decisions based on the socialization they experience within activist spaces (Crossley 2003). A notable set of studies has explored everyday practices through a dispositionalist lens, particularly in relation to aesthetic and bodily habits (Wade 2011; Walter 1990) within the feminist movement. In my case, the concept of radical habitus is particularly relevant because it can demonstrate how socialization within a movement—through membership, exposure to contentious repertoires, and participation in collective actions—generates dispositions toward radicality that influence the adoption of specific practices in daily life.

Another concept that has been used to bridge practices with activist socialization is that of eco-habitus (or ecological habitus). According to Haluza-Delay (2008), in line with Crossley, environmental movements can generate an ecological habitus that competes with pre-existing habitus shaped by other social fields. Environmental social movements function as “communities of practice”, where activists experiment with ecological practices and internalize them as an ecological habitus, making these practices applicable beyond the realm of social movements. Building on Haluza-Delay, Kasper (2009) expands the notion of ecological habitus to encompass both pro-ecological and anti-ecological behaviors. He proposes a framework for unpacking its components, including habitat, food, energy use, and future orientations. Again, ecological practices do not arise from innate characteristics or external social factors alone, but rather from the reproduction of social and socio-economic dispositions tied to one’s social position. A partially different operationalization—closer to the concept found in Bourdieu’s *Distinction*—is offered by Carfagna et al. (2014). They argue that ecological habitus is essentially an extension of the “legitimate taste” of upper-class individuals with high cultural capital, which has evolved to incorporate “green” values. This interpretation points to Bourdieu’s discussion of “modest taste”, which entails sacrificing immediate desires and pleasures for long-term fulfillment: “The ‘modest’ taste which can defer its gratifications is opposed to the spontaneous materialism of the working classes” (Bourdieu 2010, 176). From this, Carfagna and colleagues derive the idea that the “green taste” of the new bourgeoisie is fundamentally linked to renunciation. However, the authors conclude that eco-habitus, despite being a marker of class

distinction, should not be reduced to neoliberal individualization, since the practices it fosters are inherently collective. The concepts of radical habitus and ecological habitus will play a key role in the empirical analysis of my data. These frameworks allow me to explore how movement socialization influences the adoption of everyday practices, shedding light on the role of dispositions in shaping environmental and activist behaviors.

3.2.3 Dispositions outside Bourdieu's habitus

An attempt to systematize the sociology of dispositions into an analytical framework has been developed by Bernard Lahire (2003). Lahire criticizes Bourdieu for employing the concept of disposition without providing a clear definition. According to Lahire, dispositions emerge from any form of socialization an individual undergoes. Lahire introduces a distinction between: dispositions to believe (beliefs) from dispositions to act. The former would consist in the value system that an individual possesses and can verbalize, while the latter are the factors that can generate a practice. Additionally, he differentiates between strong and weak dispositions, depending on the intensity of the socialization experience that produced them. Whereas Bourdieu conceptualizes habitus as a set of “durable and transposable dispositions,” Lahire proposes a different perspective: habitus is not a monolithic structure, but rather the product of multiple and sometimes conflicting socialization experiences. Furthermore, dispositions are not necessarily durable; they can decay or be lost over time. This implies that individuals possess an intra-individual variety of dispositions, which may even be dissonant with one another. Lahire refers to this intra-individual diversity as “the plural singular” (Lahire 2005). Consequently, dispositions are activated according to circumstances, and their effects vary depending on the context in which an individual operates.

Lahire's theorization of plurality within singularity captures the coexistence of multiple dispositions at the individual level, which may result in internal conflicts and dissonance. However, Lahire's perspective—particularly the idea that individual dispositions produce different effects depending on context—overlooks a fundamental insight from Bourdieu: dispositions serve to reproduce social structures. Here, challenging Lahire's emphasis on intra-individual variation, I argue that the effect of a disposition is most significant at the aggregate level—meaning that a given disposition affects a majority of individuals in a similar way.

To assess this hypothesis, as I will show in chapter 3, I will use regression analysis, which allows me to measure the systematic influence of specific dispositions on practices. I will focus on a set of dispositions emerging from primary socialization (measured through variables such as gender,

educational attainment, subjective class) and activist socialization (measured through variables such as organizational membership and position within the movement). By employing the framework of the sociology of dispositions, I will be able to assess how dispositions shape the distribution of practices within the movement. As a caveat, it should be however mentioned that even according to Bourdieu, habitus does not determine action in a rigid way, but rather it contributes to what he calls a “feel for the game” (Bourdieu 1990, 66). This means that habitus enables individuals to anticipate and navigate the “playing field”, providing them with an orientation and sense of direction, and making certain actions appear reasonable and natural to the individual. By integrating Bourdieu’s sociology of dispositions with concepts radical habitus and ecological habitus and taking into account Lahire’s intra-individual dissonance, in chapter 3 I will explore the social factors that associate with the adoption of ecological practices.

3.3 Sociology of justifications

3.3.1 Motivations, Emotions, Justifications

After identifying the dispositions underlying the adoption of ecological practices, this research seeks to explore the reflexive frameworks and interpretative structures used to justify these practices. In this study, I use the term ‘justifications’ instead of ‘motivations.’ While the two concepts share several points of overlap—many studies on individual practices use the term ‘motivations’ to refer to the reasons people provide for their actions (Howell 2013; Portwood-Stacer 2013)—I consider ‘motivation’ to be tied to the idea that internalized values translate into consciously desired ends, which in turn support the adoption of a particular practice (Vaisey 2009). This perspective frames value, and consequently motivation, as a resource that is mobilized ex-ante to drive action, positioning motivation as the cause of behavior. Justification, on the other hand, is a response formulated ex post. In this regard, Alvarez and Way’s (2016) provide a useful distinction between normative and motivating reasons: “Motivating reasons are the reasons for which we act—the reasons that motivate us. Motivating reasons can thereby explain our actions.” In contrast, normative reasons are those that “supports, or makes a case for, or helps justify, that course of action.” Justifications, therefore, are the reflexive frameworks, arguments, and interpretations that individuals employ in discourse to make sense of their actions. In this sense, justifications function as tools through which individuals legitimize their behavior. They are plural, adaptable, and not mutually exclusive. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) introduce the concept of ‘symmetry’ to highlight that different forms of justification do not adhere to a strict hierarchy or predetermined order but are instead deployed contextually. Swidler (2001) characterizes justifications as ‘cultural repertoires’—fluid resources that

can be interchanged, combined, or intertwined, enabling individuals to navigate diverse situations and debates.

I consider the term justification to be more consistent both with the central question of this research—how do environmental activists relate to everyday ecological practices in a context of mobilization where individual responsibilities are debated?—and with the overall research design. As Vaisey (Vaisey 2009, 1687) argues, “actors are driven primarily by deeply internalized schematic processes [...], yet they are also capable of deliberation and justification [...] when required by the demands of social interaction.” Following Vaisey’s perspective, the in-depth interview method provides limited insight into unconscious processes. It does not necessarily reveal the true underlying reasons behind the adoption of a given practice; rather, it captures the ways in which individuals make sense of their actions. This, in turn, offers a more reliable basis for analysis (Vaisey 2014).

An approach to studying the ways in which individuals assign meaning to their practices comes from research on social movements, particularly from scholars who focus on culture and emotions. Jasper and Polletta (2018, 64) argue that “in the form of both short-run reactions and relatively permanent moral convictions, emotions are what give symbols, narratives, and other carriers of culture their power to move people.” Emotions, therefore, play a crucial role in motivating individuals to act in a certain way. The sociology of emotions has identified various types of emotions and classified them based on different characteristics, such as the temporal dimension in which they emerge or the effects they produce (Jasper 2018). In Jasper’s typology, moral emotions play a particularly significant role. These are emotions that “involve feelings of approval and disapproval based on moral intuitions and principles, as well as the satisfaction we feel when we do the right (or wrong) thing, but also when we feel the right (or wrong) thing, such as compassion for the unfortunate or indignation over injustice” (Jasper 2011, 287). Moral emotions are considered the most enduring emotions and the most effective in triggering collective action. Among them are indignation, disgust, and contempt, as well as self-directed moral judgments such as pride, shame, and guilt. These emotions are particularly relevant to the meaning-making processes associated with the adoption of ecological practices. As will be shown in the empirical chapters, feelings of guilt, along with a sense of alignment with one’s convictions, are frequently cited by activists as motivations for their engagement.

Despite the valuable insights that emotion analysis offers for my research, I prefer to focus on justifications rather than emotions for several reasons. One reason concerns the common interpretation of emotions as something that motivates action. Emotion and motivation share the same

etymological root (*motus*). Many sociologists of emotions, explicitly link emotions to motivation. According to Jasper (2018, 128): “moral emotions [...] operate as individual motivations”. However, this connects to what has already been examined: in this case, emotions appear to be framed as the source of a behavior, whereas my focus is on the ways in which actions are given meaning. Within this framework, “justification” seems a more appropriate term, as it does not necessarily serve as a motivating factor for action but rather reflects an agent’s effort to make sense of and legitimize their behavior—regardless of whether this justification was the initial motivation behind it.

Furthermore, although emotions and justifications partially overlap—as seen in feelings of guilt, coherence, or fulfillment—there are also forms of reflection, awareness, and reasoning that do not strictly fall within the domain of emotions. The concept of justification addresses this issue, as justifications have an amphibious nature, incorporating elements from multiple spheres—not only emotions but also reflexivity, cognition, and morality. Thus, the notion of justification brings together reflections composed of diverse elements, offering a more comprehensive framework for understanding meaning-making processes.

Therefore, I interpret justifications not as motivations or emotions, but as a way of making sense of an action. To illustrate how I gathered these reflections from my interviewees, I provide an example. After asking participants about the ecological practices they follow in their daily lives, I inquired about the reasons behind their choices. This part of the interview typically began with the question: “Do you think these practices are effective in combating climate change?” Only in a few cases did participants respond with an unequivocal “yes.” More commonly, answers were either ambiguous or outright negative, oscillating between acknowledging potential material benefits—such as putting pressure on markets—and recognizing the limitations of individual action, alongside the necessity of government intervention. This was systematically followed by another question: “If they are not effective (or only partially effective), why do you continue to adopt them?” Additional follow-up questions included: “How do you feel when engaging in these practices? And when you don’t? Do you find them personally fulfilling? Why?” At this stage, participants often hesitated, took time to formulate their responses, and occasionally contradicted themselves. In Chapters 5 and 6, I will present the analytical results derived from these data. To better interpret how these justifications interact, I decided to code them separately and adopt a method that allowed me to construct systems of justifications while contextualizing the interviews within these frameworks. For this purpose, I employed Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), a technique that enables the simultaneous examination of associations between multiple variables. The methodological details of this approach

will be outlined in Chapters 3. I will now review some of the different approaches sociology has developed to study justifications—that is, the ways in which individuals make sense of their practices.

3.3.2 The Pragmatic Sociology of Critique

Among the schools of thought that have most extensively reflected on justifications, it is worth mentioning the one known as the “Pragmatic Sociology of Critique”. Under this term the literature tends to cluster together a broad spectrum of sociological paradigms that have in common a critique of Bourdieu’s critical sociology paradigm. In short, we can say with Bénatouïl (1999a, 1999b) that while Bourdieu’s critical sociology has a “naturalist” approach, in the sense that he investigates *what society does to man*, pragmatic sociology explores *what man does*. What an individual does—both in relation to themselves and others—includes the speeches they deliver, the actions they take, and so on. According to pragmatic sociology, there are various types of actions. An action can involve applying a category, justifying oneself, denouncing something, gathering with others, failing to complete an action, and more. By adopting a broad notion of action, pragmatic sociologists avoid reducing one type of action to another—for instance, they refrain from explaining an action solely through statistical causality. Instead, their focus is on the systems of explanation underlying actions. Pragmatic sociologists reject interpretations of human action based on hierarchical ontological frameworks, where higher-level explanations (such as social structure) take precedence over lower-level ones. Instead, they embrace a pluralist approach, recognizing multiple possible explanations without imposing a rigid hierarchy. Rather than identifying causes, pragmatic sociology seeks to uncover symmetries among the various factors influencing an action. This perspective situates itself fully within the theory of action, where the actor engages with the world based on their critical capacity.

Among the most well-known proponents of this research framework is Luc Boltanski, one of Pierre Bourdieu’s closest collaborators—and also one of his critics. In two of his major works, ‘On Critique’ (2011) and ‘On Justification’ (2006) co-authored with Laurent Thévenot, Boltanski explores the key elements of this sociological approach. The primary critique directed at Bourdieu concerns the dual nature of his critical sociological approach, which contains both a descriptive and a normative component. On the one hand, Bourdieu describes how the distribution of different forms of capital and the dispositions internalized by agents shape specific representations, practices, and behaviors that distinguish the dominant from the dominated. On the other hand, his approach is also normative, as he seeks not only to explain but to unveil these relations to dominated agents—who, due to their very domination, are unable to fully grasp their own condition and thus incapable of achieving self-

emancipation. In contrast, Boltanski argues that actors are fully capable of criticizing, evaluating, and reasoning about their social position, power relations, and the choices they make within a given social context. According to Boltanski, actors possess the capacity for self-emancipation (as reflected in the subtitle of his book, *A Sociology of Emancipation*). In essence, Boltanski criticizes Bourdieu for an over-interpretation of conduct, in which social behavior is seen primarily as a function of embedded dispositions (dispositions shaped by *habitus*). This, he argues, neglects the role of uncertainty in decision-making—specifically, the uncertainty actors face when making choices or adopting particular practices. As Boltanski (2011, 43) puts it:

“The main criticism we have made of critical sociology is, briefly put, its overarching character and the distance at which it holds itself from the critical capacities developed by actors in the situations of everyday life. The pragmatic sociology of critique, by contrast, fully acknowledges actors’ critical capacities and the creativity with which they engage in interpretation and action *en situation*. But it nevertheless seems difficult, pursuing this programme, to realize all the ambitions connected with a metacritical orientation. We therefore find ourselves confronted, on the side of critical sociology, with a construct that paves the way for candidly critical possibilities, but furnishes itself with agents subjected to structures that escape them and skips over the critical capacities of actors”

Boltanski’s goal is to understand the reasons and justifications underlying actors’ choices, disentangling them from any form of hetero-direction. In this regard, Boltanski and Thévenot’s work, *On Justification* (2006, 37), serves as a foundational model of pragmatic sociology. The authors emphasize that “people need to justify their actions”, highlighting how individuals are constantly compelled to engage in justification. Agreeing or disagreeing, as well as coordinating with others, is the outcome of an ongoing process of justification. As they argue, “the imperative to justify underlies the possibility of coordinating human behavior” (*ibid.*, 37). Boltanski and Thévenot begin by critiquing how critical sociology and economics interpret behavior (and justification). Critical sociology, they argue, tends to focus on an agent’s social group, seeing action as determined by material dispositions. Economics, on the other hand, interprets behavior through the lens of individual rationality. In contrast, Boltanski and Thévenot propose a different approach: they link forms of justification to principles derived from political philosophy, generalizing these forms and decoupling them from material structures or rationality.

“we propose to explore the relations between the kinds of coordinating efforts people make in ordinary situations, on the one hand, and philosophical constructions of a principle of order and of a common good, on the other. We seek to show that the constraints brought to bear on constructions of order among human beings have just as much to do with political philosophies as with persons who are trying to reach agreement on the practical level, and that the abstract and systematic solutions proposed by the former correspond to the solutions actually adopted by the latter.” (ibid, 65).

These justifications are situational, meaning they emerge at the moment an actor engages with others or with objects. Boltanski and Thévenot identify six ‘polities’ (*cités*⁵ in the original text), which represent six distinct modes of human organization from which different yet symmetrical forms of justification arise. These polities are philosophical constructs—not utopian, as they are rooted in practice, but ideal, as they correspond to six distinct socio-historical experiences. Each polity is derived from a critical reading of a key political-philosophical text (e.g., *The City of God* by Augustine, *The Social Contract* by Rousseau, *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith). These texts are selected because they articulate a specific common higher principle, a guiding concept that governs each *cité* and defines its grandeur, that is, its understanding of the common good.

I do not intend to fully adopt the analytical framework of Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) or Boltanski (2011). Rather, I aim to incorporate some of their insights into my research. Specifically, after measuring the association between dispositions and practices, I analyze activists’ expressions of conscientization through interviews—particularly through questions such as, “Why do you adopt these practices?” These questions allow me to explore protesters’ modes of conscientization, recovering the ideal meanings, justifications, assumptions, and reasons that underpin their choices. According to Thévenot (Thévenot 2000), reintegrating this moral dimension into the analysis of practice is crucial, as it is precisely through this moral element that individuals make sense of their actions and that others interpret their behavior.

3.3.3 Tool Kit Theory

Boltanski and Thévenot’s sociology of justifications offers a useful classification model for understanding the value orders underlying each form of justification. Equally valuable is Swidler’s

⁵ In this sense, it is worth mentioning that in addition to the six polities found by Boltanski and Thévenot, subsequent studies have demonstrated the existence (albeit partial) of a “green polity” (*cité verte*) that is, a regime of justification whose common higher principle is the ecology (Lafaye and Thévenot 1993; Latour 1995).

insight that justifications can be seen as products of cultural tools, selectively drawn from a “tool kit” to respond to specific situations, without necessarily being the result of deliberate reasoning: “To adopt a line of conduct, one needs an image of the kind of world in which one is trying to act, a sense that one can read reasonably accurately [...] how one is doing, and a capacity to choose among alternative lines of action. [...] Action is not determined by one’s values. Rather, action and values are organized to take advantage of cultural competences” (Swidler 1986, 275).

Swidler starts from the idea that the culture we acquire through various socialization experiences is far greater than what we actually use in everyday life (Swidler 2001). Cultural schemas, therefore, are not the driving force behind action but rather the justification given when one chooses to act and seeks to align that action with personal objectives: “Cultural materials are reappropriated in ways that continuously change their meanings as they are adapted to varied lives” (Swidler 2001, 27). It is in the act of debating that repertoires (justifications) emerge, are assembled, and even contradict one another: “In my interviews, for example, people had great difficulty in explaining why they love the people they do” (Swidler 2001, 36). For instance, Swidler identifies two ways in which her interviewees justify love: as a voluntary choice—based on satisfaction, pleasure, and happiness—but also as commitment, something irreplaceable and unique. These seemingly incompatible justifications are used by the same individuals to explain why they love. Moreover, these conflicting perspectives do not contradict each other but rather serve a purpose: they justify a practice that one engages in—or chooses not to. As long as this practical flow functions, there is no need to provide a fully coherent explanation: “The apparent incoherence of their medley of arguments might, from another point of view, be seen as an advantage. If what one wants to do is support and justify a given way of life, having a rich variety of rationales available should strengthen one’s position. If one argument fails, there are plenty of others available” (Swidler 2001, 40-41). Cultural repertoires are thus employed to justify a particular choice in a given situation.

However, Swidler—like Boltanski and Thévenot—does not fully account for how different socialization paths may lead to the selection of distinct cultural repertoires and justifications for the same practice. In this regard, habitus theory can offer valuable insights into understanding how justifications are formed and interconnected.

3.3.4 Justifications in the Theory of Habitus

Bourdieu’s concept of habitus serves as a fundamental principle for understanding the relationship between social conditions and the perception of reality. Habitus, as already mentioned, is both a

structured structure (i.e., shaped by the material conditions of existence) and a structuring structure (i.e., capable of generating practices and perceptual schemas). This means that habitus not only produces and guides individuals' actions but also determines how they perceive and classify the world.

In other words, habitus generates the mental frameworks through which people interpret and evaluate practices, distinguishing, for instance, between what is considered “vulgar” and what is “elevated.” These perceptual schemas are shaped by an individual's social position and reflect class or group distinctions. Consequently, those who possess a certain habitus tend to reproduce the social order to which they belong, both through their actions and their perceptions.

Thus, habitus does not merely generate practices; it also shapes the way individuals perceive those practices, creating a worldview consistent with their social position. Bourdieu's entire body of work is filled with references—both implicit and explicit—to judgment and its critique. His sociology fundamentally aims to challenge Kant's critique of judgment as well as Cartesian rationalism. Judgment—whether aesthetic, political, or otherwise—is not an innate faculty equally distributed among all individuals but is instead shaped by the conditions of existence. This is one of Bourdieu's most fundamental insights: “The propensity and ability to raise interests and experiences to the order of political discourse, to seek coherence in opinions and to integrate one's whole set of attitudes around explicit political principles, in fact depends very closely on educational capital and, secondarily, on overall capital composition, increasing with the relative weight of cultural capital as against economic capital” (Bourdieu 2010, 419).

Although Bourdieu does not explicitly develop a sociology of justification, he consistently explores how individuals and social classes justify their practices, tastes, and positions within the social structure. Bourdieu's analytical power in the realm of perception and justification is particularly evident in his analysis of artistic taste. He highlights how the legitimation of aesthetic preferences, lifestyle choices, and strategies of distinction occurs through forms of justification (which Bourdieu calls “ethics”) that serve to maintain and consolidate social positions. For example, the bourgeoisie justifies its taste for opulence as a form of disavowal of the social world, prioritizing ease and comfort in their choices. This explains the need to purchase original artworks, attend gallery exhibitions, and acquire luxury goods. A case in point is the Parisian lawyer interviewed by Bourdieu, who buys art “because it pleases him at that moment”. Conversely, the dominated fractions of the dominant class, such as intellectuals, justify their ascetic taste—for instance, going to museums, owning

reproductions rather than original artworks, or collecting cultural goods like classic texts—as a way of seeking purity in art and rejecting ostentation and possession. A notable example is a 30-year-old philosophy professor interviewed by Bourdieu who states: “If I contemplate a painting by Poussin or read a Platonic dialogue, that doesn’t imply that I am depriving anyone and that we need to produce as many Poussins and Platos as there are possible beholders or readers”. Finally, the working classes justify their preference for the essential as a way of “making a virtue out of necessity.” Their taste is legitimized as necessary, orderly, clean, devoid of excess, and practical.

These justifications are not mere discourse but reflect the dynamics of symbolic power within social fields, contributing to the legitimation of structural inequalities. Justification, in this sense, is an integral part of the processes of distinction and the reproduction of social hierarchies. However, these are often forms of pre-reflective justification, where individuals align their practices with their social environment without necessarily being aware of the underlying reasons. In some cases—particularly within the middle and upper classes—justifications become explicit and systematized in the form of articulated ethical or political principles. Bourdieu criticizes such explicit justifications, showing that they are often used to rationalize privilege or legitimize social hierarchies.

The approaches examined thus far highlight different aspects of how individuals make sense of their practices. In the case of ecological practices, this reflexivity is particularly relevant, as their significance is often subject to debate. The insights drawn from these theories can be integrated to strengthen the analysis of justifications. As I will explain in the following paragraph, I will attempt to synthesize these elements into a cohesive framework.

3.4 The analysis of justifications

Justification systems, however emerging from a critical reflexive operation, suggest the presence of cultural drivers that are embedded within social dispositions. My hypothesis is that certain profiles characterized by certain social dispositions will support more some forms of justification than others. In other words, even if generated at the level of critical reflection, justifications will be influenced by dispositions.

Therefore I will proceed in three steps. By following the suggestions coming from the sociology of justification, I derive a set of ideal and spurious meanings and I will then be able to see how these meanings are distributed and connected with each other, which form of justification and which meanings intervene most often, with what intensity, etc. For example, the activist who adopts

ecological practices in order to feel good about herself is drawing on ‘coherence’ as justification, while the person who says she is guilty when she fails to adopt all the practices she would like to is drawing on the ‘sense of guilt’, etc. This exercise is useful for understanding how justifications emerge individually. Additionally, since an individual may mobilize multiple justifications—or even contradictory ones—it is important to examine how these justifications associate with one another. Finally, I aim to analyze the extent to which justification systems reflect specific social properties—that is, whether individuals with similar characteristics exhibit similar patterns of justification. The previously mentioned Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) technique is particularly valuable in this regard, as it enables the construction of a justification space in which social variables can be projected. This, in turn, allows for an assessment of how these variables are distributed within that space and how they correlate with specific justification systems.

What I aim to adopt is thus a sociology of dispositions with elements from the sociology of justifications in the field of social movement studies. I seek to understand how the presence of certain forms of socialization (familial, activist, etc.) entails a different way of behaving in everyday life and valuing one’s own action. Through the work on justification, I therefore try to: A) find traces of reflexivity outside the habitus, and B) recalibrate reflexivity in the habitus. The terrain of justification for ecological practices lends itself well to this exercise, because ecological practices require both material dispositions and a willingness to carry them out. For example, weak activist socialization can affect both the frequency with which ecological practices are adopted and the types of reflexive arguments used to justify such conduct. Insights from sociology of justifications help me think about ‘how’ actors justify themselves, but not ‘why’.

So in the end, this empirical process will allow me to make my results robust. This does not imply creating a third paradigm that mixes critical sociology and pragmatic sociology of critique or between theory of practice and theory of action. The use of these two paradigms requires some reflections on the possible criticisms that may arise:

1. my project is aimed at avoiding both the effects of pure “objectivism” i.e., to take as the object of research the external regularities, the laws, the structures that determine the social, without taking into account the critical capacities of the actors of understanding them; and the risks of pure “subjectivism”, i.e., to take as the object of research the consciences and the wills of individuals, disconnected from materiality. However, at this point, a critical sociologist might reproach me with the fact that the way to overcome this problem is already contained within critical sociology. It is the

principle of “objectivity of the subjective” (*objectivité du subjectif*) (Bourdieu 1990). In order to construct the sociological object, Bourdieu on the one hand eliminates epistemological biases (e.g., analyzing the taste through psychoanalysis) and social biases (e.g., rely on the self-analytical capacity of the upper classes to examine their own tastes) and reaches objectivity. On the other hand, he brings actors’ subjectivity back into play, because it is through the way they see the world that the world is also constructed (Bénatouil 1999b). He adopts a method that Corcuff (2011) calls “Structuralist Constructivism”: a junction between the objective and the subjective. Despite this, Bourdieu still assigns a certain primacy to objective structures. On this point I do not diverge from Bourdieu. I differ, however, on another, more empirical point: for a whole set of behaviors, according to Bourdieu, it would be possible “to pass directly from practice to practice without moving through discourse and consciousness” (Bourdieu 1990, 74). My way of proceeding is different: instead of moving from practice to practice, I move from practice to justification and then back to practice.

2. A pragmatic sociologist might criticize me by arguing that my approach (which reintegrates material dispositions and prior socialization experiences into the construction of systems of meaning and justification) still denies full critical capacity to actors who perform certain actions, because ultimately their critical space is defined by dispositions. I agree with this limitation; however, I argue that the exercise of reintegrating dispositions into the construction of meaning systems is useful for understanding them. I believe it is essential to consider a seemingly simple yet crucial point: justifications, value orders, and cultural tools do not emerge in a transcendent realm but are instead the result of processes through which social characteristics—and their underlying divisions—are incorporated. To look only at the mechanism of justification, without knowing the trajectory and past socialization of an individual, would risk idealizing these justifications and depriving them of their actual weight in relation to certain conducts.

4. Contributions to the Literature

This research positions Everyday Ecological Practices within broader political and social dynamics, emphasizing their role in the relationship between individual and collective climate action. Investigating ecological practices within the context of climate mobilization offers a unique advantage: it allows for a critical examination of individualized responsibility-taking theories in a setting where individual responsibility for climate action is debated. This raises key questions: what happens to ecological practices in such a context? Is there a generalized rejection of individual responsibility, or can this phenomenon be socially delineated within specific segments of the

movement? How do activists who reject individual responsibility behave in their private lives? How are ecological practices morally justified? And how is the transgression of such behaviors explained? This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it expands existing research on the relationship between individual and collective action. While social movement studies have largely focused on forms of collective engagement, less attention has been devoted to how climate activism translates into personal and everyday practices. Understanding whether individuals who mobilize politically to demand state intervention also transform their lifestyle allows us to assess whether political engagement extends into the private sphere as a continuum or remains a separate domain. This, in turn, leads to a broader question: why do individuals who believe in the necessity of systemic change dedicate time, resources, and energy to reshaping their daily habits? Given that the individuals under analysis belong—albeit to varying degrees—to the activist sphere, my objective is to understand how these practices are embedded within their broader activist engagement.

A second contribution of this research concerns critical consumption studies. While most studies on ecological practices and critical consumption focus either on the general population—analyzing adoption levels and behavioral determinants on a national scale—or on organizations that employ these practices as tactical repertoires, little research has examined these practices within activist communities more broadly. By situating these practices within the activist sphere, this study sheds light on the social, political, and cultural factors that influence the adoption of ecological practices among climate activists. Moreover, this research explores the role of socialization—both primary (family) and secondary (activism)—in shaping ecological practice. It examines how early socialization and activist engagement interact in influencing ecological dispositions and how these two forms of socialization articulate in shaping individuals' tendencies to engage in environmental practices. This perspective helps deepen our understanding of how environmental commitments are formed and maintained across different life stages.

Another relevant contribution concerns the moral dimensions of ecological engagement within climate mobilization. By analyzing the justifications behind personal ecological practices, this study explores how different moral logics emerge in the context of political activism. Investigating the ethical dimensions of personal and daily commitment within a movement that primarily advocates for systemic change allows us to understand how individuals make sense of their everyday ecological behaviors and what moral frameworks guide or challenge their engagement. This perspective adds nuance to the study of ecological ethics by revealing how activists navigate the tension between individual responsibility and collective political demands. Mapping the connection between specific

social characteristics and the ways in which individuals justify an ecological practice is another contribution of this research.

Additionally, this research addresses an empirical gap by examining post-pandemic climate activism in two non-Anglophone Western European countries, Italy and France. While much of the scholarship on climate mobilization has focused on Anglophone contexts, studies on the evolution of climate activism in these two countries remain limited. By providing an empirical analysis of how climate mobilization has developed in these settings, this research contributes to a broader understanding of the dynamics shaping contemporary climate activism beyond dominant Anglo-American perspectives.

Finally, this research seeks to build a bridge between two sociological approaches—the sociology of dispositions and the sociology of justification—which, although for valid epistemological reasons have rarely engaged in dialogue, share several points of convergence. Their combination can offer new ways of interpreting human practices and the forms of reflexivity that surround them.

Chapter 3. Research design: Methods, Data and Contexts

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the research design of the study. First, I begin with a summary of the research questions. Subsequently, I outline the methodological framework, detailing the application of each research technique, the composition of the dataset, and the statistical and qualitative methods employed in the empirical analysis. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research techniques, aiming to capture both the statistical patterns underlying the adoption of Everyday Ecological Practices (EEPs) and the reflexive insights shaping their justifications. Additionally, I discuss the inherent limitations of the chosen analytical approach and delineate the ethical standards adhered to throughout the research process. Finally, I provide an overview of the historical and socio-political contexts of climate mobilization where data were gathered, in Italy and France—two countries where environmentalism has followed relatively similar trajectories, albeit with distinct differences, particularly concerning the emergence and development of the recent climate movement. While this research does not adopt a strictly comparative design, I will highlight relevant parallels between these two cases to provide a more nuanced understanding of the broader mobilization dynamics.

2. Research design and questions

As discussed in Chapter 2, this research aims to understand how climate activists relate to EEPs. It builds on existing literature that has shown associations between socio-demographic, socio-economic, and political characteristics and the adoption of such practices. However, most of these studies have focused on general population samples. Much less attention has been given to how these practices are adopted within activist populations specifically. Analyzing the adoption of EEPs in the context of climate mobilization is especially relevant, given the movement's emphasis on systemic, collective solutions over individual lifestyle reforms. Although some recent studies have begun to address this object (Alexandre et al. 2021; Boucher et al. 2021; Martiskainen et al. 2020; Posmek 2023; Zamponi et al. 2022), there remains a lack of in-depth research into the social dispositions underlying the adoption of these practices and the meanings attributed to them by activists—particularly in a context where their effectiveness is internally debated. Moreover, little attention has been paid to the role of secondary socialization into activism and its impact on lifestyle choices. Similarly, the justifications activists provide for adopting EEPs have been understudied. Qualitative studies suggest that such practices are often questioned within the environmental movement and that

skepticism exists regarding their strategic value. Instead, these practices are frequently framed in moral rather than strategic terms (Kenis and Mathijs 2012; Stuart 2022). This shift underscores the importance of studying how contemporary activists relate to ecological practices.

Building on this literature, my goal is to examine the material and social dispositions behind the adoption of these practices and to understand the systems of justification activists use to support them. As outlined in the theoretical chapter, my research is guided by the following questions:

RQ1. What are protesters' dispositions related to the adoption of everyday ecological practices?

RQ2. What justifications do protesters deploy when referring to their everyday ecological practices?

To answer these questions, I adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Specifically, I conducted protest surveys and semi-structured in-depth interviews with demonstration participants to capture both statistical patterns in the adoption of EEPs and the reflexive, discursive processes shaping their justifications. This approach allowed me to include a broader range of activist profiles in the study. Protest survey served as the primary method for collecting quantitative data. Despite some inherent limitations, this method enables the collection of information from a diverse array of activist profiles—from highly engaged and organized activists to more occasional participants. It also provides variability in respondents' lifestyle choices and socialization trajectories. For the analysis of survey data, I used regression analysis, to establish associations between variables. Semi-structured interviews served as the main method for collecting data to address the second research question. The qualitative analysis followed an inductive approach, aimed at understanding how activists relate to ecology—and more specifically, to EEPs. This approach allowed for an open-ended exploration of the systems of justification employed by respondents. I first applied Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) to allow justifications to emerge from the participants' narratives. Then, I used Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) to identify patterns and contradictions within their arguments, enabling a visual and relational interpretation of the qualitative data.

Data were collected in two countries—Italy and France—which, while sharing similar environmentalist trajectories, also exhibit notable differences in the emergence and development of

the recent climate movement. Both contexts experienced significant climate mobilization, albeit with differences in the movement's maturity and consolidation. The countries were also selected based on empirical accessibility, including my knowledge of the languages and political cultures, as well as existing connections with activist and research networks in both contexts. The national context is therefore considered as one of several factors in the analysis of socialization processes. Although this research is not designed as a comparative study, relevant parallels between the two cases are highlighted throughout the empirical chapters to offer a more nuanced understanding of mobilization dynamics.

In the following sections, I present the methodological framework of the study, detailing the composition of the dataset and the implementation of each research technique. I also address the limitations of the selected methods and outline the ethical and legal standards that guided the research process. Finally, I offer a socio-historical overview of the contexts in which the research was conducted—Italy and France—tracing the development of ecological mobilizations in both countries and examining the emergence of recent climate movements.

3. Surveying protesters during demonstrations

Protest survey is a data collection method that consists of surveying participants during a protest. It therefore aims to obtain data on individuals at the micro level (Andretta and della Porta 2014). Protest survey has traditionally been little used in social movement studies (Favre, Fillieule, and Mayer 1997). However, over the past two decades it has become an increasingly popular method of gathering information on individuals participating in various social movements (Daphi et al. 2023; della Porta 2009; della Porta et al. 2006; Fisher, Yagatich, and Robertson 2017; Giugni and Grasso 2019; Heaney and Rojas 2011; della Porta et al. 2022; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2012; Walgrave and Rucht 2010). A review of over 50 articles on new climate activism after 2018 reveals that protest survey has become “one of the more common approaches to documenting the climate strikes” (Neas et al 2022). Indeed, the literature presents several studies on the new climate movement conducted through various forms of protest survey (Gaborit 2020; Gaborit et al. 2024; Le Lann et al. 2021; de Moor et al. 2020; Saunders et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019). Protest survey has been used to describe socio-demographic characteristics, repertoires of action, attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and emotions of activists taking part in protest events (Klandermans and Smith 2002; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2012).

Although studies on the general population, such as the European Social Survey (ESS) or the World Values Survey (WVS), include questions on participation in protest actions, these questions are often

formulated in a generic manner, without specifying the type of action taken or the topic of the protest (e.g. the ESS includes the following question: “During the last 12 months, have you taken part in a public demonstration?” with only binary yes/no answers). Furthermore, although such surveys allow to compare those who protest with those who do not protest and thus to understand what distinguishes the former group from the latter (Saunders and Shlomo 2021), often, as Andretta and della Porta (2014) point out, the group of protesters in general population surveys is marginal. Therefore, the protest survey makes it possible to overcome this limitation and collect data on people who are ‘caught in the act of protest’.

Protest surveys make it possible to collect information not only on participants who have experience in protest actions or who are affiliated to a social movement organization, but also on newcomers (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009) or participants who do not belong to any group and who occasionally decide to participate in protest (Klandermans et al. 2014). Research on the new climate movement has shown that these profiles constitute a relevant sector in climate mobilizations (de Moor et al. 2021). While protest survey does not pretend to capture the representativeness of the population that composes a particular social movement (Andretta and della Porta 2014), it nonetheless produces a consistent picture of the population that participated in a certain protest event, located specifically in a place and at a time (Fillieule and Blanchard 2010). Indeed, the protest survey method has the advantage of producing data that offer a certain variety of social profiles and thus offers an advantageous tool for analyzing how different social, political, activist characteristics underlie the adoption of certain practices. Protest survey also allows for the design of questionnaires that answer specific research questions and thus produces better quality data in this respect than other methods (Andretta and della Porta 2014).

I chose this method of data collection because I considered it the most appropriate for addressing my research questions—particularly the first one: “What are the dispositions related to the adoption of everyday ecological practices by climate protesters?” The protest survey allowed me to gather data on the extent to which protesters adopt such practices, while also collecting detailed information on their social, political, and activist backgrounds. It was therefore better suited to the objectives of this study than general population surveys. Moreover, it proved more effective than surveys distributed through social media groups, which often include individuals who sympathize with a movement but do not actively participate. Similarly, it was preferable to distributing the survey via social movement organization networks, which tend to overrepresent highly engaged activists while underrepresenting less involved participants who nonetheless take part in demonstrations.

3.1 The protests

Protest events have multiple configurations and are largely unpredictable: the number of participants, repertoires of action and possible police intervention can produce very different types of protest. Methodological studies have identified several characteristics that protest events must have in order to be more easily examined through the protest survey. They must gather a significant number of people and over a period of time such that random sampling methods can be used. They must be publicized in advance so that the survey protocol can be prepared and employed. They must be sufficiently peaceful and confrontation with the police must be low. Therefore, moving demonstrations and, less frequently, static gatherings are considered suitable for the adoption of a research design that includes the protest survey (Andretta and della Porta 2014; Fillieule and Blanchard 2010; Fisher et al. 2019; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2012; Walgrave and Verhulst 2011).

For my research I conducted surveys at five demonstrations in Italy (September 2021 – March 2022) and six in France (March 2022 – March 2023). All the demonstrations took place after the end of the main Covid-19 pandemic containment measures in both countries. The demonstrations took place in different areas to reflect geographical diversity. They were participated enough to select a random sample of protesters. In addition, the demonstrations were peaceful and announced sufficiently in advance and this made it possible to organize the data collection.

Table 1 shows the main characteristics of the analyzed events. In Italy, the first selected demonstration was the climate strike in Florence organized by Fridays for Future on the occasion of the Climate Global Strike on 24 September 2021, gathering around 5000 demonstrators on the streets according to the organizers (3000 according to the police). The second was the 1 October 2021 climate strike in Milan, organized by Fridays for Future Italia. The event took place as part of the counter-summit organized during the pre-COP, the international preparatory meetings for COP26 to be held in Glasgow in 2021. It was one of the largest post-pandemic climate demonstrations organized in Italy and gathered 50.000 demonstrators according to the organizers (9000 according to the police). Also, during the pre-COP in Milan, another demonstration was promoted the following day by two distinct networks of organizations: the Climate Open Platform⁶, mainly promoted by Fridays for Future

⁶ The Climate Open Platform was created in July 2021 on the initiative of Fridays for Future Milan. The platform was joined by several organisations of the Italian environmental movement such as Legambiente, Greenpeace Italia and WWF

Milan, and the Climate Justice Platform⁷, supported by Extinction Rebellion Italia, territorial collectives and social centers. The demonstration gathered 10.000 demonstrators according to the organizers. The fourth demonstration was the march against the G20 organized in Rome on 30 October 2021, promoted by Fridays for Future Italia and Extinction Rebellion Italia together with other environmental organizations, trade unions and political parties. The demonstration was attended by 10.000 according to the organizers (five thousand according to the police). The fifth Italian demonstration was the global climate strike organized in Naples on 25 March 2022 by Fridays for Future Naples. Around 5000 people attended the protest.

In France, I relied on data collected by the research collective *Quantité Critique* during the ‘Look Up’ climate march. This demonstration took place on 12 March 2022 and was organized in Paris. It was supported by over 450 organizations, including major French climate groups (ANV-COP21, Alternatiba), environmental organizations (Les Amis de la Terre France, Zero Waste), civil society groups (ATTAC, Oxfam France), as well as trade unions and local associations. According to organizers, the march gathered approximately 32.000 participants in Paris (compared to 11.000 reported by the police). This event was the last major climate mobilization in France during the 2022–2023 period, with the exception of the protest in Sainte-Soline in March 2023 against the mega-basin project, which was excluded from the study due to safety concerns. Subsequent ecological demonstrations in Paris and other cities were significantly smaller in scale. The second selected protest was the rally organized in front of the *Académie du Climat* in Paris on the occasion of the global climate strike (23 September 2022) by Fridays for Future France, a new organization born at the beginning of 2022⁸. The rally gathered 300 demonstrators. The third protest event selected was the climate and peace march organized by Youth for Climate in Angers on 24 September 2022 gathering around 200 people. The fourth demonstration was the climate march organized by Youth for Climate on 25 September 2022 in Paris, gathering around 2500 people. The fifth event was the climate strike organized in Nantes for the Global Climate Strike on 3 March 2023. The demonstration was promoted by Youth for Climate Nantes and gathered around 700 participants according to the organizers (300 according to the police). Finally, the last protest was the climate march organized in

Italia, student unions such as Link - Coordinamento universitario and Unione degli Universitari, trade unions such as CGIL, civil society organisations including ARCI and ATTAC

⁷ The Climate Justice Platform was promoted by civil disobedience-oriented climate organisations such as Extinction Rebellion, direct action-oriented climate organisations such as Rise Up 4 Climate Justice, LULU movements including the No TAV movement, social centres, trade unions and some local Fridays for Future collectives.

⁸ Fridays for Future France did not exist in France until the split. The main organisation that promoted climate strikes in France since 2019 took the name ‘Youth for Climate’ as in other countries such as Belgium.

Bordeaux on 4 March 2023 by Youth for Climate Bordeaux which gathered around 400 participants according to the organizers (300 according to the police).

Table 1. Protest survey in Italy and France

Demonstration	Cities	N of participants according to the organisers	N of participants according to the police	N of email addresses	N of respondents (response rate)	N of face-to-face interviews
Climate strike, 24 September 2021	Florence	5000	3000	465	209 (44,95%)	85
Climate strike, 1 October 2021	Milan	50000	9000	660	288 (43,63%)	125
Climate Justice march, 2 October 2021	Milan	10000		711	446 (62,73%)	134
Anti-G20 march, 30 October 2021	Rome	10000	5000	244	115 (47,13%)	42
Climate strike, 25 March 2022	Naples	5000		336	102 (30,35%)	67
Tot Italy				2416	1160 (48,01%)	453
Climate march 'Look up', 12 March 2022	Paris	32000	11000	743	490 (65,94%)	/
Rally <i>Académie du climat</i> , 23 September 2022	Paris	300		203	73 (35,96%)	12
Climate and peace march, 24 September 2022	Angers	200		94	32 (34,04%)	13
Climate march, 25 September 2022	Paris	2500		357	136 (38,1%)	19
Climate Strike, 3 March 2023	Nantes	700	300	181	116 (64,08%)	36
Climate march, Mar. 4 2023	Bordeaux	400	300	157	85 (54,14%)	30
Tot France				1735	932 (53,71%)	110

3.2 The application of the protest survey

There are several ways to set up a protest survey: by administering questionnaires orally or in written form onsite during the mobilization; *post hoc*, that is, by selecting participants during the protest who will respond to the survey in written form once the protest is over; or by mixing these two criteria (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011; Yuen et al. 2022). In the case of this research, I employed the *post hoc* method, selecting participants during the protest events who were subsequently asked to answer an online questionnaire. Face-to-face surveys on portions of the questionnaire were conducted to assess the presence of possible response bias between online respondents and selected participants, as I will specify in the following paragraphs.

To collect the data, I used a variant of the canonical protest survey method (Andretta and della Porta 2014; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2012). The canonical method implies that the person distributing the survey is different from the person selecting the respondents, to limit selection bias (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011). In my case, due to the limited number of interviewers I could recruit, this was not possible. However, to limit this bias, interviewers were instructed to avoid selecting only ‘approachable peers’ (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011, 214). The interviewers entered the protest at different points to cover the entire demonstration and moved from left to right and from bottom to top, selecting every n -th row a protester and asking her to participate in the survey. A similar method for randomizing the selection of the participants is used by Fisher, Yagatich, and Robertson (2017).

Another difference compared to traditional protest survey concerns the distribution of the questionnaires. A large portion of protest surveys are conducted via mail-in questionnaires: interviewers distribute questionnaires to be self-administered and mailed-in by protesters at home (della Porta et al. 2022; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2012; Walgrave and Rucht 2010). Recent variant concerns the use of digital questionnaires that are distributed using flyers containing QR codes (de Moor et al. 2020; Saunders et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019) or include a combination of face-to-face and digital surveys (Yuen et al. 2022). Another variant includes the use of tablets for administering surveys onsite (Fisher 2019). Following a method already experimented by the research collective *Quantité Critique* during French climate protests in 2019 (Gaborit 2020; Lann et al. 2021; Touzet et al. forthcoming), I instead decided to collect email addresses of protesters. E-mails are sensitive data: some people may refuse to provide them, fearing they could be used for spam. However, doing protest survey through emails has two main advantages compared to the canonical protest survey through mails and QR codes: first of all, it allows to send one (or more) reminders to respondents, thus increasing the response rate (Van Mol 2017). The response rate is indeed one of the main problems of the canonical approach, especially with regard to certain types of demonstration: although Walgrave and Verhulst (2011) report generally high response rates (40 percent on average among 22 protests), another study by Walgrave, Wouters, and Ketelaars (2016) on 51 protests in Europe reports a response rate of 36 percent. More recent studies on climate strikes in Europe, conducted using the same method, report much lower response rates of around 20 percent (de Moor et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019). A low response rate was also found by Saunders et al. (2020) in their study on the Extinction Rebellion protests in London in 2019. In contrast, the research collective *Quantité Critique* conducted a series of studies during the climate strikes in France between 2018 and 2019 and, after testing different methods, found that administering an online questionnaire

after collecting e-mails from protesters produces a response rate of around 50 percent (Gaborit 2020; Lann et al. 2021; Touzet et al. forthcoming). Furthermore, to collect email addresses allows to stay in touch with respondents for subsequent follow-up studies or to ask to participate to qualitative interviews. I found both of these aspects very relevant: since I could not recruit many interviewers, through e-mails I was able to compensate for the low response rate that would have been generated if I had used other methods; furthermore, since my research integrates qualitative in-depth interviews into the survey, I could randomly recruit interviewers and ask them to participate in the qualitative phase of the study.

Protesters who refused to provide their e-mail address averaged 14.7 percent in the sum of Italian protests. Although slightly higher, probably because protesters are more likely to refuse to provide their e-mail address than to take a flyer or questionnaire by mail, the number of immediate refusals does not drastically exceed what other studies have found (based on two different sets of protest surveys carried out in Europe, Walgrave and Verhulst (2011) and Walgrave, Wouters, and Ketelaars (2016) registered 10 percent of average immediate refusal to accept a questionnaire).

Each interaction with the protesters lasted between one and two minutes. All respondents were informed about the purposes and conditions of the research, including anonymity and data ownership, before providing their e-mail address. In accordance with current legislation, Italian children under the age of 14, as well as French children under the age of 15 were excluded from the survey⁹. A total of 2416 e-mails among Italian protesters and 1860 among French ones was collected. The e-mails were transferred into Excel spreadsheets and stored in password-protected devices. A first survey invitation was sent using the survey platform of the Scuola Normale Superiore¹⁰. The invitation e-mail was individual: none of the other participants knew the identity of another participant nor could they trace her from the e-mail. The invitation e-mail also contained a link that allowed participants to remove their e-mail from the dataset and not receive subsequent reminders. Both in the invitation e-mail and at the beginning of the survey, after clicking on the link, a consent form appeared containing information about the duration, the processing of the data in anonymous, synthetic and aggregated form, the ownership of the data, the fact that the study was voluntary and the possibility of stopping

⁹ European legislation (art.8 GDPR) allows states to select the age from which a child can be interviewed without parental consent, as long as it is not under 13. In Italy, the threshold is set at 14 years (art. 2-quinques Decreto Legislativo 30 giugno 2003, n.196 recante il “Codice in materia di protezione dei dati personali”) and in France at 15 years (art. 45 Loi n° 78-17 du 6 janvier 1978 relative à l'informatique, aux fichiers et aux libertés)

¹⁰ The survey platform of the Scuola Normale Superiore is based on Limesurvey. Limesurvey is a software for the development of online surveys. During the collection phase, data were stored on servers owned by the Scuola Normale Superiore. At the end of the collection phase, the surveys, e-mails and responses were removed from the platform. All data were processed in accordance with the current European legislation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679).

the survey at any time. A reminder was sent after one week. Survey answers were anonymized to make it impossible to trace respondents from their e-mail address.

A total of 1160 responses (48 percent response rate) were collected among Italian protesters and 932 (53 percent response rate) among French protesters. In Italy, 209 responses were collected during the climate strike in Florence (24 September 2021), 288 during the climate strike in Milan (1 October 2021), 446 during the climate march in Milan (2 October 2021), 115 during the anti G-20 in Rome (30 October 2021), 102 in Naples during the climate strike (25 March 2022). While in France, 490 responses were collected during the 12 March 2022 protest in Paris, 73 during the rally in front of the Académie du Climat (23 September 2022), 32 during the Angers climate march (24 September 2022), 136 during the Paris climate strike (25 September 2022), 116 during the Nantes climate strike (3 March 2023) and 85 during the Bordeaux climate march (4 March 2023).

Following Walgrave and Verhulst (2011), for every five¹¹ people with whom the interviewer interacted, a brief face-to-face survey was conducted including gender and age and in the Italian case also occupation, level of education, membership in organization, number of attended climate protests, left-right self-positioning. The comparison between the two samples of demonstrators permits to measure some possible response biases between the people who actually participated in the demonstration and were selected and people who replied to the self-administered online survey. Following Walgrave and Verhulst (2011) I used Mann Whitney U test, a non-parametric test to check whether two independent samples come from the same distribution. The Mann Whitney U test was used for ordinal variables, while the p-value associated with the Chi-square test was used for categorical variables. A positive sign indicates a positive correlation between the variable and the sample of online respondents compared to the sample of face-to-face respondents. Table 2 synthetises the results of the comparison.

Table 2. Comparison of Face-to-Face and Online surveys

Variable	Florence	Milan climate strike	Milan climate march	Rome	Naples	Paris Rally	Paris Angers	Paris climate strike	Nantes climate strike	Bordeaux climate strike
Gender (1-3) ^a	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Age (years) ^b	***	***	+	ns	***	ns	ns	ns	***	*
Education (1-5) ^b	***	***	+	ns	/	/	/	/	/	/
Occupation (1-5) ^a	ns	***	ns	ns	+	/	/	/	/	/
Member of organisation (1-2) ^b	ns	ns	ns	ns	/	/	/	/	/	/

¹¹ During the Paris rally on 23rd of September and the Paris climate march on 25th of September, face to face survey were conducted only on a segment of the demonstration.

Participation alone (1-2) ^b	ns	ns	+**	ns	ns	/	/	/	/	/
Participation in other climate protests (1-4) ^b	ns	ns	ns	ns	/	/	/	/	/	/
Political self-positioning (1-7) ^a	+**	+***	+***	+***	ns	/	/	/	/	/
N of face-to-face replies	85	125	134	42	67	12	13	19	36	30
N online replies	209	288	446	115	102	73	32	136	116	85

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, ns= not significant, /= missing value).

a: Chi square test. b: Mann Whitney U test.

Gender: “male”, “female”, “other”. Education: “lower-secondary school”, “high school”, “undergraduate”, “graduate”, “PhD”. Occupation: “school student”, “university student”, “worker”, “unemployed”, “retiree”. Member of organisation: “no”, “yes”. Participation alone: “no”, “yes”. Participation in other climate protests: “never”, “once”, “more than one”, “more than five”. Political self-positioning: “radical left”, “left”, “centre”, “right”, “far right”, “neither left nor right”, “I prefer not to answer”.

As confirmed by other studies based on protest survey (Rainsford and Saunders 2021; Saunders and Shlomo 2021; Wahlström and Wennerhag 2016; Walgrave and Verhulst 2011; Walgrave et al. 2016), higher age and higher education are typical factors that lead to a higher probability of responding to the survey. In four out of ten demonstrations, higher age was positively correlated with the probability of responding to the online survey. In the Italian case, higher education was positively associated with response probability in three demonstrations. However, in two cases (Nantes and Bordeaux), an opposite effect was detected: older people tended to respond less to the survey. This was likely due to the fact that these protests occurred during the height of the general mobilizations against pension reform (March 2023). A possible explanation for this effect is that older people participated in the demonstration not out of a specific interest in the climate issue, but as part of the broader protest movement. Indeed, during these two protests, worker unions were highly present. Upon receiving the email invitation to participate in the study—which included terms like ‘climate march’ or ‘climate strike’—they may have considered themselves outside the study’s target audience. Consequently, following Wahlström and Wennerhag (2016), the descriptive results on age, education and occupation should be interpreted with caution. The young, the less educated and students might be underrepresented compared to the people who actually participated in the event and were selected for the study. No tests produced any significant effects with regard to gender. Again, the results follow what has been reported in the literature (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011; Walgrave et al. 2016).

Furthermore, in four Italian protests, online respondents tend to position themselves less to the radical left than in-person respondents. This effect may be explained in these terms: declaring oneself radical left-wing does not lead to greater collaboration with research, perhaps due to a lack of trust in the academic institution, furthermore a segment of those who declare themselves radical leftists in the face-to-face questionnaires then renegotiate this decision when responding to the online survey,

because there is less control on the part of the interviewer. Other significant results are found with regard to some isolated protests: in the case of the march for climate justice in Milan, having participated with someone rather than alone correlates positively with the response to the online questionnaire.

Some studies have tried to provide weighting techniques to solve representativeness problems generated by response bias (Rainsford and Saunders 2021; Saunders and Shlomo 2021). However, following Wahlström and Wennerhag (2016), I decided not to adopt weighting to avoid the risk of further distorting the sample. I will however take these discrepancies into account in the analyses I will provide in the following chapters.

3.3 The questionnaire

Although with some variation between Italy and France, the survey contained 72 questions divided in five blocs: (1) access to the protest and affiliation; (2) repertoires of contention; (3) everyday ecological practices; (4) ideological orientations and values; and (5) socio-demographic characteristics. The English version of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix A.

For the Italian and French versions of the questionnaire, I opted for a word-for-word translation wherever possible, resorting to a strict translation, that is, a translation that retained the semantic meaning while modifying the wording, only in residual cases (Andretta and della Porta 2014, p.315). Most of the questions were taken from previously tested questionnaires. New questions or partial changes in the wording were only added in the absence of satisfactory alternatives.

3.4 Techniques

From an analytical point of view, I used two different set of techniques to analyze the quantitative data. The first set includes descriptive statistics which provide an overview of the dataset composition and the distribution of the adoption of EEPs within the sample. The second set of techniques includes OLS regression and logistic regression analyses. Regression analysis is a statistical method used to estimate the association between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable (Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen 2022). Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression is applied when the dependent variable is continuous, and it estimates the best-fitting linear relationship by minimizing

the sum of squared residuals (errors). This allows us to determine the expected change in the dependent variable for a one-unit increase in an independent variable, holding other factors constant. Logistic regression, on the other hand, is used when the dependent variable is binary. Instead of estimating a direct linear relationship, it models the odds that the dependent variable takes the value of 1 (as opposed to 0) based on changes in the independent variables. All statistical analyses were performed using Stata 14¹². I used regression analysis to explore how specific social characteristics of respondents are associated with the adoption of certain ecological practices. However, I do not interpret regression analysis results as causal effects, but rather as indications of the potential relationships between dispositions and practices. Furthermore, given that the data were collected exclusively from climate protesters participating in demonstrations at specific locations and times, the findings should not be generalized to the broader climate movement.

4. In-depth semi-structured interviews

The second method of data collection that I use is the semi-structured in-depth interview: a method widely used in the study of social movements because it allows the researcher to understand and read the mobilization from the point of view of the participants and thus to discover their experience, their interpretations of reality using their own words (Blee and Taylor 2002; della Porta 2014).

As suggested by Blee and Taylor (2002), this type of interview makes it possible to obtain information on a variety of people who participate in the mobilization but who do not necessarily have a role within the movement (they do not have to be members of an organization or group). Furthermore, this method allows contextualizing the motivations, attitudes, beliefs of movement participants and “understanding how social movement participants make sense of and justify their actions” (Blee and Taylor 2002, 95). Della Porta (2014) specifies that through in-depth interviews, the interviewer focuses on the interviewee’s interpretation of a certain process. Furthermore, interviews are crucial in establishing the importance of dispositional factors such as culture, norms, ethics and perceptions on the interviewee’s actions. Rathbun (2008, 692) argues that often “the researcher already knows about behaviour [...]. It is the motivation that is missing”. In-depth interviews can therefore provide information on how participants motivate and justify certain behavior. In the field of social movements, the applications of in-depth interviews are varied. Among them, one I have taken as a

¹² <https://www.stata.com>

point of reference is the work of Downton and Wehr (1997) on the biographical effects in everyday life of participation in social movements.

I specifically used semi-structured in-depth interview to gather information regarding the militant background of the interviewees and their socio-family context. Through this I was able to identify dispositions from primary and secondary socializations. I was then able to examine the subjective perceptions respondents have of the practices they perform in their daily lives (and in particular their ecological practices), and thus understand what meaning they give to them and how they justify them. Finally, I was able to retrieve information regarding their politicization, their ideological orientation, and the frames they use to understand the climate crisis.

The interview guide was divided into four sections: (1) affiliations/participation/socialization in the movement, (2) everyday ecological practices (including a subsection on justifications for practices), (3) representations of the climate crisis/framework/timeline and (4) socio-biographical details. For each interviewee it was then possible to reconstruct personal background, involvement in the movement, contacts with social movement organizations. The interviewee was then asked to describe their lifestyle, which ecological practices they adopted, when they started and which ones they stopped adopting. The interviewees were then asked if they found their ecological practices effective and to justify why they had adopted them, how they felt about doing so. Similar questions were used also in other studies on ecological behaviors (Kenis and Mathijs 2012). The last part of the interview on the representations of ecology provided information on the frames adopted by the interviewees, their political and ideological positions and their relationship to the temporalities of the crisis. The English version of the interview guide can be found in the Appendix B.

I therefore found the in-depth semi-structured interview method suitable for gathering information to answer my research questions, especially the second one: “What are the belief and justification systems that support the adoption everyday ecological practices for protesters?”

4.1 Taking a position

My point of view was that of the outsider (Blee and Taylor 2002, 97), in the sense that although I had participated in numerous climate protest actions, I was not affiliated with any movement organization nor did I present myself as a movement activist at the time of the interview. This allowed me to conduct the interviews with the aim of discovering new aspects I did not know before and to reflect

on the results without any assumptions or prejudices. Positioning myself on the outside was also a way to allow the interviewee to talk about her daily life and her background without being under pressure from another activist and thus limiting social desirability. Furthermore, unlike many studies conducted through semi-structured interviews, I did not know the interviewees in advance, nor did I select them on the basis of characteristics known in advance. The interview was a way of getting to know the interviewee's story and therefore the guide proved to be appropriate as it allowed me to get to know the individual trajectory of the interviewee, to focus on specific topics and to tailor, while maintaining a basis of comparability, each interview.

4.2 Sampling the participants

Approximately four months after completing the collection of the quantitative materials, I selected a sample of e-mail addresses (approximately 40 percent of addresses) and sent an invitation to participate in the interview. About 3 percent of the invitations generated an appointment for an interview. I conducted a total of 51 interviews (27 interviews with Italian participants and 24 interviews with French participants, the list of interviews can be found in Appendix C). As shown in table 3, 29 women (15 Italian and 14 French) and 22 men (12 Italian and 10 French) were interviewed. The average age of the participants was 31 years among the Italian protesters (44 percent of the Italian interviewees were younger than 26) and 38 years among the French protesters (37 percent of the French protesters were younger than 26). The average duration of the interviews was 83 minutes.

Table 3. Interviews in Italy and France

	N of interviews	Age (average age)	Gender	Length
Italy ¹	27	18-59 (31)	15 W – 12 M	95 minutes
France ²	24	22-68 (38)	14 W – 10 M	70 minutes
Total	51	18-68 (34)	29 W – 22 M	83 minutes

1. As regards Italy, five protesters participated to the Florence climate strike, six to the Milan climate strike, six to the Milan climate justice march, five to the Rome Anti-G20 march, three to the Naples climate strike.

2. As regards France, ten protesters participated to the Paris 'Look Up' climate march, three to the rally in front of the *Académie du Climat*, three to the Paris climate strike, three to the Nantes climate strike, five to the Bordeaux climate march

W: women, M: men

The interviewees were asked to provide explicit approval for the interview after reading the informed consent. The informed consent contained information on the objectives of the research, ownership of the data and the duration of the interview. The informed consent stated that the interview was voluntary and that it was possible to stop participating in the interview at any time, that the data

processing was anonymous and carried out exclusively by the person responsible for the research, that the data would only be used for research purposes, and that the participant's right to confidentiality would be guaranteed during all stages of the research. The informed consent confirmed that no risks were identified in participating in the research, that all notes and recordings were stored in password-protected devices. All interviewees were asked to consent to the audio/video recording of the interview. Only one participant preferred the interview not to be recorded.

The interviews were conducted online, via the opensource video call platform Jitsi.org¹³. Online interviews are an increasingly used tool in social research. They make it possible to talk to participants “anywhere, at any time” (Salmons 2024, 30). Conducting online interviews therefore overcomes geographical obstacles and allows participants dispersed in different locations to be intercepted. Online interviews can also serve to put the respondent at ease “in a familiar, non-threatening environment” (ibid., 30), as she is free to choose the place from which to connect and the time of day she prefers. Especially in the case of interviews concerning everyday life, domesticity or the biographical past, the online interview can be considered an advantage. The online interview certainly also has limitations: some are objective, related to the quality of the Internet connection of both interlocutors and the surrounding noise. Others are subjective, related to the absence of direct contact between interviewer and interviewee, the building of trust with the interlocutor, possible distractions (della Porta 2014) or the lack of observation of non-verbal communication (Salmons 2024).

Despite the limitations and distance structurally linked to the use of a video call platform, conducting the interviews online proved to be a useful tool: since the interviews were conducted a few months after the demonstrations, the protesters who had taken part in the demonstrations had in the meantime changed city, sometimes country. The online tool therefore allowed me to select interviewees without being limited to protesters close to my location. Moreover, interviewees generally responded from their homes. In several cases, this proved beneficial for the collection of information, as the interviewees were able to show me the spaces they lived in, some tools they used to carry out ecological practices (e.g. bathroom water collection tools), books they were reading at the time or other items that triggered topics that turned out to be relevant to the study.

Interviews were conducted in Italian and French. For the transcription, I used Descript¹⁴ a software for automatic transcription of audio files. In transcribing the interviews, I tried to report as faithfully

¹³ <https://meet.jit.si>

¹⁴ <https://www.descript.com>

as possible the words, hesitations and reasoning of the interviewees, preserving pauses, silences and exclamations. I first analyzed the interviews in the original language. I then translated the segments to be quoted directly in the thesis text into English, keeping references to the original wording in this case as well.

4.3 Techniques

The qualitative data were analyzed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) technique (Schreier 2012). QCA is an analysis technique used to examine and reduce qualitative material. The material is segmented into units of analysis and then a code is assigned to each unit, according to a coding framework. Sentences and periods were used as units of analysis. The coding framework I used is shown in the Appendix D. To conduct the QCA, I used MAXQDA¹⁵, a software which allows the same codebook to be activated on multiple documents. The QCA was particularly useful with regard to the justifications associated with ecological practices. Once I assigned a code to each unit of analysis, I adopted two different analytical approaches: on the one hand, a category-based approach, by means of which I was able to map the categories and thus analyze how the different justifications recur most and associate with each other. On the other hand, a case-based approach, in which each respondent corresponded to a ‘case’. In this way, I was able to create a typology of protesters from the practices and justifications adopted. Additionally, I extrapolated and analyzed the quotations from the original material.

Furthermore, once the codes had been assigned to the units of analysis, I transposed the information contained in the interviews in the form of a dataset, so that statistical analysis techniques could be used. I used the Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), a type of geometric data analysis technique that permits to visualize associations between constellations of variables and categories (Hjellbrekke 2018). The MCA was performed using the ‘explor’¹⁶ and ‘GDAtools’¹⁷ packages in R. The purpose of MCA is to place categorical variables in a Cartesian space and to analyze the associations between their categories. Having geometrically defined a cloud of points from the position in space of statistical individuals according to the properties they possess (the categories of each variable), axis 1 of the MCA is the one that maximizes the variance between the points, while axis 2 is the one that maximizes the variance immediately after axis 1. Therefore, MCA is composed

¹⁵ <https://www.maxqda.com>

¹⁶ <https://juba.github.io/explor/>

¹⁷ <https://nicolas-robinette.github.io/GDAtools/index.html>

of the space constructed from the first two axes (or subsequent axes that are selected). As Hjellbrekke (2018, 33) puts it:

“Summed up, two individuals are similar to each other if they tend to “choose” the same values, i.e. categories, across a given set of variables. If they systematically tend to “choose” differently across the active set of variables, they will also be located in opposition to each other in the global space. The same logic applies to the categories. Each category point can be described as a mean point, or a “local” point of gravitation, for all the individuals who have “chosen” the same categories. If two category points are located in proximity to each other, they tend to “catch” the same individuals, or individuals with similar response profiles. Usually, two categories from the same variable will also be mutually excluding. If they are located in proximity to each other in the space, this can be interpreted as an indication of similarity between the individuals who have chosen these two categories, vis-a-vis the other active variables in the analysis.”

The closer the modes are to the center, the more they represent the ideal type of the basic individual. If two modes are close to each other, there is a strong probability that they are related. If two individuals are very close, there is a strong probability that they share many of the same modalities. I used MCA in Chapters 5 and 6. In particular, in Chapter 5, I focused on the space of justifications—namely, the space defined by the two axes of the MCA, where the active variables (those that contribute to the construction of the axes) were the justifications, categorized according to the coding framework and then grouped into eight macro-categories (efficacy, individual responsibility, guilt, exemplarity, preparation, alignment, right, and pleasure). I also added two 'anti-justifications', that is, counter-arguments that reject certain justifications: lack of efficacy and no guilt. In Chapter 5, I provide a more detailed and analytical description of this classification.

However, beyond the active variables, it is possible to project supplementary variables onto this space without influencing the composition of the axes. This makes it possible to conduct additional analyses without altering the core structure of the space. In this way, I was able to reconstruct the ‘space’ of justifications and meanings associated with the adoption of ecological practices, and then project socio-biographical, ideological, and activist contextual characteristics onto this space in order to examine the connections between justifications and these supplementary variables. This operation forms the basis of the analyses described in Chapter 6.

5. The contexts of the mobilization

As mentioned above, I collected data during eleven protest events that took place in Italy and France. While this choice was motivated by empirical considerations—such as my familiarity with the mobilization contexts and the accessibility of the field—Italy and France also present socio-historical characteristics that both connect and distinguish them. The following section therefore begins with a brief historical overview of environmental and climate mobilization in each country, followed by a reflection on the analytical benefits of examining these two contexts.

5.1 The Italian context: between fragmentation and convergence

As in other Western countries, early Italian environmentalism developed through the creation of naturalist societies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Meyer 1995). However, due to the characteristics of Italian society—largely agricultural and with low levels of education—these organizations had limited reach and were primarily active in the northwestern regions of the country (Diani 1995). The first decades of the 20th century witnessed the emergence of the first “proto-environmentalist” mobilizations. One notable example is the popular uprising that erupted in 1933, during Fascism, in the small village of Mori, near Trento, against the Italian Aluminum Company (Sida). Known as the “Vallagarina protest,” after the valley where the industrial plant was built, the mobilization was led primarily by farmers and women, who feared the harmful effects of pollution on agriculture and children. However, these early protests remained localized and unstructured, involving unorganized populations opposing local institutions without forging broader alliances with other collective actors. As a result, they retained a “pre-ecologist” character and never evolved into a more structured environmental movement (Meyer 1995, 39).

After World War II, Italy experienced rapid industrialization and hazardous urbanization spreading across the country, leading to the establishment of conservationist organizations aimed at protecting the landscape and natural environment. However, these organizations remained the domain of small, upper-class circles (Della Seta 2000; Diani 1995). Among these initiatives, Italia Nostra was founded in 1955 with the aim of protecting Italy’s cultural and natural heritage. Another key organization was the Italian Movement for the Protection of Nature (MIPN), established in 1948, which later became part of the Pro Natura Italica federation in 1959. In 1965, the National League against the Destruction of Birds (LENACDU) was created, later renamed the Italian League for the Protection of Birds (LIPU). Finally, in 1966, a group of members of Italia Nostra founded the Italian section of the World

Wildlife Fund (WWF), further expanding the country's environmentalist landscape. Throughout the first two decades after World War II, conservationists functioned primarily as a pressure group, focusing on public awareness and advocacy rather than direct political confrontation. Their efforts were centered on educating citizens and influencing public authorities, while refraining from openly challenging institutions (Lodi and Diani 1988).

The late 1960s saw a rise in political participation and mobilization in Italy, though primarily focused on labor and social issues, with environmental concerns remaining secondary (Tarrow 1989). It was not until the 1970s that the Italian environmental movement transformed into a genuine protest movement, shifting from mere advocacy to active contestation and large-scale mobilization. Environmental mobilizations and health-related protests began to emerge within urban centers and even within factories during this period (Diani 1995). At the beginning of the decade, Western environmentalism experienced a paradigm shift. Many groups and activists broadened their focus, moving beyond the "local" concern of natural landscape destruction to address the "global" challenge posed by pollution resulting from massive industrial expansion (Dalton 1994). The 1972 UN Summit in Stockholm, the first United Nations conference dedicated to ecological issues, became a battleground for ideological disputes within Western environmental movement. Two opposing factions emerged: on one side was the "liberal wing", represented by Arturo Peccei, a founder of the Club of Rome and a strong proponent of *The Limits to Growth* (Meadows, Randers, and Meadows 2013). This perspective attributed environmental degradation primarily to uncontrolled demographic growth. On the other side stood the "left-wing" faction, led by Barry Commoner, who instead argued that the root cause of environmental problems lay in the capitalist accumulation system (Della Seta 2000). These competing interpretations of ecological crises highlighted fundamental tensions within the movement, shaping environmental discourse in the years to come.

This ideological split had a profound impact on the structure of the Italian environmental movement. While conservation organizations aligned themselves with the anthropocentric perspective of the Club of Rome, new radical groups emerged in the public sphere, giving rise to a new current defined as "political ecology" (Diani 1988). Political ecology organizations viewed environmental and labor issues as deeply interconnected. They argued that solutions to pollution required political action and the involvement of collective actors, ranging from civil society groups to political parties and trade unions. The roots of political ecology in Italy lay in the reconfiguration of the political landscape during the 1970s. As industrialization expanded with little regulation and minimal worker oversight, new groups and organizations framed the environmental crisis as a direct consequence of unchecked

industrial growth and the lack of workers' control over production. Unlike conservationists, who primarily focused on raising individual awareness, political ecology actors oriented their efforts toward broader social transformation, seeking structural change rather than merely promoting environmental consciousness (Diani 1995).

A significant source of activists within political ecology organizations came directly from the ecological reconversion of extra-parliamentary 'new left' groups that had emerged in the autumn of 1969 and declined by the late 1970s. The crisis of Marxism and workerism led to what Diani (1988, 78) describes as a "surplus of activism", with former Marxist militants shifting toward the nascent and loosely structured ecological movement, which lacked centralized leadership and rejected bureaucratic structures. One of the key outcomes of this transition was the creation of Legambiente, Italy's largest political ecology organization. Initially established as the environmental branch of ARCI, a vast network of cultural associations linked to the Italian Communist Party (PCI), Legambiente later became an independent organization in 1986. However, while political ecology groups initially embraced a conflictual and antagonistic approach, the structure of political opportunities gradually shaped their trajectory, leading to a de-escalation of direct confrontation. Therefore, political ecology in Italy can be seen as "the product of the institutionalization of the antagonist movements of the 1970s, much more than the nucleus of a new antagonist subject being formed" (Diani 1988, 221).

In addition to conservationism and political ecology, Diani (1988) identifies a third sector within the Italian ecological movement, which he defines as "environmentalism." This sector is characterized by a single-issue focus on ecology and a less radical approach to systemic transformation compared to political ecology, relying instead on direct action. The division between environmentalism and political ecology became evident in the fight against nuclear energy, a significant focal point for the Italian environmental movement in the 1970s. Following the government's 1975 plan to build nuclear power plants in Italy, two main organizations were established. The first was the Lega per l'Energia Alternativa e la Lotta Anti-Nucleare (League for Alternative Energy and the Anti-Nuclear Struggle), which brought together scientists, members of the Radical Party, and activists, and later became the Italian branch of Friends of the Earth. The second was the Comitato per il Controllo Popolare sulle Scelte Energetiche (Committee for Popular Control over Energy Choices), composed of several local antinuclear committees. However, collaboration between these two organizations proved difficult (Diani 1995). At times, different factions of the movement managed to converge, as in the case of the anti-nuclear protests in Montalto di Castro in 1977-78, where thousands of people gathered to oppose

nuclear energy through marches and street blockades. However, these alliances remained limited and fragile, often breaking down due to disagreements over protest methods. Moreover, structural differences between these factions significantly influenced their decision-making processes. Conservationist and environmentalist groups generally operated within bureaucratic, centralized structures, whereas political ecology groups were predominantly informal, grassroots-based organizations.

During the late 1980s, partly due to the crisis of the New Left, membership in environmentalist and political ecology organizations increased significantly. This period also saw greater opportunities for cooperation and debate among different factions of the movement. A resurgence of mobilizations occurred with protests against the installation of nuclear missiles and demonstrations following the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. Additionally, the anti-nuclear front achieved a major victory with the 1987 referenda, which led to the eradication of nuclear energy in Italy. In these cases, the convergence among different factions of the movement was much stronger than in the past, bringing together both conservationist organizations and more radical sectors (Diani 1995).

Italian environmentalism underwent a profound transformation at the beginning of the 1990s. This period coincided with the institutionalization of the movement and the emergence of the Green Lists (*Liste Verdi*). Although the Green Lists had been established in the early 1980s, they gained significant traction in the 1987 legislative elections, securing 2.5% of the vote, 13 deputies, and 2 senators. Their support slightly increased in the 1992 elections, where they obtained 2.8% of the vote, 16 deputies and 4 senators. During this phase, the main environmental organizations became more bureaucratic and shifted their strategy from mobilization to lobbying policymakers (Andretta and Imperatore 2023). The abandonment of contestation and the institutionalization of Italian political ecology (Diani 1995:199; Diani and Forno 2003; della Porta and Diani 2004) should not be interpreted solely as a strategic decision prompted by favorable political circumstances. Rather, it stemmed from a conceptual shift. Political ecology organizations sought to reconcile radical critiques of environmental problems with prognoses based on ecological rationality that remained compatible with the existing economic system (Osti 2007). This transformation is evident in the scientific initiatives promoted by major political ecology organizations such as Legambiente and the Italian branch of Greenpeace. These initiatives were primarily aimed at “guiding” institutions in implementing solutions to pollution and equipping individual citizens with tools to combat environmental degradation at a personal level, without directly challenging the broader economic system.

At the global level, as already showed in Chapter 2, the 1990s marked the triumph of the paradigm of ecological modernization: the 1992 Rio summit and the claim of governability of the climate crisis according to neoliberal mechanisms represent the most incisive example (Mol et al. 2009). The increasing relevance of the climate crisis coincided with a shift in the environmental movement: while the center of gravity of climate decision-making shifted from the national to the transnational arena (i.e the COP system), protest actions increasingly shifted to the local level (Diani and Forno 2003). In Italy, citizen committees assumed the role of promoters of the protest, but this coincided with a lack of coordination at the national level. The fragmentation of citizen protest action was also associated with another factor: the volatility of participation in environmental organizations. While multiple affiliations between activists in the environmental movement and other organizations (particularly cultural, leisure, and volunteer organizations) increased during the 1990s, the time and energy that activists devoted to each organization decreased, thus generating some visible effects of ‘loose activism’, meaning fragmented and uncoordinated participation inside the Italian environmental movement (Diani 1995).

The late 1990s and early 2000s marked a significant turning point in the trajectory of ecological struggles, conducting to a new phase of mobilization and conceptual reframing. As discussed in Chapter 2, the alter-globalization movement played a crucial role in expanding the diagnostic scope of environmental issues, linking them to broader systems of oppression, including classism, patriarchy, and colonialism (Moore 2016). This intersectional perspective reshaped the environmental movement, embedding ecological concerns within a wider framework of social justice. The emergence of the World Social Forum (della Porta and Mosca 2012) provided an important transnational space for cross-movement interactions, allowing environmental activism to merge with new materialist demands. These fora became key sites where activists, scholars, and civil society organizations collectively articulated a more radical critique of global capitalism and its extractivist model, fostering deeper connections between ecological struggles and socio-economic inequalities. A pivotal moment in this transformation occurred in 2009 with the Copenhagen counter-summit at COP15. This event symbolized a stark rupture between traditional environmentalism—often rooted in ecological modernization and reformist approaches—and the more radical, justice-oriented ecological demands emerging from grassroots activism. It was in this context that climate justice rapidly became the dominant framework for the climate movement (Schlosberg and Collins 2014), shifting the focus from purely environmental concerns to an integrated vision of justice that

encompassed historical responsibility, economic inequality, and the disproportionate burden of climate change on marginalized communities.

On the Italian level, the rise of alter-globalization marked an interruption of the process of institutionalization that the environmental movement had undertaken in the previous two decades. Traditional actors such as Legambiente, WWF, and Italia Nostra gradually lost their central role, in favor of informal groups, citizens' committees, and social centers (Andretta and Imperatore 2023). These groups have often played a key role in LULU¹⁸ campaigns, opposing large-scale infrastructure projects and the exploitation of natural areas (della porta et al. 2019; della Porta and Piazza 2007). Therefore, the climate justice movement did not arise in Italy homogeneously, but rather as the coagulation of several LULU campaigns emerged in Italy in the 2000s (like the No Tav, No Trip, No Muos movements, see della Porta and Piazza 2007) opposing new forms of neoliberal governability of territories (Pellizzoni 2014). Although on a local scale, these campaigns addressed the same struggles for social and climate justice of the Copenhagen movement. Territorial mobilization represented the backbone of the Italian environmental movement in the 2010s. The number of conflicts against contested infrastructures increased from 130 in 2004 to 359 in 2017 (Imperatore 2018). Therefore, departing to some extent from a past tradition that largely sidelined protest repertoires (della Porta and Diani 2004), environmental activism in Italy in the 2010s has been primarily localized, demonstrative, and, on average, more disruptive than other forms of protest. At the same time, these actions have faced heightened levels of repression (Andretta and Imperatore 2023).

The emergence of the new wave of climate mobilizations in 2019, following Greta Thunberg's school strike in August 2018, represents a significant step forward for the history of the Italian climate movement. New groups emerged in the Italian ecological sphere with the aim to put pressure on politicians against climate inaction (Zamponi et al. 2019). The main leading actor in the early phase of the new cycle of protest was Fridays for Future Italia (FFF). Born as a convergence of local groups that organized the first Italian climate strike on March 15, 2019, FFF was characterized by a horizontal structure (no leaders or representatives were recognized by the movement until 6 spokespersons were elected by local activists in 2021). Two national assemblies took place in 2019, while a permanent Telegram chat called 'Talk' was established as an executive body, including two representatives for each local group. Different segments entered FFF, including newcomers with no prior experience, student unions and social centers activists. Tens of local groups were created across

¹⁸ Locally Unwanted Land Use

the country, establishing FFF as the central climate actor during this phase. The September 2019 school strike saw an enormous turnout, with one million protesters taking to the streets (della Porta et al. 2020). Meanwhile, also in 2019, the Italian branch of Extinction Rebellion (XR) was founded with the aim of supporting civil disobedience actions.

However, in February 2020, with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the government-imposed lockdown measures disrupted this successful dynamic. Climate activists were forced to change their repertoires of contention. New actions, from digital strikes to bike caravans and petitions, were experimented at this stage. However, these repertoires lacked the contentious elements of the school strikes. Between September 2020 and March 2021, two new climate strikes were launched, but participation was very low.

Despite difficulties in keeping the movement active during the pandemic, due also to the traditionally fragmented and localized nature of Italian environmentalism (Imperatore 2018) and the lack of a strong pre-existing mobilization ground to rely on (Bosi and Zamponi 2019), by September 2021, in the aftermath of the crisis, the Italian climate movement seemed to regain momentum. Thousands of activists returned to the streets during the global climate strike on 24 September 2021, and again during the pre-COP counter-summit in Milan in October 2021 (Cugnata et al. 2024). Behind the resurgence of the protest cycle lies the fact that during the pandemic, despite the decrease in participation, activists from many local groups (from Fridays for Future and Extinction Rebellion especially) managed to keep their groups active even through remote action (Priano 2021). A second reason is the transformation of the movement's narrative. Before the pandemic, the movement primarily framed its identity around generational injustice (Belotti et al. 2022), avoiding convergence with other social actors who could bring more radical claims. Following the Covid-19 crisis, the narrative of climate justice expanded across several sectors of the movement (Christou, Theodorou, and Spyrou 2022), providing new momentum for mobilization.

As a result of this narrative change, a strategic shift has occurred in the Italian climate movement. While in the pre-pandemic phase, the movement's strategy aimed primarily at mobilizing segments of the youth population with no previous experience of activism, in the fall of 2021 the movement tried to mobilize other actors outside the sphere of youth and ecology. During the Milan Pre-COP in October, two networks of organizations were established: the Climate Open Platform, a network coordinated by the local group Fridays for Future Milano, supported by student unions such as the Rete della Conoscenza, from the social centers of the Milan area and other organizations belonging

to the Italian Global Justice Movement constellation, such as ARCI and ATTAC) and the Climate Justice Platform (involving civil disobedience-oriented climate organizations such as Extinction Rebellion, direct action-oriented organizations such as Rise Up 4 Climate Justice, and LULU movements such as the No Tav movement). The creation of these platforms reveals an attempt to extend participation in strikes and marches to other movement actors. The demonstration against the G20 in Rome in October 2021 exemplifies this attempt: while climate actors organized the march, the largest segments of the demonstration were led by students from occupied high schools, social centers, and radical left parties.

In Rome, a convergence appeared for the first time between the climate movement and the GKN factory collective (a collective of workers in Florence who had occupied the factory since July 2021, following the dismissal of 500 workers, see Cini 2023). This alignment persisted in the subsequent months, reaching a peak with the joint Fridays for Future - GKN strike on March 26, 2022, which saw over 25,000 people rallying in Florence. It was followed by a demonstration in Bologna in October 2022 and the climate and feminist strikes of March 2023. The strategic shift has coincided with other tactical changes. In December 2021, A campaign called ‘Ultima Generazione’ (Last Generation) was launched by Extinction Rebellion activists. Unlike localized and specific civil disobedience actions carried out by XR, Ultima Generazione was structured as a permanent nonviolent civil disobedience campaign, with actions taking place in different cities almost every week. In May 2022, Ultima Generazione split from Extinction Rebellion and become the leading actor behind a series of highly visible civil disobedience actions. These include road blockades and acts of “pseudo-vandalism” using washable paint on monuments such as the Senate building in Rome and Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (Zamponi, Ferro, and Cugnata 2023). The reconfiguration of the repertoires is associated with changes in perceived political opportunity structure: Zamponi et al. (2023) illustrate how the movement has had to adapt its strategies in response to the Italian government’s persistent unresponsiveness.

While climate strikes and other demonstrative actions have continued to play a central role, their prevalence has gradually diminished over time. In contrast, civil disobedience tactics—such as blocking roads and engaging in symbolic “pseudo-vandalism” of artworks—have become increasingly prominent. This transformation has also led to shifts in the rhythm of protests and the overall scale of mobilizations. This reconfiguration has also led to repressive implications. Activists from Ultima Generazione were arrested with the charge of damaging an ENI store in Rome in April 2022, while in May, three activists from Fridays for Future Milan were searched by police on

suspicion of tagging Gazprom's local offices. This later phase of the protest cycle is thus marked by new strategical convergences between the climate movement and other non-climate actors and also by the increased tension with institutions and the police.

5.2 The French ecological movement and the resurgence of confrontation

Although proto-environmentalist mobilizations could already be observed in France at the beginning of the 20th century, such as the 1906 protests against the Solvay chemical factory's plan to exploit the calanques of Port-Miou in Cassis, and despite the emergence of various organizations dedicated to protecting natural spaces—including the Association Dauphinoise d'Aménagement de la Montagne (ADAM) in 1906, the Amis de la Forêt de Fontainebleau in 1907, and the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO) in 1912 (Cans 2006)—the French environmental movement only fully developed in the wake of the 1968 student protests. In 1968, the Société Française d'Écologie et d'Évolution was founded by a group of scientists. The following year saw the creation of the Fédération Nationale des Sociétés de Protection de la Nature (FNSPN), which brought together the Société Nationale de Protection de la Nature and the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux; this federation would later be renamed France Nature Environnement. The year 1969 also marked the beginning of the first large-scale environmental mobilizations in France: 300,000 people signed a petition and many participated in demonstrations to protect the Parc National de la Vanoise, the first French national park, established in 1961, which was under threat due to plans for ski slope construction (Bennahmias and Roche 1992).

The 1970s witnessed a predominance of environmental mobilization through protest demonstrations, with a particular focus on the anti-nuclear movement (Touraine et al. 1980). Demonstrations became the main repertoire of action, both due to the close ties between activist groups and as a means to gain legitimacy in addressing emerging issues (Ollitrault 2008). The protests of this decade were characterized by the use of non-violent strategies, such as die-ins and sit-ins. In 1970, the first French anti-nuclear committee, the Comité de Sauvegarde de Fessenheim et de la Plaine du Rhin, was established. In April 1971, Pierre Fournier, an environmental journalist, issued a call for the first anti-nuclear demonstration in France, which took place in Fessenheim, gathering 1500 people. Two months later, in June 1971, another protest was held in Bugey, attracting a significantly larger crowd of 15000 participants. Also in 1971, the Larzac struggle began: in October, Defense Minister Michel Debré announced the expansion of the Larzac military base, located south of the Massif Central, which would result in the expropriation of land belonging to farmers and breeders (Libaert and Pierlot

2015). In response, environmentalists, students, and farmers organized two protests, one in May and another in November, with 1000 and 6000 participants, respectively (Bennahmias and Roche 1992).

The anti-nuclear struggles continued over the next two years, culminating in the mobilization of August 25-26, 1973, when 60000 people marched on Larzac. Among them were environmentalists, anti-nuclear activists, anti-militarists, non-violent activists, socialists, the far left, Christians, anarchists, and both peasant and labor unions (Bennahmias and Roche 1992). The anti-nuclear movement also served as a testing ground for civil disobedience in the French context (Libaert and Pierlot 2015), an approach that would continue to be used in the following decades (Ollitrault 2008). The movement peaked in the mid-1970s, with numerous demonstrations taking place in Gravelines, Paluel, Braud-et-Saint-Louis, Fessenheim, and Paris. Touraine and colleagues (1980) interpreted these mobilizations as the emergence of a new social movement, in which the population opposed the dominant technical rationality that shaped their collective future. However, the rise in mobilization also led to an increase in repression, culminating in armed police intervention during the Creys-Malville protest in 1977. During this violent crackdown, a young activist, Vital Michalon, lost his life, and numerous other protesters were injured (Bennahmias and Roche 1992; Touraine et al. 1980).

Meanwhile, ecologism evolved in multiple directions. There was a theoretical development, with the importation of texts from the Anglo-Saxon world—including works by Carlson, Commoner, Ehrlich, and Thoreau—as well as a rediscovery of French authors such as Charbonneau and Ellul. A strong network of ecological press emerged, with publications such as *Combat Non Violent*, *Agence de Presse Rehabilitation Ecologique* (APRE), *Gueule Ouverte*, and *Le Sauvage*. At the same time, French branches of Anglo-Saxon organizations were established, including WWF (1967), Friends of the Earth (*Les Amis de la Terre*) (1970), and Greenpeace (1977) (Ollitrault 2008). This period also saw the first ecological candidacy in the French presidential elections in 1974, when René Dumont ran and obtained 1.32% of the vote. In 1977, environmentalist municipal electoral lists were introduced, again supported by *Les Amis de la Terre*. In 1979, *Europe Écologie* was founded, supported by various organizations, and in the same year's European elections, it secured 4.4% of the vote (Ollitrault 2008).

In the 1980s, the exodus of activists—a process that had already started in Malville following the violent clashes of 1977—intensified. The movement developed primarily through small groups and decentralized structures, with a significant decline in mass mobilization. Some exceptions remained,

such as the Plogoff protests in 1980 and the Creys-Malville marches between 1983 and 1984, which gathered several thousand demonstrators (Bennahmias and Roche 1992; Ollitrault 2008). From the 1980s onward, French environmentalists increasingly relied on expertise as their main strategy. The counter-expert became a key figure in the ecological mobilization of this phase—an activist with scientific knowledge capable of challenging the state's positions (Florence 1999). This shift was influenced by broader transformations in French civil society, as well as a reconfiguration of the ecological movement itself. Alongside this transformation, another key element emerged: the development of a transnational space for ecological negotiation and governance, which encouraged the use of lobbying tactics—a new approach within French political culture (Ollitrault 2008). After years of relying on direct contestation, environmental organizations sought to integrate into decision-making processes and dialogue with public institutions. This transition was accompanied by stronger electoral performances. In 1984, the two main green lists—Vert-Parti Écologiste and Verts-Confédération Écologiste—merged into a single party: Les Verts-Confédération Écologiste-Parti Écologiste. In the 1989 European elections, the Greens secured 10.6% of the vote and won nine seats in the European Parliament (Bennahmias and Roche 1992).

Therefore, the 1980s and 1990s were marked by a decline in the centrality of mass mobilization, as the environmental movement increasingly adopted more institutionalized forms of action, primarily through electoral politics and expertise-based advocacy. This shift was accompanied by the expansion of public strategies aimed at environmental protection, centered on governing individual behaviors. The goal was to reduce pressure on environmental resources while maintaining economic growth (Dubuisson-Quellier 2016). Within this framework, solutions that focus on transforming individual choices and behaviors became a key priority for various sectors of environmental activism (Ollitrault 2008).

However, the outcomes of this reconfiguration are ambivalent. On the one hand, environmental experts and technical specialists gained legitimacy as partners in the political decisions enacted by the government. On the other, they remained in a position of limited influence, unable to fully advance their own demands. While the French environmental movement of the 1990s increasingly adopted an institutional path, characterized by the development of counter-expertise, engagement with ministries, and growing electoral success (for the first time, Les Verts secured elected representatives in the 1997 legislative elections), a parallel trend emerged. With the rise of the alter-globalization movement, a new wave of environmental and anti-globalization protests gained momentum in France, driven by acts of civil disobedience and symbolic actions.

The 2000s witnessed a revival of protest strategies led by groups such as Confédération Paysanne, Greenpeace, and ATTAC. The Confédération Paysanne was formed through the aggregation of farmers' organizations and segments of the New Left. It was founded on anti-corporatism, internationalism, and anti-capitalism (Fillieule, Agrikoliansky, and Mayer 2004). The organization became known for acts of civil disobedience, such as the dismantling of a McDonald's under construction in Millau in 1999 (Cans 2006). Greenpeace had arrived in France in the 1970s, establishing a highly centralized structure, in contrast to Les Amis de la Terre, whose territorial presence had been waning. Greenpeace achieved particular success in France through its campaign against GMOs, which helped unite a broad coalition beyond the core environmentalist base, including actors from the emerging alter-globalization movement. Greenpeace combined lobbying strategies, already experimented with in the French context, with civil disobedience, symbolic actions, and boycott campaigns (Ollitrault 2008). ATTAC (Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens) was founded in June 1998 and reached 20000 members by 2000. By 2003, it had become a key player in France's alter-globalization protests, leading the counter-summit against the G8 in Évian and later mobilizing mass demonstrations in the Larzac plateau. This action was organized in response to a call from the Confédération Paysanne to protest against the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancún, Mexico.

During the same period, France witnessed a renewal of ecological struggles, both in terms of strategies and ideologies, particularly in the renewed opposition to capitalism (Comby and Dubuisson-Quellier 2023). One phenomenon that gained traction in the late 2000s was the ZADs. These were permanent land occupations aimed not only at blocking large-scale infrastructure projects but also at experimenting with alternative societal models based on antiauthoritarian, democratic, and egalitarian principles, as well as self-management and cooperation (Bulle 2022). The acronym ZAD originally stemmed from the French urban planning term "*zone d'aménagement différé*" a legal mechanism introduced in the 1960s that allowed local authorities, under the prefect's directive, to preemptively expropriate land for major projects. Activists later reappropriated the term, transforming it into "*zone à défendre*" (zone to defend). The first major ZAD emerged in 2008 in response to the Grand-Ouest Airport project in Notre-Dame-des-Landes, near Nantes, an occupation that authorities attempted to evict multiple times. Since then, around 15 other local conflicts have been labeled as ZADs, although they vary widely in scope and nature (Subra 2017). Support committees for the ZADs include alter-globalization organizations such as ATTAC, environmental groups, libertarian activists, and unaffiliated ecologists. ZADs often bring together diverse activist

groups, with varying degrees of experience and local engagement, employing a wide range of protest repertoires, from legal action to civil disobedience (Dechezelles 2023). According to Subra (2017), the emergence of the ZAD movement marks a turning point for both alter-globalization and environmental struggles in France. It signifies a territorialization of the alter-globalization movement and a radicalization of ecological activism. More broadly, it represents the end of the era of negotiation over large infrastructure projects between public authorities, corporations, and civil society, which had characterized France's environmental governance in the 1990s.

The experience of the alter-globalization movement between the late 1990s and the 2000s played a crucial role in weaving a network between environmental activists and other social struggles (Hadden 2015; Ollitrault 2008; Sommier 2003). In France, this experience materialized through the counter-summit held in Paris in 2015 during the COP21 climate negotiations. COP21 represented a major moment of mobilization in France, leading to the emergence of new activist groups in the period leading up to the event, which in turn helped facilitate the organization of a counter-summit alongside the official negotiations. Among these new actors, Alternatiba became one of the most notable examples. Founded in the French Basque Country in 2009, Alternatiba distinguished itself by employing innovative protest repertoires, such as the creation of “*villages des alternatives*” (alternative villages)—spaces designed to experiment with alternative lifestyles, exchange practices, and sustainable consumption models. During COP21 in Paris, a ‘global village of alternatives’ was set up to bring together diverse sectors and social groups, beyond those traditionally involved in alter-globalization and environmental struggles (Brusadelli and Martell 2022). Another organization that emerged in 2015 was Action Non-Violente COP21 (ANV-COP21), which aimed to promote non-violent civil disobedience as a way to increase pressure on climate negotiations. Additionally, activist coalitions were formed, such as Coalition Climat 21, which brought together major social movement organizations involved in the COP21 mobilizations. This coalition coordinated various initiatives as part of the counter-summit, creating a broad-based alliance of environmental and social activists (de Moor, Morena, and Comby 2017).

The Paris Agreement generated mixed reactions within the environmental movement, with some actors supporting the outcome and others criticizing its weak enforcement mechanisms (Morena 2023). The agreement was based on a system that aims to engage stakeholders by generating expectations rather than imposing binding constraints or sanctions in case of non-compliance. However, this approach has diminished the centrality of the COP, which has ceased to be a decisive moment for climate action, shifting attention to other global events (such as the One Planet Summit

and World Economic Forum in Davos). As a result, new forms of protest emerged outside the temporal framework of the COPs (de Moor et al. 2017; Morena 2023).

The new phase of climate mobilizations in France emerged some months earlier than in Italy, in 2018. In France, the climate marches originated following a call to protest published on Facebook at the end of August 2018, leading to demonstrations in multiple cities on Saturday, September 8. In Paris, the protest attracted between 20000 and 50000 people, with organizers aiming to hold large monthly demonstrations. Additional protests took place in October 2018, followed by others in December and January, after the emergence of the Yellow Vest movement (Bendali et al. 2019). These protests were organized by pre-existing environmental organizations that had previously collaborated during the COP21 in Paris, including 350.org, Friends of the Earth, Alternatiba, and the Climate Action Network (Gaborit et al. 2024). The marches of 2018 and early 2019 did not necessarily bring new activists into the movement but rather attracted people with significant experience in associations, political activities, and trade unions. The renewal of the movement occurred following Greta Thunberg's calls to action, which led to the formation of a new organization, Youth for Climate, responsible for organizing climate school strikes. The "March of the Century" on March 15, 2019, reportedly gathered 350000 participants in Paris, followed by another massive strike on September 20, 2019. In France, intergenerational marches and school strikes emerged simultaneously and were closely interconnected. The study by Gaborit et al. (2024) demonstrates strong continuity in the social profiles of participants across both types of protests and cross-cutting differences that shape the movement as a whole.

In 2019, civil disobedience actions take place in France, including the protest at the BlackRock investment fund headquarters in February and the occupation of Pont Sully in Paris in June, organized by Extinction Rebellion. Climate strikes suffered a significant setback with the Covid-19 pandemic, as was the case in other countries, however this decline continued even after containment measures were removed. Civil disobedience actions emerged as a prominent repertoire, including both nonviolent actions —such as throwing washable paint on monuments and disrupting fossil fuel company shareholder meetings carried out by groups like Extinction Rebellion and Dernière Rénovation—and more radical forms of sabotage, like those conducted by Soulèvements de la Terre. These latter actions faced extreme repression by French law enforcement, as exemplified by the case of "Sainte-Soline battle" in March 2023. During this protest, 6000 demonstrators were violently attacked by the police, leaving one protester in a coma (see Nachet 2023).

In this context of reconfiguration of ecological action, a few demonstrations have taken place, such as the “Pour une vrai loi climat” protest, which gathered 110000 people on March 28, 2021, and the march “Look Up” which attracted 32000 participants on March 12, 2022, both in Paris. However, the other climate marches have had significantly lower participation. The climate strikes of September 2022 and March 2023, as mentioned in the section dedicated to the data used in this research, only brought a few hundred activists to the streets. Additionally, three new climate organizations were created in 2022: Dernière Rénovation, already mentioned, is a branch of the A22 network and has followed a trajectory similar to Ultima Generazione, initially as an Extinction Rebellion campaign before becoming an autonomous organization. Soulèvements de la Terre, which has primarily focused on civil disobedience actions, bringing together pre-existing actors such as Confédération Paysanne, among others. Fridays for Future France, launched in September 2022 by former members of Youth for Climate and external activists, aiming to revive weekly climate strikes, though without success. Meanwhile, Youth for Climate, the main organization behind climate strikes, has shifted its approach, increasingly supporting civil disobedience actions.

In the current phase, two strategic logics appear to be emerging: one focused on awareness-raising and sensibilization, and the other centered on political pressure (Comby and Dubuisson-Quellier 2023). This divide also shapes divergences within climate organizations. While some groups continue to prioritize public awareness campaigns, particularly among citizen-driven organizations (Unis pour le Climat, Citoyens pour le Climat, On est Prêt), other associations and collectives (Extinction Rebellion, Youth for Climate, Désobéissance Écolo Paris, ANV-COP21) emphasize the need to reaffirm political conflict, supporting the deployment of more radical forms of civil disobedience (Gaborit 2020). This shift underscores a significant transformation in French climate activism, as the movement increasingly distances itself from the institutional strategies that dominated previous decades.

5.3 Similarities and Differences Between Italy and France

In general terms, the trajectory of the environmental movement in Italy and France follows relatively similar patterns. There are many common features between ecological mobilizations in both countries, such as the presence of internal divisions and occasional convergences among different factions of the movement, the initial reliance on mass mobilization followed by a later phase of institutionalization, the central role of the anti-nuclear struggle in shaping the historical trajectories of both countries, the revival of activism during the alter-globalization movement, and the subsequent

surge of climate-related actions. However, there are key differences that must be highlighted and will also be considered in the interpretation of results in the following chapters.

The first key difference lies in the historical and political context. In France, ecology has been more deeply embedded in the political landscape, with a ‘green’ candidacy emerging as early as the 1970s and maintaining stronger electoral appeal in the following decades. In more recent years, ecology has found an additional political platform beyond the Greens through Jean-Luc Mélenchon’s France Insoumise, further strengthening its political presence. In contrast, in Italy, the electoral pathway for environmental activism developed later and never fully consolidated. Moreover, in Italy, fragmentation and the localized nature of mobilization have been more pronounced than in France. The relative weakness of the Italian environmental movement compared to other European countries had already been analyzed by della Porta and Diani (2004, 73), who observed that the Italian environmental movement “appears quite fragmented.”

The second key distinction involves the focus on climate issues in the two countries in more recent times. Many actors within the French climate movement had already been active since the COP21 summit in Paris in 2015, and some sectors of the movement began employing civil disobedience tactics as early as that occasion (de Moor et al. 2017). By the time the climate marches began, climate-related issues had already gained visibility and legitimacy within the French political sphere. In December 2018, a petition in support of a climate litigation action against the French state, known as “*L’Affaire du Siècle*”, was signed by two million people (Traïni 2022). In contrast, in Italy, the climate issue remained largely peripheral in both societal and political debates (Biancalana and Ladini 2024). It only gained significant attention with the rise of climate strikes and post-2019 civil disobedience actions. Unlike in France, where climate activism could build upon pre-existing organizations and struggles, in Italy, it had to carve out space within a relatively underdeveloped political and social framework. Therefore, the Italian climate movement underwent political maturation at a later stage compared to France.

The third key difference concerns the broader protest landscape in each country (Klandermans 1993). In France, climate protests emerged within an exceptionally dynamic mobilization context. The climate strikes of 2018-2019 coincided with mass protests against the Loi Retraite, led by trade unions and the radical left, as well as with the Gilets Jaunes movement (Le Lann et al. 2021). This pattern of overlapping mobilizations—though not necessarily full convergence—persisted in subsequent years, as seen in the participation of ecological organizations in the protests against the Loi Sécurité Globale

in November 2020 and, later, in the demonstrations against pension reform in 2023. Although the climate movement therefore found itself competing with other forms of mobilization — which helps explain its rapid decline after the pandemic — within this context, it nonetheless appeared particularly receptive to radical tendencies. In contrast, the Italian mobilization landscape was more diluted and fragmented. As previously mentioned, major environmental NGOs had long marginalized protest actions in favor of lobbying strategies (della Porta and Diani 2004), while LULU movements engaged in radical action repertoires at the local level (della porta et al. 2019), adopting climate justice narratives yet remaining highly fragmented (Imperatore 2018). Fridays for Future Italy, the main actor in organizing climate strikes, emerged within this fractured context, initially promoting a message focused on respect for scientific evidence and generational responsibility, without necessarily calling for systemic change. While various protest events unfolded in Italy during the same period as the climate strikes—including the trans-feminist mobilizations of Non Una di Meno and the anti-racist protests of Black Lives Matter—these movements lacked the cohesion and cross-sectoral alliances seen in the French context. As a result, the emergence of the climate movement in Italy was shaped by a structurally fragmented social mobilization landscape (Bosi and Zamponi 2019), while attempts at convergence — for example with the struggle of GKN workers — were pursued at a later stage of the mobilization. Thus, the Italian climate movement lagged behind its French counterpart not only in terms of political maturation, but also in its interaction with other political actors.

Keeping in mind the characteristics of mobilization in both countries can thus enhance and strengthen the interpretation of the data in the following empirical chapters. However, it is important to clarify that this research design does not explicitly follow a comparative approach. The two cases were not selected according to the conventional criteria of comparative research, such as the most-similar or most-different systems design (Della Porta and Keating 2008). The goal is not to identify explanatory factors for a particular outcome by analyzing the similarities or differences between the two countries, but rather to extend the findings to two distinct movement contexts. As previously discussed, both countries have experienced significant climate mobilizations, yet their trajectories have diverged: in France, the movement had already emerged by 2015 and became embedded within a broader and more diverse mobilization landscape, whereas in Italy, it only took shape in 2019, developing within a less structured protest environment. The integration of the two datasets was conceived with the aim of enhancing the robustness of the analysis by providing a larger sample size (N increase) and greater variability in respondent profiles. Comparison, therefore, is not the primary objective of the research but rather a tool for contextualizing the data and assessing the recurrence of certain trends in different

mobilization settings. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the adoption of ecological practices within diverse movement contexts. In the empirical chapters, I will refer to respondents' national background whenever this characteristic proves significant for understanding specific variations in the data analyzed.

Chapter 4. Protesting and Practicing: Patterns of Engagement in Everyday Ecological Practices Among Climate Protesters

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I present the results of a quantitative analysis based on protest surveys conducted during eleven climate mobilizations in Italy and France. The first section outlines the characteristics of the collected samples, with a focus on sociodemographic and political variables. Particular attention is given to responses concerning the adoption of ecological practices in each national context. The second section examines how various factors—such as sociodemographic traits (including country, gender, age, education, and social class), political attitudes (e.g., radicalism, anti-capitalism), and group affiliations (such as organizational membership and prior protest experience)—are associated with different levels of ecological practice adoption. This chapter has two main goals. First, it aims to confirm, as suggested by much of the literature (Gaborit et al. 2024; Martiskainen et al. 2020; Posmek 2023; Zamponi et al. 2022), that ecological practices complement, rather than oppose, collective action within climate movements. Second, it seeks to demonstrate that the adoption of such practices is shaped by specific social dispositions and is not uniformly distributed among participants. In doing so, this chapter lays the groundwork for the qualitative analysis that follows, which will examine how protesters justify and ascribe meaning to their ecological practices, and how these meanings and justifications are influenced by both primary and secondary socialization.

2. Descriptive analysis

2.1 Sociodemographic Characteristics of Climate Protesters

Before analyzing the adoption of ecological practices, it is important to first explore the basic characteristics of the Italian and French samples. After excluding individuals with missing data for gender and age variables, as well as those who did not respond to any of the questions on ecological practices, the final sample sizes are $N = 908$ for Italy and $N = 738$ for France. I begin by examining the sociodemographic characteristics of the samples, including gender, age, education, occupation, family background, and class.

Regarding gender, studies have shown differences in participation across various sectors of environmental movements. Men have generally held leadership roles in political ecology organizations (Dalton 1994; Gottlieb 2005), including in the Italian (Diani 1995) and in the French contexts (Bennahmias and Roche 1992). While women have been more involved in community-based environmental justice initiatives (Stover and Cable 2017; Togami and Staggenborg 2022) and have represented the predominant group in the climate justice movement since the 2000s (Wahlström, Wennerhag, and Rootes 2013). This shift has been interpreted as the effect of their access to intellectual labor and the intersection of the environmental and feminist movements (Togami and Staggenborg 2022). The predominance of women has been reported also by several studies on the new climate mobilizations (Gaborit et al. 2024; de Moor et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019). My data corroborate these findings: women represent the majority of both the Italian and the French samples: in Italy, 57.9% of respondents identify as women, 37.8% as men, and 4.3% as another gender identity. In France, 58.9% identify as women, 38.1% as men, and 3% selected ‘other’ as their gender identity. In four out of eleven demonstrations (Florence, Naples, Nantes, Bordeaux) respondents identifying as women represent over 60% of participants.

However, some notable differences emerge in the age distribution of the two samples: the average age of participants in the French sample is 29.9 years, compared to 28.6 years in the Italian sample. The younger age group (14-18 years) is significantly larger in Italy, comprising 24.3% of the sample, while only 17% of the French sample falls within this age range. The data reveal an overall increase in participant age compared to previous climate marches in 2019, where younger individuals (under 19) constituted the largest cohort (Wahlström et al. 2019). In Italy, those under 25 made up 53% of protesters in March 2019 and 77% in September 2019 (della Porta et al. 2020). In France, 51% of demonstrators in September 2019 were high school students (Quantité Critique 2019). The increasing age of participants is a key feature of the evolving protest cycle (Fisher and Nasrin 2021; Neas, Ward, and Bowman 2022). My findings align with this trend, revealing an aging demographic within climate marches—particularly pronounced in the French sample. This discrepancy between the two countries may be explained by the dynamics of their respective protest cycles. In Italy, following the pandemic, climate strikes regained momentum—largely due to major international events such as Pre-COP21 and the G20—which mobilized thousands of young people in the second half of 2021. In contrast, climate strikes in France experienced a marked decline after the pandemic for two main reasons. First, the French climate movement shifted away from mass marches as a primary mode of action, increasingly favoring civil disobedience tactics—even within groups like Youth for Climate that were previously central to strike mobilizations. Second, since the pandemic, the protest space in France has been dominated by other major mobilizations, particularly the movement against pension reform,

and therefore climate mobilizations remained isolated episodes and failed to reignite broader momentum for school-based climate strikes.

The educational level of the two samples also varies accordingly: in Italy, those with a middle or high school diploma account for 54.3% of the sample, while in France they constitute 30.6%. Undergraduates represent 18.2% in Italy and 26.3% in France, and graduates make up 22% in Italy compared to 25.8% in France. Some differences are also observed in the proportion of PhD holders, with 5% in Italy compared to 7.2% in France.

The occupational status of the two samples is also influenced by this age variation: high school students constitute 10.7% of the French sample and 23.6% of the Italian sample, while university students are more prevalent in France (37.9%) than in Italy (29.3%)¹⁹. Workers are also more present in France (38.4%) compared to Italy (32.2%). Additionally, there is a slightly higher presence of unemployed individuals in France (4.9%) compared to Italy (3.9%), as well as retirees (6% in France versus 3.3% in Italy). As concerns the socio-professional category of respondents²⁰, in both countries, executives and professionals account for the large majority of the sample (60.7%), followed by intermediate professions (23.6% in Italy, 29.8% in France). Employees are the third socio-professional category within both samples (10.7% in Italy, 3.7% in France), while the other categories are residual (workers are respectively 3.9% in Italy and 1.8% in France; artisans and shopkeepers are 1.1% in Italy and 3.7% in France, farmers are 0.4% in France and they are not present in the Italian sample).

A substantial difference emerges regarding the professions of the parents of the respondents. To ensure demographic homogeneity, the analysis of parental occupations considers the sample segment aged 25 years or younger (N=414 Italy, N=397 France). Among Italian respondents, 38.2% reported having a father and 30.3% a mother in the category of executives or professionals. In France, these figures rise to 54.7% for fathers and 44.3% for mothers, confirming the trend highlighted in the literature that climate marches in France tend to attract young people from higher socio-professional backgrounds (Gaborit et al. 2024). Intermediate professions are similarly represented between countries: 14.7% of fathers and 22.5% of mothers in Italy, compared to 16.9% of fathers and 24.2%

¹⁹ Among university students surveyed (N=265 in Italy and N=274 in France), 15.5% of Italians and 27.7% of French students receive a scholarship. Additionally, 36.6% of Italian students work while studying, similar to the 37.5% of French students.

²⁰ Participants were asked to provide the full occupation of their fathers, which was subsequently recoded based on the INSEE socio-professional classification. This classification was chosen as it better captures the public/private employment divide (Pierru and Spire 2008). However, I also recoded the occupations using the international ISCO 08 classification, and the correspondence between the two samples remains consistent.

of mothers in France. Among employed workers, Italy shows higher shares for both fathers (16.9%) and mothers (27.2%), while in France the figures are lower (7.8% fathers, 17.6% mothers). Manual workers are reported for 12.8% of fathers and 2.6% of mothers in Italy, compared to 5.3% of fathers and 0.7% of mothers in France. Artisans and shopkeepers account for 11.6% of fathers and 4.5% of mothers in Italy, compared to 9.8% of fathers and 6.6% of mothers in France. Agricultural workers are marginal: fathers represent 0.5% in Italy and 1.8% in France; no mothers are reported in this category in Italy, and only 0.2% in France. Finally, inactive parents are more frequent in Italy (fathers 5.3%, mothers 13%) compared to France (fathers 3.8%, mothers 6.4%).

A significant difference exists between the two samples concerning subjective class perception. Among Italian protesters, 24.6% identify as belonging to the upper or upper-middle class, while 43.9% identify as lower-middle class and 11.3% as working/popular classes. In contrast, in France, respondents identifying as part of the upper or upper-middle classes constitute 67.6%, whereas only 19.5% identify as lower-middle class and 6% as working/popular classes. No main differences are appearing in the two samples concerning those who do not identify with any class (3.2% in Italy, 2.6% in France). Contrary to what one might expect based on these subjective class perceptions, no significant differences are observed between respondents who report experiencing economic difficulties during the month (25.9% in Italy, 23.6% in France). In both cases, they represent approximately one-quarter of the respondents. These findings regarding employment, class, and economic difficulties challenge the notion that climate mobilizations are composed solely of the more privileged social sectors. While the working classes remain underrepresented, these analyses support existing literature that emphasizes the social heterogeneity within climate mobilizations (Gaborit et al. 2024; della Porta and Portos 2021).

Protesters in both countries are predominantly urban. Most report having been raised in a big city (34.7% in Italy, 27% in France) or in the suburbs of a big city (12.4% in Italy, 27% in France). A significant portion also indicates they grew up in a small town (25.1% in Italy, 18.4% in France) or a village (23.4% in Italy, 17.1% in France). Additionally, 4.1% of participants in Italy and 7.1% in France report growing up on a farm or in a rural area.

In conclusion, the examination of these sociodemographic characteristics provides a portrait of the Italian and French samples of climate protesters examined. These are relatively young individuals (though not the youngest as in the early phase of the mobilization), predominantly identifying as women, possessing a relatively high level of education, and coming from urban middle- to upper-

middle social classes. However, despite some social disparities between the Italian and French cases, they do not necessarily belong to the most privileged segments of the population.

2.2 Political orientation and values

I now turn the attention to the analysis of the political characteristics of respondents involved in this study. Firstly, I consider the ideological self-placement of the respondents. On a spectrum ranging from ‘radical left’ to ‘far-right’, with a category for ‘neither left nor right’, a notable similarity emerges between the two samples. Among the Italian respondents, 33.3% identify as radical left and 47.7% as left (a total of 81%), whereas French respondents report 39% as radical left and 47% as left (totaling 86%). The proportion of respondents identifying as centrist is small in both samples (2.3% in Italy and 4.7% in France), with an even smaller percentage identifying as right-wing or far-right (0.6% in Italy and 0.5% in France). The proportions of respondents identifying as ‘neither left nor right’ are also relatively small across the two countries, though they are higher in Italy (6.8%) than in France (3.9%). A slightly higher number of Italians prefer not to respond to this question (9.2% compared to 1.4% among the French). In general terms, trends are quite similar in both countries, though the French sample appears to exhibit a more pronounced radical inclination and a greater tendency to identify with specific political categories compared to the Italian sample. Comparing these results with the 2019 climate protests, which were nonetheless characterized by the presence of a significant majority of left-leaning demonstrators (66% of European climate protesters self-identified as radical left or left in 2019, see Svensson and Wahlström 2021), data corroborate a trend toward ideological radicalization among protesters (Gaborit 2020) as the cycle of protests has progressed (Andretta and Imperatore 2023; Zamponi et al. 2023). A second ideological aspect that emerges in both samples is the tendency to favor an exit from capitalism. Respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, “to solve the climate crisis, it is necessary to exit capitalism”, comprise 85.8% of the Italian sample and 86.6% of the French sample. This suggests that the idea of systemic change, including in its economic form, is now broadly shared within the mobilization.

When considering the emotions related to climate crisis, both Italian and French protesters express significant levels of anger (94.5% and 87.4%, respectively), anxiety (75.8% and 74.3%), fear (69.4% and 69%), and feelings of powerlessness (75.6% and 63.6%). Optimism is notably low, with only 23.1% of Italians and 16.5% of French respondents expressing a positive expectation. Italians also exhibit relatively more confidence regarding potential solutions to the climate crisis, with 40.4%

agreeing that “technological innovations will solve the environmental crisis” compared to 21.2% of French respondents.

A significant difference emerges between the Italian and French samples regarding the strategic importance of lifestyle change in combating climate change. Indicators reveal that respondents from the Italian sample are more inclined to view lifestyle change as a strategic act. For instance, 66.5% of Italians agree with the statement, “stopping climate change must primarily be accomplished through voluntary lifestyle change”, compared to only 33.8% of French respondents.²¹ These findings underscore a stronger belief among Italians in personal responsibility regarding climate issues. However, when asked whether “demonstrating without changing one’s lifestyle is useless”, both 73.6% of Italians and 62.5% of French respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Thus, while there is a distinction between Italian and French respondents vis-à-vis the strategic weight of individual practices to solve the crisis, they both largely manifest a will to change their own individual lifestyle.

In summary, the descriptive statistics reveal a mobilization strongly aligned with the left in both countries, with a notable distinction between radical and moderate positions within the left. Both Italians and French respondents express profound emotional responses—such as anger, fear, and anxiety—toward the climate crisis. However, Italians demonstrate relatively greater confidence in technological innovation, in contrast to their French counterparts. Furthermore, Italians place greater strategic importance on lifestyle changes as a solution to climate change than the French, underscoring differing views on the roles of individual and collective action in environmental activism. The impact of these perspectives on the actual adoption of ecological practices will be analyzed in the second part of the chapter. Before, I turn to analyzing the ‘activism experience’ of the respondents.

2.3 Pathways into Activism: Levels of engagement and activism experience

By activism experience, I refer to a range of factors—including previous participation in protest actions, membership in groups or organizations, and the adoption of specific repertoires of action—that help define a protester’s position within the movement.

²¹ This question was administered during two surveys conducted in Nantes and Bordeaux, with a total sample size of N=151. Additionally, the French questionnaire included a supplementary question: “For the following statements, can you tell us if you ‘strongly agree’, ‘somewhat agree’, ‘somewhat disagree’, or ‘strongly disagree’: Climate change is primarily the result of poor individual choices.” Only 13.8% of the entire French sample (N=704) responded that they agree or strongly agree with this assertion. Furthermore, the correlation between the two variables (recoded as binary) in the segment of the sample where both were measured (N=150) is very strong, with a Cramér’s V of 0.6145.

Overall, there are no significant differences between the Italian and French samples concerning participation in previous climate mobilizations. The percentage of first-time protesters, those participating in a climate march for the first time, stands at 18.6% in Italy and 18.2% in France. Respondents who had participated only once in climate marches make up 19.7% of the Italian sample and 15.3% of the French sample. Those who had attended more than one protest represent 38.6% of the Italian respondents and 37.8% of the French respondents. A slight difference emerges in the more experienced categories, with over five protest actions, where Italians account for 24.6% and the French for 28.1%. Similarly, small differences are found among those who had never participated in protests outside of climate-related issues (16.6% in Italy and 23.4% in France). These numbers are particularly striking when compared to existing literature on the 2019 climate strikes, which indicated that 38% of participants in March 2019 were first-time protesters, particularly students (Wahlström et al. 2019). This result can be interpreted in two ways: on one hand, climate protesters appear to have matured through progressive participation in demonstrations, so it is natural to find participants in the 2021-2023 protests who first joined in 2018-19. On the other hand, it is important to consider the potential influence of the protest cycle's evolution (Zamponi et al. 2023), which may have drawn more experienced activists to the climate cause, including those already engaged in other social movements, rather than newer, less experienced protesters.

In terms of group membership, the French sample has a notably higher proportion of respondents affiliated with collective organizations. Only about a quarter of French participants (25.8%) are unaffiliated with any organization, a significantly lower percentage than their Italian counterparts, where 46.6% are not affiliated. This difference likely reflects the distinct protest dynamics in the two countries. In Italy, protests were primarily organized as climate strikes focused on mobilizing school and university students, who were not necessarily linked through organizational networks. Consequently, Italian participants, despite their protest experience, were often unaffiliated with formal organizations. In contrast, France aimed to broaden participation in climate protests beyond students, drawing more active members from diverse groups. This is reflected in the higher levels of membership in various types of organizations in France. For instance, union membership is more common in France (9.6%) compared to Italy (5.8%), as is party affiliation (15.7% in France vs. 6.3% in Italy), membership in feminist organizations (6.2% in France vs. 2.5% in Italy), cultural organizations (15.3% in France vs. 9% in Italy) and environmental, ecological, or animal rights groups (32.6% in France vs. 30.6% in Italy).

The difference in willingness to engage in activism between Italy and France is particularly evident in the types of actions that demonstrators have undertaken and their stated inclinations toward them. French respondents report higher levels of participation in both consensual actions—such as contacting a politician (35.3% in France²² vs. 19.6% in Italy) and signing petitions (92.9%²³ vs. 72.5%)—and contentious actions, including confronting the police (10.2% vs. 8%) and engaging in violent protest (4.1% vs. 1%). However, Italian respondents show higher engagement in other forms of activism, such as donating to organizations (23.5% vs. 13.1%) and participating in direct actions (30.2% vs. 26.3%²⁴). Overall, French demonstrators tend to engage in a wider range of actions, including less consensual ones.

The overview of activists' experiences and repertoires reveals two highly active mobilizations, with participants showing extensive involvement — both in previous climate protests and in other forms of collective action — through organizational affiliations and diverse tactical engagement. Some key differences between the two samples emerge. In Italy, participants tend to have considerable protest experience but are less embedded in formal organizations. They also report less direct experience with certain protest repertoires, compared to their French counterparts. Conversely, the French sample includes a larger proportion of highly experienced activists who have participated in multiple demonstrations. About three-quarters of the French respondents are affiliated with organizations, and they report broader experience across a wider range of protest tactics.

2.4 Everyday Ecology in Action: How Italian and French protesters integrate ecological practices into daily life

Having described the socio-demographic, political, and activist characteristics of the two samples, I now turn to the everyday ecological practices (EEPs) adopted by the protesters, which constitute the core focus of this study. The practices surveyed in both questionnaires cover a range of domains, primarily related to consumption, but also include practices of renunciation and self-production. Given that the practices were originally measured using various response formats (some based on

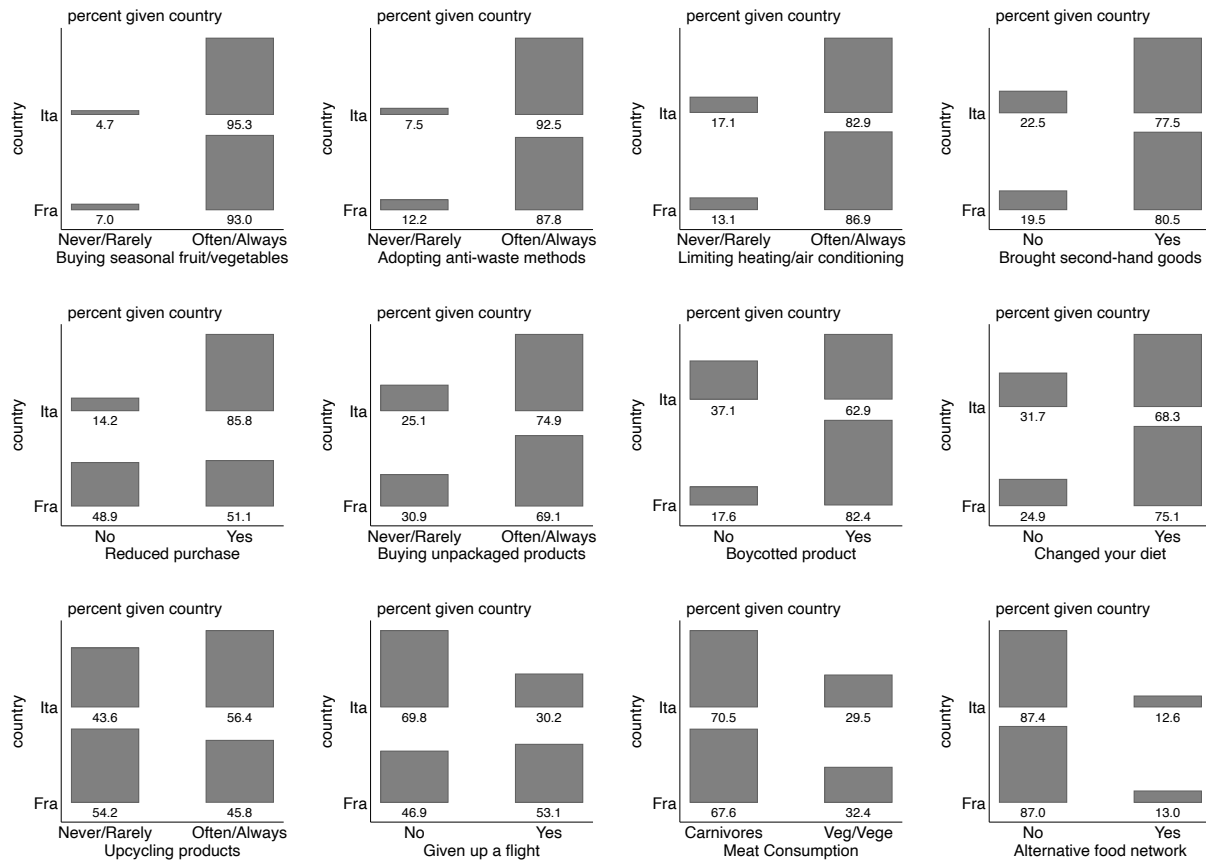
²² This question was administered during two out of six surveys conducted, with a total sample size of N=167

²³ This question was administered during two out of six surveys conducted, with a total sample size of N=168

²⁴ In the absence of a specific variable for direct action in the French case, it was decided to combine three variables: “blocking polluting infrastructure” “illegally occupying a place”, and “taking part in an Extinction Rebellion action”.

frequency, others on willingness or feasibility), I recoded all items into binary variables for the purposes of analysis²⁵. Figure 1 presents the frequency distribution of these EEPs²⁶.

Figure 1. Distribution of 12 EEPs (N=1646)



Notably, the distribution patterns are quite similar across the two samples for each individual practice. Practices aimed at reducing the environmental impact of consumption are widely adopted in both countries. For example, buying seasonal fruit and vegetables is common among 95.3% of Italian respondents and 93% of French respondents. Similarly, 92.5% of Italians and 87.8% of French

²⁵ Variables were recoded as follows: Boycotting products, Reduced purchase, Bought second-hand goods, Changed diet, Given up a flight: 1 = yes; 0 = could have + no + NA. Meat consumption: 1 = vegan + vegetarian, 0 = once/week + 2-4/week + 4+/week + every day + NA. Member of a CSA org: 1 = yes, 0 = no + NA. Buying seasonal fruit/vegetables, Buying unpackaged products, Anti-waste methods, Limiting heating, Upcycling: 1 = always or often; 0 = rarely + never + NA. Giving up using the car: 1 = always + often; 0 = rarely + never + not applicable + NA. Self-produced vegetables, Self-produced cosmetics, Self-produced clothes: 1 = yes; 0 = no + NA.

²⁶ A core set of twelve Everyday ecological practices was tested in all questionnaires: Boycotted a product, brand, or platform; Reduced purchases to the bare essentials; Bought second-hand goods; Changed diet; Given up air travel; Weekly meat consumption; Participated in an alternative food network (AMAP-GAS); Bought seasonal fruits and vegetables; Bought unpackaged products; Adopted anti-food-waste methods; Limited heating/air conditioning use; Upcycled products instead of discarding them. Additionally, four other practices included in all questionnaires except for the March 12, 2022, protest in Paris: Stopped using a car; Self-producing food (fruits and vegetables) for personal consumption, Self-produced homemade cosmetics (soaps, toothpaste, creams); Self-produced homemade clothing.

respondents report frequently adopting anti-waste practices. Limiting the use of heating and air conditioning is also widespread, with 82.9% of Italians and 86.9% of French respondents doing so often or always. Finally, purchasing second-hand goods is reported by 77.5% of Italians and 80.5% of French respondents. Adopting these practices is not only relatively easy but also socially valued. This aligns closely with the concept of “altruistic individualism” introduced by Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, 28). Although these actions are personal, they carry a strong sense of contributing to the greater good, benefiting society as a whole. While they could represent genuine forms of renunciation, sometimes these practices can also result in economic savings, like the reduction of domestic energy consumption. The widespread diffusion of these practices suggests that ecological engagement often begins with actions that are both socially encouraged and logistically accessible, forming a foundational layer of environmental commitment.

Some practices do not have direct economic implications and necessitate specific domestic infrastructure and familiarity with certain shops, such as buying unpackaged products, nonetheless there are widely adopted (74.9% of Italians and 69.1% of French respondents). Other practices, require a significant investment in transforming one’s daily life, particularly those related to dietary choices. Among the respondents, 68.3% of Italians and 75.1% of French reported having changed their diet for ecological reasons. Reducing meat consumption entails a radical transformation of one’s identity, impacting both daily routines and social relationships. Individuals who adopt a vegetarian lifestyle may face stigma (Bagci and Olgun 2019), which reinforces the political significance of this practice (Judge, Fernando, and Begeny 2022). In both samples, only a minority of respondents identified as vegan or vegetarian—29.5% of Italians and 32.4% of French participants. Carnivores account for 70.5% of the Italian sample and 67.6% of the French. However, it is worth noting that nearly half of those who identify as carnivores report eating meat only once a week or less, while high meat consumption is limited to a small minority.

Despite the overall similar patterns, there are notable differences in the adoption of practices between the two countries. In Italy, two practices related to the reduction or transformation of waste are widely adopted. The first is limiting purchases to only what is necessary, with 85.8% of Italians reporting they do this, compared to 51.1% of French respondents. The second practice is upcycling products instead of discarding them, with 56.4% of Italians indicating they do this often or always, in contrast to 45.8% of French respondents. Both practices can be associated, among other factors, with a logic of economic savings (Boucher 2017; Sung et al. 2014) that may have found more space in the Italian

context, where, as noted earlier, there is a significant presence of young students and individuals who identify with the lower-middle classes.

Other practices, such as boycotting products, brands, and companies, as well as giving up air travel, are widely practiced in the French sample but less so in the Italian one. 82.4% of the French respondents report having engaged in boycotting, compared to 62.9% of the Italians. Boycotting is indeed a more widely practiced activity in France than in Italy, as shown by national data as well (Table A1 in the Appendix E; see also Yates 2011). This may derive from the fact that large-scale boycotting was already a common practice in France starting in the 1990s (Dubuisson-Quellier 2008).

Additionally, another practice that is highly reported among French respondents compared to the Italian ones is renouncing to air travel: 53.1% of the French respondents state that they have given up a flight for environmental reasons, compared to 30.2% of Italians. Renouncing air travel may have implications in terms of cost (air travel is often cheaper than other less polluting means of transport), time (alternative means might require more hours spent traveling and preparing), and social activities (giving up air travel can lead people to alter certain aspects of social life, such as leisure time and holidays). Some of the potential tensions linked with this practice emerged also in the qualitative interviews. In particular, Italian interviewees more frequently mentioned financial and logistical difficulties related to avoiding air travel. For instance, Manuela, 30, who works as a researcher in northern Italy while her family lives in the south, says she tries to limit air travel when possible, but notes:

For long distances, when train prices are absurd—as they often are in Italy—I’m forced to take a Ryanair or a low-cost flight. (Manuela, i.1)

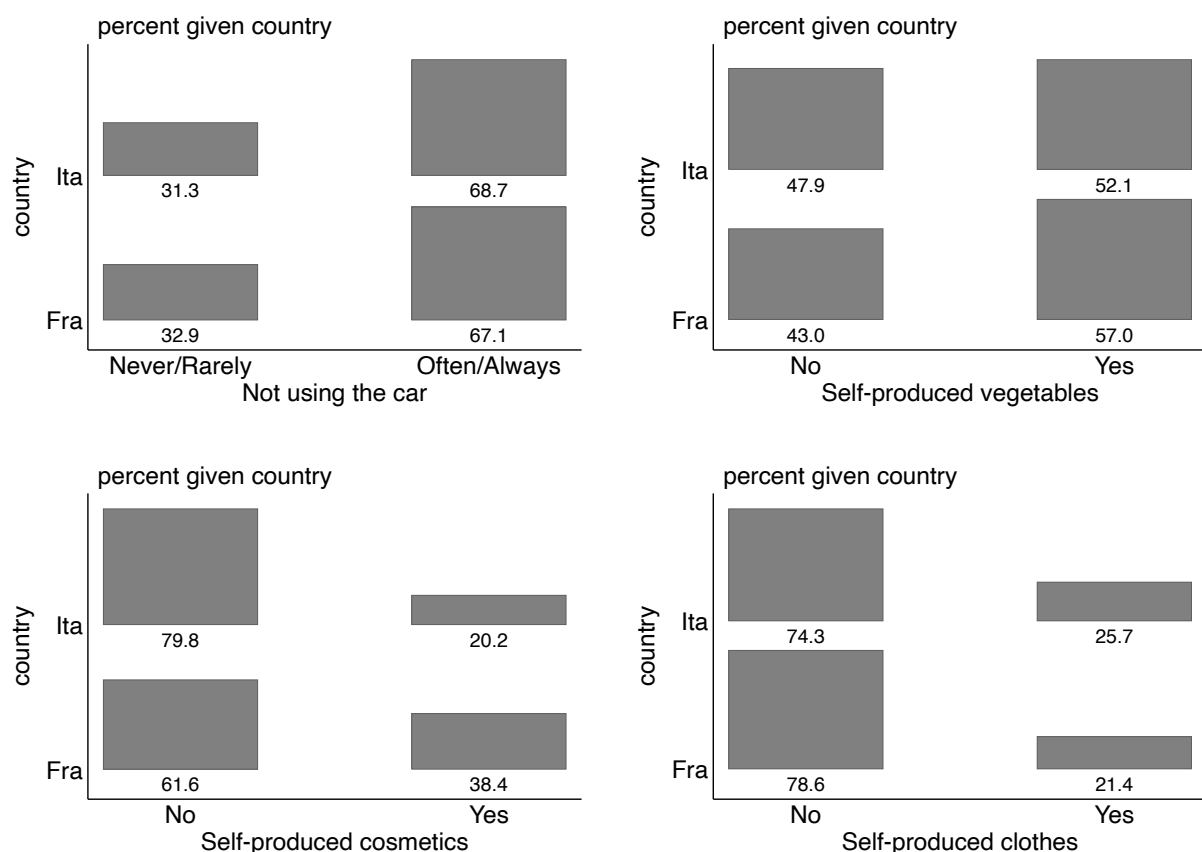
Similar concerns were raised by Susanna, Giada, Carla, and Riccardo, who reported flying due to the lack of viable alternatives to return home. In contrast, French respondents were less likely to report such cases.

Being members of alternative food networks (Huber and Lorenzini 2022), such as the ‘*Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale*’ (GAS) in Italy or the ‘*Associations pour le Maintien d’une Agriculture Paysanne*’ (AMAP) in France, which are the most prominent networks of this type in Italy and France (Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Graziano and Forno 2012) is quite rare. In both samples, 13% of respondents belong to these networks. This practice differs from the others because it requires a collective group to operate, which explains why it remains a minority practice even among an active

sample. Joining a local food network involves the necessity of connecting with such a network, picking up food at designated times and locations, and participating in collective service activities (Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine 2008; Graziano and Forno 2012). In essence, it requires balancing personal consumption with the dynamics of a collective entity (Moruzzi and Sirieix 2015).

As mentioned above, four variables—related to car renunciation and the self-production of vegetables, cosmetics, and clothing—were included in 10 of the 11 surveys conducted (with the exception of the one administered in Paris during the climate march on March 12, 2022). The frequency distribution (Figure 2) shows no substantial differences between Italian and French respondents regarding car renunciation. This practice appears to be well established in both countries, with over 60% of participants reporting that they avoid using a car often or always.

Figure 2. Distribution of 4 additional EEPs (not tested in the protest survey in Paris on 12 March 2022, N=1256)



A significant difference emerges in the production of homemade cosmetics, practiced by 38% of French respondents compared to just 20% of Italians. In contrast, making clothes is slightly more common among Italians (25.7%) than among the French (21.4%). Both activities require specific

materials, tools, and skills. Growing vegetables, on the other hand, also demands access to space—whether a balcony or a garden plot—but remains widespread despite these constraints: 52.1% of Italians and 57% of French respondents report cultivating vegetables. The popularity of this practice may have been reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Italian surveys, 38% of respondents said they had adopted new ecological practices during the pandemic; among these, 9% started growing food, while only 1% began making clothes and 2% producing cosmetics or soap.

In sum, the data reveal that EEPs are widely adopted among climate protesters in both Italy and France. While many practices—particularly those related to consumption—are shared across contexts, others, such as dietary change, boycotting, and giving up air travel, highlight deeper personal commitments and expose tensions between individual agency and structural constraints. The interplay between ease of access, material resources, and social norms plays a key role in shaping how these practices are adopted and sustained. In the following section, I delve deeper into the cumulative levels of adoption of practices by climate protesters.

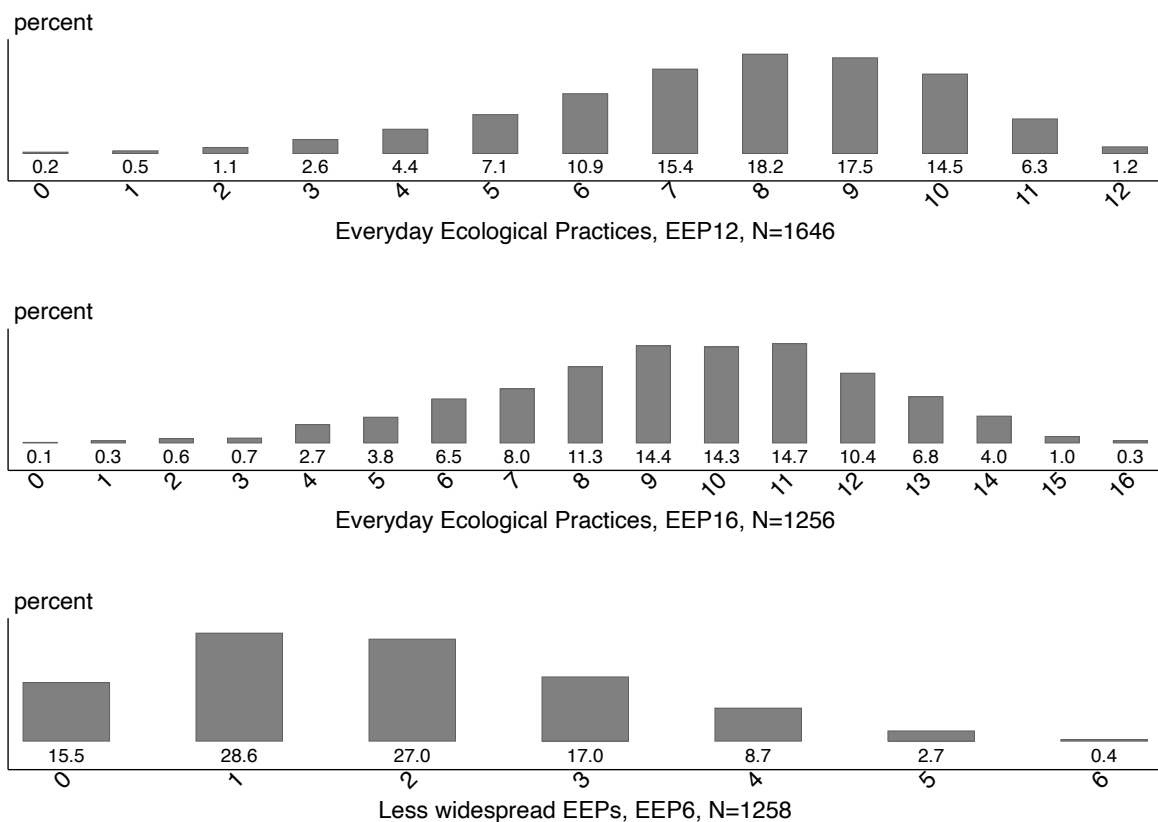
2.5 The cumulative adoption of EEPs

Overall, respondents to the protest surveys display a strong tendency to adopt ecological practices in both Italy and France. A comparison between this dataset and existing studies based on representative national samples allows for an assessment of the relative intensity of ecological practice adoption among climate protesters (Table A1 in the Appendix E). Although such a comparison must be interpreted with caution—given that national surveys do not always use identical indicators, that comparable questions are not always available, and that responses collected during protests may be influenced by a desire to align with the cause being supported—it nonetheless reveals a clear pattern: the rate of adoption is markedly higher among protest participants than in the general population. For instance, according to the most reliable indicators, boycotting is practiced by 63% of the Italian protest sample compared to 31% nationally, and by 82% of the French sample versus 26% nationally. Similarly, 78% of Italian protesters report buying second-hand products, compared to about 50% in the national population; among French protesters, this figure reaches 81%, compared to approximately 25% nationally. Reducing meat consumption is reported by 61% of Italian protesters and 65% of French protesters, in contrast to 29% nationally in both countries. Despite the limitations of this comparison, it is evident that the climate march participants in this study constitute a group that is significantly more engaged in EEPs than the general population in both countries.

I now examine the cumulative levels of ecological practice adoption. Based on the individual EEPs, I constructed three indexes: the EEP-12 index, which includes twelve practices common to all surveys (N = 1646); the EEP-16 index, which adds four practices not included in the Paris protest survey of March 12, 2022 (N = 1256); and the EEP-6 index, which focuses exclusively on the less widespread practices, namely: upcycling, growing one's own vegetables, giving up air travel, being vegetarian or vegan, making one's own cosmetics, making one's own clothes, and participating in alternative food networks (N=1258).

Figure 3 shows the distribution of these indexes. For the EEP-12 index, respondents adopted an average of 7.7 practices; for the EEP-16 index, the average rises to 9.4. On average, respondents adopted 1.8 of the less widespread practices (EEP-6). These results confirm the diversity of practical engagement with ecological lifestyles within the protest population: while a substantial share adopts more than half of the practices, only a small minority adopts all or nearly all of them.

Figure 3. Everyday Ecological Practices Indexes



Overall, the descriptive data presented in this section highlight that, although ecological practices are relatively widespread, there are clear differences in the levels of adoption of specific practices. While low-barrier practices are widely embraced, more demanding ones remain rare, pointing to a clear stratification of ecological commitment and limited spillover across different domains of practice. Most protesters focus on selected types of practices, and only a minority adopts a comprehensive ecological lifestyle. In the following section, I examine whether the likelihood of adopting these practices is associated with a range of social, political, and activist-related factors.

3. Exploring the Association Between Sociopolitical Factors and Ecological Practices

I now turn to examine the social characteristics associated with the adoption of these practices. In this section, I use logistic regressions to analyze each individual EEP²⁷ and linear regressions for three indexes comprising respectively 12, 16 and 6 EEPs²⁸. Each regression model includes sociodemographic variables (country, gender, age, occupational situation, educational level, subjective class, financial difficulties and growing place) as controls. Each model includes a different set of independent variables. These encompass factors related to primary socialization (e.g., parental occupation), political orientation (including self-placement on the political spectrum and ecological values), and activist experience (operationalized through organizational membership, prior protest participation, and repertoires of action).

The hypotheses guiding this section of the chapter are primarily drawn from critical sociology, particularly habitus theory (Bourdieu 1987, 1990). The main hypothesis is that the adoption of ecological practices is influenced by dispositions developed during primary (family) and secondary (activism) socialization. Regarding primary socialization, in line with much of the literature on critical consumption (Boström et al. 2005; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Koos 2012; O'Shaughnessy and Kennedy 2010; Zelezny et al. 2000), I contend that a higher propensity among individuals who identify as women to adopt ecological practices. Also, in light of eco-habitus theory (Carfagna et al. 2014), I hypothesize that protesters from upper-class segments with high cultural capital are more

²⁷ All logistic regression models are statistically significant ($\text{Prob} > \chi^2 < 0.05$), with the exception of most models related to two specific practices: limiting heating/air conditioning and giving up car use. These models are retained for the sake of completeness; however, any statistically significant effects that do emerge from them are not discussed.

²⁸ As shown above, the EEP-12 index includes all ecological practices that were present in every survey. A 16-item index (EEP-16) was also constructed by summing variables included in all Italian and French protest surveys, with the exception of the Paris protest on March 12. The EEP-6 index focuses exclusively on the less commonly adopted practices, namely: upcycling, self-producing vegetables, giving up air travel, being vegetarian or vegan, self-producing cosmetics, self-producing clothes, and participation in alternative food networks.

likely to adopt ecological practices, and that children of socio-cultural professionals, in particular, tend to transform their lifestyles to a greater extent. I further hypothesize effects linked to secondary socialization, specifically a positive correlation between political radicalism and the adoption of ecological practices, as well as a positive correlation between activism experience and ecological practices, reflecting the “radical habitus” theory proposed by Nick Crossley (2002, 2003). As outlined in the theoretical chapter, this concept refers to how, much like the socialization processes observed within families, prolonged participation in a social movement can generate dispositions that extend beyond activism and shape other areas of life, such as lifestyle choices. Accordingly, individuals who have become acclimated to the movement’s culture are more likely to engage in specific personal practices as a result of these socialization experiences (Crossley 2003). Building on this theory, I contend that organizational membership and the frequency of participation in climate protests, as channels of activist socialization, may determine a greater likelihood for climate protesters to adopt ecological practices in their daily life.

3.1 Socio-demographic factors associated with the adoption of EEPs

Before moving toward exploring these hypotheses, I examine the effects of sociodemographic control variables on ecological practices. Table 4 shows the results of logistic regressions individual practices (models 1–16) and OLS regression results on EEP indexes (models 17–19).

Table 4. Sociodemographic controls

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
France	0.470** (0.111)	0.650* (0.123)	1.432* (0.229)	1.250 (0.171)	0.177** (0.0235)	0.900 (0.129)	0.618** (0.0791)	2.657** (0.353)	1.246 (0.156)	0.635** (0.0723)	1.238 (0.172)	2.405** (0.282)	1.092 (0.135)	2.746** (0.426)	0.651* (0.110)	0.914 (0.156)	-0.0917 (0.118)	0.232 (0.177)	0.492*** (0.0853)
Woman	1.843** (0.407)	2.188** (0.389)	0.934 (0.136)	1.869** (0.236)	1.411** (0.175)	1.017 (0.132)	1.735** (0.203)	1.353* (0.165)	1.934** (0.227)	2.145** (0.229)	1.164 (0.143)	0.850 (0.0929)	1.712** (0.203)	3.383** (0.547)	4.518** (0.803)	1.148 (0.181)	0.818** (0.112)	1.289** (0.155)	0.546*** (0.0733)
Other gender	1.016 (0.499)	0.926 (0.369)	0.983 (0.364)	2.191 (0.883)	0.938 (0.290)	0.919 (0.282)	0.983 (0.286)	1.660 (0.540)	1.843* (0.560)	2.750** (0.770)	0.736 (0.218)	1.198 (0.342)	1.918* (0.543)	2.764** (0.989)	4.314** (1.429)	1.494 (0.659)	0.757** (0.282)	1.164** (0.365)	0.516** (0.195)
Age	1.055** (0.0185)	1.005 (0.0144)	1.017 (0.0101)	0.996 (0.0085)	1.032** (0.0092)	1.019 (0.0098)	1.034** (0.0087)	1.063** (0.0099)	1.034** (0.0088)	1.001 (0.0075)	1.003 (0.0089)	1.034** (0.0081)	1.013 (0.0087)	1.035** (0.0111)	0.963** (0.0104)	1.065** (0.0115)	0.0506* (0.00784)	0.0543* (0.0111)	0.0179** (0.00550)
Age2	1.000	1.001	1.000	1.000	0.999** (0.0002)	0.999 (0.0002)	0.999** (0.0002)	0.998** (0.0002)	0.999** (0.0002)	1.000 (0.0002)	1.000 (0.0002)	0.999** (0.0002)	0.999** (0.0002)	0.998** (0.0002)	1.001** (0.0002)	0.999** (0.0002)	-	-	-
																	0.00152***	0.00183***	0.000742***

	(0.0007 05)	(0.0006 47)	(0.0003 70)	(0.0003 01)	(0.0003 21)	(0.0003 59)	(0.0003 01)	(0.0003 35)	(0.0003 02)	(0.0003 73)	(0.0002 46)	(0.0003 04)	(0.0003 12)	(0.0003 03)	(0.0003 93)	(0.0003 72)	(0.0003 0)	(0.0003 6)	(0.0004 5)
University degree	1.125	1.225	0.931	0.968	0.809	1.173	1.173	1.141	1.437**	0.986	0.741	0.949	1.006	1.100	0.994	0.769	0.0551	0.273	-0.0241
	(0.347)	(0.298)	(0.161)	(0.144)	(0.123)	(0.193)	(0.164)	(0.170)	(0.201)	(0.127)	(0.114)	(0.126)	(0.149)	(0.194)	(0.181)	(0.132)	(0.133)	(0.193)	(0.0943)
Lower-middle class	0.958	1.529	1.211	0.969	1.091	0.871	0.872	1.082	0.910	0.960	0.862	0.743*	0.850	0.978	0.957	0.938	-0.0821	-0.274	-0.189*
	(0.280)	(0.337)	(0.217)	(0.151)	(0.164)	(0.136)	(0.128)	(0.161)	(0.131)	(0.125)	(0.128)	(0.101)	(0.118)	(0.167)	(0.167)	(0.175)	(0.129)	(0.180)	(0.0894)
Working-Undefined class	0.399**	1.257	1.053	1.060	1.040	0.853	0.651**	0.781	0.773	0.950	0.799	0.780	0.830	0.787	0.876	0.502**	-0.365*	-0.536**	-0.277**
	(0.117)	(0.315)	(0.219)	(0.189)	(0.180)	(0.145)	(0.105)	(0.127)	(0.123)	(0.140)	(0.130)	(0.121)	(0.134)	(0.153)	(0.169)	(0.131)	(0.158)	(0.206)	(0.0985)
Financial difficulty	1.101	1.022	0.957	1.706**	1.278	1.047	0.931	1.200	0.914	1.368*	1.186	1.136	1.098	1.130	1.527**	0.642*	0.202	0.407*	0.146
	(0.294)	(0.218)	(0.158)	(0.282)	(0.187)	(0.155)	(0.128)	(0.171)	(0.126)	(0.172)	(0.165)	(0.144)	(0.144)	(0.187)	(0.250)	(0.132)	(0.120)	(0.165)	(0.0826)
Small town/rural	1.135	1.355	1.042	1.015	1.359*	0.815	0.997	1.016	1.241	1.000	1.976**	1.192	1.251*	1.112	0.787	1.166	0.244*	0.234	0.230**
	(0.255)	(0.239)	(0.145)	(0.126)	(0.163)	(0.102)	(0.115)	(0.121)	(0.142)	(0.104)	(0.235)	(0.128)	(0.138)	(0.157)	(0.112)	(0.181)	(0.105)	(0.147)	(0.0719)
Constant	24.37**	4.707**	4.924**	2.314**	5.192**	2.904**	3.168**	1.993**	1.670**	0.738	0.901	0.652*	0.361**	0.144**	0.0949*	0.231**	7.450**	8.881**	1.540**
	(9.275)	(1.394)	(1.191)	(0.455)	(1.088)	(0.625)	(0.613)	(0.397)	(0.309)	(0.127)	(0.179)	(0.119)	(0.0718)	(0.0360)	(0.0248)	(0.0556)	(0.190)	(0.262)	(0.123)
													)	)	)	)			
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.078	0.104	0.100
Pseudo R2	0.0756	0.0447	0.0096	0.0357	0.137	0.0105	0.0379	0.0939	0.0491	0.0381	0.0250	0.0577	0.0267	0.0931	0.0951	0.0525			
Prob Chi2	>0.000	0.000	0.129	0.000	0.000	0.0981	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Country: Italy; Gender: male; Age: 14-19; Education: Middle school diploma; Class: upper-middle class; Financial difficulties: No; Religion: no religion; City: Big city or suburbs.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

National background is associated with specific ecological practices. Compared to Italians (reference category), being French correlates positively with more activist-oriented ecological practices, including boycotting certain products, refraining from air travel and self-producing cosmetics/soap, which can reflect an attempt to break away from pharmaceutical and cleaning product companies. In contrast, being French is negatively associated (and conversely, being Italian is positively associated) with practices involving consumption reduction. These include minimizing consumption to essentials, buying sustainable products like seasonal fruits and vegetables, using strategies to reduce food waste, buying unpackaged products, and engaging in self-production activities such as upcycling or making clothing. These practices are generally more socially accepted and accessible, carrying broad social relevance. The OLS regression shows no significant differences in overall ecological engagement (as measured by the EEP-12 and EEP-16 indexes) between French and Italian respondents, except for the less widespread practices (EEP-6), where being French is positively associated with higher adoption levels. These variations may reflect different levels of movement

maturity in each country. As shown in the historical section in Chapter 3, in Italy the climate movement emerged only recently, starting in 2019 with the school climate strikes (della Porta et al. 2020). As a result, the climate issue—and its reflection in everyday practices—represents a relatively new phenomenon. In contrast, the French climate movement was already well established by 2015, particularly around the Paris COP21 (Aykut, Foyer, and Morena 2017; de Moor 2018, 2021a), and the most recent wave of mobilizations has built upon this existing foundation. This difference in movement maturity may help explain the observed pattern: politically charged practices (such as boycotting or avoiding air travel) are more widespread among French respondents, whereas more accessible and socially integrated practices are more distinctive among Italian participants.

Gender emerges as the sociodemographic factor most strongly associated with the adoption of EEPs. Specifically, identifying as a woman (as opposed to the reference category of ‘man’) is associated with greater odds of adopting 11 out of 16 individual ecological practices and with higher scores on the EEP-12, EEP-16, and EEP-6 indexes. Numerous studies have demonstrated that women tend to adopt ecological practices more frequently than men (Boström et al. 2005; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Koos 2012; O’Shaughnessy and Kennedy 2010; Zelezny et al. 2000). However, it’s noteworthy that while individuals who identify as women are more likely to adopt a wide range of ecological practices, this does not apply exclusively to practices traditionally associated with femininity — such as self-producing clothing or cosmetics, upcycling, or domestic practices like buying seasonal produce or using anti-waste strategies. They are also more likely to engage in universally applied ecological actions, such as boycotting products, reducing purchases, buying secondhand, changing dietary habits, or giving up meat.

The reasons for this are still debated. On the one hand, Stolle and Micheletti (2006) refer to the fact that consumerism represents a more accessible space for women’s political participation and that women tend to focus more on ethical issues (such as family health or animal rights) than men when engaging with consumer practices. Similarly, Zelezny et al. (2000, 445) suggest that while men are socialized to be competitive and independent, women are socialized to embrace an “ethic of care”, which is reflected in their pro-environmental behaviors. From a more critical perspective, some researchers argue against the notion that women simply reproduce a caring disposition in environmental protection. For instance, O’Shaughnessy and Kennedy (2010, 561) argue that through their ecological actions in everyday life, women actively “create social change and are, for the most part, aware of this.” Additionally, Stoddart and Tindall (2011) show that women in the environmental movement often interpret their actions as a way to distinguish themselves from hegemonic

masculinity. In this sense, some excerpts from the interviews help illustrate how the ecological norm is transmitted through a form of gender-based reproduction and how this norm can become a point of distinction from men who do not adopt it. Giada, 26, an Italian teacher in Barcelona, adopts several practices, such as not buying meat or new clothes, and she tries to repair objects herself. When asked about these practices, she says:

So, let's say the act of keeping objects, not throwing things away, or not buying things with a short lifespan, like cheap clothes, this is definitely a practice I learned from all the women in my family. So, my mother, my grandmother, my mother's mother. (Giada, i.3)

The gendered socialization here is quite striking. Although the men in the family also influenced her behavior, she emphasizes how women stand out in promoting this moral stance:

It's very much part of our family tradition, because my grandmother clearly has post-war trauma and doesn't throw anything away; she even patches up potholders. So, it's really family education. (Giada, i.3)

These practices and the morals associated with them can lead to conflict with the opposite gender:

For me, waste is almost immoral. This is almost a family tradition for me. The idea of throwing food away, not finishing your plate, even if you're no longer hungry, or throwing away new clothes makes me angry. So, I argue a lot, for example with my boyfriend, who has a very different view... For him, objects have a much shorter lifespan, while for me, it's more a matter of principle. (Giada, i.3)

Thus, while Giada's example highlights how these practices originate from gendered socialization within the domestic sphere, it also shows how they are reflexively reappropriated through moral reasoning and as a form of symbolic distinction from male behaviors perceived as polluting.

Laura, 24, employed at an NGO and a former member of Greenpeace has reduced her meat consumption, renounced flying, engaged in making products last longer, and handmade her own products. She speaks about her mother as someone from whom she draws inspiration for adopting ecological practices. For example, on how to make homemade laundry detergent:

I gave my mother a book about it. She tries things out before I do, so I just take what works. (Laura, i.32)

When asked whether one of her parents adopts more ecological attitudes, her response is clear, and she tends to adopt a posture that distinguishes her from her father's masculine inaction:

I'm closer to my mother. So, we kind of evolved together on these issues. My father is maybe less inclined to make an effort. And it's just not his main issue, even though the environment is becoming more important to him, he's more concerned about social inequalities. (Laura, i.32)

Laura's case also demonstrates how ecological norms, gendered socialization, and distinction from male behaviors and attitudes intersect in the context of ecological practices. In the qualitative interviews, about one-third of the women interviewed stated that their mothers were more attentive than their fathers in adopting ecological practices, and about one-quarter reported having disagreements or conflicts with male partners or sons over ecological choices. While the quantitative data show that even within a specific segment of the population such as climate activists, primary gender socialization remains a central factor distinguishing those who adopt many practices from those who do not, the qualitative insights reveal that this division does not simply reflect a mechanical and uncritical reproduction of eco-maternalist norms (MacGregor 2011, 2021). Rather, they show how ecological norms can be embodied and reflexively reinterpreted as part of a critical identity construction that distinguishes itself from polluting male behaviors.

Another sociodemographic element that has an impact is age. Several studies have shown that age determinant of pro-environmental behaviors. For Stolle et al. (2010), political consumers tend to be middle-aged, that is, between 30 and 40 years old. Ward and De Vreese (2011) further note that this age gap appears even within younger cohorts: young adults are more likely to engage in political consumerism than the very youngest segments of the population. Results from the protest sample indicate a positive curvilinear effect (inverted U-shape) of age on the adoption of ecological practices. This curvilinear relationship is statistically significant for 7 out of 16 practices. Similar patterns are observed in the EEP-12, EEP-16, and EEP-6 indexes. In all these cases, adults are more likely — within the protest sample — to engage in ecological practices compared to younger individuals, while this likelihood tends to decline among older participants. This finding, which aligns with results from studies on the general population, shows that even in the context of climate mobilization, biographical availability — in terms of resources and domestic autonomy — is essential to enable the transformation of one's habits in an ecological direction.

Although several studies suggest that higher education and elevated cultural capital are positively associated with the adoption of ecological practices in the general population (Koos, 2012; Stolle & Micheletti, 2013), this effect is not strongly evident in the protest sample. Holding a university degree, compared to a lower level of education, is positively correlated only with dietary change. By contrast,

subjective social class reveals more consistent differences. Compared to the upper-middle class (reference category), individuals identifying with the lower-middle class are less likely to give up flying. Those identifying with the working class or reporting no specific class affiliation are less likely to buy seasonal fruits and vegetables, to purchase unpackaged products, and to engage with alternative food networks. They are also less likely to engage in a greater number of ecological practices, as measured by the EEP-12, EEP-16, and EEP-6 indexes. However, while a lower subjective social class tends to be associated with reduced ecological engagement, experiencing financial difficulties is positively associated with specific practices—such as purchasing second-hand products, upcycling objects, and making one’s own clothes—as well as with a higher score on the EEP-16 index. The results suggest the presence of an eco-habitus (Carfagna et al. 2014), understood as a set of distinctive dispositions that foster the adoption of ecological practices among individuals who identify with the upper-middle class, as compared to those belonging to lower-middle and working-class groups. However, this effect must be interpreted in light of an apparently counterintuitive finding: experiencing financial hardship is positively associated with several ecological practices. This indicates that the dispositions associated with the eco-habitus are not exclusive to economically affluent individuals, but also emerge among those who, while identifying with the upper-middle class, acknowledge having limited financial resources.

Finally, place of origin appears to have a positive effect on the adoption of certain ecological practices. Individuals who grew up in small towns, villages, or rural areas tend to embrace a more frugal lifestyle. They are more likely to reduce consumption to essentials, grow their own vegetables, and adopt vegetarian or vegan diets. These individuals also tend to score higher on both the EEP-12 and EEP-6 indexes. This highlights how contextual factors — such as access to outdoor space and living in less urbanized areas — can foster greater attention to ecological practices in everyday life.

In sum, the results presented here highlight a set of associations between sociodemographic factors — linked to a variety of contexts (such as nationality or place of origin) and forms of socialization (such as gender, education, or class) — that are associated with a greater or lesser propensity to adopt EEPs within the context of climate mobilization. Among these, gender emerges as the most impactful factor, showing a significant association with a large number of practices. The role of gender socialization and distinction is also clearly reflected in the accounts of a substantial number of interviewees.

3.2 The Weight of Social Background: Socio-economic Factors Shaping the Adoption of Ecological Practices

The results discussed above highlight the presence of social differences within the sample of protesters. These differences are associated both locally with specific practices and more broadly with the overall set of practices examined. Further distinctions in the adoption of EEPs are linked with channels of primary familiar socialization. Parental occupation, in particular, is associated with variations in the adoption of ecological practices.

For consistency, the analysis is restricted to individuals under the age of 25. All models reported in the tables below and in the Appendix E include the following control variables, which are omitted from display for the sake of conciseness: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial status, and the type of place where the respondent grew up.

In the first two analyses (see Tables A3 and A4 in the Appendix E), I included each parent's occupation (father and mother separately), coded according to INSEE's one-digit 2020 socio-professional classification and then aggregated into three macro-categories: (1) executive, professional, intermediate; (2) self-employed and commercial professions; (3) employees, workers, or inactive. The results reveal two main findings. First, compared to the executive, professional, intermediate reference category, children of fathers who are self-employed or engaged in commercial professions (such as shopkeepers, artisans, or entrepreneurs) show a lower propensity to adopt certain mainstream ecological practices—such as purchasing seasonal fruits and vegetables or engaging in anti-waste strategies—and also score lower on the EEP-16 index. No significant differences emerge for fathers who are employees, workers, or inactive. This is noteworthy, as it suggests that even within a sample of activists, those whose fathers work in market-oriented professions may be less influenced by ecological norms. Second, children of mothers who are employees, workers, or inactive appear less inclined—compared to those whose mothers are in executive, professional, or intermediate roles—to purchase unpackaged products, produce their own cosmetics, and, more generally, to engage in practices reflected in the EEP-16 index. This finding suggests that in households where mothers occupy lower occupational positions or are not in the labor force, domestic responsibilities may take priority, potentially limiting the time and resources available for implementing alternative consumption practices.

The third and fourth analyses (Tables 5 and 6) explored parental occupation grouped according to Kriesi's classification (1998). Kriesi argues that traditional political cleavages are now replaced by

new structural cleavages. In particular, managers (those employed in administrative hierarchies) are thought to hold market-oriented, right-leaning values, while sociocultural professions (professionals in education, care, media, and social services) tend to align with left-leaning issues. Technical professionals (such as engineers and scientific and IT technicians) are in an intermediate position. Kriesi's classification appears relevant here as well. In order to remove small categories skilled and unskilled workers were grouped together, as were farmers, petite bourgeoisie, and liberal professions. Compared to managers (reference category), children of fathers who are technical professionals are more likely to adopt anti-waste strategies and to self-produce clothing. Likewise, children of fathers in sociocultural professions show a significantly higher likelihood of engaging in anti-waste behaviors and score higher on both the 12- and 16-item EEP indexes. A similar pattern emerges for maternal occupation. Children of mothers in sociocultural professions—who represent over one-third of the total sample—are more likely to adopt five out of the sixteen practices examined (boycotting products, buying second-hand, adopting anti-waste strategies, limiting heating and air conditioning use, and upcycling objects). They also score higher on both the EEP-12 and EEP-16 indexes. In contrast, children of mothers in technical professions show mixed results: while they are more likely to limit heating and cooling usage, they are less likely to adopt a vegetarian diet.

Table 5. Father's occupation

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Father																			
techno professional	2.301 (1.040)	2.835* (1.141)	1.812 (0.591)	1.145 (0.360)	1.031 (0.284)	1.034 (0.326)	1.461 (0.384)	0.950 (0.268)	1.109 (0.320)	1.563 (0.405)	0.932 (0.276)	1.244 (0.323)	0.852 (0.227)	0.798 (0.281)	2.028* (0.731)	0.875 (0.392)	0.503 (0.268)	0.578 (0.393)	0.0372 (0.187)
soccult professional	2.057 (0.882)	4.565* (2.077)	2.258* (0.790)	1.513 (0.491)	1.377 (0.375)	0.968 (0.291)	1.261 (0.320)	1.030 (0.307)	0.863 (0.242)	1.403 (0.359)	1.198 (0.343)	0.963 (0.254)	1.197 (0.319)	0.930 (0.329)	1.446 (0.529)	1.347 (0.560)	0.599* (0.259)	0.845* (0.363)	0.148 (0.169)
skilled dependent worker	1.997 (0.803)	2.214* (0.834)	1.829 (0.569)	1.262 (0.386)	1.232 (0.329)	1.182 (0.336)	1.716* (0.439)	1.112 (0.309)	0.766 (0.198)	1.296 (0.335)	1.393 (0.387)	1.008 (0.264)	0.974 (0.250)	1.004 (0.330)	1.636 (0.562)	1.020 (0.442)	0.454 (0.254)	0.644 (0.368)	0.140 (0.157)
self-employed	1.535 (0.634)	1.075 (0.348)	1.104 (0.322)	1.404 (0.444)	1.321 (0.377)	1.052 (0.310)	1.377 (0.351)	1.092 (0.303)	0.805 (0.219)	1.035 (0.266)	1.215 (0.344)	0.976 (0.254)	0.843 (0.216)	0.976 (0.329)	1.977* (0.681)	1.448 (0.575)	0.238 (0.271)	0.357 (0.387)	0.114 (0.172)
inactive	2.197 (1.366)	2.493 (1.636)	2.329 (1.330)	1.391 (0.672)	0.870 (0.354)	1.353 (0.619)	3.372* (1.675)	1.340 (0.612)	0.617 (0.246)	2.207* (0.871)	1.557 (0.686)	1.530 (0.614)	1.490 (0.593)	1.559 (0.794)	2.304 (1.172)	0.460 (0.496)	0.831 (0.453)	0.935 (0.628)	0.321 (0.264)
Constant	4.690* ** (2.015)	2.725* * (1.057)	2.631** (0.948)	1.800 (0.571)	4.445* ** (1.426)	3.271* ** (1.019)	1.828* (0.506)	0.811 (0.244)	1.441 (0.415)	0.413** (0.114)	0.661 (0.198)	0.447* (0.127)	0.332*** (0.0965)	0.0859* ** (0.0324)	0.0950* ** (0.0384)	0.0710* ** (0.0345)	6.420* ** (0.291)	7.713* ** (0.402)	1.182* ** (0.174)
Observations	811	811	811	811	811	648	811	811	811	811	649	811	811	651	650	811	811	647	649

R-squared																			0.079	0.104	0.124
Pseudo R2	0.0565	0.0909	0.0277	0.0453	0.164	0.0216	0.0362	0.101	0.0684	0.0674	0.0480	0.0778	0.0642	0.0883	0.0843	0.0409					
Prob > Chi2	0.0039	0.000	0.293	0.0047	0.000	0.259	0.00223	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000700	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.115					
Prob > F																			0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Father's socio-professional category: Manager

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

Table 6. Mother's occupation

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Mother																			
techno professional	1.033 (0.649)	0.900 (0.468)	4.077* (2.636)	1.106 (0.525)	1.062 (0.513)	1.351 (0.748)	1.065 (0.495)	1.018 (0.429)	0.740 (0.344)	1.504 (0.631)	0.953 (0.511)	0.729 (0.299)	0.241* (0.134)	0.222 (0.173)	1.504 (0.903)	1.858 (1.268)	0.0148 (0.468)	0.0325 (0.703)	-0.345 (0.305)
soccult professional	2.172 (0.942)	2.120* (0.725)	2.463** (0.782)	2.144* (0.699)	1.174 (0.338)	1.205 (0.410)	0.737 (0.212)	2.104* (0.640)	1.137 (0.320)	1.888* (0.515)	0.924 (0.310)	0.862 (0.231)	0.866 (0.241)	1.083 (0.421)	1.152 (0.448)	1.813 (0.869)	0.669* (0.290)	0.909* (0.429)	0.0041 (0.172)
skilled dependent worker	1.925 (0.831)	2.082 (0.820)	1.753 (0.586)	1.372 (0.467)	1.325 (0.408)	1.073 (0.383)	0.649 (0.199)	1.320 (0.408)	1.354 (0.413)	1.453 (0.427)	0.861 (0.307)	0.747 (0.214)	0.996 (0.295)	0.741 (0.307)	0.944 (0.389)	1.469 (0.769)	0.416 (0.314)	0.535 (0.463)	-0.130 (0.184)
self-employed	1.141 (0.567)	1.588 (0.703)	1.002 (0.356)	1.253 (0.473)	1.417 (0.501)	1.179 (0.456)	0.767 (0.263)	1.511 (0.516)	1.094 (0.369)	1.776 (0.562)	1.090 (0.414)	0.734 (0.239)	0.743 (0.249)	1.041 (0.451)	1.083 (0.480)	1.792 (0.997)	0.290 (0.352)	0.714 (0.495)	-0.0023 (0.200)
inactive	1.498 (0.786)	2.029 (1.030)	1.120 (0.437)	0.851 (0.331)	1.216 (0.507)	1.467 (0.632)	0.436* (0.159)	0.816 (0.299)	1.261 (0.462)	1.536 (0.531)	0.548 (0.227)	0.436 (0.158)	1.116 (0.395)	0.658 (0.326)	1.232 (0.570)	0.809 (0.624)	-0.0754 (0.372)	0.0755 (0.529)	-0.248 (0.210)
Constant	5.324* (2.488)	2.748* (1.213)	2.584* (1.008)	1.693 (0.589)	4.164* (1.495)	2.803* (1.058)	3.448*** (1.093)	0.641 (0.214)	1.216 (0.391)	0.348** (0.109)	0.921 (0.337)	0.668 (0.209)	0.389** (0.129)	0.0849* (0.0375)	0.152** (0.0674)	0.0588* (0.0301)	6.524* (0.336)	7.682* (0.472)	1.374* (0.195)
Observations	832	832	832	832	832	667	832	832	832	832	668	832	832	670	669	832	832	666	668
R-squared																	0.085	0.109	0.120
Pseudo R2	0.0682	0.0592	0.0388	0.0535	0.160	0.0215	0.0378	0.107	0.0702	0.0624	0.0489	0.080	0.0747	0.0996	0.0768	0.0392			
Prob > Chi2	0.0015	0.0033	0.0303	0.0008	0.000	0.272	0.000487	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.244			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Mother's socio-professional category: Manager

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

The fifth analysis focuses on the socio-professional profile of the family unit. Table 7 presents the results based on a recoded classification of households, distinguishing between: managerial households (at least one parent is a manager), technical households (at least one parent is a technical professional), sociocultural households (at least one parent is a sociocultural professional), self-employed households (at least one parent is self-employed), and residual households. The findings reinforce the patterns already observed when looking at parental occupations individually. In particular, children of sociocultural professionals—compared to those from managerial households—are more likely to engage in anti-waste strategies, upcycle objects, grow their own vegetables, and show higher overall engagement on the EEP-12 and EEP-16 indexes. This supports the idea that being raised in a sociocultural family context strengthens certain norms and contributes to a more consistent ecological posture. Regarding the classification of parental occupations, the INSEE 2020 socio-professional grid allows for the determination of family-level socio-professional status. The results (Table A4 in the Appendix E) highlight a key pattern: compared to manager-dominated households (reference category), protesters raised in families of small business owners show lower engagement across a wide range of ecological practices, as indicated by lower scores on both the EEP-12 and EEP-16 indexes. They are also significantly less likely to purchase seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Table 7. Household professional category

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Household																			
techno professiona l household	1.592 (0.647)	1.907 (0.669)	1.935* (0.590)	1.130 (0.331)	1.105 (0.289)	1.054 (0.309)	1.136 (0.282)	1.183 (0.303)	1.105 (0.297)	1.604* (0.379)	0.753 (0.209)	0.958 (0.232)	0.879 (0.222)	0.675 (0.225)	1.456 (0.465)	1.348 (0.554)	0.432 (0.250)	0.449 (0.358)	-0.0906 (0.170)
soccult professiona l household	1.580 (0.567)	2.751** (0.885)	1.985* (0.525)	1.730* (0.473)	1.237 (0.278)	1.106 (0.279)	1.150 (0.249)	1.572 (0.385)	0.886 (0.200)	1.715* (0.364)	1.209 (0.290)	0.893 (0.194)	1.081 (0.235)	1.147 (0.326)	1.389 (0.391)	1.678 (0.606)	0.608** (0.218)	0.778* (0.304)	0.130 (0.137)
self- employed household	2.263 (1.102)	1.252 (0.455)	1.014 (0.307)	1.315 (0.425)	1.390 (0.426)	1.031 (0.307)	1.277 (0.353)	1.215 (0.337)	1.013 (0.282)	1.521 (0.394)	0.994 (0.288)	0.675 (0.181)	0.786 (0.214)	1.013 (0.351)	1.220 (0.410)	1.891 (0.823)	0.312 (0.277)	0.343 (0.374)	-0.0684 (0.165)
residual household	1.848 (0.746)	2.370* (1.011)	1.820 (0.575)	0.884 (0.269)	1.536 (0.431)	1.250 (0.359)	1.054 (0.279)	1.092 (0.288)	1.152 (0.303)	1.183 (0.306)	1.156 (0.325)	1.041 (0.272)	1.529 (0.402)	0.815 (0.272)	1.155 (0.378)	1.259 (0.642)	0.486 (0.259)	0.557 (0.360)	0.115 (0.155)
Constant	5.710** (2.328)	2.896** (1.063)	2.987* (1.015)	1.947* (0.571)	4.325** (1.307)	3.189** (0.931)	2.220** (0.566)	0.753 (0.208)	1.358 (0.359)	0.387** (0.0980)	0.790 (0.218)	0.561 (0.147)	0.326** (0.0885)	0.0788** (0.0278)	0.135** (0.0470)	0.0633** (0.0283)	6.519** (0.271)	7.838** (0.360)	1.284** (0.155)

Observations	840	840	840	840	840	672	840	840	840	840	673	840	840	675	674	840	840	671	673	
R-squared																		0.081	0.106	0.123
Pseudo R2	0.0617	0.0704	0.0293	0.0493	0.161	0.0208	0.0316	0.0981	0.067	0.0644	0.0501	0.076	0.0690	0.0930	0.0784	0.0382				
Prob > Chi2	0.00101	0.00050	0.126	0.00062	0.000	0.188	0.00187	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.112				
Prob > F																		0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Manager household

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

In sum, these findings — while exploratory in nature — highlight how class socialization, and more specifically the differences between segments of the middle class, can play a meaningful role in shaping the adoption of ecological practices. The results suggest that the social environment in which individuals are raised, particularly the socio-professional profile of their family, is reflected in their ecological engagement, even for climate activists. These differences between the social origin of protesters also emerge in the interviews. Justine a 50-year-old actress, provides an intriguing example of how family background shapes ecological practices among those with a upper-middle class upbringing. Raised within an affluent environment due to her parents' advertising business, Justine lives between Paris and Marseille. Without prior activist experience, Justine views herself as “a sort of bourgeois, Parisian, over-consuming citizen.” Justine's ecological commitment include transferring her bank accounts to a cooperative bank, investing in an electric car, and prioritizing organic and locally sourced products. These practices, while ecologically conscious, are largely accessible to those with her level of affluence, aligning with a more individualized, consumer-based approach to environmental responsibility.

On the other hand, Émile, a 22-year-old engineering student, is the son of a high school teacher and a choreographer, both professions typically associated with the sociocultural class fraction. Émile became involved in the climate movement during his university studies, despite having no prior experience in activism. Over time, he developed a stronger awareness of climate issues and decided to take a gap year to volunteer on a WWOOF farm in Sweden. He explains that his motivations were to experience collective living and learn about permaculture. Émile notes that his family has always had an environmental awareness. He learned many ecological practices at home. His parents are separated. His mother, together with her new partner and daughter, transitioned to a vegetarian diet, so when Émile stays with her, he also avoids eating meat. His mother also tries to use alternative products instead of conventional soaps and disinfectants. His father, while less strict about meat consumption, practices organic waste recycling through composting. Overall, Émile feels a strong

ecological affinity with both of his parents, which reflects the cultural and environmental values typically seen in the sociocultural class.

Some significant variations in the likelihood of adopting ecological practices also concern, albeit to a lesser extent, the respondents' own occupation. Table A6 in the Appendix E reports the results of the regression models including occupational status. For students, two distinct categories were considered: high school students and university students. Among employed individuals, the following categories were distinguished: managers (used as the reference category), technical professionals, sociocultural professionals, employees. Two residual categories were used: inactive individuals, and others. The main findings highlight the lower odds among high school students of adopting certain practices—such as boycotting, changing one's diet, and being vegetarian or vegan—but a higher likelihood of engaging in alternative food networks. This result further supports the idea that having a certain degree of autonomy in household and lifestyle decisions—something that typically increases with entry into the labor market—is associated with a greater propensity to adopt ecological practices (Supporting this interpretation, Table A7 in the Appendix E shows that, within the student sub-sample, being a working student — compared to non-working students — is positively associated with the likelihood of adopting specific behaviors, such as reducing purchases and changing one's diet). Other notable results in Table A6 concern technical and sociocultural professionals, who show a greater likelihood of purchasing seasonal products. These findings align with the broader pattern observed in relation to parental occupation.

In summary, while several studies have shown that ecological practices are generally associated with middle-class groups, particularly sectors with high cultural capital (Carfagna et al. 2014; Johnston et al. 2011; Koos 2012; Stolle and Micheletti 2013), my results confirm this hypothesis, suggesting the emergence of an eco-habitus within the sample (Carfagna et al. 2014) — one that does not concern the middle class as a whole, but rather specific fractions of it. These findings indicate that individuals socialized in particular class fractions — especially those linked to sociocultural (and to a lesser extent technical) professional backgrounds — are more likely to adopt ecological practices, in contrast to those from more market-oriented and managerial households. This diversity challenges the idea of a homogeneous eco-habitus across upper classes, suggesting instead that ecological practices are concentrated within the dominated fraction of the dominant classes (Bourdieu 1987).

3.3 Political factors and values behind everyday ecological commitment

In addition to sociodemographic and socioeconomic factors, literature has highlighted the relevance of political and value orientations as potentially linked with the adoption of ecological practices. They often explore the general distinction between left-wing and right-wing sympathies, noting that pro-environmental behaviors are commonly associated with left-wing positions (Boström et al. 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2013), compared to right-wing ones (Allen et al. 2000; Dhont and Hodson 2014). However, some distinctions within the left wing must be acknowledged. According to Neumayer (2004, 172), those on the radical left would be more in favor of limiting energy consumption or paying more taxes rather than changing their consumer habits for environmental reasons because “they might favor government intervention to solve environmental problems and might not be supportive of the idea that individual behavior can or should improve the environment.” On the other hand, Stolle and Micheletti (2013) suggest that although left-wing orientations are more commonly associated with ethical consumption than liberal or green views, practitioners are never left-wing extremists. In contrast, Strømsnes (2005) finds that radical left-wing voters are those most engaged in political consumption practices. Ecological lifestyles often take the form of anti-consumption practices (Black and Cherrier 2010) and are linked to rejecting a consumerist society (Bossy 2014). Samdahl and Robertson (1989) demonstrated that indicators of economic factors, such as ‘pro-regulatory liberalism’ are reliable predictors of environmental behavior. Additionally, some theoretical studies associate ecological practices, such as veganism, with an anti-capitalist ethos (Dickstein et al. 2022), while new sustainable materialism theorists argue that everyday ecologism must be recognized as emancipation from the current flow of material production in capitalist society (Schlosberg and Coles 2016). Thus, while ecological practices are generally linked with left-wing orientations, the internal differences within the left—especially between moderate and radical orientations—remain a topic of debate with no clear and uniform findings.

Within the protest sample, instead, a clear pattern seems to emerge: political radicalism is associated with greater personal engagement in EEPs. The main findings concern two indicators used as independent variables in the regression models. The first is self-placement on the political spectrum (Table 8). Compared to the radical left (reference category), other positions—such as left and center-right—are generally less associated with the likelihood of adopting ecological and environmental practices (EEPs). Protesters identifying as left-wing, in particular, are less likely than radical leftists to purchase second-hand goods or to follow a vegetarian or vegan diet. Those identifying as center-right or do not declare their positioning not only show a lower likelihood of engaging in these two practices but are also less likely to boycott products and to score highly on both the EEP-12 and EEP-

16 indexes. Overall, these findings suggest that political radicality on the left is strongly associated with the consistent adoption of ecological practices.

Table 8. Political self-positioning

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter network food	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Political self-positioning Left	1.371 (0.340)	1.051 (0.200)	1.249 (0.190)	0.745* (0.105)	1.133 (0.148)	1.107 (0.153)	1.173 (0.149)	0.873 (0.118)	1.043 (0.132)	1.042 (0.118)	0.925 (0.120)	0.992 (0.11)	0.672** (0.0815)	0.748 (0.115)	0.819 (0.133)	0.867 (0.143)	-0.0481 (0.118)	-0.0918 (0.164)	-0.198* (0.0812)
Centre-Right/Undeclared	1.101 (0.344)	0.839 (0.226)	1.087 (0.250)	0.578** (0.122)	1.217 (0.264)	1.056 (0.222)	1.058 (0.203)	0.427** (0.0822)	0.824 (0.157)	1.140 (0.204)	0.984 (0.203)	0.975 (0.18)	0.453** (0.0940)	0.852 (0.208)	1.103 (0.259)	0.527 (0.175)	-0.432* (0.178)	-0.547* (0.257)	-0.173 (0.121)
Neither left/right	0.841 (0.381)	1.245 (0.520)	1.594 (0.554)	0.664 (0.183)	1.849* (0.547)	0.856 (0.222)	1.115 (0.286)	0.878 (0.217)	1.439 (0.388)	1.427 (0.347)	1.588 (0.422)	1.024 (0.24)	0.977 (0.240)	1.093 (0.326)	1.501 (0.451)	0.892 (0.304)	0.238 (0.240)	0.456 (0.312)	0.226 (0.159)
Constant	21.32** (8.358)	4.566** (1.429)	4.233** (1.109)	2.912** (0.647)	4.564** (1.037)	2.799** (0.647)	2.876** (0.598)	2.239** (0.484)	1.601* (0.322)	0.695 (0.130)	0.896 (0.193)	0.654 (0.13)	0.462** (0.0965)	0.165** (0.0443)	0.100** (0.0277)	0.260** (0.0687)	7.483** (0.205)	8.891** (0.290)	1.621** (0.136)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.082	0.110	0.109
Pseudo R2	0.0787	0.0456	0.0120	0.0406	0.139	0.0113	0.0387	0.104	0.0510	0.0393	0.0276	0.057	0.0371	0.0961	0.0990	0.0559			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.128	0.000	0.000	0.194	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Respondent's political self-positioning: radical left

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

This is further confirmed by another model that includes “anticapitalism” as an independent variable (Table 9). Those who are partly or fully in favor of getting out of capitalism to address the climate crisis are more likely to adopt 7 out of 16 ecological practices, including the more demanding and less common ones, such as renouncing flying, vegetarianism, and self-production. They are also more likely to adopt a growing number of practices when considering the EEP-12, EEP-16 and EEP-6 indexes, compared to those who do not agree getting out of capitalism (reference category). Political radicality, therefore, reinforces everyday ecological commitment.

Table 9. Anticapitalism

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter network food	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Anticapitalism agree	1.270 (0.366)	0.714 (0.194)	1.131 (0.219)	1.836** (0.301)	1.140 (0.206)	1.028 (0.181)	0.993 (0.164)	1.797** (0.288)	1.282 (0.203)	1.345* (0.202)	1.181 (0.200)	1.803** (0.291)	1.542* (0.265)	1.506 (0.327)	1.827** (0.406)	1.784* (0.474)	0.632** (0.160)	0.887** (0.224)	0.424** (0.0981)
Constant	19.85** (8.459)	6.270** (2.354)	4.458** (1.243)	1.425 (0.337)	4.657** (1.213)	2.840** (0.734)	3.186** (0.765)	1.236 (0.295)	1.363 (0.307)	0.579* (0.124)	0.787 (0.191)	0.397** (0.0906)	0.251** (0.0611)	0.101** (0.0311)	0.0570** (0.0183)	0.142** (0.0448)	6.930** (0.238)	8.160** (0.329)	1.195** (0.142)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.088	0.117	0.112
Pseudo R2	0.0765	0.0463	0.0099	0.0434	0.137	0.0106	0.0379	0.101	0.0503	0.0399	0.0256	0.0639	0.0301	0.0956	0.101	0.0568			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.169	0.000	0.000	0.138	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: to solve the climate crisis it is necessary to exit capitalism: disagree

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

Attitudinal factors related to how individuals perceive the effectiveness of personal actions in addressing climate change also play a role. Specifically, protesters who agree with the statement that “Stopping climate change must primarily be accomplished through voluntarily lifestyle change” are more likely to adopt certain practices—such as anti-waste strategies and upcycling—and to engage in a broader range of ecological and environmental practices, as reflected in higher scores on the EEP indexes (Table 10). However, it is important to note that the positive effects of this belief do not extend to a large number of practices and are especially absent in relation to the less commonly adopted ones—such as flying less, adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet, engaging in alternative food networks, and self-producing vegetables, clothing, and cosmetics. This is confirmed by the results related to the EEP-6 index. These findings suggest that support for individual lifestyle change as a solution to the climate crisis may influence the adoption of some practices, but does not significantly increase the likelihood of adopting more demanding or structurally challenging ones.

Table 10. Lifestyle efficacy

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Lifestyle change is the solution agree	1.369 (0.410)	1.680* (0.409)	1.442* (0.256)	0.832 (0.140)	1.375 (0.241)	1.029 (0.149)	1.143 (0.179)	0.944 (0.140)	1.200 (0.179)	2.046** (0.289)	1.155 (0.160)	1.220 (0.181)	1.209 (0.184)	1.072 (0.184)	0.983 (0.167)	0.748 (0.152)	0.386** (0.138)	0.427* (0.171)	0.0940 (0.0846)
Constant	25.54** (14.33)	3.576** (1.346)	3.689** (1.121)	2.543** (0.660)	3.238** (0.927)	2.924** (0.726)	2.381** (0.594)	2.366** (0.601)	1.541 (0.369)	0.433** (0.0991)	0.863 (0.195)	0.591 (0.149)	0.315** (0.0833)	0.138** (0.0406)	0.0821** (0.0241)	0.345** (0.102)	7.189** (0.241)	8.580** (0.295)	1.488** (0.138)
Observations	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,057	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,058	1,059	1,059	1,058	1,058	1,059	1,059	1,057	1,058
R-squared																	0.104	0.110	0.097
Pseudo R2	0.0985	0.0435	0.0130	0.0479	0.104	0.0108	0.0391	0.0852	0.0499	0.0550	0.0210	0.059	0.0411	0.0923	0.101	0.0617			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.00203	0.383	0.000	0.000	0.223	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.0020	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F											5						0.000	0.000	0.000
Robust standard errors in parentheses																			
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05																			
Reference categories are as follows: stopping climate change must primarily be accomplished through voluntarily lifestyle change: disagree																			
Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.																			
Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.																			

Further support for this interpretation comes from a variable measured in the French sample. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement that “climate change is primarily the result of individual bad behavior” (see Table A10). Those who agreed with this view were more likely to buy unpackaged products but less likely to be vegetarian or vegan, compared to those who disagreed.

More than belief in lifestyle change as a solution per se, it is the perceived complementarity between collective protest and individual lifestyle transformation that emerges as the attitudinal variable most strongly associated with the adoption of ecological practices—both individually and cumulatively (Table 11). Protesters who agree with the statement “Protesting without changing one’s lifestyle is useless” are significantly more likely to engage in a range of practices. These include consuming seasonal fruits and vegetables, adopting anti-waste strategies, reducing consumption, buying unpackaged products, boycotting, changing one’s diet, and engaging in upcycling. In addition, these individuals are also more likely to adopt an increasing number of ecological practices overall, as shown by higher scores on the EEP-12 and EEP-16 indexes. It is worth noting, however, that these are not the most transformative or least common practices, but rather the more widespread and accessible ones. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that while belief in the efficacy of individual

lifestyle change only partially drives the adoption of ecological practices among climate activists, it is viewing lifestyle change as part of a broader social transformation that plays a more significant role instead.

Table 11. Complementarity lifestyle change-protesting

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Altered food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Complementarity lifestyle/demonstrating agree	1.725* (0.387)	1.781* (0.312)	1.379* (0.207)	1.181 (0.159)	1.809* (0.225)	1.274 (0.171)	1.544** (0.187)	1.443* (0.185)	1.318 (0.160)	1.726* (0.193)	1.057 (0.136)	0.835 (0.094)	0.921 (0.110)	1.164 (0.180)	1.261 (0.206)	1.030 (0.176)	0.550* (0.120)	0.663* (0.170)	0.0527 (0.0803)
Constant	17.96* (6.992)	3.342* (0.997)	4.055* (1.031)	2.076* (0.453)	3.609* (0.808)	2.486* (0.577)	2.411** (0.497)	1.580* (0.342)	1.397 (0.282)	0.517* (0.0977)	0.869 (0.187)	0.731 (0.144)	0.379** (0.0791)	0.130* (0.0344)	0.0818* (0.0232)	0.227* (0.0584)	7.096* (0.204)	8.448* (0.288)	1.505* (0.135)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.091	0.116	0.101
Pseudo R2	0.0836	0.0549	0.0130	0.0366	0.148	0.0125	0.0445	0.0981	0.051	0.0486	0.0251	0.0589	0.0270	0.0938	0.0966	0.0525			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0574	0.000	0.000	0.0567	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: demonstrating without changing one's lifestyle is useless: disagree

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

In sum, these results confirm two key points. First, they highlight the persistence of a certain ambivalence among climate activists regarding their individual position and the role of personal choices as a potential remedy to the climate crisis. The data do not resolve this ambivalence: within the sample, sectors coexist that reject this argument and others that support it. Second, this ambivalence has tangible effects on practices. While belief in the relevance of individual ecological actions can indeed encourage greater adoption of such practices, this belief does not necessarily translate into the generalized adoption of ecological practices, particularly when these are more demanding in terms of resources or personal renunciation. A more decisive attitudinal factor appears to be political radicality, which is associated with a greater likelihood of adopting ecological practices—including the more demanding ones.

Emotions related to the climate crisis play a significant role in influencing the adoption of ecological practices (Tables A11 to A15 in the Appendix E). Specifically, anger and anxiety are the emotions most strongly associated with a higher likelihood of adopting practices (respectively 7 and 6 out of 16 practices, and cumulative indexes), followed by fear (4 practices, and cumulative indexes) and optimism (3 practices, and cumulative indexes). On the other hand, powerlessness has a negative impact on the likelihood of giving up air travel. Thus, it is primarily feelings of discomfort—such as anxiety, anger, and fear—that drive the adoption of ecological practices. In this sense, agreeing with the statement ‘Environmental problems have reduced my confidence in the future’ is positively associated with six practices and additive indexes and negatively associated with only one (joining an alternative food network) (Table A16 in the Appendix E). Conversely, agreeing with the idea that ‘There is still enough time to overcome the climate crisis’ is negatively associated with boycotting and cumulative EEPs, while it is positively associated with joining an alternative food network (Table A17). In general, distrust in the future and a sense of disillusionment lead to a greater propensity to adopt practices. In accordance to this result, the belief that technology is the primary solution to the climate crisis (see Table A18 in the Appendix E) is negatively associated to the likelihood of adopting four practices such as buying second-hand, changing diet, giving up flying, becoming vegetarian and self-producing cosmetics and to adopt a higher number of practices on the additive indexes. These results highlight how, within the climate movement, there is also an individual-level critique of the principles of ecological modernization—understood as a techno-optimistic and future-oriented vision. They also reveal a misalignment between those who endorse such principles and the actual daily adoption of ecological practices: believing in the principles of ecological modernization does not translate into the consistent everyday application of ecological norms. By contrast, opposing these principles—expressing distrust in the future and skepticism toward technology—is associated with a deeper transformation of daily life.

Consistent with this perspective, many respondents in the qualitative interviews describe the adoption of such practices as a way to prepare for life in a post-catastrophic society, framing them in terms of resilience and survival. For instance, Valentina, is a 24-year-old activist, who has been a member of Extinction Rebellion since 2019. At the time of the interview, she was in Slovenia for a month, participating in the European Civil Service program at an eco-village. Even before this experience, she had already embraced several ecological practices, such as veganism, refraining from consumerism, and making her own cosmetics and soaps. During her stay at the eco-village, she further expanded her skills by learning to grow her own vegetables. Valentina believes that changing one’s individual lifestyle without engaging in collective action is not only unhelpful but can also be harmful,

as it fosters feelings of guilt. Initially, her primary focus was on reducing her personal carbon emissions. Now, however, she has come to value ecological practices not for their direct impact but because she enjoys living this way. This shift in perspective is paired with another justification: preparation. She explains:

I believe that what I am learning now will become essential in the future. Learning to grow food or to live like this will be crucial because many resources might no longer be available. So, while I partly do this because I wanted to learn these skills anyway, I also believe that, given the scenarios ahead, these abilities will be vital for survival. (Valentina, i.6)

Valentina envisions scenarios of societal collapse and expresses strong emotions about them:

Fear. A lot of fear. Anger. But the anger, as I've mentioned before, is mainly for all the people who are already suffering the consequences, especially those with the least resources. [...] When I think about my future, I feel a lot of fear—fear of societal collapse, fear of what might happen to me, like being at greater risk of violence or struggling to find food. But at the same time, I find hope in the community around me, particularly in the bonds I've formed within Extinction Rebellion. Knowing that there are others who share my worldview and with whom I can act even if everything falls apart gives me strength. (Valentina, i.6)

For Valentina, the activist community represents a way to feel safe in the face of the advancing crisis, and ecological practices—especially those involving radical lifestyle changes—serve as a means of coping with the emotional burden it entails:

I think that what I am learning now will become fundamental in the future. That is, learning how to grow food or, in general, how to live this way, because many things might no longer be available. So in reality, yes, I am doing this partly because these are things I would have wanted to learn anyway, but also because, given the scenarios we are facing, I believe this kind of knowledge will be useful for living. (Valentina, i.6)

Highly committed activists like her tend to focus on how to mitigate future threats, and they view everyday ecological actions as central to this effort. This kind of awareness deeply influences the meaning attributed to ecological practices.

Overall, these results highlight a heterogeneity within the movement in terms of attitudes and political orientations, with divisions concerning political radicalism, the role of ecological practices as potential solutions to the climate crisis, and trust in the future and in technology. This heterogeneity is also reflected in practices: the analysis suggests a sort of contrast between the more radical segments, who appear more willing to transform their lifestyle in an ecological direction, and the

more moderate segments, who—while believing in eco-modernist and individualizing principles—are less inclined to make substantial changes to their everyday habits. These differences will be examined in greater depth in Chapters 5 and 6. The analysis now turns to the connection between secondary socialization within the movement and the adoption of these practices.

3.4 Protest and practice: activist socialization and everyday ecological practices

Membership in an organization, particularly an environmental organization, emerges as the most significant determinant of adopting an ecological lifestyle. One of the main findings from the regression analysis is that individuals who do not belong to any organization—compared to those who are members of at least one (reference category)—are significantly less likely to adopt ecological practices in nearly half of the cases examined (7 out of 16). Non-membership also decreases the likelihood of adopting a greater number of practices overall, as shown by the cumulative EEP-12, EEP-16, and EEP-6 indexes (Table 12). Interestingly, the accumulation of multiple memberships in various organizations does not necessarily lead to greater adoption of practices. Those with membership in two or more organizations are no more likely to adopt ecological practices except in the case of participation in alternative food networks, which represents an additional form of membership, and giving up a flight. Therefore, the key distinction lies between individuals who do not belong to any organization and those who are members of at least one, the latter are more likely to integrate ecological practices into their daily lives. The effects hold even when adding additional controls referred to primary socializations (parents' occupation) as shown in Table A19 in the Appendix E. This means that beside primary socialization, the fact of participating in one organization or more leads to an additional disposition to adopt ecological practices.

Table 12. Membership

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Membershi																			
p																			
No	0.625	0.625*	0.736	0.663**	0.847	0.900	0.872	0.520**	0.833	0.724*	0.794	0.798	0.558**	0.575**	0.943	0.453**	-	-	-
Membershi								*	*			*				*	0.694**	0.966**	0.409**
p	(0.153)	(0.122)	(0.119)	(0.0932)	(0.118)	(0.131)	(0.118)	(0.0684)	(0.110)	(0.0878)	(0.109)	(0.099)	(0.0737)	(0.0987)	(0.156)	(0.0979)	(0.119)	(0.165)	(0.0816)
Two	0.894	0.709	0.702	1.268	1.129	0.987	0.851	0.834	0.870	0.824	1.264	1.113	0.854	0.836	1.215	1.717**	-0.0904	-0.0830	0.104
	(0.309)	(0.175)	(0.142)	(0.245)	(0.204)	(0.181)	(0.143)	(0.152)	(0.145)	(0.123)	(0.218)	(0.171)	(0.138)	(0.165)	(0.251)	(0.327)	(0.164)	(0.222)	(0.105)
More than	1.428	1.247	1.055	0.916	0.874	1.073	0.799	1.312	0.769	0.938	0.953	1.581*	0.749	0.803	1.040	1.503	0.0200	-0.211	-0.0476
Two																			

	(0.751)	(0.503)	(0.334)	(0.242)	(0.209)	(0.268)	(0.181)	(0.366)	(0.176)	(0.201)	(0.228)	(0.339)	(0.180)	(0.219)	(0.296)	(0.433)	(0.218)	(0.314)	(0.167)
Constant	29.67**	5.904**	5.799**	2.610**	5.460**	3.004**	3.430**	2.548**	1.834*	0.853	0.937	0.680*	0.448**	0.177**	0.0932**	0.256**	7.707**	9.231**	1.662**
	(12.05)	(1.850)	(1.509)	(0.551)	(1.210)	(0.688)	(0.694)	(0.540)	(0.358)	(0.154)	(0.197)	(0.129)	(0.0922)	(0.0457)	(0.0256)	(0.0648)	(0.196)	(0.274)	(0.128)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.097	0.128	0.122
Pseudo R2	0.0823	0.0517	0.0136	0.0433	0.138	0.0110	0.0389	0.108	0.0505	0.0414	0.0288	0.0626	0.0367	0.101	0.0961	0.0792			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0634	0.000	0.000	0.218	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05
 Reference categories are as follows: Membership in organizations: One
 Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.
 Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

While the accumulation of memberships is not strongly associated with a greater propensity to adopt practices, the type of organization to which one belongs plays a significant role. Membership in environmental, ecological, or animal rights organizations has the most substantial positive effect, being associated with 15 out of 16 ecological practices and positively influencing the three additive indexes (Table A20 in the Appendix E). Conversely, membership in trade unions negatively impacts the likelihood of adopting practices such as reducing purchases, buying second-hand, changing diets, and choosing unpackaged goods, and it is also negatively associated with the EEP-12 scale (Table A21 in the Appendix E). Political party membership similarly has a negative effect, being associated with lower adoption rates of six practices and lower scores on both cumulative indexes (Table A22 in the Appendix E). This highlights a distinction between those engaged in electoral and representational politics—who are less inclined to transform their lifestyles—and those involved in movement-based networks, particularly those focused on environmental struggles, who are more likely to make such changes. These findings indicate that ecological practices and lifestyle changes are not solely a matter of individual motivation or attitude. Instead, they are strongly shaped by one’s involvement in collective organizational frameworks. Those who participate in movement-oriented groups, particularly those focused on environmental issues, are more inclined to integrate ecological behaviors into their daily lives. While Micheletti (2003, 28) theorizes the concept of “individualized collective action,” according to which “people do not need collectivism for collective action,” and, in line with theories of ecological modernization and individualization discussed in Chapter 2, suggests that people in contemporary society are called upon to individually assume responsibility for global challenges such as the ecological crisis—for example through their market choices—the findings presented here challenge this theorization. At least for this segment of climate activists, the

adoption of ecological practices goes hand in hand with collective action carried out through organized collective channels.

Activist experience also plays a role in shaping ecological practices, particularly when considering the frequency of participation in climate demonstrations. Compared to individuals who have never taken part in a climate protest (reference category), having attended at least one demonstration is positively associated with the adoption of 2 ecological practices (see Table 13). Participation in more than one protest is associated with the adoption of 9 practices, while participation in more than five protests is associated with the adoption of 13 practices. Moreover, increasing frequency of protest participation is significantly associated with higher scores on the EEP-12, EEP-16, and EEP-6 indexes. These associations hold after controlling for parental occupation (see Table A23 in the Appendix E), suggesting that secondary socialization—operationalized here as participation in climate demonstrations—is linked to lifestyle transformation beyond the influence of family habitus.

Table 13. Prior participation to climate protests

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Past Participation																			
Once	1.051 (0.355)	1.421 (0.375)	0.889 (0.187)	1.131 (0.216)	0.997 (0.194)	1.260 (0.252)	1.334 (0.247)	1.360 (0.255)	1.007 (0.190)	0.927 (0.159)	2.011** (0.399)	1.362 (0.248)	1.334 (0.254)	1.533 (0.388)	1.098 (0.270)	2.345** (0.689)	0.334 (0.177)	0.603* (0.246)	0.419** (0.112)
More than one	1.359 (0.408)	1.751* (0.398)	1.646* (0.328)	1.848** (0.320)	1.393 (0.237)	1.808** (0.324)	1.477* (0.234)	1.652** (0.266)	1.227 (0.201)	1.138 (0.169)	1.850** (0.322)	1.563** (0.244)	1.382 (0.230)	1.507 (0.345)	1.349 (0.295)	2.304** (0.625)	0.767** (0.150)	1.140** (0.211)	0.489** (0.0958)
More than five	1.381 (0.452)	1.928* (0.488)	1.347 (0.286)	2.223** (0.430)	1.667** (0.312)	1.671** (0.318)	1.556* (0.268)	2.759** (0.525)	1.517* (0.272)	1.255 (0.200)	2.029** (0.370)	2.955** (0.494)	2.339** (0.405)	2.359*** (0.557)	1.832** (0.416)	2.598** (0.736)	1.238** (0.165)	1.790** (0.228)	0.921** (0.107)
Constant	19.30** (8.435)	2.912* (1.013)	3.823** (1.091)	1.429 (0.338)	4.004** (1.014)	1.891* (0.487)	2.257** (0.524)	1.137 (0.265)	1.362 (0.311)	0.666 (0.141)	0.501** (0.122)	0.373** (0.0833)	0.228** (0.0565)	0.0838** (0.0272)	0.0661** (0.0212)	0.106** (0.0363)	6.721** (0.222)	7.750** (0.309)	0.981** (0.139)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.116	0.154	0.152
Pseudo R2	0.0779	0.0524	0.0188	0.0507	0.143	0.0189	0.0419	0.110	0.0531	0.0401	0.0355	0.0801	0.0407	0.105	0.102	0.0642			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0181	0.000	0.000	0.0085	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Past participation in climate protests: Never

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

This trend extends to participation in protests for causes unrelated to climate issues. Having taken part in other social protests—compared to not having done so—is associated with higher odds of adopting four ecological practices and with higher scores across all EEP indexes (Table 14). However, not all forms of non-climate-related protest show a uniformly positive association with ecological practices. Prior involvement in certain types of protest, such as animal rights demonstrations, is strongly associated with the adoption of 8 out of 16 ecological practices (Table A24 in the Appendix E). By contrast, participation in labor rights protests is associated with lower odds of adopting five practices (reduced purchasing, giving up car use, giving up flights, buying unpackaged products, and changing one’s diet), as well as with lower scores on the cumulative indexes—although it shows a positive association with participation in alternative food networks (Table A25 in the Appendix E). Therefore, while protest participation generally appears to foster the adoption of sustainable lifestyle changes, this is not consistently the case across all protest types.

Table 14. Prior participation to other protests

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Past other protest																			
Yes	1.296 (0.307)	0.863 (0.188)	1.112 (0.190)	1.516* (0.232)	0.876 (0.132)	1.332 (0.217)	1.217 (0.171)	1.578** (0.227)	0.874 (0.127)	1.279 (0.170)	1.143 (0.178)	1.166 (0.158)	1.361* (0.198)	1.336 (0.255)	1.562* (0.309)	1.422 (0.313)	0.353** (0.135)	0.695** (0.199)	0.266** (0.0917)
Constant	19.88** (8.372)	5.318** (1.846)	4.522** (1.262)	1.662* (0.386)	5.778** (1.403)	2.302** (0.580)	2.711** (0.602)	1.382 (0.314)	1.862* (0.409)	0.606* (0.124)	0.808 (0.192)	0.576* (0.123)	0.281** (0.0645)	0.113** (0.0327)	0.0649** (0.0203)	0.173** (0.0513)	7.167** (0.217)	8.311** (0.305)	1.322** (0.141)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.082	0.113	0.106
Pseudo R2	0.0770	0.0452	0.00995	0.0400	0.137	0.0125	0.0389	0.0989	0.0495	0.0397	0.0254	0.0583	0.0290	0.0946	0.0989	0.0546			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.173	0.000	0.000	0.0485	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Past participation in other protests: No

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

The adoption of EEPs is closely linked to a tendency to engage in broader repertoires of action. Analyses reveal that collective actions—ranging from consensual activities such as contacting a signing petitions (Table A26 in the Appendix E), to contentious actions like direct actions such as blockades, occupations, civil disobedience—are all associated with higher odds of adopting ecological practices. These connections hold true both for individual practices and for the cumulative adoption of multiple practices. In particular, practices that involve significant lifestyle changes, such as giving up meat or air travel, as well as self-production activities (e.g., growing vegetables, making cosmetics, or crafting clothes), are strongly linked to the adoption of contentious repertoires of action like doing direct action (Table 15).

Table 15. Direct Action

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand purchase	Reduced car	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
direct action yes	2.133** (0.608)	1.381 (0.278)	1.249 (0.197)	2.358** (0.369)	1.445** (0.196)	0.876 (0.114)	1.237 (0.160)	1.563** (0.208)	1.248 (0.158)	1.319* (0.150)	1.644** (0.208)	1.891** (0.223)	1.753** (0.209)	1.611** (0.235)	1.531** (0.232)	1.350 (0.223)	0.798** (0.111)	0.992** (0.153)	0.536** (0.0759)
Constant	20.21** (7.736)	4.310** (1.275)	4.631** (1.125)	1.877** (0.378)	4.712** (1.004)	3.033** (0.666)	2.982** (0.585)	1.757** (0.356)	1.567* (0.295)	0.682* (0.119)	0.772 (0.157)	0.541** (0.101)	0.302** (0.0616)	0.121** (0.0309)	0.0819** (0.0217)	0.212** (0.0517)	7.223** (0.189)	8.570** (0.261)	1.373** (0.120)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.104	0.133	0.136
Pseudo R2	0.0869	0.0473	0.0111	0.0547	0.141	0.0112	0.0393	0.0997	0.0506	0.0407	0.0340	0.0710	0.0375	0.101	0.101	0.0550			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0808	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: participated in a direct action: yes

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

In sum, these findings on the relationship between ‘activist experience’ and ecological practices support the hypothesis that participation in a movement, a form of secondary socialization, fosters dispositions to transform one’s lifestyle as predicted by radical habitus theory (Crossley 2002, 2003). Radical habitus emerges through interaction with the movement’s structures and experiences of collective action. The data indicate a positive association between having a core position in the

movement—defined by membership in groups, participation in multiple protest events, and the use of both consensual and contentious repertoires of action—and adopting a high number of ecological practices. That said, however, the quantitative data do not definitively establish how daily practices change before and after an individual becomes active in the movement. These results, therefore, do not rule out the possibility that certain practices may already be in place before joining the movement.

Several interviews, for instance, reveal that an initial awareness of ecological issues can prompt individuals to begin transforming their lifestyles. Benedetta, 27, is a consultant in a renewable energy company. Since 2019, she has been actively involved in Extinction Rebellion. Before joining the climate movement, Benedetta had already engaged in activism as a teenager with WWF and had been active in her school community. However, her first significant encounter with climate activism was through the zero-waste movement, which she discovered by watching online videos. Inspired, Benedetta adopted a series of strict ecological practices, including refusing to buy new clothes, becoming vegan, eliminating plastic use, and minimizing air travel. At the time, she viewed these individual practices as central to combating the climate crisis. Yet, this focus brought immense mental strain and exhaustion. She recalls:

Trying to eliminate plastic drove me crazy because I truly tried to remove it from everything—buying unpackaged goods and so on—even in situations where it wasn't easy [...] I remember sometimes feeling completely overwhelmed, especially when traveling. (Benedetta, i.11)

When Benedetta began her involvement with Extinction Rebellion, she experienced a shift in perspective. She notes:

I stopped blaming myself as I used to, even with plastic. Before, it created a considerable psychological burden for me. I already have so many issues with eco-anxiety, so adding this was just unacceptable. (Benedetta, i.11)

This change in mindset did not mean abandoning her learned practices but rather approaching them with a more balanced attitude:

Now, I try to limit plastic, of course. Compared to before, I still pay attention, but without exhausting myself—without striving for that kind of perfection, which shouldn't even exist. (Benedetta, i.11)

Additionally, Benedetta began incorporating new practices into her life. She experimented with homemade cosmetics, such as making toothpaste and deodorant. Eventually, she shifted to using alum stone or, as she humorously admits, sometimes no deodorant at all, owing to her self-described laziness. She also explored fermentation techniques to preserve seasonal foods and also experimented

with gardening. In conclusion, Benedetta's experience illustrates how participation in collective movements can alleviate the burden of individual responsibility while sustaining ecological engagement.

While, as confirmed by many interviews, ecological practices may already be part of activists' lives before their involvement in the movement, the findings suggest that as movement participation deepens—and secondary socialization becomes more pervasive—the perceived centrality of these practices may decline, but their level of adoption does not. This provides further evidence of the activation of a radical habitus: one that goes beyond rational, deliberate decisions to adopt effective behaviors and instead reflects a deep-seated orientation that sustains and expands ecological practices within the context of activism.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I addressed the first research question of this study: What are protesters' dispositions related to the adoption of everyday ecological practices? After presenting the main social and political characteristics of the sample under study, I focused on the EEPs adopted by the protesters surveyed. This chapter highlights several key findings. First, the adoption of EEPs among climate protesters is widespread and, on average, significantly higher than that observed in the general population. While this might seem predictable, it reinforces the idea that those who participate in protests are not distinguished solely by their political views, but also by their everyday behaviors. This provides a more concrete understanding of how political engagement is reflected in daily practices.

Second, the diffusion of ecological practices is uneven. Some less demanding practices are widely adopted across all segments of the protesters studied, whereas others are less common and show greater variability. This indicates that there is no straightforward spillover effect: adopting certain practices does not necessarily lead to the adoption of others. The comparison between the Italian and French samples also highlights that, despite a general similarity, there are differences in specific practices adopted by activists in the two countries. Among Italian activists, practices aimed at limiting waste—such as minimizing consumption or engaging in upcycling—are more widespread. By contrast, among French activists, more “combative” practices such as boycotting products or giving up air travel are more common. These patterns suggest that the differing levels of political maturity of the movements in the two contexts may also shape individual activists' choices.

Third, ecological practices are closely linked to specific sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Of these, gender plays the most significant role. Even within a politically active population, gender differences strongly distinguish those who engage more in EEPs from those who engage less. The literature offers varying interpretations of this phenomenon. On the one hand, some perspectives interpret these findings—particularly those related to sustainable consumption—as the result of gendered socialization of ecological norms. On the other hand, more critical perspectives view them as a way for women to distance themselves from hegemonic, masculine polluting behaviors. The results of this analysis suggest that such gendered socialization effects are indeed present, and that identifying as a woman is associated with a greater tendency to modify one's behaviors. However, the combination with interview analysis reveals that these findings do not reflect merely a mechanical reproduction of a socialization mechanism. Rather, women reclaim these practices and are aware that, through them, they also assert a symbolic distinction from the polluting behaviors of the men within their families and domestic settings.

In addition to gender, class habitus is associated with greater adoption of ecological practices. Specifically, individuals from families with a socio-cultural professional background are more likely to adopt ecological practices compared to those from managerial or entrepreneurial backgrounds. This finding aligns with interpretations of new political-cultural cleavages within the new middle class, as proposed, among others, by Kriesi (1998). Furthermore, these results add nuance to the idea of an eco-habitus (Carfagna et al. 2014), namely the notion that ecological practices are distinctive of the upper-middle class with high levels of cultural capital compared to other classes. The data suggest that, at least for this sample of activists, it is possible to identify an eco-habitus mechanism that pertains specifically to certain sectors of the middle class, namely those linked to the socio-cultural sphere.

Fourth, political radicalism correlates with a greater likelihood of adopting ecological practices, including those that are less common and more demanding. This is a significant finding, as studies on general populations have often emphasized a correlation between political moderation and the adoption of ecological practices. Moreover, it is important to note that among attitudinal variables, belief in ecological practices as potential solutions to the climate crisis does increase the general likelihood of their adoption—but only to a limited extent, and primarily for practices that are more accessible. In contrast, variables related to political radicalism are more strongly associated with the adoption of practices that bring about deeper transformations in everyday life. Furthermore, eco-

modernist elements such as trust in the future and in technology as solutions to the crisis are inversely correlated with the adoption of ecological practices. This highlights how, despite eco-modernist visions identifying citizen-consumers as key agents of ecological reform, it is precisely those who align with these positions who are less inclined to change their lifestyles compared to those who reject such views.

Fifth, participation in groups and organizations, along with prior protest experience, is strongly associated with the adoption of an ecological lifestyle. In this sense, a useful interpretative framework is provided by the concept of radical habitus (Crossley 2002, 2003): similar to what happens in the phase of primary socialization, daily actions align with the norms incorporated through activist experiences in secondary socialization. Even when accounting for primary socialization, the associations between activist socialization and ecological practices remain robust. This demonstrates a particularly strong link between collective action and ecological engagement and suggests that the theoretical framework of individualized collective action is ill-suited to explain the behavior of the most committed climate activists.

This analysis, which remains exploratory and does not aim to provide results that are generalizable to the entire climate movement or the general population, nonetheless highlights the potential link between social dispositions and the adoption of ecological practices among the activists examined. Ecological practices thus do not appear to reflect merely a value-based motivation, but rather seem to be strongly shaped by contextual factors and socialization processes. Moreover, a dynamic emerges whereby women, the most politically radical activists, those furthest from eco-modernist positions, and those most actively engaged in movement structures are more committed to transforming their lifestyles compared to men, moderates, and more individualized or less engaged protesters. Building on these findings, Chapters 5 and 6 will focus on how climate activists make sense of and justify their involvement in ecological practices in their everyday lives, and how social dispositions are connected to the reflexive ways in which these practices are interpreted and legitimized.

Chapter 5. Justifying Everyday Ecological Practices

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described the socio-demographic and activism-related factors that are associated with the adoption everyday ecological practices (EEPs) by climate protesters. In this chapter, I turn to a complementary yet distinct question: how do protesters make sense of these ecological choices? Specifically, I investigate the discursive justifications climate protesters use to legitimize their engagement in EEPs. These justifications are not mutually exclusive, and often appear in contradictory or hybrid forms within the same discourse. My goal is to identify and understand the plural systems of justification that individuals draw upon to explain their ecological behaviors. Empirically, this chapter is based on 51 in-depth semi-structured interviews with climate activists in Italy and France. Methodologically, I combine Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) with a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) to map what I define as the ‘space of justifications’. The MCA allows me to analyze how different justifications co-occur and cluster into distinct justificatory systems. These systems are organized along two main axes: one that contrasts strategic reasoning with preparatory logics, and another that differentiates moral-normative justifications (such as guilt or rightness) from arguments based on personal alignment and coherence. This approach enables me to make two main contributions, which I develop across this and the following chapter. First, in this chapter, I examine how ecological practices are not only enacted but also reflexively interpreted by climate activists in specific ways. Second, in the next chapter, I reintroduce a structural dimension into the analysis of reflexivity, demonstrating that these justificatory systems are associated with social background and primary/secondary socialization experiences. In short, this chapter provides a contribution to understanding how ecological commitment is made meaningful in activist contexts—how it is explained, justified, and socially anchored.

2. Motivations and Justifications

As already discussed in the theoretical chapter, in this study, I use the term ‘justifications’ rather than ‘motivations.’ While the two concepts share some common ground, I consider ‘motivation’ to be closely tied to the idea that internalized values translate into consciously desired ends, which in turn drive the adoption of specific practices (Vaisey 2009). This perspective thus conceptualizes values—and, by extension, motivations—as resources mobilized *ex-ante* to drive action, positioning motivation as the causal force behind behavior (Weber 1978). Many studies on environmental behaviors focus particularly on the motivations that influence ecological actions (K. R. S. Hamann

and Reese 2020; Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002; Onwezen et al. 2013; Pelletier et al. 1998, 1999; Reese and Junge 2017; Shipley and van Riper 2022; Turaga et al. 2010).

Justifications, instead, are reflective frameworks, arguments, and interpretations that individuals employ in discourse to make sense of their actions. They operate *ex-post*, after an action has been carried out. In this sense, justifications function as tools through which individuals legitimize their behavior. They are plural, adaptable, and not mutually exclusive. The “justificatory school”, to use Vaisey’s (2009) term, emphasizes the reflexive capacities of actors to interpret and respond to specific situations. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006, 49) refer to justifications as a “common higher principle” in the name of which a certain action is performed. They argue that “people need to justify their actions”, highlighting how individuals are constantly compelled to engage in justification. According to their framework, justifications are symmetrical, meaning that different forms of justification can coexist and be deployed contextually, without a strict hierarchy or predetermined order. Along similar lines, Swidler (2001) argues that values—and consequently, motivations—are not active determinants of behavior but rather elements that actors draw upon to ‘justify’ their choices and ‘make sense’ of their actions. Cultural schemas, therefore, do not drive action directly but instead serve as justifications individuals provide when making choices and aligning them with personal objectives. Swidler’s key insight is that justifications can be understood as resources selectively drawn from a cultural “tool kit” to respond to specific situations. As she puts it: “Action is not determined by one’s values. Rather, action and values are organized to take advantage of cultural competences” (Swidler 1986, 275). Consequently, justifications can be interchanged, combined, or intertwined to make sense of a particular choice in a given context. A few studies focus on justifications connected to the realm of ecological practices (Balsiger et al. 2019; Johnston et al. 2011; Lorenzen 2012, 2016; Schroeder 2013; Truninger 2005).

However, justification-based studies, while acknowledging actors’ reflexivity associated with practices, do not fully explain how different socialization paths shape the selection of distinct justifications for the same practice. In this regard, habitus theory provides valuable insights into how justifications are formed and employed. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, Bourdieu (1987, 1990, 1998) conceptualizes habitus both a structured structure—shaped by material conditions of existence—and a structuring structure—capable of generating practices and perceptual schemas. It produces the mental frameworks through which individuals interpret and evaluate practices. These perceptual schemas are shaped by an individual’s social position and reflect class or group

distinctions. Consequently, individuals with a shared habitus contribute to reproducing the social order, including through their perceptions.

For now, the aim of this chapter is to identify and map the main justifications that climate protesters use to make sense of their choices. In the next chapter, I will explore how these justifications relate to specific social backgrounds. This initial mapping serves to show how even seemingly antithetical rationales can be articulated into coherent systems of justification. My goal, therefore, is to examine how these perceptual frameworks are discursively constructed, how different justifications interact and combine, and to lay the groundwork for their sociological anchoring in the following chapter.

To investigate this object, I focused on the reasoning that activists themselves provide when discussing their ecological practices. Immediately after asking to my interviewees which ecological practices they had adopted in their daily lives, I followed up by asking why they adopted them. This section of the interview was generally introduced by the question: ‘do you think these practices are effective in combating climate change?’ In a few cases, the answer to this question was totally positive. In most cases the answer was either totally negative or ambiguous, oscillating between emphasizing the potential material benefits like pressuring markets, to considerations of the insufficiency and necessity of public intervention on climate. This question was systematically followed by another question: ‘so if they are not effective (or only partially effective), why do you continue to adopt them?’ Such questions may be followed by other follow-ups, such as: ‘how do you feel about adopting these practices? What about when you do not adopt them? Or, in general, does it satisfy you to adopt them? Why?’ These exchanges often marked the most reflexive moments of the interview. At this stage, participants frequently hesitated, took time to reflect, and sometimes contradicted themselves. Yet as the interviews progressed, recurring patterns of justification began to emerge. This led me to think that the rationalization of such actions was not the result of chance, but of certain social conditions.

Therefore, I decided that the best way to interpret the combination of these justifications was to code them all separately and use a technique that would allow the combination to be examined as a whole. I then decided to use Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), a technique that allows processing and examining associations between multiple categorical variables simultaneously. I will describe the methodological details and results of this analysis in the next sections.

Before moving to the empirical sections, I would like to emphasize an important point that concerns the scope of the analysis proposed in this chapter: the entire MCA design concerns 51 individuals who are representative neither of the population of Italian and French climate protesters nor of the general population. The results should therefore not be read with the idea that they can be generalized toward a larger population. They are an attempt to unite, through an analytical and empirical bridge, the assumptions of sociology of dispositions with those of the sociology of justifications. I chose the MCA because, among the techniques I am familiar with, it is the one that most effectively allows for the simultaneous visualization of elements of socialization and justification—making it possible to capture their intersections. In the next section, I present the methodological approach used to carry out the MCA on justifications. I then describe the justificatory space that emerges from the analysis, based on the dimensions identified through the MCA. Finally, I turn to a qualitative investigation of the interviews, examining how different justifications cluster together and how they guide the ways in which respondents make sense of their practices.

3. Mapping Justifications: Space and Systems

3.1 Conceptualization and Interview coding

I define justifications as the reflexive patterns, arguments, and meanings that are discursively employed by individuals to ‘make sense’ of their actions (Swidler 2001). Justifications are thus tools used by actors to give validity to their actions. To analyze the interviews, I used the qualitative content analysis (QCA) technique (Schreier 2012) through the MAXQDA software, as detailed in the methodological chapter. This technique allowed me to segment the material into units of analysis (individual statements and reasoning expressed during the interviews) and analyze them by assigning one or more codes to each. The coding system was structured around a set of macro-categories, including activism experience, ecological practices, justifications, social circles, frames, ideological orientations, and socio-demographic aspects (see Appendix D in Chapter 3 for an overview). Subcategories for each macro-category were identified inductively. Regarding the macro-category of justifications, approximately thirty specific justifications were identified and subsequently grouped. However, only some of these thirty justifications will be explored in this study, as many are not widely shared among the interviewees.

Justifications are plural and not mutually exclusive. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) refer to ‘symmetry’ to give the idea that there is no hierarchy or order between the types of justification, but

that they are used from time to time depending on the context. Swidler speaks of justifications as resources that can be interchanged, mixed, interwoven to allow people to navigate multiple situations and debates: “the apparent incoherence of their medley of arguments might, from another point of view, be seen as an advantage [...] if one argument fails, there are plenty of others available” (Swidler 2001, 40). Indeed, in line with Boltanski and Thévenot’s and Swidler’s points, even in my case interviews turned out to be very varied, some interviewees followed a precise argumentative trajectory to make sense of why they engaged with the adoption of EEPs, but often they employed contradictory arguments. The interview conducted with Samuele is an example of this. When asked about the reason behind the ecological practices he implements in his daily life, Samuele says:

I obviously also consider my individual gesture to be effective, but I consider it relatively effective if, in my environment, I’m the only one who doesn’t eat meat. So let’s say it’s really fifty-fifty: on the one hand, I think it’s effective, but on the other, I hope to set an example and give some momentum to change. (Samuele, i.10)

However, a few moments later, he reflects:

But on the other hand, I don’t want to aim too high, because I realize that as long as these are such individual, small-scale gestures, they actually contribute very little. Their contribution is perhaps more symbolic than effective. (Samuele, i.10)

Here Samuele refers to the fact that his daily practices technically contribute positively to affect emissions and others’ behaviors, while at the same time he also reflects that the contribution is rather symbolic than effective. In this case, apparently incompatible justifications related with effectiveness and lack of efficacy are alternated along the same reasoning, coexist and interact within the same narrative. This highlights the complexity of how individuals negotiate meaning around their own ecological commitments.

The interview with Luca, an activist from Fridays for Future, offers another example of how apparently contradictory justifications can coexist in the same line of reasoning. When asked about the ecological practices he adopts in his daily life, Luca begins with a clarification:

In general, we [as Fridays for Future] try not to focus much on this individual side, because it is not really the most important thing, for the climate crisis. [...] According to a Stockholm University study, in the European Union, if we all behaved as best we could, we would reduce emissions by a quarter. Which is something, but simply not enough. (Luca, i.4)

Here, Luca clearly frames individual practices as insufficient—useful perhaps, but ultimately inadequate to address the climate crisis in any meaningful way. However, when asked what he gains from engaging in these same practices, he offers a different explanation:

I get that I have made some contribution to reduce the consumption of energy and therefore it means that [...] those who make forecasts of the demand of energy production will have to put something less in the modulable sources, that in Italy is gas, and therefore this will go in favor of the constant and or intermittent ones that are much cleaner and therefore generally reduces often [...] the CO₂ produced per kilowatt hour. (Luca, i.4)

In this second reflection, Luca provides a technically reasoned account of how individual practices can influence energy demand and, in turn, emissions. Despite his initial framing of these behaviors as insufficient, he also articulates a belief in their concrete, if limited, effectiveness. This illustrates how seemingly opposing justifications—those based on lack of efficacy and those affirming efficacy—can coexist and alternate within the same person’s reasoning.

Another example is the case of André, an activist from Alternatiba Paris. When asked “do you think that taking all these actions is a good way to combat the climate crisis or not?” he replies:

No, I don’t think so. [...] it’s more to make me feel less guilty, I think individually. (André, i.33)

This is a logic that I called ‘guilt decreasing’, meaning the idea that adopting practices serves to lower the sense of guilt. However, in another passage of the interview, when asked how he feels when he fails to adopt a certain practice, André says:

I think that if you take a step back, you quickly realize that in any case, as I was saying earlier, individual actions don’t do much good. So we have to stop feeling guilty. (André, i.33)

Thus, while supporting the idea that adopting practices can help one feel less guilt, André also states that the guilt connected to everyday practices must be stopped. These cases demonstrate that opposing or partially incompatible justifications can coexist within the same reasoning. Therefore, I chose to consider all these arguments together in the analysis. To achieve this, I created a dataset in which all justifications are coded as binary variables. The (+) mode indicates the active use of a justification to support the adoption of ecological practices, while the (-) mode signifies its absence. For instance, Efficacy+ means that the respondent used arguments emphasizing the effectiveness and usefulness of ecological practices as justifications, whereas Efficacy- indicates that such arguments are not present. Similarly, Lack of efficacy+ denotes the explicit rejection of efficacy-based arguments, while

Lack of efficacy- means that counterarguments against efficacy were not mentioned. This approach is, of course, a necessary approximation to avoid arbitrarily assigning a single argument to a respondent. It also provides a more nuanced and realistic view of the contradictory elements in their reasoning. These coding distinctions will be taken into account when interpreting the results in the following paragraphs.

I distinguished eight justifications within the coding frame, each representing a recurring argument used to make sense of the adoption of ecological everyday practices (EEPs):

1. Efficacy: viewing EEPs as effective in reducing emissions or influencing institutional and industrial decisions.
2. Individual responsibility: believing that everyone has a duty to contribute to solving the climate crisis.
3. Guilt: adopting EEPs as a way to avoid or alleviate feelings of guilt.
4. Exemplarity: seeing EEPs as a means of setting a positive example for others.
5. Preparation: justifying EEPs as tools for adapting to and preparing for life in a post-carbon society.
6. Alignment: adopting EEPs to maintain coherence with one's beliefs and values.
7. Right: acting based on a sense of what is morally or ethically right.
8. Pleasure: describing EEPs as a source of psychological or physical gratification.

To these, I added two 'anti-justifications', meaning arguments that explicitly reject certain justifications:

9. Lack of efficacy²⁹: doubting or denying the effectiveness of EEPs.
10. No guilt: rejecting guilt as a motivating factor or criticizing guilt-based narratives.

As discussed earlier, these justifications and anti-justifications are not mutually exclusive. In fact, contradictory arguments often coexist within the same interview—for example, affirming and denying efficacy or guilt. For this reason, I chose to retain both the eight justifications and the two anti-justifications in the analysis. This allows for a more nuanced and realistic picture of how different

²⁹ Although it is possible to distinguish analytically between a lack of efficacy—i.e., the perception that certain ecological practices fail to produce tangible results even when performed correctly—and a lack of sufficiency—i.e., the recognition that such practices, even if effective on their own terms and widely adopted, remain insufficient to meaningfully address climate change—this distinction often appears blurred in respondents' narratives. Many interviewees oscillate between these two registers of critique without clearly separating them. For reasons of conceptual parsimony and analytical clarity, I have chosen to group these perspectives under the broader notion of "lack of efficacy" in the rest of the chapter.

layers of meaning around ecological practices intersect and interact (see Table A1 in the Appendix F for the frequency distributions of each of these justifications and anti-justifications).

3.2 Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA)

To analyze how justifications interact with each other, I employ geometric data analysis, specifically Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA). MCA is a statistical technique used to explore and visualize the structure of associations between categories of three or more categorical variables (Greenacre 2016; Hjellbrekke 2018). Its primary goal is to map categorical data onto a two-dimensional space, allowing for the identification of associations between different categories. MCA constructs a geometric cloud of points, where individuals are positioned based on the categories that describe them. The method identifies a set of orthogonal axes, with the first axis capturing the highest amount of inertia, followed by subsequent axes that account for the remaining inertia. The result is a factorial space defined by the first two principal axes or by any additional axes deemed relevant for interpretation.

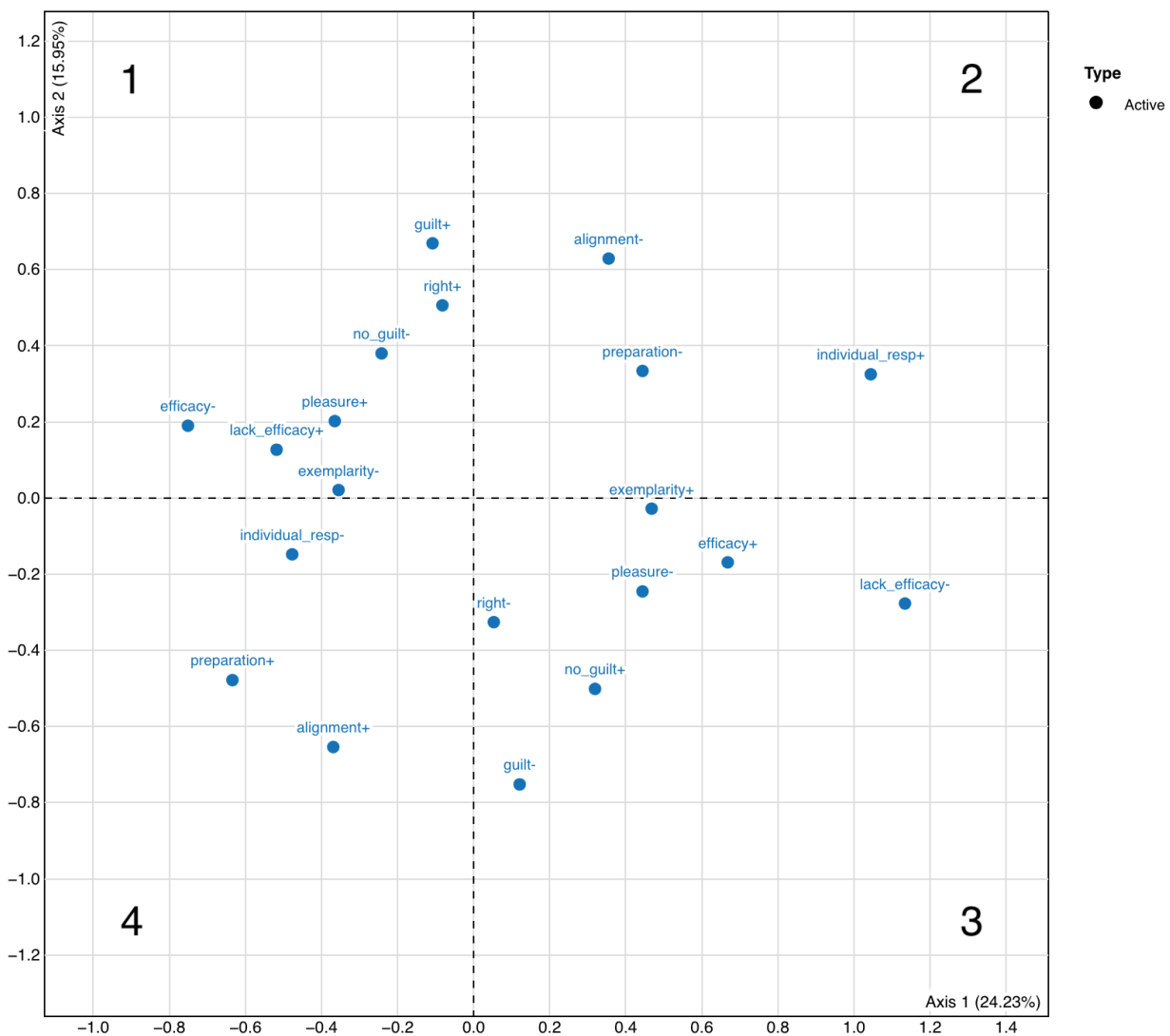
Interpreting the MCA requires careful consideration of the contribution of variables and categories to the axes. The meaning of an axis is derived from the active categories with the highest contributions. Categories located near the barycenter tend to be more frequent or widely distributed, whereas those farther from the barycenter indicate more distinctive patterns. If two categories are positioned close to each other in the factorial space, it suggests a strong association between them. Similarly, individuals located near each other are likely to share multiple characteristics across the active variables.

Although the MCA analysis presented in the following sections is not intended to produce statistically generalizable associations—since it is applied to qualitative data—it nonetheless serves to synthesize the extensive information gathered from the 51 interviews. This method allows for the exploration of proximities, oppositions, and potential groupings within the interviewees’ justificatory discourse. By projecting categorical data onto a factorial space, MCA helps uncover underlying patterns that might not be immediately apparent through traditional qualitative analysis. It facilitates the organization and visualization of the data, making it possible to identify relationships between different justifications and to detect clusters of similar profiles.

As a rule of thumb, “one should keep the needed number of axes in order for 80% of the inertia to be explained” (Hjellbrekke 2018, 18). Based on these criteria, I retained only the first two axes — Axes

1 and 2 — for the analysis and did not proceed with the selection beyond that point (see Table A2 in the Appendix F for a detailed description of the variance)³⁰.

Figure 4 provides a visualization of the ‘space of justifications’ created by axes 1 and 2. Again, as a note to the reader, categories that are close to each other on the plot are often selected together by individuals, while points further from the origin (barycenter) contribute more to the variance captured by the dimensions and are more distinct in their characteristics.

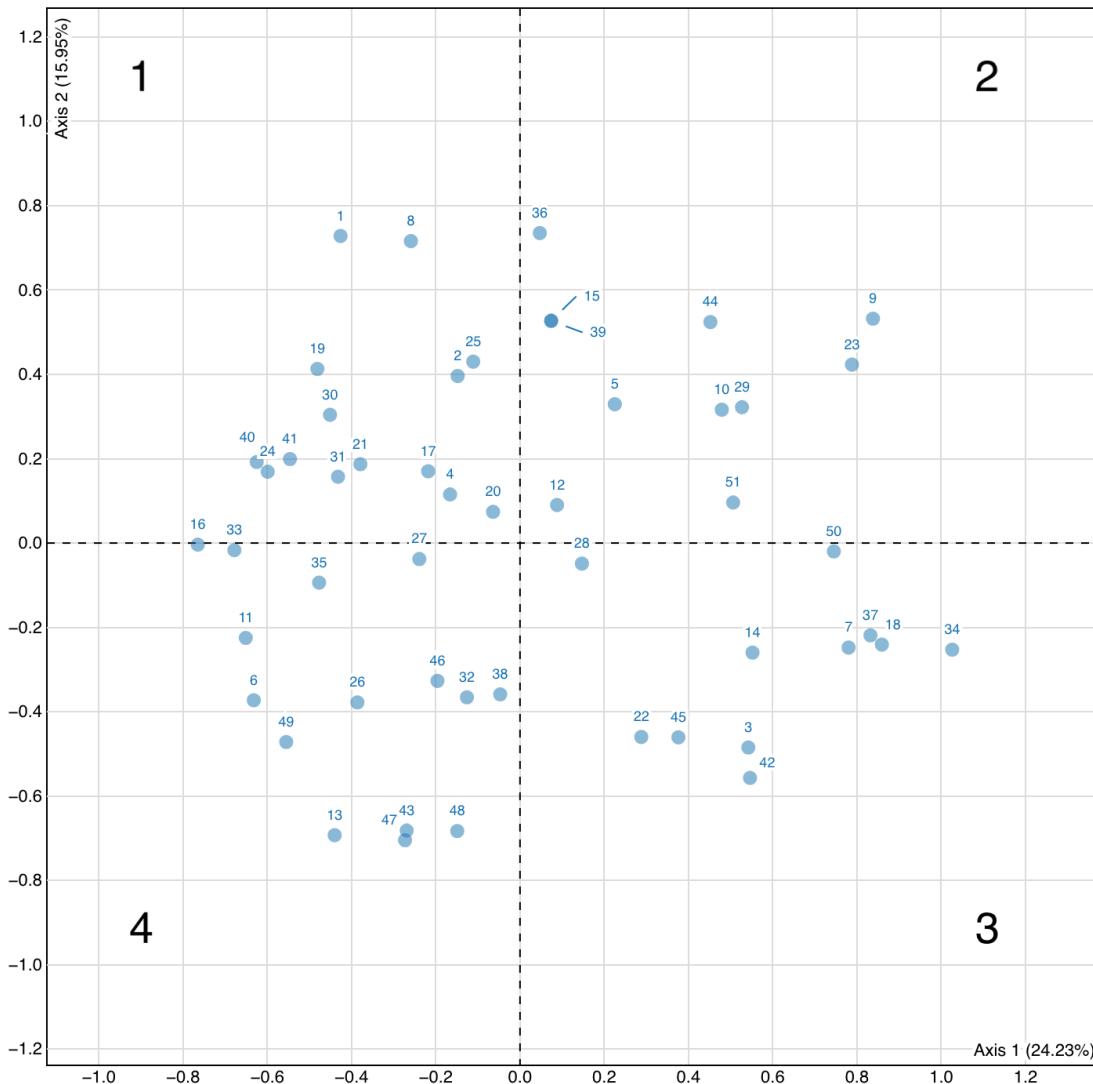


Axis 1 (horizontal) explains the largest share of variance (79%). The variables contributing most to this axis are lack of efficacy, efficacy, individual responsibility, exemplarity, and preparation (see Table A3 in the Appendix F for detailed contributions of each category). This horizontal axis separates, on the right side, categories related to efficacy (efficacy+, lack_efficacy-) and individual responsibility (individual_resp+). On the left side, it groups categories associated with ineffectiveness (lack_efficacy+, efficacy-), lack of individual responsibility (individual_resp-), and preparation (preparation+). Two additional categories—exemplarity (exemplarity+) and pleasure (pleasure-)—are also located on this side, though their contributions are lower. The right quadrants (quadrants 2 and 3) of the justification space thus include respondents who perceive EEPs as effective, believe that it is everyone’s responsibility to take action, and support the idea of leading by example—while often not framing EEPs as sources of pleasure. Conversely, the left quadrants (quadrants 1 and 4) include those who are skeptical about the efficacy of individual action and the universality of responsibility, reject the exemplary function of practices, and instead justify them as a form of collective preparation for the post-carbon future— and partially highlighting the satisfaction and pleasure they provide. In summary, Axis 1 thus distinguishes between those who see practices as something useful here and now, and those who see them as ineffective now, but useful in the future and still good for themselves.

Axis 2 (vertical) accounts for 13.8% of the variance and is shaped by a set of ‘normative-moral’ variables: guilt, alignment, no guilt, and right. It also includes preparation, which, as discussed later, cuts across both axes (see Table A4 in the Appendix F for detailed contributions). At the top, we find justifications based on moral imperatives—adopting EEPs due to guilt (guilt+) or as the morally right thing to do (right+). At the bottom, justifications pertain to alignment (alignment+), opposition to guilt (no_guilt+), and preparation (training+). The upper quadrants of the factorial space (quadrants 1 and 2) thus reflect justifications rooted in moral obligation, while the lower quadrants (quadrants 3 and 4) express justifications such as aligning with their personal principles. In summary, Axis 2 is a ‘normative’ axis that distinguishes between two conceptions of ecological morality: justifications based on guilt, rightness, and moral norms (at the top) versus justifications rooted in internal alignment, personal coherence, and preparation (at the bottom).

MCA enables the visualization of both the spatial distribution of categories and the positioning of individuals who exhibit those characteristics. Figure 5 illustrates how the interviewees are situated within the justification space according to the justifications they articulate.

Figure 5. The space of justifications. Axes 1-2. Individuals



Moving clockwise, quadrant 1 (top left) includes 14 out of 51 respondents, accounting for 27% of the sample. As mentioned above, this quadrant represents the inefficacy-normativity subspace—those who justify the adoption of ecological practices not based on their effectiveness or individual responsibility, but rather for normativity-driven reasons. Quadrant 2 (top right) includes 11 respondents, accounting for 22% of the total. It represents the efficacy-normativity subspace—those who justify ecological practices based on their effectiveness, attribute responsibility to individuals, and are driven by the belief that EEPs alleviate guilt and fulfill a moral duty. Quadrant 3 (bottom right) includes 11 respondents, accounting for 22% of the sample. It represents the efficacy-alignment subspace—comprising those who believe in the effectiveness of ecological practices and adopt them

in order to be in agreement with themselves. Finally, quadrant 4 (bottom left) are 15 respondents, representing 29% of the total. This quadrant identifies the alignment-preparation subspace, i.e. of those who justify eco-practices as a way of being coherent with their own internal principles.

3.4 Systems of Justification

The space of justifications thus arises from the intersection of these two axes. Within the space of justifications, therefore, justifications are interconnected and create what I define ‘systems of justification’. Following Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) and Swidler (2001), by this term I mean the fact that when asked to provide justifications for their actions, the interviewees do not take only one direction, a single justificatory trajectory, but move among different arguments, switching from one justification to another. Systems of justifications are clusters of arguments that appear, aggregate and support each other, sustaining the discursive and reflexive apparatus, especially when asked to give explanations for actions whose meaning is changeable, fluid and not settled in rationality (Weber 2013b). They are more robust than the single justification as, to mention again Swidler (2001, 40): “if one argument fails, there are plenty of others available”. For example, alignment and preparation are two justifications closest in space (bottom left). This means that it is common for activists who claim to adopt EEPs to align with their internal principles also refer to the fact that EEPs can play a role in preparing themselves and others to live in the future society. Or, as I will show more extensively below, respondents who believe their practices are effective in reducing carbon emissions are more likely to argue that they will adopt them to raise awareness and set an example for others.

In the following paragraphs, I delve deeper into some of the key systems of justifications that emerged in the interviews. I begin by focusing on the interplay between efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity, and examine how these elements intersect with notions of morality and alignment—corresponding to Quadrants 2 and 3 in Figures 1 and 2.

3.5 Strategic Systems of Justification: Efficacy, Individual Responsibility, and Exemplarity

3.5.1 Efficacy and Individual Responsibility: Consumer Action as a Strategy

Efficacy and individual responsibility are two closely related justifications. Efficacy manifests in various forms, one of the most widespread being the idea that individual change can have repercussions on the market. Teo, an 18-year-old high school student without experiences in activism, expresses this perspective:

Change must start from the bottom because, okay, companies pollute a lot, and industrial production as a whole pollutes a lot, but why? Because people drive these companies and this type of economy. So, if people at the grassroots level became aware of the importance of adopting certain types of diets [...], there would automatically be a shift in that direction. Why? Because if no one buys products that result from a polluting production process, that production process collapses on itself, as there is nothing left to sustain it. If no one buys anymore, the company fails. Alternatively, it forces the company to change its production methods and make them more aligned with the ecological transition. (Teo, i.9)

This type of reflection echoes what was described in the first chapter regarding interpreting critical consumption as a tool for market pressure and reform (Balsiger 2014). Everyday ecological practices, from this perspective, take on a strategic role as they serve as the means to achieve market transformation. Their usefulness is not questioned, on the contrary, they become central to the process. The logic of efficacy aligns in this sense with that of individual responsibility, considering that “everyone is responsible”. Teo, for instance, argues that ecological practices have their own significance in combating the climate crisis and should be adopted by everyone:

if everyone got into the mindset of being a little more careful all the time, without disrupting their lives, those little things, all together, can actually make a difference. (Teo, i.9)

Along the same lines is Fabio, a 19-year-old environmental science student with limited activist experience linked to the student context and no formal affiliation with any organization. Fabio argues that climate marches are not the most useful solution, but rather “providing a concrete contribution”. For this reason, he enrolled in a program in Environmental Science and Policy and dreams of “working in climate management environments and improving that perspective”. His words reflect an individualist ethos, centered on personal responsibility over that of governments:

A lot of people are always complaining, saying, ‘Oh, why doesn’t the government do this? Why doesn’t the government do that?’ [...] What I say is: You do it. If you really care about an issue that much, then start doing something about it yourself. Take the first step. Don’t complain about others when you haven’t done anything at all. (Fabio, i.18)

Thus, Fabio frames the ecological issue as a matter of overconsumption, stating:

All this production would not be necessary if people started consuming less and more thoughtfully. (Fabio, i.18)

The idea that consumers, through their own choices, can influence production mechanisms strongly emerges as the cornerstone of the justificatory edifice for some activists. For example, two French interviewees, Louise, 55 years old, a writer and biologist who became involved in a local Transition Towns collective in adulthood, and Giselle, 66 years old, a retired executive secretary with no prior activism experience, use the term *consommacteur* (a play on words between consumer and actor) to refer to the ideal type of political consumer:

I'm talking about *consommacteur*. For me, it has a real meaning, it has a real impact. [...] But yes, it's absolutely clear that we, as consumers, have a very important role to play from the moment we buy, we endorse. So if we buy more of that, it means 'no, I don't agree with it', and if more of us buy more of that, it means more of us support it. (Louise, i.29)

The bulk of the troops are the citizens. Each and every one of us has power, even me, with my tiny purchasing power at the moment, I'm not just a consumer. I'm a *consommactrice*. We're all players in the development of a better quality of life and better protection of the planet. We are actors. And I think that we are first and foremost actors with our bank card or with our money. And that's what we can use to make choices. (Giselle, i.37)

These examples suggest that, for a portion of the climate activists involved in the mobilization, addressing ecological problems depends—above all—on individual consumption choices. This view aligns with theories of individualized collective action (Micheletti 2003) and individualized responsibility-taking (Stolle and Micheletti 2013), as well as with broader sociological frameworks on individualization and responsabilization in contemporary society (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1991). Within this perspective, societal transformation is seen as occurring through individual choices, shifting the locus of political engagement from the public to the private sphere. Voluntary personal action thus becomes the main pathway for change.

The continued presence of these ideas within the climate movement signals the deep pervasiveness of this paradigm. Furthermore, this conception of the individual consumer's role appears to be linked to specific social dispositions that shape the internalization of consumer norms—an issue that will be explored more thoroughly in the next chapter. Dubuisson-Quellier (2016) offers an overview of how individuals' exposure to such prescriptions varies depending on their social trajectories. One illustrative case is Justine, a 50-year-old actress raised in an affluent environment due to her parents' work in advertising. Recently, she has become involved in local associations focused on beach clean-ups and urban agriculture. When asked, 'Do you think that the everyday practices you adopt are effective?', Justine responds:

Yes, I'm absolutely convinced of that. Partly because we know that personal actions are now estimated to be 25% effective in reducing our impact, so that's not insignificant. [...] I clearly think that the citizen has a crucial role to play here for at least two reasons: because he votes and because he consumes, and these two levers of action are enormous. When we say that personal actions represent 25% of what needs to be done, we forget that we have a bank account. So, we forget that we consume and we forget that we vote. So we really do have a huge amount of power in our hands. (Justine, i.34)

The 25% emission threshold is an interesting element, given that other interviewees employing other systems of justifications (Luca, i.4, Veronica i.27, Éliane, i.31), precisely because of this threshold, conclude by saying that ecological practices alone cannot help so much, as I will show below.

Within this logic, consumers are identified as the central actors in addressing the climate crisis, with changes in their behavior framed as the key strategy—whether this means promoting different habits from childhood (Teo, i.9), avoiding certain types of consumption (Vania, i.7; Viviana, i.14), or imposing restrictions on their daily lives (Samuele, i.10; Fabio, i.18; Justine, i.34). These types of responses align with an anthropogenic and depoliticized understanding of ecological issues (Comby 2017; Kenis 2019). According to Comby (2017, 470), the ecological governance of conduct is the result of a process of “politicization [...] that depoliticizes”: public authorities take charge of the ecological issue, but rather than addressing it through political action, they delegate responsibility to individuals and market-based mechanisms. While respondents who draw on justifications of efficacy and responsibility do acknowledge that part of the blame lies with production and politics for failing to act, the primary agent held responsible for the climate crisis is humanity itself—people as “consumers of the planet” (Vania, i.7), driven by an inherent “need to burn and consume” (Fabio, i.18). Building on this logic of individualized responsibility, the next paragraph explores how some respondents mobilize the idea of “setting an example” as a further way to legitimize their practices.

3.5.2 The Power of Example: Exemplarity as a Strategic Justification

Reflections on the efficacy of ecological practices and individual responsibility are often coupled with the idea that citizens must be exemplary, adopting behaviors that show the “right path” to others. Exemplarity, in this context, means to justify the adoption of a practice by supporting the argument that one can succeed in convincing or sensitizing other people through performing an ecological practice. The combination of exemplarity and efficacy is quite common among the interviewees, with 16 respondents (31% of the sample) expressing this perspective. These justifications reinforce each

other. A typical line of reasoning is: practices can be effective if everyone adopts them, but for that to happen, awareness and leading by example are essential.

Max Weber (Weber 2013a) identifies two ways of spreading the religious message. The first one is defined by Weber as ‘emissary prophecy’: “addresses its demands to the world in the name of a god” (ibid., 285). It is a way of spreading the religious message based on speech. The emissary prophet spreads his teaching to all, with the idea of turning devotees into an “instrument of a God” (ibid., 285). The second one is the ‘exemplary prophecy’ which consists in spreading a message to others by the mere conduct of life, in silence, embodying “the path to salvation by exemplary living” (ibid., 285). This second, exemplary mode of message transmission—through the embodied practice of an ecological lifestyle—clearly emerges in several interviews. When discussing his actions, Teo repeatedly refers to the idea that what he does constitutes a form of ‘passive activism’, which he describes as follows:

What I mean by passive activism is more a group life thing. For example [...] when I’m in a group, it’s difficult to talk about climate change explicitly. But when we have to tidy up or when we have to do certain activities, maybe go somewhere, *not saying it explicitly*, but inviting everyone to go to that place by bike... [...] trying to limit the behavior of group life *without making it a burden* [...] Behaviors and actions that limit pollution or consumption of fossil fuels. [...] I look for a middle way to feel good as a group, without destroying the environment. Even when I go to the park to have a picnic, I’m careful to clean up, maybe keep the bags, I don’t throw them in the trash bin, but take the bags to the different bins. It’s something I try... we try to be careful and we remind each other, *but without actually saying it, saying it explicitly*. (Teo, i.9)

Ecological practices are thus considered good practices because they help to “limit pollution” and can be emulated by circles of friends, as long as the transmission does not take place explicitly, but implicitly. On a similar perspective is Vania, 55 years old, an employee in the immigration sector, a volunteer with FOCSIV (Federation of Christian Organizations for International Volunteer Service):

I see that, compared to years ago, I am able to be less angry and maybe more impactful on relationships [...] And as a result I hope to let others have a chance to reconsider their lifestyle as well. No one can impose the transformation. It has to come from each one’s own choice. [...] *Being vegetarian without saying it*. If someone eats meat at the table with me, I don’t care. [...] *Even in silence, in my opinion things happen*. [...] It is useless to keep saying ‘become a vegetarian, do this, do that...’ [...] Just keep doing it in silence. Then if others observe you and ask you answer. Maybe you sow a seed, then it will come. (Vania, i.7)

The metaphor of the seed also appears in the words of Louise:

I fundamentally believe in leading by example. So, if many of us take action, we've sown a little seed around us. [...] When I know that my children go to Burger King, I'm not going to be an *ayatollah* about it because I tell myself that I'd rather convince them than repress them. (Louise, i.29)

Exemplarity here emerges not as an effort to persuade through pressure, but as a quiet gesture of presence — an invitation to transformation through consistency and patience. The logic of exemplarity is thus essentially expressed through the embodiment of a certain precept, aimed at encouraging others to act in a similar way. However, while Weber considers this logic of exemplarity—related to Eastern religions—as antithetical to that of so-called emissary prophecy, and therefore to the idea of evangelizing through words, which is typical of Western religions such as Christianity, other studies have shown that these logics can also coexist and even reinforce one another. Turina (2006) shows that in the contemporary Catholic church these two logics coexist for example in the cases of hermits and consecrated virgins, who rely in the power of example not only to be a 'vessel of the divine' (in Weberian terms), but also to gain the trust of the faithful. By showing them that their religious commitment is lived "body and soul without any material gain" (Turina 2006, 128) they are then able to convey their message through speech, without the risk of being perceived as dishonest or inauthentic. This particular form of exemplarity, which combines silent embodiment and words as complementary tools for behavioral change, is widespread among the interviewees. For example, Viviana, 27, an employee at an industrial plant company, and a volunteer with the major Italian environmental NGO, Legambiente, explains that she started an Instagram page during the pandemic to raise awareness and introduce new ecological practices. She also began collaborating with e-commerce businesses focused on sustainable consumption:

I wanted to create content related to sustainable or conscious consumption, to talk about how important it is to request, for instance, bulk products. Why choosing eco-friendly products matters. (Viviana, i.14)

She believes in the power of example, which is spread both through social media communication and everyday imitation:

I do it to put into practice a sort of... how can I say it? To make sure that by observing, people will automatically start doing the same. Without necessarily having to say, 'Look, I do this, you should do it too.' Learning through imitation. [...] It makes me feel better because I think that maybe the techniques I use can be replicated by someone else. For example, I live with two other girls, and I think that if I do something, maybe two more people will start doing it as well. Or behaviors I adopt at the office—maybe others who wouldn't normally think about them will start applying them too. (Viviana, i.14)

This combination of exemplarity and sensitization, as expressed by this segment of climate activists, closely resembles the dynamic described by Turina (2006). The point is that by displaying a certain exemplary behavior, it will be easier for others to approach, ask questions, and become interested. Being an example through action and raising awareness through words are thus not opposing logics, but rather complementary ways of spreading the ecological message. A similar dual logic—what could be called “missionary militancy”—has also been identified by Ollitrault (2008, 56), who sees ecology as a field in which these two forms of mission intersect. In her study of French environmental activists in the 1990s, Ollitrault identifies two meanings of mission. On the one hand, ecology is a mission in the religious sense: spreading the message, informing others, guiding behavior. On the other hand, it is also a mission as a task—a role to be assumed, one that has a concrete ecological impact. This dual understanding of mission resonates strongly with the justificatory systems grounded in efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity—frequently mobilized by individuals located in Quadrants 2 and 3 of the justificatory space.

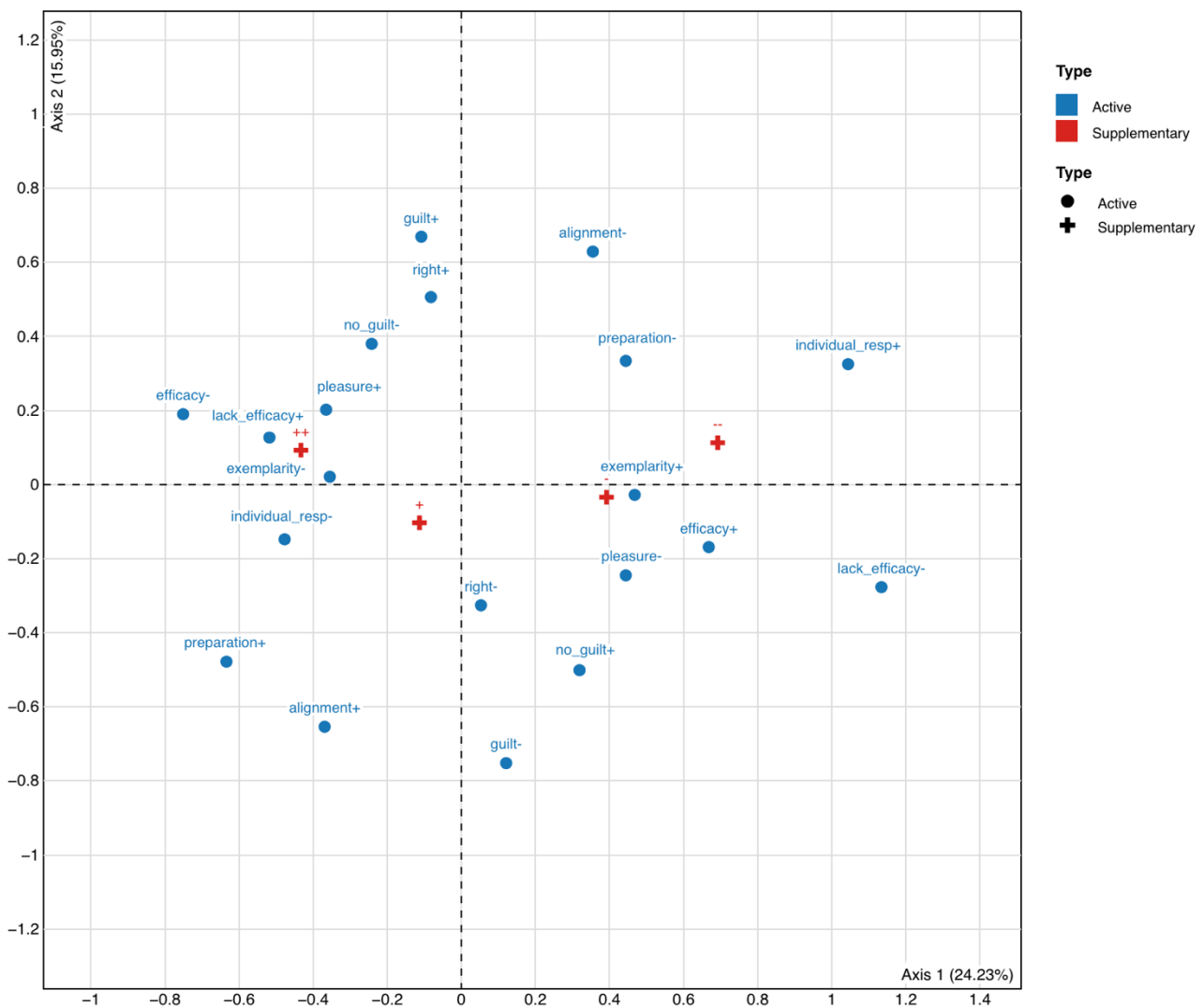
Many ‘exemplary’ interviewees reveal that the ecological practices they transmit through example often involve consensual, low-threshold choices—those that do not require a complete overhaul of household infrastructure or a radical transformation of one’s lifestyle, but can be easily promoted within close social circles. Raising awareness about alternatives to plastic bottles thus becomes emblematic (Zamponi et al. 2022). Take the case of Edoardo, a 23-year-old physics student with no prior activism experience:

Let’s say I have an individualistic approach—using the car less, eating less meat, trying to convince my friends to switch from plastic bottles to reusable ones... That’s something I’ve managed to do with several people. [...] I don’t push too much when it comes to people’s diets. But if I see someone using plastic bottles, I say, ‘Excuse me, why don’t you just buy a reusable bottle?’ Especially since there are very few disadvantages to using a bottle instead of a plastic one, so it’s usually quite easy to convince them. It’s not as big of a request as saying, ‘You should go vegan starting today.’ (Edoardo, i.12)

Convincing friends to switch to a reusable bottle is perceived as a lighter and more feasible gesture than urging them to change their diet. Dietary change is often framed as a political and potentially divisive act, while switching bottles is non-confrontational, easily accessible, and offers immediate benefits. In general terms, it should be noted that the type of ecological practices personally adopted by individuals relying on justifications of efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity tend to be the most widely accepted and least disruptive. This finding aligns with existing research, which

shows that much of the communicative rhetoric around everyday ecological practices emphasizes small, consensual actions—those that provide an immediate and easily attainable form of “ecological responsibility repair” (Jensen 2019, 95). Common examples include waste reduction and recycling, reducing packaging, cutting energy and water use at home, using public transportation, and buying organic products. Justifying ecological practices through a strategic logic is typically associated with the adoption of actions that do not require deep changes in personal routines. This is visually illustrated in Figure 6, which shows the justification space generated by the MCA axes, with the supplementary variable of meat consumption reduction projected onto it.

Figure 6. Variable plot. Meat reduction



Being vegan is marked as (++), being vegetarian as (+), occasional meat consumption as (-), and regular meat consumption as (--). Vegan and vegetarian respondents cluster in the left-hand quadrants, associated with the rejection of efficacy and individual responsibility logics. Conversely,

meat consumers are more frequently found in the right-hand quadrants, which are grounded in perceived efficacy and personal responsibility. This apparent paradox—valorizing ecological practices without engaging in deeper lifestyle transformation—was already addressed in the previous chapter, where I showed that lifestyle efficacy was significantly associated with accessible EEPs but not with more transformative ones. This can be explained by the idea that such practices allow less deeply engaged activists to construct an outwardly ecological identity without substantially altering their daily routines or consumption patterns. In this sense, ecological practices become compatible with previously internalized consumption norms. This form of engagement aligns with an environmentalist conception of citizenship (Dobson 2007), in which ecological commitment remains compatible with market logics. According to these respondents, ‘good ecological practices’ function primarily as tools for raising awareness.

The attitude of exemplarity is reinforced by social position. Justine, who considers herself part of “the richest ten percent in France and the world”, sees it as her duty to lead by example:

If we don’t set an example for this, who will? (Justine, i.34)

Behaving in an ecological way means for Justine:

to be on a trajectory that would be *regenerative* and *salvific* (literally, *régénératrice et salvatrice*, in the text). (Justine, i.34)

Justine’s *salvific trajectory* is inspired by a reconciling idea of climate action, in which everyone is called upon to his own beyond social distinctions:

Little by little, I began to find out more, to adopt personal actions that seemed to me more consistent with the moment in the history of humanity. [...] It’s a real universal struggle [...] it’s the first time in the history of humanity that we can be united in the same cause, so I think it’s very beautiful. (Justine, i.34)

Belonging to the richest segments of the population, therefore, creates a sense of duty to be exemplary. Sophie is 52 years old, a former bank sales agent who decided to change jobs and now works in the associational sector and is a volunteer for an organization that provides assistance to disabled African children in France. Sophie says she felt very guilty when she realized how much her behavior was polluting:

That was the trigger, to say ‘we can’t go on like this. If everyone does what we’re doing, we’re screwed. [...] I mean, we can’t be part of this destruction. (Sophie, i.51)

Therefore, together with her husband, a consultant for companies involved in agroecology, she decided to change her lifestyle. She decided to stop flying every year, moved to a smaller house and also bought a house in the countryside:

We prefer to be part of the solution and do things our own way. For example, [...] when we sold our large apartment with what was left, we were able to buy a house in the country. [...] at the very beginning, we wanted to buy a ski apartment. But then the kids said ‘no, it’s not that attractive’ and we thought, well, it’s still a long way to ski from Nantes, so it might not be very environmentally friendly to go skiing, so maybe it’s not such a good idea. Afterwards, we said we’d buy a house by the sea, we’d do what everyone else does, and then, as we thought more and more about it, we finally said [...] we need a house in the country, with a big garden, and we’re going to grow our own vegetable garden and take things in hand. We’re going to learn how to plant our carrots, we’re going to regain a bit of autonomy, we’re going to experiment in our garden. So today we have a house in central Brittany that’s completely lost. [...] When we told them [their friends], they looked at us saying ‘what’s wrong with you? Why don’t you buy by the sea like everyone else?’ And then these people came to see our house, our garden, and they all went away saying ‘Ah well, I understand, you’ve got a great wooden house’, because we’ve found an ecological, bioclimatic wooden house that doesn’t need heating and has water recovery systems. Now my husband has made a big vegetable garden, so it looks like a *little paradise* in fact. [...] So they’re also experiencing what it’s like to live in an ecological house. There’s no heating, but they’re not cold. And so they leave thinking ‘well, maybe that’s the ecology of happiness’. In fact, that’s what I call *the virtue of example*. (Sophie, i.51)

Again, the idea behind the lifestyle change is to set an example. Sophie says she believes in the ‘virtue of example’ and this excerpt offers a practical demonstration of how exemplarity provides the perfect path to redemption, represented metaphorically by the ‘little paradise’ that is the eco-home they bought, a personal Garden of Eden that can be reached only when one leaves behind the former consumerist life.

In both Justine’s and Sophie’s configurations, exemplarity is associated with a path toward attaining salvation. Whether it is the *salvific trajectory* Justine speaks of or the *little paradise* described by Sophie, exemplarity justifies the adoption of certain behaviors as the means to propagate the ‘good.’ This use of exemplarity recalls Beck and Beck-Gernsheim’s (2002, 7) argument that in modern society, “everyday life is being post-religiously ‘theologized,’” as lifestyle decisions, once grounded in religious morality, have now become existential matters. However, these two approaches are partially distinct from each other. They differ because the dispositions underlying their formulation are different: Justine, who grew up in an affluent family environment, has not significantly altered

her life trajectory or engaged in any militant activism, even after becoming ‘ecologically conscious.’ She considers herself inherently embedded in the salvific trajectory and sees herself as an example for others. In other words, she perceives herself as aligned with the ecological norm without necessarily transforming her existence. Sophie, like Justine, also comes from an upper-class background and lacks extensive activist experience. However, her professional bifurcation seems to have influenced not only her behavior but also the way she justifies it. Sophie’s reasoning is shaped by a dual imperative: distinguishing herself from those who have not yet adopted the ecological path and redeeming herself from past guilt. Social position influences the conviction that one’s own behavior is the correct one and that others should aspire to follow the same path—a perspective that, in Weberian terms, could be seen as a “symptom of one’s own state of [...] grace” (Weber 1993, 142). Seen through a Bourdieusian lens, this awareness among activists from the upper classes has a strongly distinctive value, as it opposes an exemplary, legitimate way of acting ecologically to a polluting way of acting by those who refuse to adhere to ecological norms. This form of distinction operates not only in relation to those from economically disadvantaged classes, as is well illustrated in the case of Justine, but also in relation to those who, despite belonging to the same class, lack the cultural resources and ecological awareness necessary to transform their lifestyle (and achieve salvation), as Sophie demonstrates:

Among our friends, almost no one thinks like us, does like us. [...] We ask ourselves whether we should cut ties with friends who don’t think like us at all, who keep buying big, polluting cars and traveling by plane four times a year. [...] At some point, it’s heartbreaking to see people around you, people you care about, who don’t want to change their ways. [...] But in the end, we moved past that, we told ourselves that if we did that, we would have no friends left, because no one does what we do. (Sophie, i.51)

These reflections foster a sense of exceptionality and virtue that is strongly present among activists positioned within this part of the space of justifications. It represents a way of perceiving ecological practices as something public, to be displayed to others, but not necessarily as something political. Moreover, the logic of exceptionality and virtue behind this way of thinking also allows individuals to justify their own breaches of ecological norms by stressing that, all things considered, they are still doing more than most. Fabio for instance states:

Let’s say we’ve tried to reduce meat consumption at home as much as possible, though I personally struggle with it a lot... but I definitely make an effort... Yeah, well, for sure, my consumption is far lower than that of the average person out there. (Fabio, i.18)

This sense of exceptionalism and virtuosity, permeated by the absence of social critique, is generally accompanied by a very distant and disengaged relationship with the prospect of climate catastrophe. Respondents who employ a system of justifications based on efficacy, responsibility and exemplarity generally consider themselves to be personally little affected by the threat of the climate crisis. For these protesters, the search for practical solutions for daily life is based on an optimistic conception of the future, linked to what John Dryzek (2005) has defined as a Promethean faith in technology. This is evidenced, for example, by the fact that several interviewees from quadrants 2 and 3 mention investment in renewable energy as a solution to the climate crisis. The approach to raising awareness about ecology, which deactivates social critique, thus develops in a relationship with time that is less structured by urgency. In a certain sense, these protesters incorporate the idea that we are living in an era of “reflexive modernity” (Beck, Giddens, and Lash 1994), characterized by greater awareness of environmental issues, which could lead to social change. This idea is marked by trust in a gradual transformation of mentalities, as expressed in Justine’s words:

We no longer have time to be pessimistic. That is to say, now we have only one path, which is individual and collective action. And that’s it, there is no longer any need to ask questions, and we can only move towards something better [...] I don’t really want to tell myself that it’s a catastrophe because there is nothing more paralyzing than that [...] It’s not simple, but people are taking action, it’s happening. And I think that’s it, it has started. Besides, I am naturally optimistic. (Justine, i.34)

This element of faith in the future, combined with the absence of personal fear regarding the consequences of the climate crisis, is particularly distinctive among protesters who adopt a system of justification centered on efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity. These respondents tend to view ecological practices in a strategic light. By contrast, those who draw on alternative systems of justification often rely on narratives that frame ecological practices as a means of preparing for life in a post-crisis society, as I will demonstrate in the following sections.

To summarize, the system of justifications generated by the combination of efficacy, individual responsibility and exemplarity reveals a highly distinctive pattern of perception (Bourdieu 1987), in which a high position (the one who is exemplary) is opposed to a low position (the one who has not yet changed behavior). These justifications are particularly common among protesters with limited activist experience and relatively affluent economic backgrounds. This suggests that certain segments of the climate movement have internalized principles associated with ecological modernization, individualization, and responsabilization. Moreover, the analysis reinforces some of the findings from the survey, indicating that the valorization of ecological practices is often carried out by those who

are less engaged in a profound transformation of their lifestyle. Instead, they tend to adopt and promote only the most common, socially accepted, and accessible practices. Although such individualized approaches have been criticized within climate mobilizations, they continue to find resonance among grassroots participants. As a result, the climate movement functions as a space of convergence, where individuals with divergent views on personal responsibility in addressing the climate crisis can still come together.

3.5.3 The Intertwining of Individual Responsibility and Guilt

I have therefore shown that the combination of efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity constitutes a relatively homogeneous system of justifications, consistently observed among many of the activists interviewed, particularly those positioned in quadrants 2 and 3 of the justificatory space. However, this justificatory cluster can be further differentiated into two segments, based on the presence of additional “moral” justifications. I will now examine more closely the differences between these two quadrants. As previously noted, axis 2 separates those in the upper half—who invoke guilt-related motivations for adopting ecological practices—from those in the lower half, who instead appeal to normative motivations such as alignment with personal principles. I begin by exploring the relationship between efficacy, individual responsibility, and guilt (quadrant 2).

Numerous studies have highlighted a positive correlation between guilt and the adoption of ecological behaviors. Shipley and van Riper (2022) review over 30 years of research on perceptions of guilt and pride in relation to pro-environmental behaviors, finding that guilt is positively correlated with both public practices, such as activism, and private ones, such as daily routines. Recent studies have also noted the presence of guilt-related sentiments within the climate movement (Kleres and Wettergren 2017; Knops 2021; Vandepitte 2024). In the interviewees, guilt emerges as one of the most common justifications. A total of 19 respondents explicitly use the word “guilt” to justify their actions. However, when including those who do not directly mention “guilt” but use related expressions (e.g., “having a clear conscience”), the number rises to 27 out of 51 respondents.

As Jensen (2019, 3) observes “guilt is protean [...] guilt can emerge from doing wrong, but just as easily from not doing right”. Therefore, guilt manifests in various ways among activists. Two main ways of justifying a practice through guilt have been identified in the interviews: the first concerns self-blame, meaning the feeling of not doing enough in terms of daily ecological practices—failing to adopt a certain behavior increases guilt. The second is guilt reduction, whereby engaging in ecological practices serves to alleviate guilt and relieving one from its burden. Since these

interpretations of guilt are highly interconnected and several respondents use them simultaneously, in the MCA, these types of arguments were grouped under the single category of “guilt”. However, the distinction between these interpretations can still be explored further. Teo, for instance, describes how he uses ecological practices to cope with the guilt caused by environmentally harmful behavior:

I feel very bad when I take the wrapper of a snack and throw it on the floor or when I throw a cigarette butt on the ground. You don't feel good about yourself. You know you're doing something wrong. You feel a little bit of guilt, so those actions serve, in a way, to say, 'I'm doing the right thing.' It's a way to avoid the feeling of doing something wrong by instead doing something right. (Teo, i.9)

Within a framework that conceives ecological practices as eminently voluntary actions—hence intentional and deliberative—as Jensen (2019) suggests, the decision not to adopt a given practice becomes grounds for guilt. In these cases, engaging in ecological practices is framed as being irreproachable in the eyes of others. Nina, 22, is a fine arts student. Nina spent a few months in Fridays for Future France and then Youth for Climate, but had never had experience of participating in protest actions before. She claims to be ‘in full cognitive dissonance’ since she alternates between times when she feels overwhelmed by guilt:

I recently went through a three-month period when I was feeling so guilty that I was having trouble eating because I was thinking, ‘Nina, you're not legitimate to eat so much, to sleep so much, to have such a good life when you're screwing up other people's lives!’ (Nina, i.44)

To times when she feels no guilt:

I'm not going to make myself feel guilty because I'm not the one polluting, and because everything I do ecologically and politically [...] well, that's it, I'm doing my bit. Just because I don't make my own compost doesn't mean I'm a bad environmentalist, you see. (Nina, i.44)

Nina links these fluctuations to a constant comparison with others, especially those close to her:

I see, for example, my best friend, I see that in the ten years we've been friends, she's changed, but it's ten years of friendship and she's changed... she still flies. She still buys in fast fashion. She still buys her groceries in an unethical way. [...] But it's frustrating. It's really, really frustrating because all the things I've done, that I've done alone... well, I mean, I didn't force people to do it, but everything I've done in so many years, well, they haven't done half, a quarter of what I've done because they've chosen, it's not because they're not capable, it's because they've chosen. (Nina, i.44)

From this perspective, guilt is not only directed at one's own behavior but also at the behavior of others, resonating consistently with a view of the climate crisis that emphasizes personal responsibility and the imperative to do one's best individually. Once again, continuity with previous justifications can be observed, as this logic also entails adopting a certain public posture. Carla, a 22-year-old master's student in international relations and a former member of the Young Democrats (youth branch of the center-left Democratic Party), also describes how guilt influences her commitment to ecological practices:

Irrationally, you feel like an awful person if you don't do it because you know what's behind it. (Carla, i.15)

She notes that adopting ecological behaviors significantly reduces this emotional burden:

[You feel] definitely much better. In the sense that you feel less guilty, to put it simply. (Carla, i.15)

Carla discusses extensively the market-based solutions she has started to adopt, such as buying second-hand clothes, turning to fast fashion only as a last resort, or using apps to purchase unsold food. In contrast, when it comes to more transformative practices that are less directly tied to the market—such as reducing meat consumption or avoiding air travel—she claims that she does not have many accessible alternatives. As Jensen (2019, 71) argues, “eco-friendly rhetorics steadily stoke low-lying levels of collective guilt for one's complicity in an economic system that is ecologically destructive, and then, in perverse irony, invite one to atone for their guilt via market-based solutions and consumption management techniques.” This mechanism of perpetuating guilt, fostering individual responsibility, and simultaneously offering redemption through practices that require only minimal reform of one's consumption patterns and habits is particularly evident among the respondents situated in quadrant 2 under examination.

3.5.4 The Role of Internal Alignment

At the opposite end of the second axis (quadrant 3) lies a set of moral justifications grounded in the alignment with one's principles. Unlike the cases discussed earlier, these justifications are not rooted in self-criticism or feelings of guilt. A clear example is offered by Jordan, a 27-year-old activist who has participated in numerous civil disobedience actions with Extinction Rebellion and Dernière Rénovation in France. His stance reflects a view of responsibility that includes several agents:

I think companies are the reflection of consumers, states are the reflection of votes [...] We're all responsible. [...] We interact with each other, the state with votes, companies with standards set by the state, and also [...] depending on customer demand, so everything interacts. (Jordan, i.42)

This perspective is accompanied by a second layer of justification, which contemplates both alignment and the goal of raising awareness:

I do my part in order to be as much as possible in alignment with myself. I know it's not enough, and once you've done your part, the next step is to help others do theirs.... So, I facilitate *fresque du climat*³¹ workshops so that I can take advantage of what I know to explain it to others and help others to make progress in their thinking. (Jordan, i.42)

Although Jordan is involved in a social movement organization that demands public intervention in the ecological transition through civil disobedience, his social background leads him to align his discourse and justifications with the segment of less politicized activists discussed so far. Jordan, in fact, the son of engineers, attended a business school and later secured a position at a firm specializing in sustainable development consulting for corporations. Speaking about his individual ecological practices, he notes:

I'm familiar with carbon footprint calculations, and so I try to... a bit because of 'professional deformation' to reduce my footprint wherever I can. (Jordan, i.42)

He frames this commitment within a broader vision of material and energy degrowth—a view that calls for collective transformation, but ultimately emphasizes individual action as its starting point:

I'm pretty aligned with the ideas of material and energy degrowth. So that means it has to go through us—through what we buy, the life choices we make. It's something that lies in each person's hands. These are actions... they have to go beyond small gestures, but they're still daily, personal actions. Then there's a part that has to come from the state and from companies, but everyone is interconnected and reacts.

Jordan's case thus reveals a form of dissonance (Lahire 2016) present in certain activist profiles: collective action aimed at demanding public intervention, carried out even through civil disobedience,

³¹ 'La Fresque du climat' is a French association that was created in 2018 with the goal of raising awareness of the climate issue through workshops that are based on game activity. The workshops are open and anyone can become a volunteer and animate a session. The association has spread to several countries and currently has 78,000 volunteers and more than 1.5 million participants: <https://climatefresk.org/world/>

coexists with a deeply individualized understanding of the climate crisis, where responsibility ultimately lies with individuals. In this context, the logic of alignment serves to rationalize individual action—not as a moral obligation, but as a strategy to avoid internal contradiction and maintain credibility.

3.6 Alternative Systems of Justification: Beyond Responsibility

So far, I have examined the system of justifications employed by a significant, albeit minority, portion of interviewees—one that combines efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity to strategically justify individual ecological practices. I have also noted that this justification system is particularly prevalent among respondents with limited political engagement and activism experience. This point will be further elaborated in the next chapter dedicated to supplementary variables within the MCA. However, the majority of respondents—those positioned in the left-hand quadrants (1 and 4), which reject individual responsibility as a solution—argue that adopting ecological practices at the individual level does not constitute a meaningful response to the climate crisis. How, then, do they justify engaging in such behaviors? I now turn to an analysis of these alternative justification systems.

3.6.1 Challenging the Logic of Individual Action

A common perspective among many respondents is the belief that EEPs lack efficacy in addressing the climate crisis. This perception takes different forms, but ultimately converges on the same conclusion: individual action is not enough, and political intervention is necessary. Manuela, a 30-year-old doctoral student in law, has been active in human rights movements and maintains connections to student unions, though she is not affiliated with any specific organization. Politically, she identifies as an “eco-socialist”. She expresses her skepticism toward the impact of individual actions with irony:

It’s a bit controversial what I’m going to say, but in my opinion, in our daily lives, we can choose very little and the ecological transition is a much bigger political-institutional agenda. I mean [...] it makes me laugh to say that I can change the world by not buying bananas, by buying seasonal fruit. (Manuela, i.1)

Susanna, a 25-year-old member of the student union Rete della Conoscenza, who defines herself as a communist, expresses the same view more directly:

A series of individual behaviors will not change whether we exceed or stay below the 1.5-degree threshold.
(Susanna, i.2)

Similarly, André, a 26-year-old doctoral student in evolutionary ecology and member of Alternatiba, draws from scientific evidence:

I read scientific reports. There are concrete measurements, and they clearly show that if everyone became perfect in their behavior, it still wouldn't change anything. (André, i.33)

These excerpts reflect a shared disillusionment with the idea that individual behaviors can bring about a meaningful transformation of the climate crisis. On the contrary, placing too much emphasis on such behaviors risks obscuring the inherently political nature of the problem. For some activists, the perceived inefficacy of ecological practices directly influenced their decision to engage in climate activism. Valentina, a 24-year-old member of Extinction Rebellion since 2019, explains it in these terms:

For me, it was really helpful to find a movement that doesn't push individual behaviors because I believe that, at this point, they are simply no longer useful. (Valentina, i.6)

Several respondents refer to the often-cited figure that individual behavior change could account for a 25% reduction in emissions. As discussed earlier in the case of Justine, this number is sometimes interpreted as evidence that individual practices are essential. However, while those who justify their actions in terms of efficacy view the 25% as a significant amount, respondents who are more critical of individual action use the very same figure to highlight its limitations. Luca, previously mentioned, a 19-year-old engineering student and member of Fridays for Future, offers a clear example of this perspective:

According to a Stockholm University study, in the European Union, if we all behaved as best we could, we would reduce emissions by a quarter. Which is something, but simply not enough. (Luca, i.4)

Éliane, a 45-year-old librarian and the responsible for an AMAP (Association for the Maintenance of Peasant Agriculture), echoes this sentiment:

I read the other day that individual actions could resolve about twenty-five percent of the crisis. But that's just too partial. (Éliane, i.31)

Veronica, a 33-year-old private English teacher and activist in Fridays for Future, provides an additional perspective:

There was a slide we use when we go to schools that says: ‘If all daily actions were done perfectly, they would account for 24% of emissions.’ So clearly, unfortunately... I don’t think they’re useless, I actually think they’re useful, but they are not sufficient. I believe they are important more for their intrinsic value and because they raise awareness and promote reflection on certain issues. (Veronica, i.27)

These reflections reveal how the same figure—25%—can serve different argumentative functions. For some, it justifies personal engagement; for others, it underscores the structural limitations of an approach based on individual action. In the latter cases, the perceived inefficacy and insufficiency of ecological practices is tied to the demand for structural government measures. Émile, a 22-year-old engineering student involved in a WWOOFing permaculture project in Sweden, puts it succinctly:

It’s not enough. If I really want to make a difference, I know that acting at an individual level won’t cut it. We need to act collectively. (Émile, i.30)

Ettore, a 22-year-old geography student and former EELV activist now close to La France Insoumise, reinforces this point:

It’s good to take individual actions, but they won’t be fast enough for the challenge ahead. There’s also the collective aspect—politics. Politics needs to change on a large scale. Individual action is important, but it’s not the most effective lever. (Ettore, i.47)

These excerpts reveal that, despite their nuances, climate mobilization includes individuals who critically reassess the role of individual action, often perceiving it as inadequate, too limited in scope, or too slow to meet the urgency of the crisis. Questioning efficacy is also closely tied to a rejection of the notion that individuals should be held responsible for the climate crisis. Manuela strongly criticizes this focus on individual responsibility:

Even within the environmental movement, if we focus mainly on individual responsibility, we lose sight of the real problem—which is political. (Manuela, i.1)

Benedetta, a 27-year-old renewable energy consultant and activist in Extinction Rebellion since 2019, says she has stopped blaming herself for her individual behavior, as she now believes that responsibility does not lie with the individual but must be shared collectively:

What I've come to feel through activism is that I no longer carry the weight of the world on my shoulders with every little action I take. Moving away from this individualist mindset, where everything depends on me, where every step must be measured and compensated for, isn't about shirking responsibility or being lazy. It's about collectivizing the problem, about sharing responsibility. (Benedetta, i.11)

Thus, for these activists, the issue is not only questioning the efficacy, usefulness, or potential of widespread everyday ecological practices as a solution to the climate crisis. More fundamentally, it is about challenging the very idea that the climate crisis stems from individual misbehavior—and that, consequently, responsibility for solving it should be distributed among individuals. For activists strongly involved in the movement shifting the focus from individual responsibility to governmental responsibility is crucial. Greta, a 27-year-old activist in *Ultima Generazione* and a student-worker, makes this point clear:

One of the things I struggled with the most, even during the roadblocks [is that] it feels like people don't really understand. They don't get that we're not there to criticize people for driving cars, you know? That's not the point at all. And this really shows how deeply ingrained the idea is that environmentalism is just about individual behavior. But honestly, I just want to say to these people: let's realize that Italy is the sixth largest investor in fossil fuels in the world. What difference does it make if you bike or drive a car compared to that? Even if every single one of us switched to biking, Italy would still keep investing in fossil fuels and looking out for its own interests. (Greta, i.21)

The logic underlying these responses stands in clear opposition to the eco-modernist, individual-centered approach discussed in previous sections. For these activists, solutions to the climate crisis must be collective and governmental, with the state bearing primary responsibility. This view sharply contrasts with the perspective that places the citizen-consumer at the center of ecological transformation. According to this group of interviewees, if the state fails to act, the appropriate response is mobilization—not the substitution of public intervention with individual initiatives. Deeply embedded in the social fabric of climate activism, these respondents also emphasize that the crisis has been driven by the industrial and productive system, supported by governments and political institutions. Yet, they are also the ones who most rigorously adhere to environmentally conscious lifestyles. This creates a paradox: on the one hand, they reject the idea that individual practices are effective tools for change; on the other, they uphold a highly demanding ethical standard in their own daily lives. For example, Greta is vegan, has stopped using a car, carefully selects organic and locally sourced products, helps her parents with the family vegetable garden, has renounced air travel in favor of Flixbus, boycotts Amazon and fast fashion, and buys second-hand clothing. Yet, she

expresses “a sense of rejection toward the idea of activism as raising awareness about individual behaviors.” As she explains, one should not conflate being an activist with simply making sustainable lifestyle choices and encouraging others to do the same:

I reject the idea that an activist is someone who acts solely through individual behaviors. To me, an activist is a person who seeks political and systemic change, which in turn implies an economic shift, eventually leading to changes in individual behaviors. [...] When I adopt an individual behavior, I rather see myself as a conscious person who has made certain choices [...] But in that moment, I don't feel like an activist, because I don't want to think of activism as something defined by individual behaviors—I prefer to conceive of activism as something else entirely. (Greta, i.21)

This perspective stands in stark contrast to the previously discussed form of ‘passive activism’ exemplified by Teo. In contrast, Greta states:

That's why I'm very cautious when talking about my individual behaviors with people—because I really want to debunk the myth that as an individual, I can change the world just by using a reusable bottle instead of a plastic one. (Greta, i.21)

Here, Greta uses the example of the reusable bottle to challenge an approach—promoted, as we saw earlier, by Edoardo—that emphasizes small, consensual individual actions as a meaningful solution to the ecological crisis.

Veronica, a member of Fridays for Future, expresses a similar position. She has been a vegetarian for over twelve years and recently transitioned to veganism, though she occasionally consumes eggs from a local farmer and cheese made with plant-based rennet. Her dietary choices reflect a desire to avoid complicity in industrial farming. She has also renounced air travel—except for one work-related trip to England, which caused her considerable internal conflict. In her daily life, she purchases in bulk, avoids large retail chains, and boycotts e-commerce platforms like Amazon—a stance that sometimes creates friction with her husband. Veronica's lifestyle reflects a deep personal commitment to ecological values and a conscious refusal to engage with dominant consumption models. Yet, despite this transformation, she explicitly rejects the narrative that individual practices alone can resolve the climate crisis:

It has happened with friends of mine, discussing this issue... They say, ‘Well, now everyone is changing a little... little by little, we're changing our consumption habits, and everything will get better.’ And unfortunately, I told them, ‘No, look, that would be really nice, but it's false.’ (Veronica, i.27)

Her statement illustrates a clear skepticism toward the idea of gradual, consumer-driven change. Thus, although these activists are, on a personal level, almost irreproachable, adopting practices that involve significant lifestyle changes, they refuse to present these actions as inherently central or politically sufficient.

3.6.2 Negotiating between Reputation, Transgression and Legitimacy

How, then, can we explain the apparent paradox between the rejection of the strategic logic of efficacy and individual responsibility, and the strict adherence to ecological practices in one's personal life? One possible justification that emerges is the desire to avoid falling into what Jensen (2019) calls the hypocrite's trap. This mechanism—often employed by opponents of ecological transition policies—aims to undermine the credibility of those promoting environmental choices by accusing them of not fully adhering to ecological norms in their personal lives. As Jensen (2019, 74) explains: “The credibility of both proposal and proposer are evaluated by how closely personal actions align with recommendations for altering social systems. By emphasizing gaps between the two, charges of hypocrisy—faking the role of a virtuous person, while failing to live by the principles they chasten others to uphold—can be leveled, along with the recommendation to lead by example.” Such accusations of hypocrisy have frequently targeted figures within the climate movement. For instance, a photo shared by Greta Thunberg on Twitter in 2019, showing her eating a meal on a train, triggered a wave of critical comments from users accusing her of inconsistency, as the meal included food wrapped in plastic packaging³². In this context, behaving in accordance with the ecological norms one seeks to promote becomes a way to avoid falling into the trap. Riccardo, a 41-year-old university researcher and member of Extinction Rebellion explains:

I believe that in order to be an advocate for a certain vision of the world, one must, at least to some extent, act in a way that is consistent with that vision. (Riccardo, i.16)

Greta also says:

Regarding what I do, even when I talk to people, I might explain that I'm an activist, and I like being able to say, yes, I do a certain kind of activism, and at the same time, I am consistent. It's a consistency that I hold within myself because it makes me feel like I'm not being hypocritical, both internally and externally. So, for example,

³² The post is visible on Greta Thunberg's X profile and is dated January 22, 2019.

if someone sees me during an action and asks ‘Yeah, but you do this, yet you still eat meat, you eat hamburgers...’—No! I like being able to say, ‘No, I am consistent.’ (Greta, i.21)

Avoiding the risk of falling into the hypocrite’s trap becomes a central concern for activists. The aim of adopting certain practices, then, is reputational: to avoid discredit in the eyes of the public—whose support is sought—and in those of the institutions to which demands are addressed (Posmek 2023; Stuart 2022). However, certain contexts demand a transgression of personal norms. This often occurs in family settings, particularly during events that involve relatives, where individuals have less freedom to negotiate choices, such as dietary preferences. This is the case of Riccardo, who follows a vegetarian diet and tries to reduce his dairy consumption while living in Barcelona. However, he reports eating meat during family meals, especially on holidays:

When I go home for Christmas and my parents are cooking—like, my mother makes ragù—I eat the ragù. I mean... even if I sometimes try to tell her, ‘Look, I really am trying to cut down on meat,’ well, my mother is someone of a certain age, she has her habits. It’s hard, and honestly, I’m not even sure it’s right to ask her to change them just for me, especially when there are other people in the family. So yes, from that point of view, I think a bit of flexibility is needed—at least, that’s how I see it. (Riccardo, i.16)

Riccardo’s reflection—where, on the one hand, he justifies his ecological practices as a form of consistency with collective action, while on the other, he calls for flexibility in the family setting—aligns with what Swidler (2001, 41) suggests: “Cultural repertoires allow people to move among situations, finding terms in which to orient action within each situation [...] people switch cultural frames when they imaginatively engage new scenes or situations.” Nevertheless, when the required transgression becomes too significant to accept, activists may abandon this flexibility and instead seek to bring about change within the family setting. This is the case of Fabian, a 25-year-old PhD student and activist in the radical left party La France Insoumise, who initially ate meat and fish only on special family occasions. However, after realizing that such quantities were physically uncomfortable for his now-vegetarian body, he decided to persuade his family to adapt:

Well, now there’s always a vegetarian dish, and it works out just fine. (Fabian, i.41)

Otherwise activists may develop “tricks” (De Certeau 1990) to navigate the situation without fully compromising their principles. For instance, Greta describes her strategies when family members prepare non-vegan meals:

Meat is absolutely out of the question. But let's say, they're still processing the fact that I don't consume milk and eggs, so I kind of pretend. I say I'm lactose intolerant, so maybe that way I can avoid milk. (Greta, i.21)

In some cases, transgression is even concealed precisely to avoid being attacked and thus undermining the awareness-raising process and the struggle itself. This is the case for Chloé, 22, an activist from Youth for Climate. She does not consider practices effective in themselves but rather sees them as useful for making people more aware of the environment around them. For health reasons, Chloé must consume meat at least once every two weeks, but in those cases, she chooses to eat it when she is alone at home, not in the presence of others:

I often have iron deficiencies, and what I try to do is to consume meat to overcome my iron deficiencies at home when no one's around. But in front of my family, in front of my friends, or even when I go to the university restaurant, I'll eat vegetarian because I think, 'At least it raises awareness,' even if I technically need to eat some meat. (Chloé, i.48)

For this reason, Chloé sees her moments of transgression as a potential failure of her awareness-raising strategy and, therefore, as something that should be hidden from external eyes. Engaging in ecological practices is seen, in this case, as a way to make the ecological message more accessible to outsiders. As in previous cases, this can be understood as a form of exemplarity—but one that functions primarily as a means of communicative signaling rather than behavioral replication. This marks a significant departure from the type of exemplarity analyzed in the previous subchapter. Unlike strategic exemplarity—which aims to show that a certain lifestyle is feasible, replicable, and desirable for its intrinsic outcomes—this form of symbolic exemplarity is oriented toward raising awareness, capturing attention, and encouraging critical reflection on the necessity of collective and systemic responses. Here, the focus is not on encouraging imitation of the behavior itself, but rather on making others aware of the problem, the need for collective action, and the urgency of political engagement.

In certain cases, however, transgression can play a constructive role, helping to counter the perception of environmentalism as rigid or sectarian (McCalman 2023). This is the case of Ettore, who claims to allow himself some “concessions” when he is among friends who do not necessarily share his values, precisely to give himself the opportunity to talk with them and later convince them on other issues:

When I'm with friends who don't necessarily share my views, well, I let it go and tell myself, 'Okay, I don't want to alienate these people or anything,' especially because that would be even worse than just making a

concession. While I can make a concession, in the end, I might convince them later or win victories on other issues. If I were rigid about everything, I could just turn them against me, and that would be counterproductive, making them not want to listen to me at all about anything else. (Ettore, i.47)

A very similar argument is made by Léonie, a 30-year-old who works in a recycled goods shop and is an active member of EELV. Although she is becoming increasingly less patient with those who criticize her dietary choices—especially within her family—she still tries to negotiate the transgression of the norm, justifying it as a useful way to soften the rigidity with which others perceive her:

So I try to be a bit more flexible sometimes (literally, *mettre un peu d'eau dans mon vin*, in the text), to be able to get other ideas across in a slightly more educational way if possible, without alienating them and making them completely resistant to the whole ideological package. (Léonie, i.46)

Another point is mentioned by Laura, 24, a former Greenpeace volunteer, who argues that deviating from the ecological norm—for example, not buying meat while still consuming it occasionally—has both negative and positive effects:

I think that, on the one hand, it disappoints me because I feel like I'm breaking the rules I set for myself. At the same time, I also like it because it keeps one foot in 'normality,' so to speak. I can still adapt, and I enjoy eating meat from time to time, which also makes me feel like I belong to another group of people, not just the environmentalists who refuse to eat meat. So yeah, it's a bit of an internal conflict—an in-between where I'm both not very happy and, at the same time, it makes me feel normal. (Laura, i.32)

Laura opposes the idea of the hermit, as previously mentioned, precisely because her goal is to normalize the ecological message:

I'm also interested in showing that there's a way of life that can be a bit alternative while remaining part of society. I'm not someone who lives like a hermit or anything, and I find it interesting to spread this around me and my friends. (Laura, i.32)

Thus, adopting ecological practices can serve as a strategy to reinforce one's legitimacy as an activist and to strengthen a political message without the fear of being contradicted or perceived as inconsistent. At the same time, in an effort to distance themselves from 'sectarian' stereotypes, activists seek to support the ecological cause while remaining grounded in reality and connected to their social environments (McCalman 2023). Balancing ethical rigor with openness toward those outside the movement—while avoiding social stigma—becomes, therefore, an ongoing exercise

(Posmek 2023). The goal is to demonstrate authenticity while also normalizing the integration of ecological and non-ecological behaviors, thereby facilitating engagement and raising awareness among those who are not necessarily part of the environmentalist sphere.

Alongside these explanations, which are oriented toward the outside—namely, how one’s conduct is perceived by others—a central role is also played by justifications grounded in moral and normative reasoning. In the next two sections, I will analyze the notions of guilt and alignment-preparation, which offer insight into these alternative, non-strategic ways of justifying the adoption of ecological practices.

3.6.3 Guilt as a Moral Justifications

Morality represents a central element around which the justification systems of many interviewees revolve. To better understand the role of morality, it is useful to analyze the range of justifications most closely associated with guilt. As discussed in section 3.5.3, guilt functions as a keystone emotion—particularly in relation to everyday lifestyle choices (Jensen 2019)—and numerous studies have demonstrated a connection between feelings of guilt and ecological changes in behavior. As mentioned above, guilt appears frequently in the interviews, emerging within the justificatory systems of both those who embrace individual responsibility (Quadrant 2) and those who reject it (Quadrant 1). In the latter case, ecological practices are justified less in terms of individual responsibility or utility, and more as a matter of morality and the personal fulfillment derived from doing what is right. In what follows, I focus specifically on this latter configuration.

Activists who adopt highly transformative practices often tend to downplay their efforts when talking about their lifestyles. This is the case with Manuela, who refuses to buy meat—though she occasionally consumes it when dining out with friends—buys fruits and vegetables mainly from the local market, boycotts e-commerce platforms, and avoids flying for domestic travel. She has also experimented with self-production when feasible and prefers to exchange or donate clothes rather than throw them away or buy new ones. Yet when asked about her ecological lifestyle, she tends to express guilt and minimizes her commitment:

First of all, I feel very guilty I have to say [...] so this question is complicated for me, because I feel I can do a lot more but I don’t do enough [...] I feel like I don’t do enough. (Manuela, i.1)

She does not frame her actions in terms of effectiveness or individual responsibility; on the contrary, she explicitly rejects these narratives. Rather, guilt emerges as the central justification in her system. Alongside guilt, a related moral element also comes into play: a sense of duty and rightness.

I take many small precautions [...] I feel maybe a bit of a moral duty [...] I would really feel like a criminal if I filled my home with plastic, or take a plane to go to another region, or take the car to go anywhere in town. (Manuela, i.1)

Manuela adopts these practices for moral rather than strategic reasons. She acknowledges her ability and opportunity to modify her behavior—through consumer choices, reducing packaging, or avoiding plastic—but this perceived freedom of choice translates into a moral obligation. Unlike the notion of individual responsibility invoked by activists in quadrant 2, this obligation is not tied to the causes or solutions of environmental problems. It is a purely moral imperative rooted in the private sphere:

So, I do some things because I know that if I reduce my plastic consumption, if I don't buy plastic, I am doing something good. Other small actions, let's put it this way, I do them just to feel good about myself, without... I do it purely for ethical reasons, not for anything else. (Manuela, i.1)

This is accompanied by an anti-exemplary stance: not only does she not wish to showcase her actions publicly, but she explicitly rejects the notion of individual responsibility:

And then, when I talk to people, I don't like emphasizing it too much. I think it's a kind of misguided and counterproductive moralism to highlight individual responsibilities. (Manuela, i.1)

Similarly, Armando, 56, a sales representative, is a former member of the radical left party Rifondazione Comunista and is currently affiliated with the left-wing party Sinistra Italiana. Armando adopts various ecological practices together with his wife, who is an activist with Extinction Rebellion. Together, they have made several home insulation improvements, keep the heating at 18 degrees in winter, and buy bulk products. They use air travel only once every two years and are exploring alternative transportation methods to avoid it entirely. He explains:

I adopt these practices because I couldn't do otherwise. Even though I feel guilty for doing so little, it is a moral and ethical sentiment of mine. It drives me because it is right, it is just, and even though it's not much, doing less than this would be truly undignified. (Armando, i.19)

For Armando, adopting certain practices does not necessarily mean absolving himself of guilt. Like other activists in the same quadrant, he emphasizes that despite feeling guilty, these practices should not be seen as a solution:

I don't know if what we do is really meaningful. But I also believe that... I wouldn't want to give the impression that it's up to the individual. That this is the solution... The solution must be sought at a political and global level. [...] Individual actions, of course, are important, as is the awareness of behaving differently. But honestly, I think maybe we shouldn't even talk about them too much. (Armando, i.19)

Despite a lifestyle change that he considers significant, Armando still experiences guilt and downplays his daily efforts. He repeatedly minimizes his actions and blames himself for not being able to transform his behavior as much as he would like. Like Manuela, respondents who exhibit self-blame often reject the label of “climate activist”. They do not consider themselves worthy of such a title, as they feel they have not done enough to deserve it. This dynamic echoes McCalman's (2023) findings on environmentally conscious individuals, who hesitate to identify as environmentalists because they believe they have not yet reached a sufficient level of commitment. According to McCalman, this reluctance stems from an ecological commitment grounded in moral imperative.

Unlike respondents in Quadrant 2—who exhibit their personal actions publicly as evidence of responsibility—those in Quadrant 1 keep their actions private and intimate. Guilt functions as a justification for self-transformation when such transformation cannot be framed in strategic terms. As Jensen (2019) notes, guilt plays a central role in the eco-friendly rhetoric of environmental communication. The fact that even activists with radical political views—who explicitly reject individual responsibility—reflect on their practices through the lens of guilt, highlights the pervasiveness of these rhetoric and the extent to which they have been internalized. Once disentangled from responsibility, guilt endures—taking on a more symbolic meaning, rather than a strategic one. Additionally, Manuela and Armando share a common social background despite their age difference: both grew up in working-class environments and later found employment in professions related to the cultural sphere (Manuela is a PhD student in law; Armando is a sales representative in the publishing sector). This shared background is significant. As will be shown in the next chapter, respondents with a working-class or employee background are predominantly positioned in the left quadrants, while those from small-business backgrounds tend to occupy the right quadrants. These findings are not definitive, but they suggest a potential association between social background and the tendency to either display or conceal one's actions.

The same sense of guilt for not doing enough is reported by Lars, 23, a Norwegian student in France and a member of Young Ecologists in Norway and France. Since becoming active in the environmental movement, Lars has radically changed his lifestyle. For example, he has stopped flying between Paris and Oslo, initially trying trains, which were too expensive and required five changes, before settling on a 30-hour Flixbus journey with one transfer. He also refused to buy a new phone

after his was stolen, waiting several weeks before a friend lent him an old one to repair. Additionally, he follows a vegetarian diet, buys organic and second-hand products, and adopts numerous other daily ecological practices. Nevertheless, he describes himself as follows:

I still pollute far too much compared to what a normal citizen would pollute [...] even if I try to do everything I can to pollute less, I'm sure that my carbon footprint is more than what it should be on the global level. (Lars, i.40)

Lars, therefore, adopts an irreproachable lifestyle in many respects, constantly managing ecological norms, compromise, and transgression, which he reduces to a minimum. He recalls a particularly traumatic episode—the flight he had to take to attend the Young Ecologists World Congress in Korea:

When I flew to Korea, I thought, 'Can we calculate the number of people who died on that flight? The 0.2 people died from these emissions?' [...] and it was really uncomfortable. And I think I didn't manage to take advantage of the situation well enough exactly because this extreme pollution and unfortunately I found that what we organized wasn't useful enough to really justify what we did. (Lars, i.40)

Although Lars rejects any solution to the climate crisis based on the transformation of individual lifestyles, he lives his life in a constant process of self-transformation. The relentless pursuit of moral rectitude becomes the driving force behind his behavior, fueled by a persistent feeling of falling short of his moral obligations. This becomes evident, for instance, when Lars compares French and Norwegian activists. He describes a sort of competition among the French to pollute less, which acts as a form of peer pressure and intensifies the tendency to devalue one's own efforts and to continually raise the bar of moral compliance:

I also find that there's this kind of race to always do more, to always be the one who pollutes the least and who lives most in line with our principles. And I think that's one of the reasons I've become increasingly radical, especially in France. I feel there's much more pressure to truly live in an ecological way—much more than among the Norwegian Greens. (Lars, i.40)

This shows how social circles encourage specific practices, shaping perceptions of what is right or wrong. However, it is important to recognize that this moral pressure is often reinforced by internal justifications—such as pleasure, satisfaction, and gratification derived from adopting a certain practice. Lars illustrates this interplay between guilt and personal satisfaction:

I feel like a good person [...] The feeling of not polluting makes me feel like I am being kind. (Lars, i.40)

Therefore, one could argue that when moral pressure alone risks feeling too coercive, the justification strategy shifts to blending external conformity with personal gratification. In this way, by integrating the adoption of practices with individual enjoyment, activists navigate the tension between responsibility and moral pressure, reinforcing their commitment.

In light of this, it becomes evident that guilt, rightness, and pleasure coherently compose a system of justifications that appears in several interviews. These individuals engage in transformative and demanding practices, yet they oscillate between a sense of the inadequacy of individual engagement and a strong moral imperative. Within this group, certain recurring social patterns emerge—such as a background in working-class or employee families, a moderate but solid level of political experience that does not translate into a full activist identity, and a highly politicized and radical outlook. This suggests that guilt, once detached from the discourse of individual responsibility, may operate as an internalized moral discipline—a form of self-regulation that sustains ecological commitment and self-transformation, while at the same time fostering self-devaluation. In contrast, some of the most politically engaged respondents express a conscious effort to reject guilt altogether, viewing it as a counterproductive element that undermines effective political action.

3.6.4 Rejecting Guilt: Non-Complicity and Negotiation

If guilt, in all its variations, represents a central element in the justificatory framework of many interviewees, it is important to note that a significant portion of respondents (22 out of 51) explicitly reject arguments related to guilt when referring to their everyday practices. These interviewees are predominantly women who are highly engaged in activism.

To understand the reasons behind this trend, it is useful to turn to social movement studies that have explored the role of guilt. Craddock (2019) and Kennelly (2014) have shown that within social movements, an idea of the ‘ideal activist’ often emerges—one shaped by strongly gendered elements, what Craddock (drawing on Bourdieu 2001) refers to as the masculine *doxa*: a normative framework that values direct action, sustained high-intensity engagement, and a willingness to take risks while overlooking the gendered constraints that such expectations entail. Women are more likely to reflect on and critically examine their role within the movement, which makes them more vulnerable to feelings of self-blame for not doing enough (Kennelly 2014). Guilt for not doing enough is thus a common condition in social movements stemming from the misalignment between an ‘ideal’ activist stance and one’s personal capacity to engage. Interviews with climate activists reveal a very similar

pattern. Several committed activists, in fact, speak of a persistent sense of guilt when reflecting on their engagement:

I feel so much guilt about not doing enough, never being enough. Not being in the square enough, not organizing enough. Not doing enough impactful, high-risk, incisive things. [...] So that also comes a little bit from one's own privilege. I sometimes really drown in guilt. (Benedetta, i.11)

In this case, I feel guilty. And my feeling guilty also makes me feel a duty to act. [...] I feel a duty to do so. I recognize the enormous privileges that I have, how the consequences of the ecological climate crisis are being suffered mainly by people who don't have even a tenth of the privileges that I've had so far and so I feel a duty, I feel a duty to do something. (Valentina, i.6)

You can't just do activism from morning to night. However, it's like precisely that there is a space that is that [of activism] and then a personal space. And I find sometimes difficult when I feel so much... the climate crisis on an emotional level takes a lot out of me, it almost feels like the things that I do, that don't affect it [the climate crisis] are useless. (Veronica, i.27)

While these activists do mention feelings of guilt in relation to collective action, none of them report being motivated by guilt when it comes to the adoption of everyday ecological practices. On the contrary, they all argue that guilt for not engaging in certain practices is harmful and should be actively rejected. Why does this happen? In many cases, the rejection of guilt follows a period of intense self-blame. Several respondents who now oppose guilt-driven arguments regarding personal ecological conduct previously went through a phase in which they strictly followed rigid rules to minimize waste in their daily consumption. For example, Valentina, before becoming active in Extinction Rebellion, discovered the concept of zero waste (Hajek 2023) and made a concerted effort to fully incorporate it into her lifestyle:

The 2017/2018 period was much more about individual behaviors, so I started to be careful to avoid using plastic ... all of this made me feel very guilty, in the sense when I was trying to improve myself, I felt very guilty, whenever maybe I couldn't avoid buying things in plastic. (Valentina, i.6)

A similar trajectory can be observed in the case of Benedetta, who, like Valentina, initially embraced the principles of the Zero Waste movement before becoming active in Extinction Rebellion, where she has now been involved for three years. While she once attempted to strictly follow zero waste guidelines, she now emphasizes how activism has reshaped her perspective and practices:

When I discovered the zero waste movement, it drove me crazy to try to eliminate plastic because really tried to eliminate it from everything, buy bulk etc., even in situations that was not easy [...] militancy also helped me to focus more on the collective than on the individual. [...] So what I tell myself about plastic now is that obviously I try to limit it [...] Compared to before here I definitely pay attention, however without exhausting myself, without that perfection that doesn't even have to exist here. (Benedetta, i.11)

Benedetta strongly criticizes guilt and individual responsibility, rejecting the notion that ecological action should be framed as a personal burden:

I believe that responsibility must be allocated. A mass movement is needed to change an economic model of production. [...] I've stopped guilt-ing myself as I used to do with plastic, because before it really used to psychologically burden me. I don't want, because I already have so many problems with eco-anxiety and so on, to add that to it. For me it has become unacceptable. (Benedetta, i.11)

In a very similar way, Elisabetta, a member of Ultima Generazione, describes the period when she was solely focused on zero waste as a time of deep guilt, from which she eventually escaped through activism:

I used to be too rigid about that and it doesn't make sense to be. In the sense that is, for me it is more important to participate and to the campaigns as 'Ultima Generazione' than to do individual actions. [...] And so this anyway makes me accept the fact that sometimes I can't do things perfectly [...] it allows me to do that without blaming myself. (Elisabetta, i.26)

Although the feeling of not doing enough persists when it comes to collective action, for activists who are actively involved in the movement, guilt is not seen as a legitimate argument when applied to individual behaviors. In their view, responsibility lies with institutions rather than individuals, and guilt on a personal level should therefore be rejected. While guilt is actively removed from the argumentative framework adopted by activists, a residual sentiment remains—a kind of sublimated non-complicity, stripped of the moralistic connotations typically associated with guilt, yet still grounded in a refusal to participate in the violence inflicted on other living beings. For example, Elisabetta explains her stance on avoiding fast fashion products as follows:

I believe in climate justice, social justice, and therefore I don't want to buy clothes that have been produced at the expense of people or the environment. I also don't want to fuel waste production because I know what impact it has. So I don't want to be complicit in this system that I am trying to change. (Elisabetta, i.26)

Similarly, Benedetta applies this reasoning to food self-production:

This made me reflect on the necessity of self-sufficiency, precisely to avoid dependence. Not because I'm afraid that I won't have food tomorrow, but to avoid relying on a system that is so dysfunctional and deeply rooted in exploitation in every possible way. (Benedetta, i.11)

Veronica expresses a similar sentiment regarding giving up air travel:

The thing about flying really bothers me—the idea of participating in something I consider wrong. (Veronica, i.27)

And in the case of non-vegan consumption, she further elaborates:

[It bothers me] not only because I would be eating an animal, but also because that animal is a product of an entire system that I don't want to be part of. [...] It wasn't just about not eating animals—it was about not being involved in factory farming, about not participating in everything that it entails. (Veronica, i.27)

Violette, 49 years old, a former sports journalist who later transitioned to working as a garden planning consultant, is an activist with ANVCOP21, and has participated in civil disobedience actions. She justifies her choice to make objects last longer or buy second-hand instead of new as follows:

I don't want to be part of excessive extraction, of this constant flow of materials that is wasted, of this overuse of energy. (Violette, i.43)

Not being complicit in the system one seeks to challenge emerges as a particularly strong form of justification in the cases examined. Analyzing the personal behaviors of Extinction Rebellion activists in the UK, Stuart (2022) similarly finds that the normative obligation to act “rightly” is often accompanied by the belief that, although individual actions may be inconsequential in light of the scale of the crisis, adopting a certain lifestyle serves to distinguish oneself from the system and to avoid being part of the problem. However, as also emerges from my interviews, these activists do not intend to use moral standards as tools for blaming—neither themselves nor others.

In conclusion, guilt emerges as a highly complex and ambivalent form of justification. It serves as a foundational argument both for those who believe in individual responsibility and for those who explicitly reject it. In the latter case, guilt becomes linked to the imperative of “doing the right thing,” which forms the core rationale behind adopting ecological practices, as a moral self-discipline.

Moreover, as shown by previous studies on guilt and activism (Craddock 2019; Kennelly 2014), guilt is constantly renegotiated within activist spaces—particularly among women with stronger ties to the movement and longer activist trajectories. Here, guilt is not tied to personal ecological choices, but to the perceived inability to contribute as fully as one would like: to act more, to take more risks, or to fully dedicate oneself to the movement. Thus, in this case, guilt related to everyday ecological practices is discursively rejected, as it is associated with depoliticizing narratives and false solutions centered on personal responsibility. Yet guilt does not entirely disappear. Instead, it is rearticulated into an ethic of non-complicity: a refusal to harm or exploit others—human or non-human—and a commitment to resisting participation in an unjust system.

3.6.5 Between Moral Alignment and Overcoming Dissonance

The removal of guilt and its transformation into a sense of non-complicity—particularly evident among respondents in quadrant 4 (bottom left)—is accompanied by a feeling of coherence between personal practices and ecological values, which underpins a distinct system of justifications. This perceived coherence influences how activists assess compromises and determine which practical decisions are acceptable within the boundaries of their ecological ideals. By rejecting the notion that individuals must be “effective” to make a difference, and moving beyond guilt and personal responsibility, these everyday practices help strengthen a sense of alignment between principles and practices for some activists. André’s experience clearly illustrates this sense of being in harmony with oneself—of living in a way that matches one’s beliefs and commitments:

I think I feel more in harmony, actually, with the rest of my thoughts and my political and activist commitments [...] It’s demanding; it takes up time and mental space—how are we going to travel? What are we going to eat? How will we handle everything? But these are reflections that I find interesting, so it doesn’t bother me at all. [...] I find it coherent and simply human to live this way, but I don’t do it to change things. (André, i.33)

This feeling of being in alignment with one’s values and principles—is widespread among the segment of activists examined, particularly those with extensive experience, especially in ecological organizations. For Violette, this sense of harmony and alignment is also associated with emotional satisfaction and the joy of doing something positive, despite the extra effort it requires:

I go with something where I feel like I’m truly aligned with myself, where I really feel like I’m in agreement with myself [...] Yes, for example, with AMAP, it has a side to it... you have to go every Tuesday evening, and there are times when, yes, I’d rather skip it. But at the same time, I’m really happy to participate in this kind of

organization to get my vegetables. The vegetables are amazing, and there's this whole connection with the farmer—it's great. So in the end, yes, it's a constraint, but one that brings so much positivity. (Violette, i.43)

Even after the initial awareness phase, these virtuous ecological practices tend to persist and become internalized, as Valentina explains:

I realized that changing my habits didn't make much of a difference, even though we still kept many of those behaviors. But, well, I think it's simply because they align with my principles [...] I continue to adopt these behaviors because they are part of my life principles. (Valentina, i.6)

For Elisabetta, adopting these practices is a way to feel:

Coherent and aligned with the person I want to be and with my principles. (Elisabetta, i.26)

According to Bourdieu (1998, 142), the coherence between one's position within a group and obedience to the group's norms increases the more central one's role is within the group: "This work is imposed with a particular urgency upon those who act as the official spokespersons of the group. These persons, more than anyone else, cannot afford to be irreverent toward the collective ideal, in public or even in private". It is therefore no coincidence that the most engaged activists within the movement are also the ones most committed to adopting ecological practices.

Therefore, the need to align one's political aspirations and ideals with personal conduct acts as a form of internal pressure towards coherence. However, just as some activists sublimate guilt by replacing it with a sense of non-complicity, the most radical and politicized among them rearticulate the normative concept of coherence. For these activists, coherence is not about moral purity, but about minimizing contradictions or overcoming dissonance. Alessio, 30 years old, is an engineer and member of the Centro Popolare Autogestito Firenze Sud, a historic self-managed social center in Florence. He identifies politically as Marxist–Leninist. Regarding ecological practices, he avoids flying or limits it to once a year, has reduced his meat consumption, and tries to make products last longer. He adopts these practices because he sees them as "good," without feeling that he is giving anything up:

I don't feel I'm renouncing anything [...] we don't have to sacrifice ourselves because the media decide to make us feel guilty for having a car that consumes a little too much, because maybe it's old. (Alessio, i.13)

He explains:

I'm not a priest and, therefore, I'm not interested in what is moral or what is ethical [...] But, let's say, it is important [...] Notwithstanding the fact that we all have contradictions [...] it is important to make sure that they are as few as possible. To this I would add that the militant example, the militant practical act [...] It is in the practice that the theory is strengthened. Putting into practice what you believe in helps you to advance from all points of view [...] Minimizing contradictions is important because it gives more strength to one's political action. (Alessio, i.13)

A similar perspective is found in Benedetta. She views climate justice, feminism, anti-racism, and anti-capitalism as deeply interconnected, and considers individual practices essential to sustaining a critical perspective and remaining prepared as an activist.

In my opinion, it's not just or even mainly a matter of coherence—yes, that too—but rather about having the lens to understand the complexities of these struggles. Otherwise, we risk not even knowing why or what we're fighting for. I truly believe in the intersectionality of struggles—not because it's trendy to say it or because it sounds coherent. Not so I can claim to be a better activist, saying that I'm anti-racist, feminist, anti-speciesist, and so on... That's not the point. The point is that the matrices of oppression, the mechanisms that link these struggles together, are the same. [...] That's why I say coherence is not the central issue, because incoherence is inevitable. Given the system we live in, being inconsistent is just part of being human—maybe even of human nature itself, I don't know. We are not purely rational beings, so there will always be contradictions and clashes, and I think this applies to ethics as well. (Benedetta, i.11)

Like Alessio, Benedetta rejects the individualizing and moralistic component of coherence-based justifications. For her, coherence is not a matter of willpower or personal virtue. Instead, she argues that the reason she adopts such practices is to reduce her internal dissonance:

In my opinion the effect is not so much significant on the global effect, on the outside. However they have an important effect on the inside... to overcome cognitive dissonance, because otherwise we just remain in indignation in my opinion (Benedetta, i.11)

In this context, overcoming dissonance and minimizing contradictions emerge as justifications once responsibility, guilt and morality are taken out of the equation. Instead of acting out of moral duty or striving for absolute coherence, these activists focus on maintaining internal consistency, reinforcing their political stance, and ensuring that their personal practices reflect their broader ideological commitments.

3.6.6 Preparation: Navigating the Future Through Everyday Practice

If normativity—whether expressed through guilt or through alignment with one’s own principles—plays a predominant role in justifying ecological practices among those who do not believe in the effectiveness of individual action, another crucial element must also be considered: preparation. I use the term preparation because it is flexible and encompasses various ways of adapting to the future—whether individually or collectively, physically or mentally. Compared to the more established concept of adaptation, which is prevalent in policy literature and often implies a more individualistic and reformist approach (Felli 2021), preparation allows for a broader and potentially more transformative understanding of this process. In this context, preparation refers to the justification of practices as a way of readying oneself for life in a post-carbon society.

Several studies have examined the role of temporality within the climate movement (Buzogány and Scherhauser 2022; Hayes and MacGregor 2023; Kenis 2023; Knops 2021, 2023; McKnight 2020; de Moor 2023a; Soler-i-Martí and and Pérez-Altable 2024). These works have highlighted how the discourse of climate movement actors is increasingly shaped by a sense of emergency (Hayes and MacGregor 2023; Kenis 2023). While some studies point to the growing relevance of post-apocalyptic and adaptation-oriented visions within environmental activism (Cassegård and Thörn 2018), especially in recent years (Tasset 2019), others argue that apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic narratives coexist within the movement, primarily supporting mitigation strategies and, more rarely, adaptation (de Moor 2021b). The temporal framing of the crisis influences the movement’s strategies, including do-it-yourself practices such as sustainable consumption and lifestyle politics (de Moor 2023b). In this context, the notion of preparation for life on a planet gripped by climate crisis becomes increasingly salient.

We can distinguish between two types of preparation: individual preparation, meaning individual survival in the era of the climate crisis, and collective preparation—the necessary shift in approach to living in the time of the climate crisis. These two forms of justification are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they often appear together in the narratives of various interviewees. Individual preparation means adapting to live in a future where the effects of the climate crisis will disrupt certain aspects of daily life. For example, Laura tries to anticipate some of these effects:

Maybe I’m a bit of a catastrophist, but I think it’s going to be very hard to adapt... And I don’t want it to be very hard for me. So, I try to anticipate things [...] I also try to figure out what I enjoy doing without electricity. Uh yeah, just so I don’t find myself completely lost [...] I’d really like to learn [how to garden] from my mother...

So typically, my plan, if all the stores were to close, would be to go back to my mother's house. But uh yeah, even in terms of adaptation, you see, for example, I'm taking beekeeping classes, also with the idea that 'If one day I want to be self-sufficient...' I'd like to have an easy source of sugar. (Laura, i.32)

Similarly, Valentina is participating in a European civil service project in a Balkan ecovillage at the time of the interview. There, she has had the opportunity to experience self-sufficiency, not only in food production but also in other areas. She explains:

I decided to take part in this experience both because I wanted to see if this way of living was really as I imagined it and if I would actually like it. But also because I believe that I am learning something, too. Before, I didn't know how to grow anything. I didn't know how to build—meaning, build something for myself, like a yurt [...] I think that what I am learning now will become fundamental in the future. That is, learning how to grow food or, in general, how to live this way, because many things might no longer be available. So in reality, yes, I am doing this partly because these are things I would have wanted to learn anyway, but also because, given the scenarios we are facing, I believe this kind of knowledge will be useful for living. (Valentina, i.6)

These examples reveal a different perception of the temporality of the climate crisis within the mobilization. As discussed in section 3.5.2, individuals who rely on justifications grounded in efficacy and individual responsibility tend to perceive the crisis as more distant and report feeling less directly affected by its consequences. By contrast, the cases examined here reflect a much more urgent sense of the crisis. This contrast mirrors the patterns observed in the previous chapter regarding the influence of eco-modernist attitudes on behavior. There, we saw that holding an eco-modernist outlook—characterized by trust in the future and techno-optimism—is inversely correlated with the likelihood of transforming one's individual practices in an ecologically oriented direction.

Whereas these examples reflect a personal approach to preparation, others frame their practices as a way to demonstrate that alternative modes of consumption, production, and living are possible, mobilizing a justification that appeals to the collective. For example, Ettore is actively involved in a cooperative supermarket where he and other volunteers manage the sale of local, organic, and bulk products. He approaches the issue of emissions in quantitative terms, arguing that, to keep global temperatures within the limits set by the Paris Agreement, individual emissions should remain below two tons per person. However, he believes it is now too late to achieve this target. Nevertheless, Ettore remains committed to changing his own lifestyle and encouraging others to do the same through his work at the cooperative supermarket. In his view, a shift in consumption habits is inevitable, so it is better to be prepared for it:

In any case, even if we change things politically, we'll still have to adapt these practices. For me, that means going to less than two tons per inhabitant, so it will have to be applied in all cases. So, the sooner we start, the simpler it will be. Once you've got the hang of it, well, it gets a lot easier. It can be hard at first. But once you're used to it, it's easy. [...] since it's going to be necessary in any case, it's... yes, to set an example, to prepare ourselves, it's necessary that we get there. (Ettore, i.47)

This represents a reversal of the logic of individual responsibility and the citizen-consumer model. Here, reducing one's carbon footprint is not seen as an end in itself, but as a means of preparing people to live within a fundamentally different kind of society. Changing one's behavior is seen as a necessity that cannot be ignored. Rather than striving to be exemplary in order to encourage others to influence the market, Ettore aims to set an example to help others prepare for life in a less carbon-intensive society.

Likewise, Émile, who at the time of the interview is participating in a WWOOFing project on permaculture in Sweden, also sees his training on the collective farm as something that could be valuable for the future:

Working the land, for me, is mostly about better understanding nature [...] I think that the individual practices I engage in now will have to become part of daily life in the future [...] This society of abundance cannot continue [...] We will have to embrace a more frugal way of living. And that frugality means, for example, using fewer household products, trying to reduce meat consumption. It also means realizing that relying on local products is becoming increasingly important [...] So, for me, these are things that will be essential—at the very least, to set an example, and at the very least, to establish habits that make more sense to me. (Émile, i.30)

Preparation and exemplarity here can be understood as a form of anticipatory activism (Renou 2020)—a type of activism that seeks to prefigure (Yates and de Moor 2022) the desired society through everyday practices. This approach is not necessarily (or exclusively) about changing institutions through contentious action, but rather about collectively transforming individual lives by leading through example. Far from seeing ecological practices as a major tool of action, these activists seem to reframe them within a new rationality—one that is not justified by its ability to trigger market transformations but rather as a way to bypass the system altogether (Vinthagen and Johansson 2013). This is achieved by withdrawing from the consumerist system (as evidenced by various forms of food autonomy and alternative consumption). Ettore and Émile are both engaged in lifestyle social movement organizations (Haenfler et al. 2012), such as the cooperative supermarket and the permaculture project. In both cases, they frame their personal commitment as a way to prepare themselves and others for a different way of living in the society of the future. This follows a logic

of salvation, which, as mentioned in section 3.5.2, is a recurring theme in activist narratives centered on exemplary action. However, unlike activists who blend exemplarity with individual responsibility—seeing daily practices as a personal path to redemption and salvation—those who focus on preparation see salvation not as an individual pursuit, but as a collective one.

A parallel way of thinking about ecological practices is to see them not only as a means of material and physical preparation for the future, but also as a form of mental preparation. Enrico, a 44-year-old researcher involved in the Collettivi di Ecologia Politica, explains his motivations when asked about the reasons behind his lifestyle:

I am aware that only a shift in the structure of production can allow us to get to a solution [...] However, by the time this institutional and production change takes place, subjectivities capable of inhabiting that world will be needed. So it means that you won't be able to eat a banana a day because it's absurd – to say that a whole series of practices that I still adopt myself, even though I'm trying not to do it anymore, won't be practicable and if you get trained it's better. So it's a kind of training that will be useful if we ever get a chance to play the game and to win it. (Enrico, i.24)

The same applies to Benedetta who says that she adopts ecological practices:

To make my brain elastic to change. [...] you do it because it trains you, mentally trains you for change. [...] Individual practices allow one to do this kind of analysis and ask these questions, because otherwise one does as he has always done, let's say as a prisoner almost of his own habits. And habits are not one's own, they have been taught. [...] so you have been taught that on New Year's Eve you eat sausage because tradition dictates that you eat sausage [...] Going to challenge these mechanisms allows you to train critical thinking [...] They are part of your life, so inevitably they will affect your ability to understand the world. (Benedetta, i.11)

Therefore, being in favor of a radical transformation of society presupposes accepting the possible effects this may have on the private sphere and, thus, being not only physically but also mentally prepared for it. For these activists, the consequences of the crisis are already visible and will only become more pronounced. As highlighted in the literature, varying degrees of catastrophic visions of the future emerge among them. However, these are not necessarily depictions of climate collapse as an immediate extinction event for humanity. Rather, they frame it as a period of social crisis, characterized by worsening inequalities and escalating violence. Many activists who are closely engaged in the movement share the belief that the climate crisis is already affecting—or will imminently affect—their personal lives.

I am deeply afraid of social collapse—what could happen to me, the fact that I might have to... that I will be at a much higher risk of being assaulted, or that even finding food will become incredibly difficult. (Valentina, i.6)

At home, we've already had to adapt. In 2020, there was a moment when—since we live in a small house—the water came in from the street, to the point that I couldn't even see the ramp to the garage anymore. The house flooded a bit. So we bought sandbags, and now every time it rains, I place them outside [...] Now I always have this worry, thinking, 'Damn, is the water going to get in again?' [...] You don't leave the house feeling at ease anymore. (Giacomo, i.8)

I notice it every time a storm is forecast—I get an automated call from the local government [...] That really worries me. (Stella, i.25)

In France, it's going to happen quickly. I would say within a decade. We are already seeing that heatwaves, which used to be rare, now happen almost every summer. (Émile, i.30)

I think we are already in the crisis. (Éliane, i.31)

These reflections have significant implications for future decisions, including major life choices such as having children, deciding where to live, or considering a career change. But they also shape daily life in more immediate ways. As many activists repeatedly emphasize, the solidarity felt within activist groups serves as a crucial lifeline against feelings of anguish and despair. In this sense, daily engagement is also justified as it allows individuals to work through their emotions, particularly when these emotions contribute to the development of a new way of life. This is the case for Éliane. When asked about the meaning she attributes to her daily ecological practices, she explains that they serve as a form of emotional relief in the face of climate urgency:

I find that taking action is already an anxiolytic. (Éliane, i.31)

Self-sufficiency and alternative transportation are the areas where the connection between preparation and pleasure is most evident. Adapting to future living conditions goes hand in hand with the desire to discover something new, learn a new skill, and venture into unexplored territory. Léonie describes her relationship with self-sufficiency in these terms:

First, there's the satisfaction of having made something yourself. It might also be somewhat reassuring to know that, even though you're still dependent on uncertainties like bad harvests—which in itself is another source of anxiety—it's still cool to think that at the very least, you have something to eat, even if you don't have a high income. (Léonie, i.46)

Similarly, André, who makes his own soap, and Amelie, who produces yogurt and jams, emphasize the fun and playful aspect of self-sufficiency. This feeling of happiness, discovery and gratification in learning new practices that can serve to prepare for the future is also reflected in other areas such as modes of transport. Violette, who traveled to Norway by train, describes the experience as an adventure:

When I travel to Norway this way, I feel like I'm embarking on an adventure. And, in fact, it really is an adventure. It makes me experience things in a completely different way. More than anything, it's a journey that feels deeply aligned with who I am. (Violette, i.43)

Pleasure, enjoyment, discovery, and the sense of fulfillment in daily practices emerge as additional justifications that help soften the otherwise urgent and distressing narrative of the crisis. When the crisis is perceived as an unstoppable process with direct impacts on one's life, these elements serve to counterbalance that perspective. They resonate with the idea that, if one must prepare to live in a fundamentally different future, then finding meaning and satisfaction in the process of change becomes essential. Such justifications—rooted in pleasure, preparation, and alignment—form the core of an alternative justificatory system that stands apart from the more strategic, goal-oriented logic of efficacy and individual responsibility. Rather than viewing ecological practices as instruments to solve the crisis, this system emphasizes the transformative power of everyday engagement. This configuration is particularly visible in the left quadrants of the justificatory space, where the focus shifts from outcome-driven action to ongoing self-transformation. Thus, for the most committed individuals, ecological engagement becomes not a strategy, but a way of politicizing daily life through the reinforcement of awareness and the management of the anxiety provoked by the crisis. Within this logic, the effort involved is downplayed, and the process itself becomes central—valued as a continuous journey rather than a means to an end. In this framework, daily life is no longer seen as the key to solving the crisis but as a space for self-transformation that can, in turn, strengthen collective engagement.

4. Conclusions

In this chapter, I examined how climate activists reflect on and make sense of their everyday ecological practices. The analysis was based on 51 interviews conducted with participants in climate marches in Italy and France. After performing a qualitative content analysis (QCA) of the interviews, I identified approximately 30 distinct justifications for the adoption of ecological practices. I then grouped these into broader categories, reducing them to eight justifications (efficacy, individual

responsibility, exemplarity, guilt, preparation, alignment, right, pleasure) and two anti-justifications—namely, counter-arguments that reject certain justifications, such as lack of efficacy or guilt removal. These categories were subsequently recoded into a dataset, which served as the basis for a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA). This allowed me to examine the relationships between justifications and between interviewees through a spatial visualization of their distribution.

The key findings of the analysis are summarized as follows: 1) Two main justificatory axes structure the narratives of the interviewees around their ecological practices. The first axis distinguishes between justifications that invoke the strategic efficacy of individual action, emphasize individual responsibility, and often converge with a logic of exemplarity (i.e., setting an example for others to follow), and those that reject efficacy and individual responsibility, valuing instead the intrinsic pleasure or preparatory function of certain practices—seen as steps toward adapting to a post-carbon society. The second axis is more moral-normative: it contrasts moral arguments (guilt, duty, rightness) with alignment-based justifications centered on coherence with one's values and the rejection of guilt.

2) Within the space created by the intersection of these axes, justifications combine into specific patterns, each offering a distinct way of making sense of ecological action while also accommodating internal tensions and contradictions—what I refer to as “systems of justification.” These systems are constructed through the aggregation of multiple justifications, reflecting the idea that justifications are composed of clusters of arguments, often interwoven in contradictory ways, to help individuals navigate complex and shifting situations. Justifications, therefore, are not mutually exclusive and static, but combine with each other according to different logics. This result goes in the same direction that was already highlighted by Swidler (2001, 212), that “people are better equipped for life if they have available multiple approaches to situations if they can shift justifications for their actions, and if they can mobilize different meanings to organize different lines of action”. Or, as Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) put it, that individuals generally employ multiple justifications and move from one ‘order of worth’ to another. Multiple Correspondence Analysis, by revealing the spatial positioning of justifications, also sheds light on their patterns of co-occurrence, thereby enabling the empirical emergence of these systems of justification.

3) Strategic systems of justification are those that emphasize the effectiveness of everyday ecological practices as a means of intervening in patterns of consumption and addressing the climate crisis. These justifications are closely intertwined with arguments grounded in the notion of individual

responsibility shared by all citizens. This combination, while representing a minority position among respondents, is strong and coherent. This perspective frames individuals as key political actors who influence change through their consumption choices. It reflects the idea of individualized collective action (Micheletti 2003), where responsibility for addressing the climate crisis shifts from the state to the citizen. Within this view, ecological engagement becomes a form of market-compatible citizenship (Dobson 2007), in which personal lifestyle changes and “good practices” are primarily valued for their ability to raise awareness and mobilize others.

4) This strong connection between efficacy and individual responsibility is often accompanied by a valorization of one’s own ecological actions as a form of exemplarity aimed at influencing others. Within individualized frameworks, exemplarity functions as a personal model of ethical integrity or symbolic redemption. The forms of exemplarity expressed by climate march participants resonate with Weber’s distinction between emissary prophecy and exemplary prophecy (Weber 2013a). While some respondents clearly embody the latter—adopting a silent model of living ecologically—others combine both approaches, blending personal transformation with outward-oriented messaging. In general, justifying one’s conduct by claiming it “sets an example” aligns closely with systems of justification rooted in individual responsibility and perceived efficacy. This justificatory pattern is particularly distinctive: it constructs a symbolic hierarchy between those who have embraced ecological practices (and thus become exemplary) and those who have not yet done so. These justifications—efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity—tend to be most prevalent among protesters with limited activist experience and relatively privileged socioeconomic backgrounds. This suggests that certain segments of the climate movement have internalized the normative logic of ecological modernization.

5) Alternative systems of justification emerge where attachment to strategic arguments is lacking—a pattern that appears in a considerable number of interviews. Despite the presence of contradictions in many narratives, a prevailing tendency can be observed: most respondents view individual ecological practices as insufficient in the face of the climate crisis and instead frame the issue primarily as a public and collective responsibility, rather than a private or individual one. For these activists, the persistence of ecological practices can be explained through what has been termed the “hypocrite trap,” particularly among those most engaged in disruptive forms of activism. Ecological practices are often justified as a way of protecting oneself from external accusations of inconsistency or moral failure.

6) Since individual responsibility and guilt do not necessarily align, feelings of guilt—especially for not doing enough—can emerge even within discourses that explicitly reject individual responsibility. In such cases, guilt does not disappear but rather coexists with strong forms of political radicalism. Individuals may engage in transformative and demanding ecological practices while oscillating between a sense of inadequacy regarding individual action and a compelling moral imperative. At the same time, many describe feelings of satisfaction or gratification for having acted “correctly.” This results in a robust and internally coherent system of justification, in which guilt, duty, and moral gratification operate together to sustain the adoption of ecological practices.

7) Guilt is also actively rejected by a segment of interviewees, who view it as a potentially individualizing force and direct explicit criticism toward guilt-based narratives. For these respondents, moving away from guilt does not signal a retreat from ecological engagement, but rather a reframing of how that engagement is understood. This stance is often accompanied by a strong internal drive for non-complicity—a widespread concern with refusing to harm or exploit others, whether human or non-human—and a commitment to resisting participation in unjust systems. Moreover, this distancing from guilt frequently aligns with a justification based on internal coherence: the alignment between one’s principles and practices. Among interviewees, this emerges as one of the most common rationales. In these cases, being in harmony with oneself and reducing the dissonance between values and behavior becomes a central criterion in how ecological practices are reflected upon and evaluated.

8) Temporal orientation also plays a key role in the act of justification. The analysis reveals two distinct perceptions of the temporality of the climate crisis. On one side, those who justify ecological practices in strategic terms tend to view the crisis as both temporally and personally distant. On the other, individuals who reject such strategic justifications perceive the crisis as immediate and feel its effects directly in their own lives. In this latter sense, their views resonate with the idea of preparation—that the adoption of ecological practices serves as a way to get ready to live in a fundamentally different future. Practices that may not produce immediate results or strategic benefits are often framed as long-term investments—in time, effort, or financial resources—that gradually acquire meaning. This temporal logic connects present actions to imagined futures, assigning symbolic and political value to practices that might otherwise seem marginal or inefficient. In this context, preparation often intersects with other justifications such as pleasure and internal alignment, forming a coherent justificatory system. If one must prepare to live in a post-carbon future, then finding meaning and satisfaction in the process of change becomes essential. Rather than pursuing

measurable outcomes, these practices reflect a deeper commitment to transformation—both personal and collective.

9) Taken together, these findings reveal not only the diversity of justificatory systems at play, but also the internal tensions between discourse and practice that run through them. A relevant paradox emerges when connecting discursive justifications with actual practices. Those who invoke strategic justifications—such as individual responsibility, efficacy, or exemplarity—report in interviews that they adopt basic and socially accepted ecological practices (such as sorting waste, avoiding plastic, or reducing household consumption). In contrast, the most demanding and transformative practices (such as dietary change, restrictions on mobility, or forms of voluntary simplicity), alongside more accessible ones, are more commonly adopted by those who explicitly reject strategic justifications and instead frame their ecological engagement in terms of preparation, guilt, or moral alignment. This paradox—where ecological practices are valued rhetorically without being accompanied by deeper lifestyle transformation—can be explained by the idea that such practices allow less engaged activists to construct an ecological identity outwardly. Ecological practices, when interpreted as goal-oriented actions, become a way of feeling part of the movement, while at the same time remaining compatible with previously internalized norms of consumption. By contrast, the fact that those who downplay the strategic value of ecological practices are often the ones who engage in them most intensively underscores the transformative power of ethical commitment. In these cases, action is not driven by goal-oriented rationality, but by a refusal to compromise one's principles—regardless of the outcome. Because these actions are not oriented toward external goals but anchored in an ethical orientation, ecological practice diffuses across the entire fabric of everyday life.

This disjunction between discourse and practice raises important questions about the relationship between systems of justification and the social dispositions that underpin them. In the next chapter, I will examine how different ways of making sense of everyday ecological practices are associated with, and shaped by, distinct social positions and trajectories of engagement.

Chapter 6. The Socialization Elements Behind the Justifications

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the set of reflections, arguments, and discourses surrounding the adoption of everyday ecological practices of climate protesters—what I have defined as the space of justifications. I also showed that, although these arguments are often contradictory or non-linear, certain patterns tend to emerge among recurring justifications. I referred to these as systems of justification. Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) provided a visual representation of these dynamics, especially by distinguishing between strategic systems of justification—based on efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity—and alternative systems, grounded in guilt, morality, pleasure, alignment, and preparation.

At this point, I want to take the analysis further by exploring an aspect only briefly mentioned so far: are these systems of justification associated with specific social profiles? Understanding how justifications for ecological practices relate to social background is useful to assess the extent to which primary and secondary socialization shape not only individuals' actions, but also their ways of reflecting on those actions. The sociology of justification has paid relatively little attention to this question—namely, the role that socio-biographical factors may play in shaping how individuals justify their actions. On the other hand, the theory of habitus may offer useful tools for analyzing this relationship. As discussed in Chapter 2, habitus is both a structured structure (i.e., shaped by material conditions of existence) and a structuring structure (i.e., capable of generating practices and perceptual schemas). This means that habitus not only influences individuals' actions, but also their ways of perceiving and classifying the world (Bourdieu 2010). These perceptual schemas are socially embedded and reflect class or group distinctions. However, empirical research attempting to link habitus and meaning-making remains limited. One notable exception is the study by Ambrasat et al. (2016, 1010), which finds that “self-identities are systematically associated with one's position in the social structure.” The authors argue that “individuals exhibiting a common lifestyle share self-meanings as well as patterns of meaning making regarding a broad variety of social concepts.” This suggests that in a stratified society, there is a relationship between ways of making sense of the world and specific living conditions and social backgrounds.

In this chapter, I will connect the systems of justification identified earlier with social dispositions shaped by activists' primary and secondary socialization. To do so, I will use a specific feature of

Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA). As discussed in the methodological chapter, in MCA, the variables that define the factorial space and determine the structure of the axes are called ‘active’ variables. In my case, the justifications function as active variables. However, MCA also allows for projecting ‘supplementary’ variables onto the space. These do not influence the construction of the axes but are positioned based on their association with the active categories. In my study, sociodemographic characteristics, political orientations, and activist experience were treated as supplementary variables. Their position within the justificatory space will be analyzed in the following chapter.

As a note to the reader, below I present two types of plots, variable plots and individual plots. In variable plots, each point represents a mode of a variable. The position of a supplementary modality in the plot represents the average coordinates (on the factorial axes) of the respondents who exhibit that modality. This is the most parsimonious way of representing the position of supplementary categories in space. However, for the sake of clarity, in some cases I also include the individual plots to highlight how individuals with a certain supplementary characteristic are positioned differently within the justification space. The axis pairs shown in both types of plots are identical. While MCA is typically visualized through a biplot that displays variables and individuals together, I chose to present the two types of visualizations separately to avoid overly crowded figures. In particular, I focus on two additional ranges of variables: variables related to the sphere of primary socialization (within which I include social origin, gender, religion, country) and variables related to the sphere of secondary socialization (affiliation to social movement organizations, activist experience, centrality of activism). The aim is to show that although the space is made up of justifications, it in fact also distinguishes individuals on the basis of their professional, educational and activist characteristics. I intend to show how the possession of certain characteristics is reflected in the distinction between the use of different systems of justification with regard to the protesters I interviewed. The aim of this analysis is not to identify “determinants” but rather to visualize associations between systems of justification and certain social elements that can be part of a specific process of socialization.

2. Patterns of Justification Across Social Origins

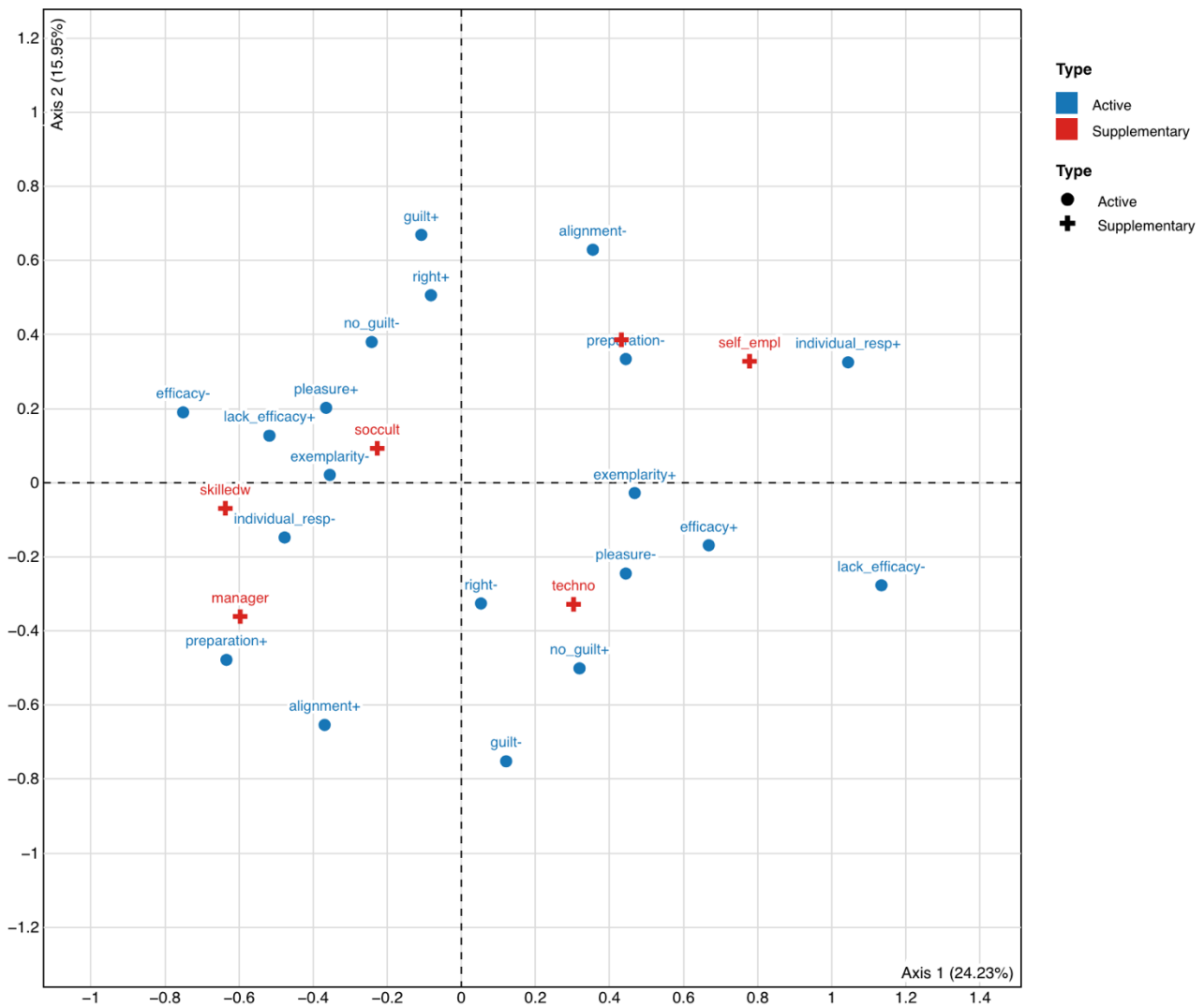
As shown by della Porta and Portos (2021) the climate movement has a relatively diverse class composition. This observation is supported by the analysis of respondents’ social origins presented in Chapter 4. Social origin proves to be a relevant distinguishing factor when it comes to justifications. I coded the occupations of the respondents’ parents regardless of whether they were still active in the

workforce³³. This choice was motivated by the aim not to provide a demographic snapshot of the sample, but rather to understand how the primary forms of socialization—shaped by the social positions of the parents—influence the respondents’ choices and reasoning. I then categorized the parents’ occupations based on Kriesi’s (1998) framework, while merging some smaller categories, as done in the survey analysis. For example, I grouped liberal professionals, small business owners, and independent farmers under the category “self-employed”, and similarly combined clerical employees and manual workers into a single category of ‘skilled dependent workers’.

Subsequently, I classified families according to the occupational background of the parents. A family was considered a “manager household” if at least one parent was a manager, defined as an employee with supervisory responsibilities according to INSEE guidelines. If at least one parent was self-employed, the family was labeled a “self-employed household.” Families with at least one technical professional parent were classified as “technical professional households,” while those with at least one socio-cultural professional parent were labeled “socio-cultural households.” Families in which neither parent fell into any of these categories were classified as “skilled dependent worker households” which include blue-collar workers and employees.

³³ I coded the occupations of respondents and respondents’ parents following two grids, the ISCO88 international socio-professional category grid and the INSEE socio-professional category grid. The latter, unlike the ISCO grid, takes more account of the division between public and private in the classification (Desrosières 2008; Pierru and Spire 2008). Furthermore, unlike the ISCO classification, the INSEE classification provides guidelines for codifying the dominant socio-professional family category: <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/6051701> This is why I preferred to use the INSEE classification for the analysis.

Figure 7. Variable plot. Household socio-professional category



The results presented in Figure 7 show that, while the ‘self-employed’ category is positioned on the right side of the space—together with technical professionals, who are slightly more central—the categories of ‘skilled dependent workers’, ‘socio-cultural professionals’, and ‘managers’ are located on the left. A clear association emerges between individuals from self-employed households and a system of justification for ecological practices that emphasizes efficacy, exemplarity, and individual responsibility. In contrast, individuals from manager, socio-cultural professional, or dependent worker households tend to be associated with a system of justification that highlights lack of efficacy, absence of responsibility, preparation, and pleasure. This is a significant finding, as it highlights a relationship between a specific type of primary socialization and a particular self-perception and understanding of individual action. This contrast points to a meaningful connection between primary socialization and the discourses individuals use to frame their actions. Growing up in an environment

where autonomy and initiative are valued—such as in self-employed households—appears to foster a stronger belief in the individual impact of one’s behavior. These individuals often see their practices as impactful and regard themselves as exemplary models to be emulated by those around them. On the other hand, respondents socialized in contexts characterized by dependent labor may place less emphasis on personal efficacy and instead privilege normative alignment, ethical consistency, and collective frameworks of responsibility.

Figures 8 and 9 reinforce this interpretation through individual-level plots: children of dependent workers cluster predominantly in the left quadrants, while those from self-employed families are positioned on the right.

Figure 8. Individual plot. Skilled dependent workers households

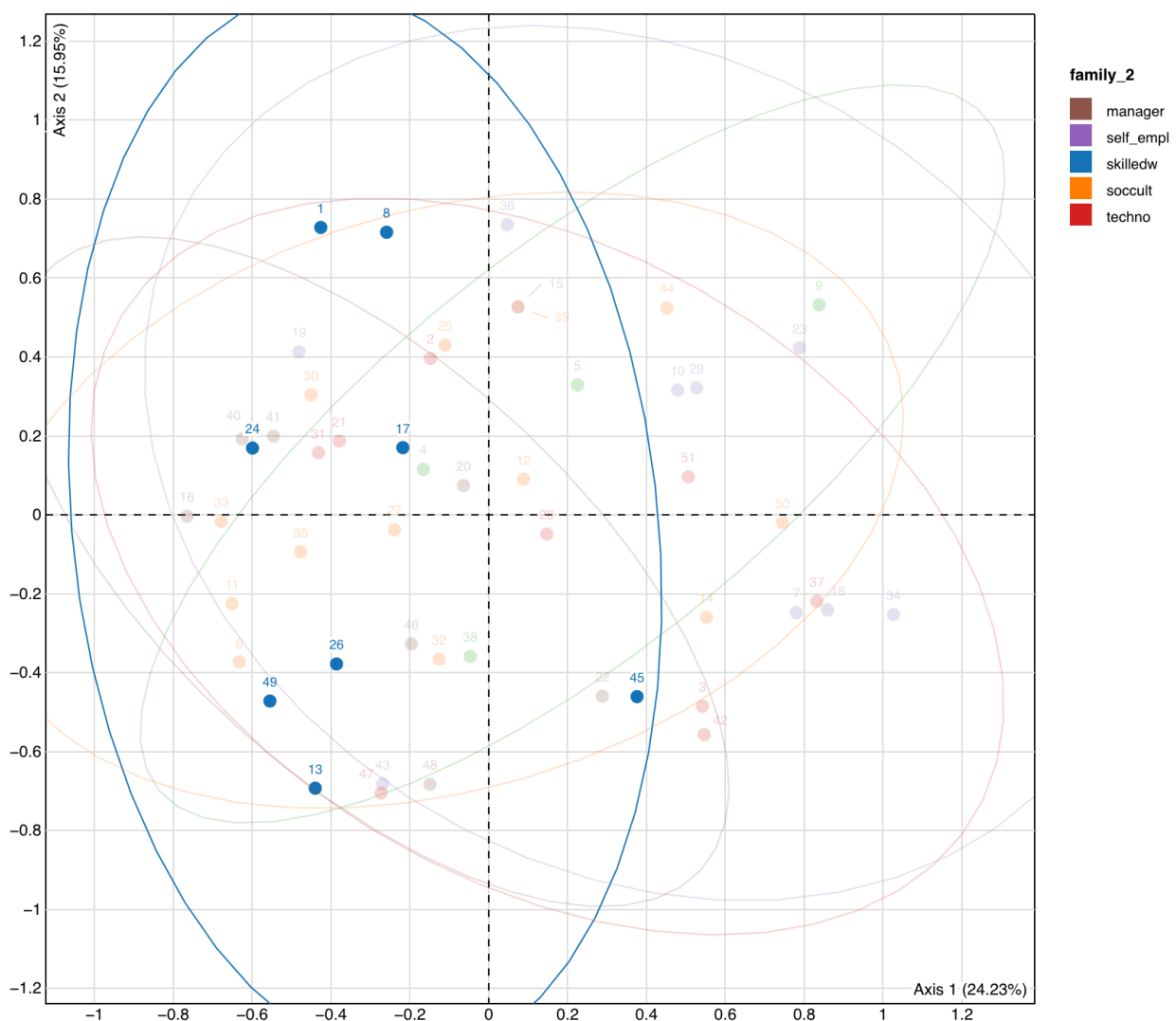
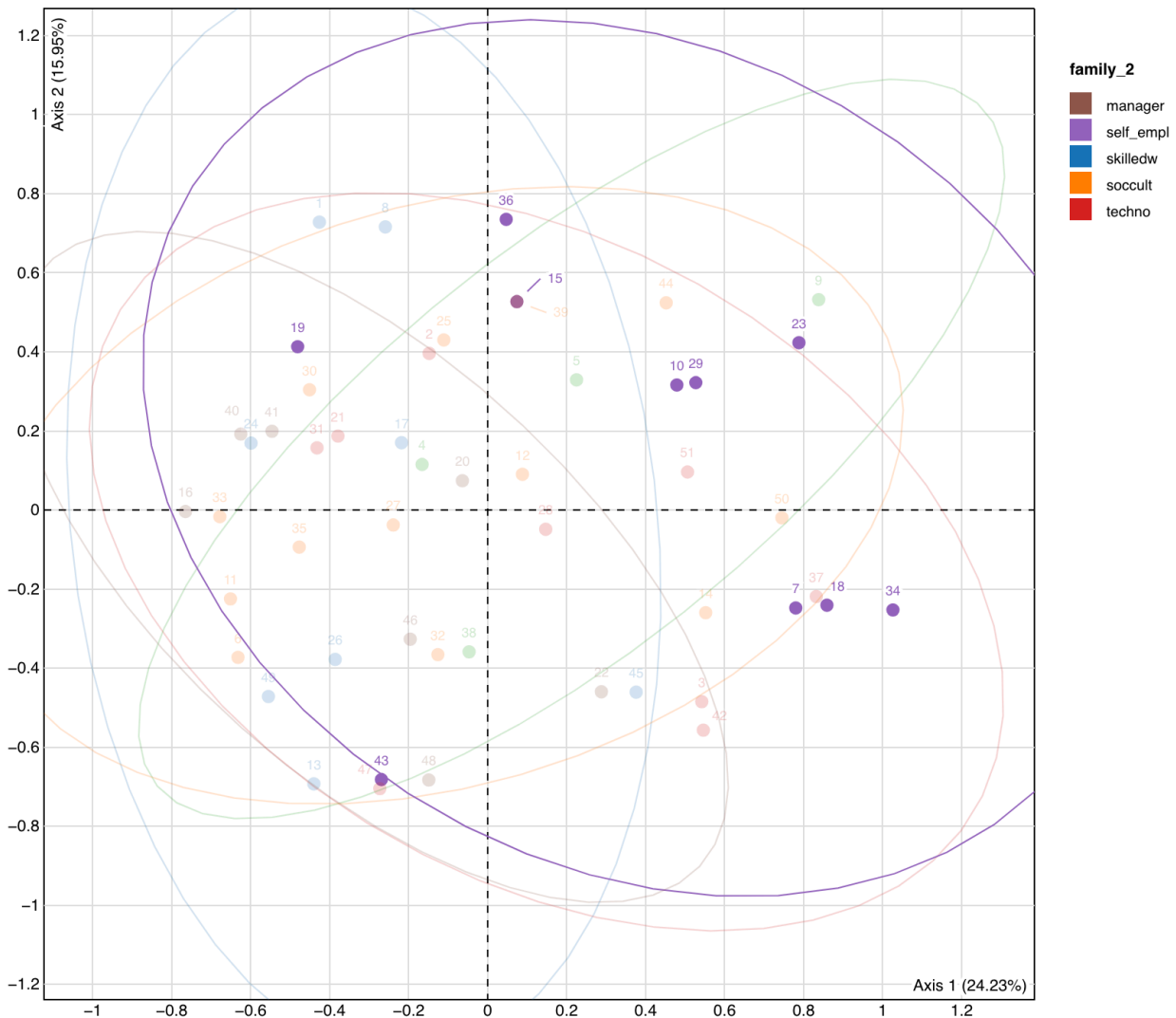


Figure 9. Individual plot. Self-employed households



Axis 1, which separates strategic justifications from those marked by perceived ineffectiveness, thus appears to reflect a deeper differentiation rooted in social origin. This result remains more illustrative than explanatory, but it nonetheless suggests that social origin may shape cultural repertoires (Swidler 2001), and in turn, the types of arguments individuals mobilize to justify certain actions. In particular, respondents from self-employed families seem to have more fully internalized a rhetoric of personal agency and accountability. In interviews, they often portray themselves as people who can serve as examples for others. In several cases, respondents from self-employed families articulate a sense of serving as role models for others, as illustrated in the following quotes:

I'm convinced that it's only by setting a good example that we can convince people. (Louise, i.29, parents shopkeepers)

It's up to us to set an example. (Justine, i.34, parents owned an advertising company)

These respondents tend to frame their ecological behavior—particularly their sustainable consumption—as a means of exerting pressure on markets and institutions. This is not to suggest that respondents from other social backgrounds do not employ similar justifications; rather, such justifications appear more frequently among those from self-employed families.

Conversely, respondents from dependent worker backgrounds tend to express greater skepticism about the efficacy of individual ecological action, are less likely to see themselves as role models or bearers of responsibility.

When I also confront people, I don't really like to emphasize [...] individual responsibilities. (Manuela, i.1, father blue-collar worker, mother employee)

It's not to motivate other people or set a good example. (Valentina, i.6, father gardener, mother physiotherapist)

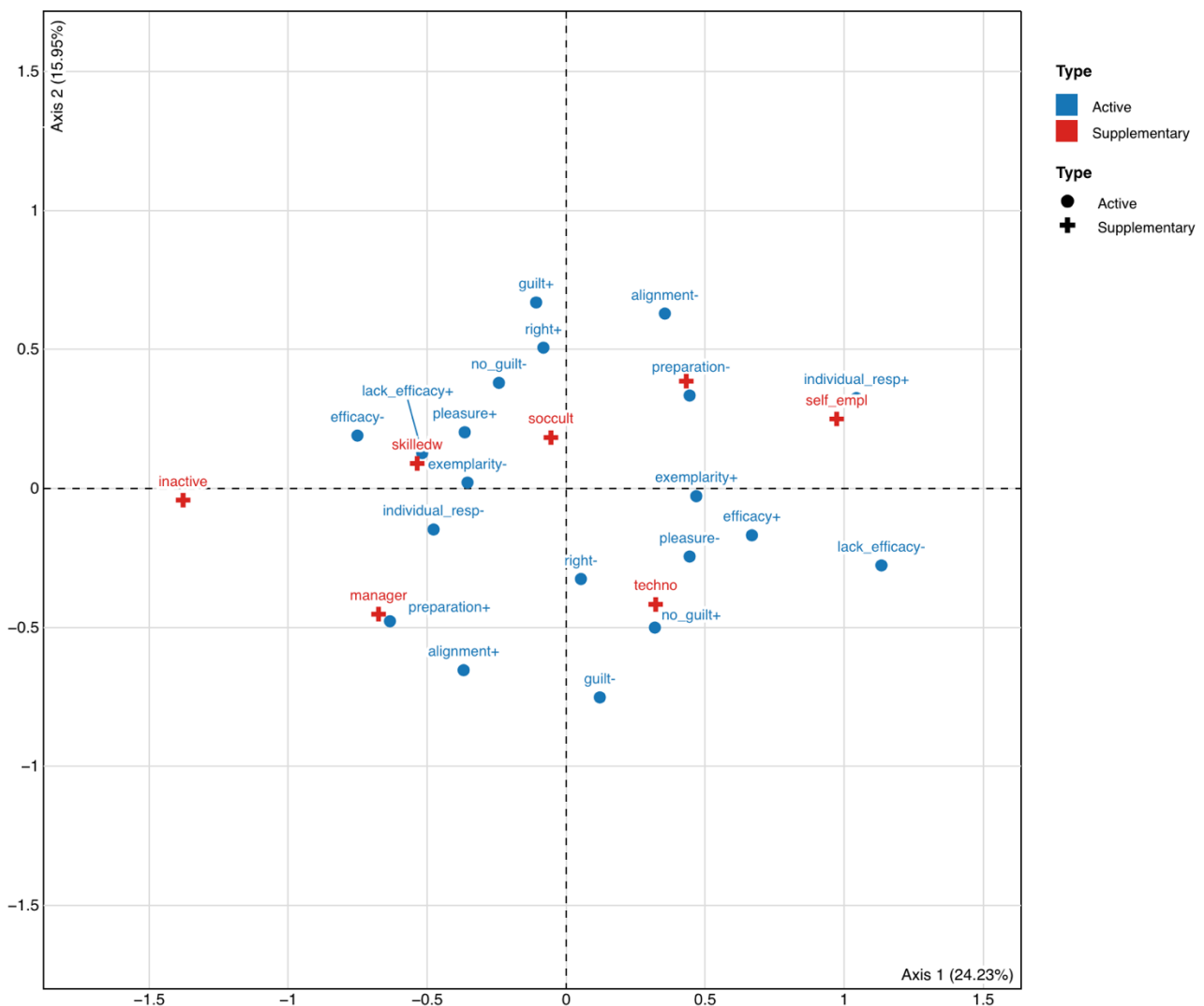
Rather, they present themselves as agents who adopt ecological practices in order to align with their own moral norms and to prepare themselves—and those around them—to live in future societies.

The children of managers, socio-cultural professionals, and technical professionals—shown in Figures A2, A3, and A4 in the Appendix G—exhibit more dispersed positioning patterns. Respondents from managerial and socio-cultural backgrounds are predominantly located in the left quadrants, whereas those from technical professional households are more evenly distributed across all four quadrants. The analysis presented in Chapter 4 highlighted a certain similarity in the behavior of respondents from managerial, self-employed, and dependent worker backgrounds, while distinguishing this group from that of technical professionals—and especially socio-cultural professionals. The analysis of justifications, however, appears to reconfigure this division: socio-cultural professionals now seem to align more closely with managers and dependent workers, while distancing themselves from technical professionals and, most notably, from self-employed families. While the analysis of practices reveals internal divisions within the middle class, the analysis of justifications appears to highlight a sharper divide between different working and class conditions.

By disaggregating parental occupations from the broader household occupational category and focusing specifically on the father's profession, a pattern emerges that closely mirrors the dynamics previously observed in relation to household socio-professional status. Figure 10 illustrates a clear

divide: dependent workers and managers are primarily positioned on the left side of the space, while technical professionals and the self-employed are concentrated on the right. Socio-cultural professionals occupy a more central position. Notably, the vast majority of respondents whose fathers are self-employed (8 out of 9) appear in the right-hand quadrants, whereas most children of dependent workers (11 out of 14) and managers (5 out of 6) are found in the left-hand quadrants (see Figures A5–A9 in the Appendix G). Respondents with fathers who are socio-cultural or technical professionals are more evenly distributed across the space. Once again, the father’s social origin appears to be associated with distinct ways of framing and interpreting everyday ecological practices.

Figure 10. Variable plot. Father’s socio-professional category

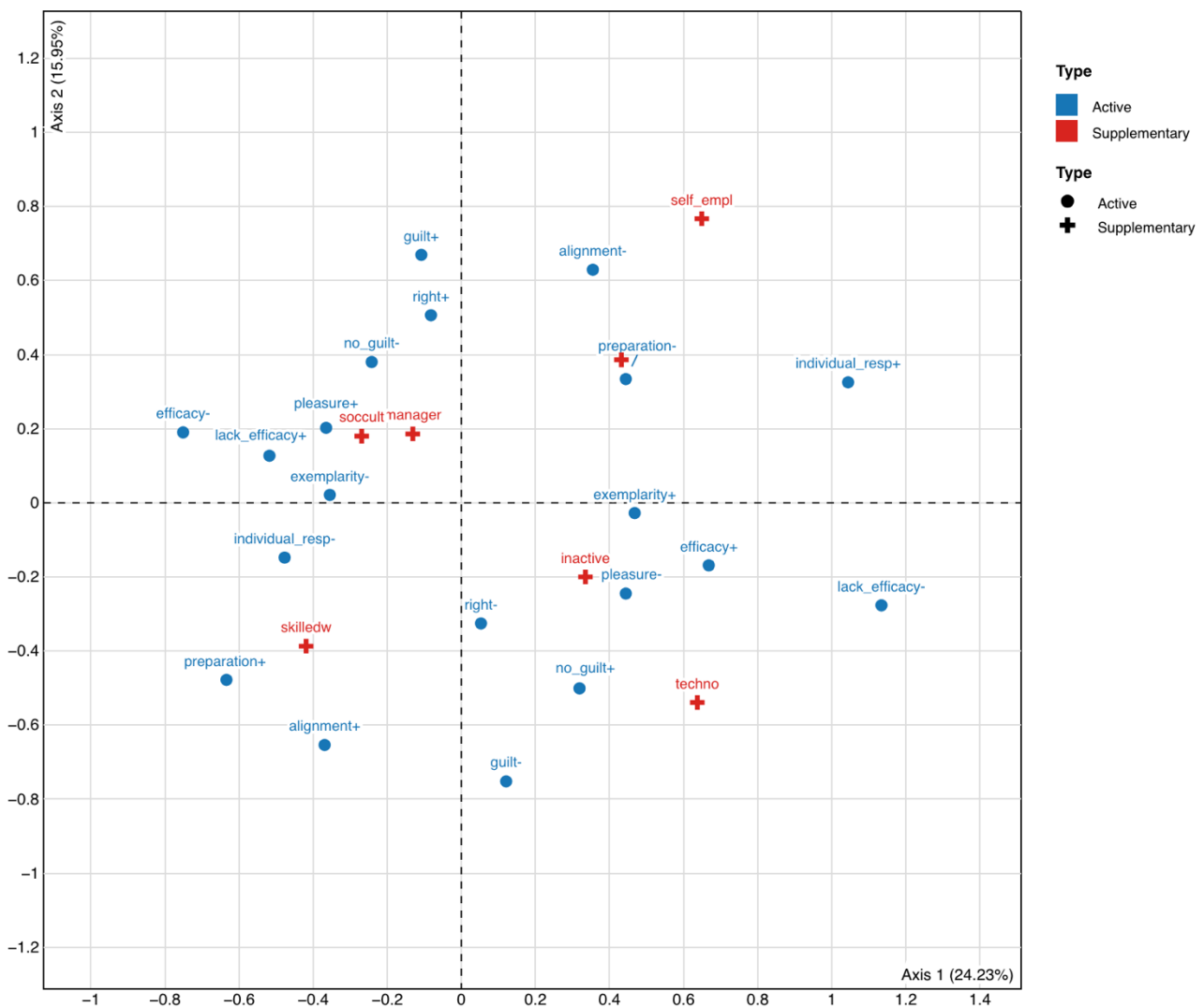


A similar pattern emerges when examining the socio-professional category of the mothers. As shown in Figure 11, socio-cultural professionals and dependent workers are predominantly positioned on the left: 10 out of 16 children of socio-cultural professionals and 10 out of 13 children of skilled

dependent workers fall within the left-hand quadrants (see Figures A10 and A11 in the Appendix G). In contrast, the children of self-employed and inactive mothers are more often located on the right: 4 out of 5 for self-employed mothers and 5 out of 9 for inactive mothers (see Figures A12 and A13 in the Appendix G). The remaining categories—managers (1 case) and technical professionals (3 cases)—are marginal.

This distribution may reflect different relationships to everyday ecological engagement. Children of socio-cultural professional or dependent worker mothers may have internalized ecological norms and thus routinized their practices, often questioning the significance of the specific actions they perform. In contrast, for children of self-employed or inactive mothers, invoking efficacy, responsibility, and exemplarity in ecological discourse may function as a form of distinction, legitimizing their environmental engagement.

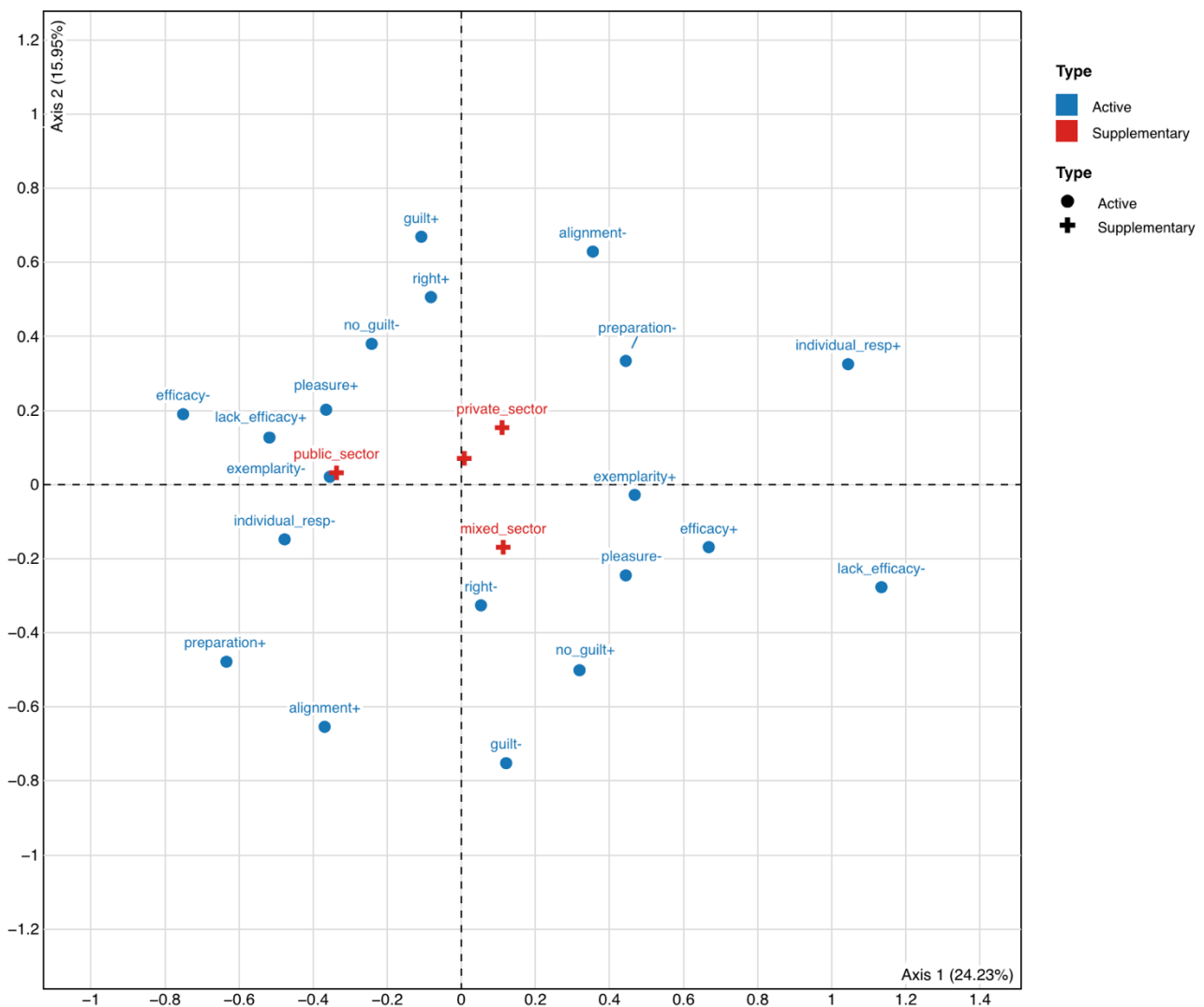
Figure 11. Variable plot. Mother's socio-professional categories



The employment sector of the parents³⁴—public or private—offers a relevant indication, as shown in Figure 12. Children whose parents are both employed in the public sector tend to cluster in the left-hand quadrants (9 out of 12), whereas those whose parents work in the private sector or in mixed sectors (i.e., one in the public and one in the private sector) are more evenly distributed across all four quadrants. As a result, the ‘mixed sector’ and ‘private sector’ categories are positioned closer to the barycenter. Once again, the association between having two parents employed in the public sector and the use of justifications that downplay the effectiveness of ecological practices—while emphasizing preparation, personal fulfillment, or internal coherence—may point to a distinct mode of transmitting ecological norms. This form of socialization appears to prioritize ethical adherence to principles over tangible, outcome-oriented approaches to environmental action.

³⁴ In the case of respondents with an inactive parent, I only considered the employment sector of the active parent.

Figure 12. Variable plot. Household working sector

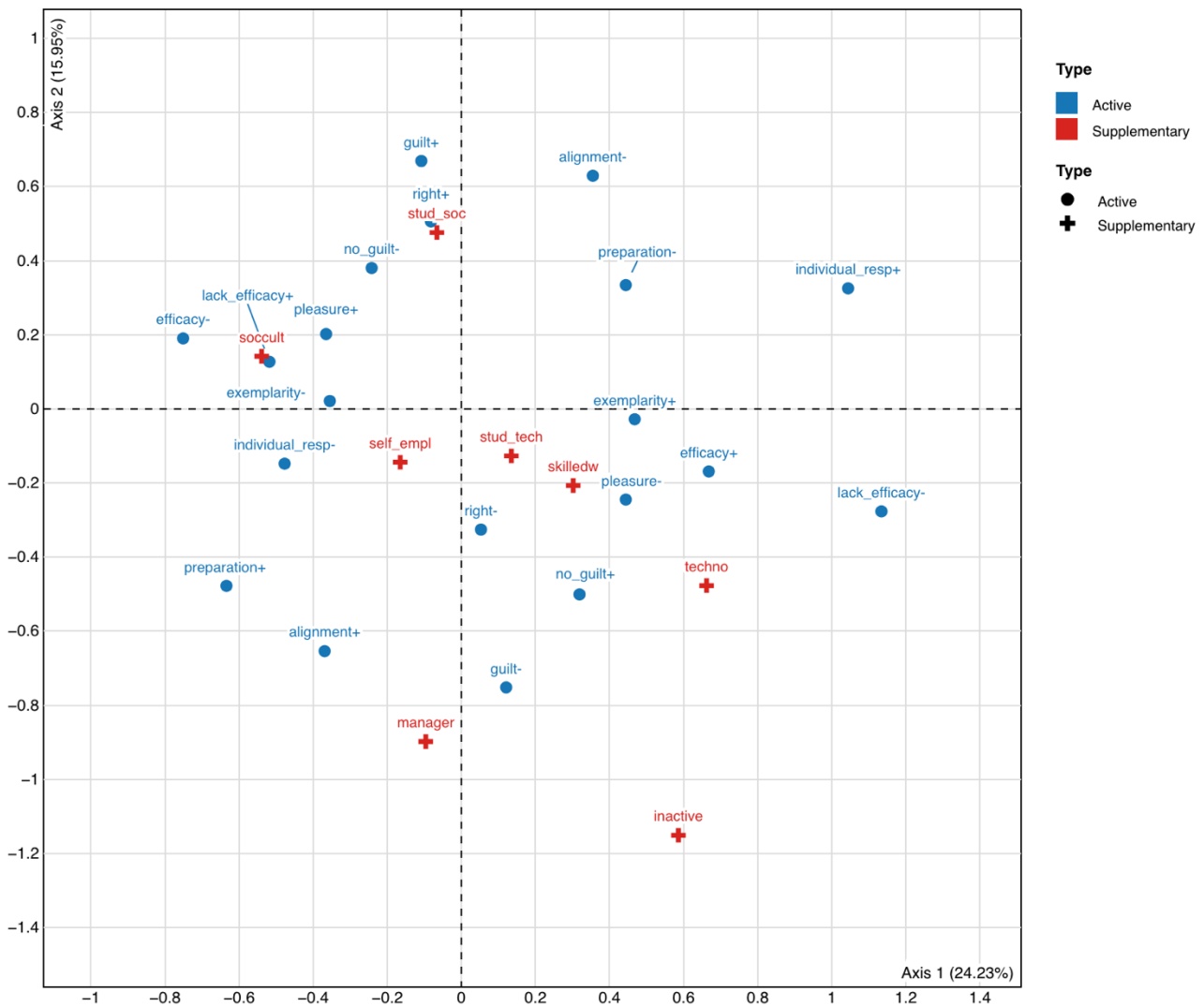


To summarize, the Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) suggests the presence of recurring associations between the socio-professional background of respondents' parents and the types of justifications interviewees mobilize to make sense of their ecological practices. Respondents from self-employed households tend to cluster in the area of the space where justifications emphasizing individual responsibility, efficacy, and exemplarity are most prevalent. By contrast, those from dependent worker, managerial, and socio-cultural households—particularly when both parents are employed in the public sector—are more often located in areas where other forms of justification dominate, such as references to preparedness, personal coherence, or the intrinsic satisfaction of doing the right thing. These findings are, of course, not generalizable, nor do they establish a causal relationship between social origin and justification logics. Nevertheless, they offer a valuable lens through which to consider how social background may shape distinct moral sensibilities, and how ecological engagement can assume different meanings along diverse social trajectories.

3. Occupational Positioning and Variations in Justifications

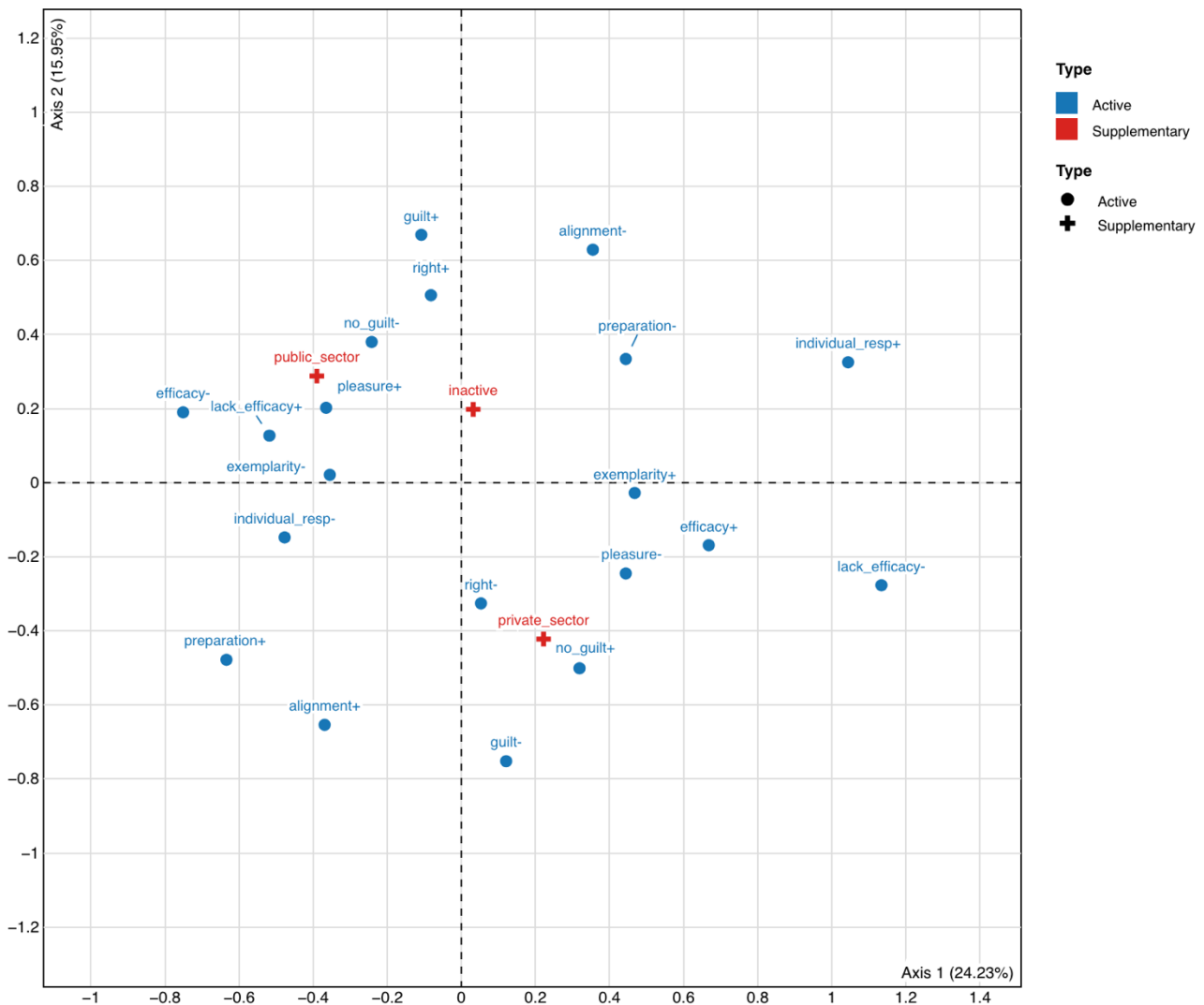
While the occupational sector of parents offers some meaningful insights, respondents' own occupations present a more complex and less immediately interpretable picture (Figure 13). Some categories are marginal in size, such as managers (1 case), self-employed (3 cases), and inactive individuals (1 case). Unlike the patterns observed in parental occupations, respondents who are dependent workers tend to be positioned less clearly to the left and more toward the right of the space—though still near the barycenter—indicating no strong or specific pattern. The most striking difference concerns professionals. Socio-cultural professionals are clearly concentrated in the left-hand quadrants (10 out of 12), particularly in the upper-left quadrant (Quadrant 1), whereas technical professionals are predominantly located in the lower-right quadrant (Quadrant 3), with 5 out of 6 cases falling there. This contrast suggests that working in the socio-cultural field may be associated with a stronger orientation toward moral concerns and normative reflection, while employment in technical fields appears to foster more pragmatic considerations focused on efficacy and individual responsibility. A similar—though less pronounced—trend is visible among students. University students are distributed across all quadrants, yet those enrolled in social sciences or humanities show a clear tendency to occupy higher positions in the space, closer to the moral-guilt dimension. In contrast, students in technical or scientific disciplines tend to be positioned nearer to the center. Ultimately, respondents who work or study within socio-cultural domains are more likely to ground their arguments in normative stances, while those in technical domains tend to prioritize pragmatic or outcome-oriented reasoning.

Figure 13. Variable plot. Respondents socio-professional categories



The employment sector of respondents further contributes to interpreting these results. Figure 14 shows the distribution of respondents according to their employment sector. Here again, respondents employed in the public sector are predominantly located in the left-hand quadrants, while private-sector workers are more evenly distributed along Axis 1, though more concentrated in the lower part of Axis 2. In contrast, students—coded as “inactive”—are relatively evenly split between the left and right quadrants, but mostly located in the upper half of Axis 2.

Figure 14. Variable plot. Interviewees' working sector



This spatial distribution offers several insights. One possible hypothesis is that private-sector workers, regardless of whether they view ecological practices as effective or not, tend to invoke internal alignment as a justification. This may be a way of navigating the dissonance created by a work context that they perceive as misaligned with their ecological values. Working in the private sector may be seen as a necessary compromise, disconnected from one's ethical aspirations, and ecological justifications may thus serve to manage this tension. This is illustrated in the words of Alessio, 30, an engineer at Leonardo³⁵ and an autonomist Marxist activist, who says:

I work for Leonardo and that is a very big contradiction for me, that I accept because on the other side [...] at the beginning of the month, I have to pay the rent, I have to eat, I have to live. It's a big contradiction, it's an industry

³⁵ Leonardo is an Italian industrial company operating in the defense sector. Although its main shareholder is the Italian state, it operates in the market as a private actor, and its employees are contracted under private-sector employment regulations.

that has so many problems. If I had the choice, I wouldn't work there. So I would gladly overcome this contradiction too, but in the meanwhile I have to deal with it. (Alessio, i.13, engineer at Leonardo)

As mentioned in the previous chapter (see Section 3.6.5), Alessio explains that he adopts ecological practices in order to “minimize contradictions.” For individuals working in highly polluting industries—contexts that may conflict with their political or ethical commitments—framing ecological practices as a means of achieving personal alignment becomes a way of rationalizing their actions and justifying their stance. Another illustrative case is that of Aymeric, 52, an employee and trade unionist at a large IT company. He describes in detail the contradictions he observes in his workplace, especially in relation to the company's ecological policies. According to Aymeric, measures such as encouraging online meetings over air travel are less about environmental concern and more driven by cost-cutting or managerial control over employee behavior. Despite recognizing these initiatives as aligned with corporate interests, he does not deny their positive impact on the environment. To cope with these contradictions, Aymeric makes a conscious effort to act differently in his personal life. For instance, he avoids air travel for family holidays, even when this decision causes tension at home. When asked why he remains so committed to these ecological practices in his private life, he responds:

It is based on the principle of trying, where you can and where you have the time and energy to do so, to be consistent with your ideas. [...] So it's based on the principle of being coherent with these ideas first of all, even if I know that the impact will be much less than something collective rather than individual. (Aymeric, i.45, employee in an IT company)

By contrast, people working in the public sector tend to rely less on justifications centered on alignment, and more on moral arguments grounded in the idea of ‘doing the right thing’. Éliane, 45, a librarian, explains that she changed job sectors for precisely this reason:

I have to say that I've changed jobs and gone from the private sector to the public sector with the idea of having ten weeks' holiday instead of five. I'm poorly paid but I have time, so I can afford to spend two extra days on the train. It's also part of my lifestyle choice to... I wanted to work for the public sector, because it was part of my values... There was also the fact of being less in this kind of over... well... particularly in the private sector, I'm not saying it's the same everywhere, but in many private companies, you're under pressure all the time. So you probably earn more, but that's not what I wanted. (Éliane, i.31, librarian)

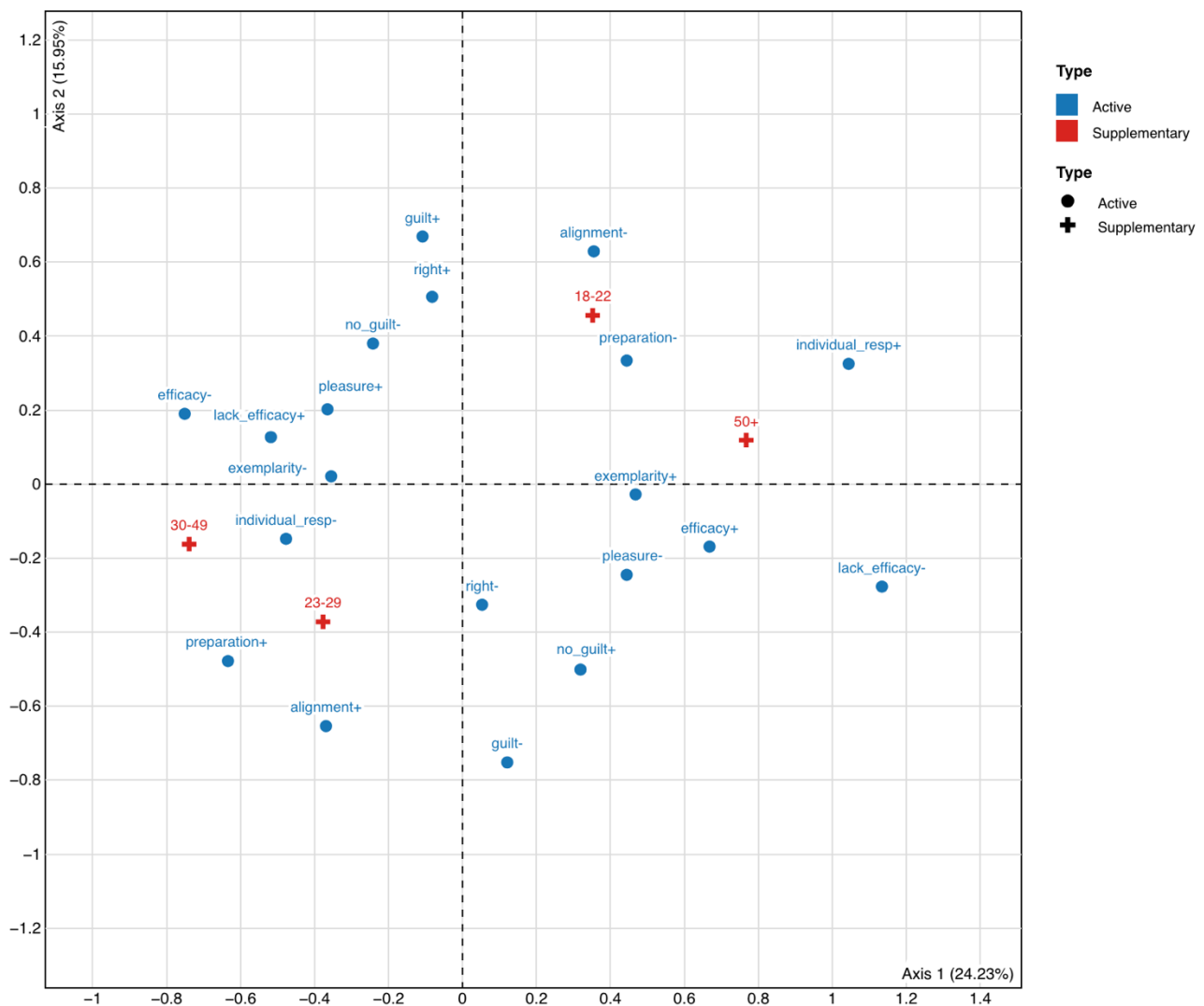
Her reference to “two extra days on the train” reflects a deliberate choice to travel by train rather than fly when going on holiday. Working in the public sector may offer more room to accommodate

ecological practices and may also be perceived as less ethically problematic in terms of environmental repercussions, as it is less directly tied to market dynamics. As a result, the public-sector employees I interviewed are less likely to rely on justifications related to internal consistency or the management of dissonance, and more likely to frame their ecological practices as a means of fulfilling moral obligations.

4. Justifications and socio-demographic variables

The figures discussed above offer valuable insights into how social origin and employment intersect with distinct areas within the space of justifications. Yet, when projected onto the space, also other socio-demographic variables situate in specific positions, such as age. Figure 15 illustrates how different age groups are distributed across the space. A noticeable division emerges: individuals in the intermediate age brackets (23–29 and 30–49) are predominantly situated in the left-hand quadrants, while both younger respondents (18–22) and older ones (50+) tend to cluster on the right. A similar curvilinear effect of age had been observed in Chapter 4 in relation to the tendency to adopt EEPs, with both younger and older individuals being less likely to engage in such practices compared to adults. This distribution invites multiple interpretations. One possible reading is that the youngest and oldest respondents, despite their differences, share a more individualized approach to ecological engagement. Several studies on contemporary climate activism suggest that young people often view personal ecological practices not only as part of the solution to the climate crisis (de Moor et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019), but also as a way of asserting agency in front of it (Pickard 2019). In this respect, their position within the space may reflect a form of ecological subjectivity grounded in empowerment through individual action—a logic that seems to resonate, albeit for different reasons, with the older cohort as well.

Figure 15. Variable plot. Age segments



However, the interviews conducted for this study also reveal a certain degree of ambivalence among younger respondents regarding the effectiveness of ecological practices and the weight of personal responsibility. Many participants in this age group expressed mixed or contradictory views on whether individual action can truly make a difference. In addition, feelings of ecological guilt emerged frequently in this group, which explains their positioning in the upper quadrants of the justification space, closer to the moral pole. Lydia, 22, the daughter of an accountant and a school nurse, with no background in activism, captures this generational aspect of ecological guilt particularly well. She reflects:

I think my parents aren't really part of a generation where guilt around these issues is as prominent as it is for mine. For example, when I didn't want to fly round-trip to Lisbon [...] they didn't really understand. Taking the

bus just seems beyond them. So I think that's it—there's a kind of understanding... or rather, a distance. (Lydia, i.39)

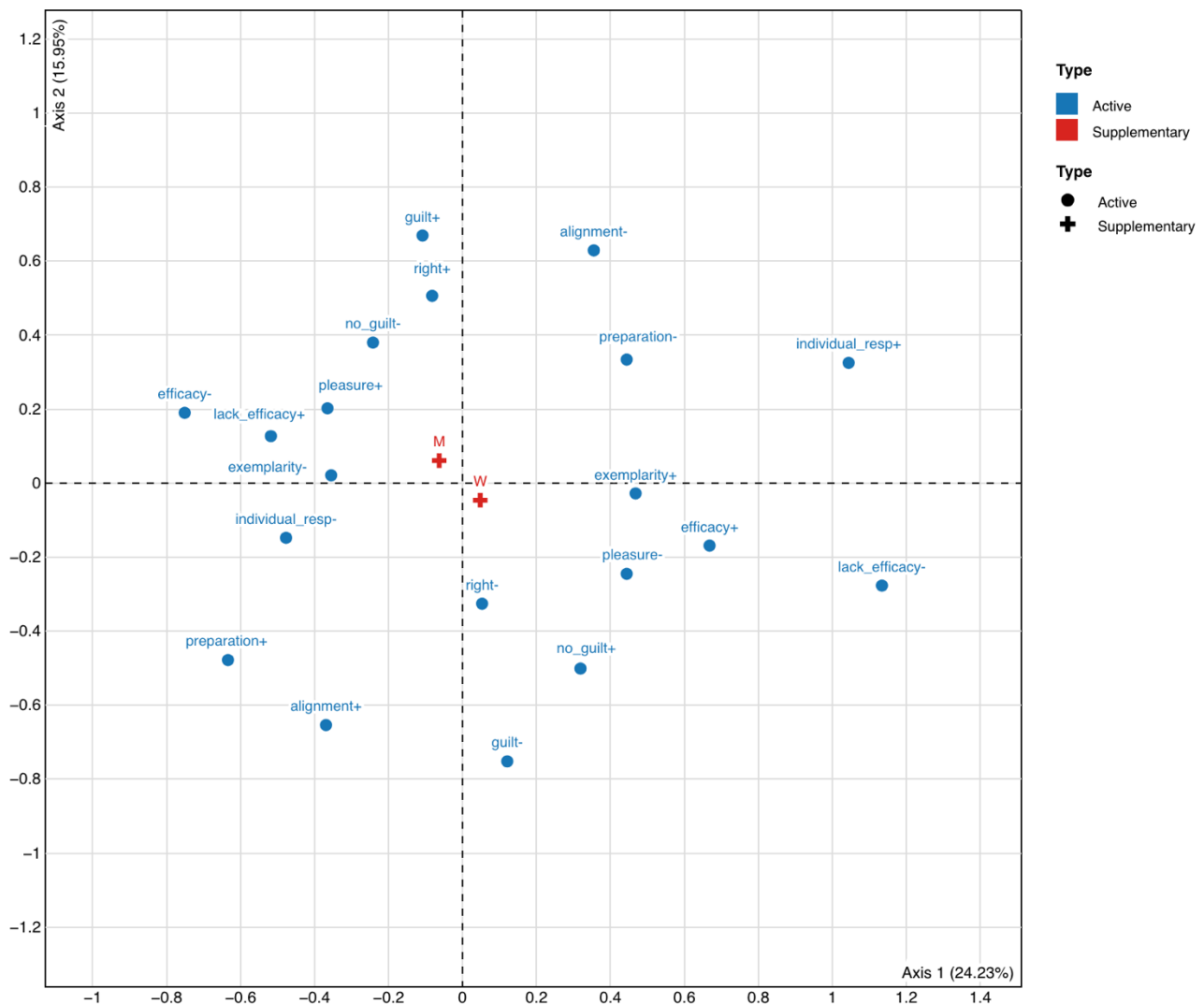
In contrast, among respondents over the age of 50, justifying ecological practices in terms of their effectiveness appears more frequent and consistent. As previously discussed, many older activists belong to the generation most influenced by the discourse of ecological modernization—a perspective that emphasizes market-based solutions, technological innovation, and responsible consumer behavior as key drivers of environmental change (Mol et al. 2009). This aligns with the dominant narrative promoted by environmentalism in the 1990s (Dalton 1994; Ollitrault 2008). Older activists more often than others frame their ecological actions through the lens of the “political consumer”—an individual who engages in political action through everyday consumption choices (Stolle and Micheletti 2013). This was illustrated in the previous chapter (Section 3.5.1) by the example of two interviewees over the age of 50, Giselle and Louise, who described themselves as *consommacteurs*.

Intermediate age groups (23-29 and 30-49), which also include the most engaged activists in the sample, tend to adopt a more critical stance toward ecological modernization. Many of them question the efficacy narrative and are more attuned to discourses of preparation and future-oriented responsibility, reflecting a different set of justifications shaped by both political experience and temporal awareness. Ultimately, age appears to play a role in shaping ecological arguments and justifications. Growing up in a specific cultural—and temporal—context can foster one type of reasoning over another. On the one hand, the differences between young adults and older respondents are particularly pronounced, with each group drawing on distinct sets of reflections. On the other hand, younger respondents (18–22) show a strong form of reflexivity concerning the moral implications of their ecological conduct: they are often inclined not only to take personal responsibility but also to experience a sense of guilt in relation to their choices.

No clear gender differences are observed in the justification space, as men and women are evenly distributed across all four quadrants, and both categories are located near the barycenter (Figure 16). The fact that gender does not emerge as a relevant structuring variable in the MCA space, however, does not imply that justifications are entirely gender-neutral. A closer analysis of single justifications—rather than broader justificatory systems—reveals some nuanced differences. Arguments related to preparation are more frequently expressed by men (50%) than by women (34%). Conversely, justifications that refer to the satisfaction of engaging in ecological practices are more commonly found among women (62%) than among men (45%). While nuanced, these differences in

individual justifications lend support to the idea that gendered socialization contexts can shape distinct modes of ecological reflexivity.

Figure 16. Variable plot. Gender



As discussed in both Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, gender socialization appears to influence not only the frequency with which certain ecological practices are adopted, but also how these practices are perceived. In interviews, many respondents who identify as women describe taking on more ecological responsibilities within the household compared to men. They often emphasize that even when their partners are environmentally conscious, they are more likely to transgress ecological commitments. Veronica, for instance, notes that while her husband—who supports the climate movement, though he is not an activist—has largely adopted a vegan diet like hers, he is still more inclined to break it during family gatherings. She also points out that he continues to shop on

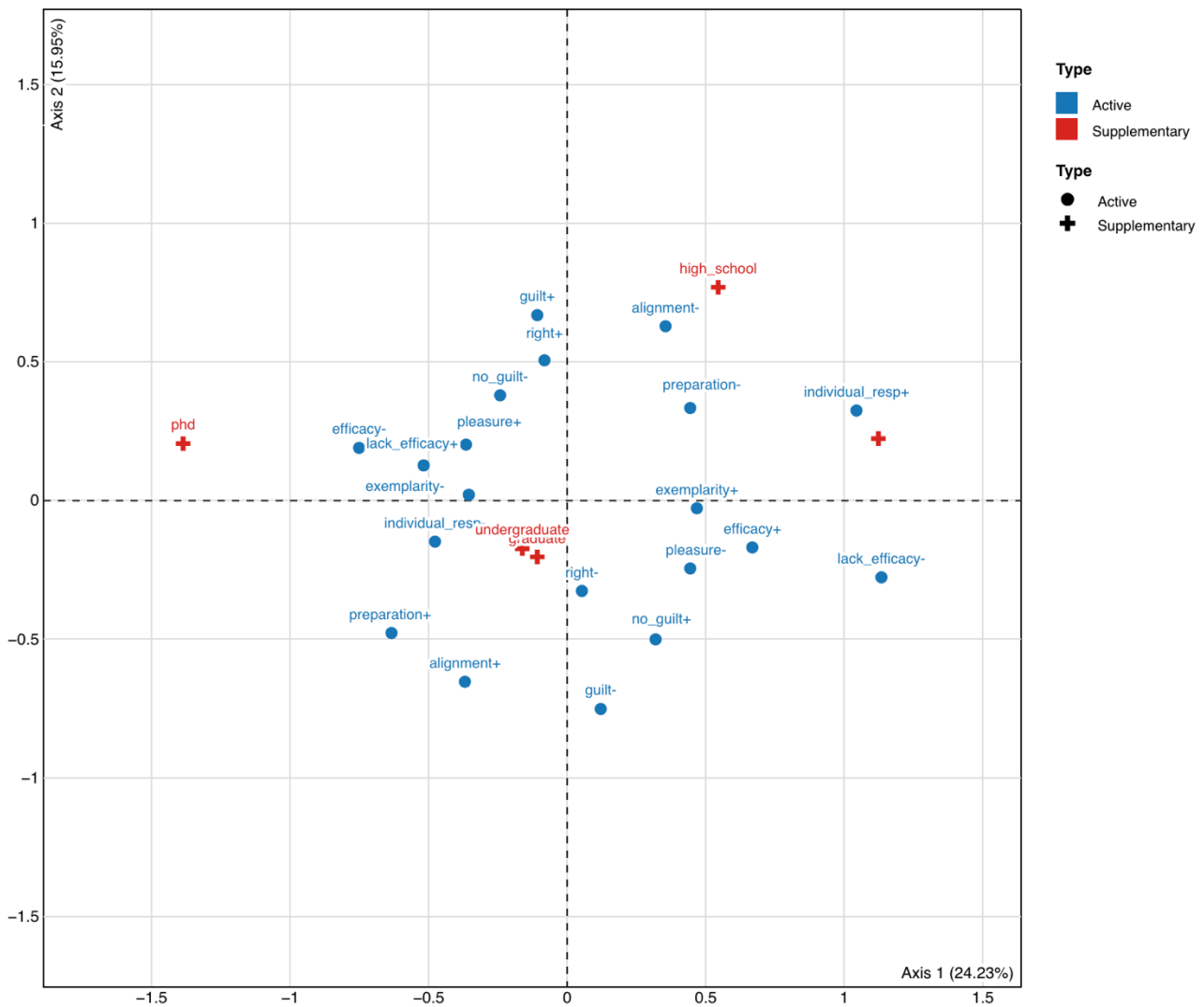
platforms such as Amazon, which she actively boycotts. Similarly, Chloé notes a difference in her boyfriend's attitude:

So, well, when it comes to eco-friendly habits, he's been vegetarian from the start. It's thanks to him that I became one too, but he doesn't really do much beyond that. For him, flying is not a problem. (Chloé, i.48)

Conversely, among male respondents, there is often an explicit recognition that their female partners are more attentive to ecological issues. Armando, for example, attributes several lifestyle changes—such as switching energy providers, reducing meat consumption, and flying less—to the influence of his wife, who is an activist with Extinction Rebellion. Therefore, while gender differences are not particularly pronounced in the justifications respondents offer for their ecological practices, they become much more significant when considering intra-domestic dynamics. For women, ecological choices are more frequently perceived as integral to their activist identity, whereas men tend to regard these practices as more incidental, peripheral, or loosely tied to their overall sense of self.

An additional dimension that appears to influence the way individuals justify their ecological practices is educational background. Figure 17 illustrates the distribution of educational levels within the justification space, revealing a noticeable gradient. Respondents with only a high school diploma are positioned on the right, whereas those holding undergraduate and graduate degrees are more centrally located, being relatively evenly distributed across the four quadrants. PhD holders—though the group includes only two individuals—are found on the left. This pattern suggests that lower educational levels are more often associated with justifications that emphasize the efficacy of individual practices and moral considerations, thus placing greater value on personal ecological action. In contrast, higher levels of education tend to correspond to more critical or distanced positions. The possession of greater cultural capital appears to be linked with a more reflective or skeptical stance toward narratives of individual responsibility and effectiveness.

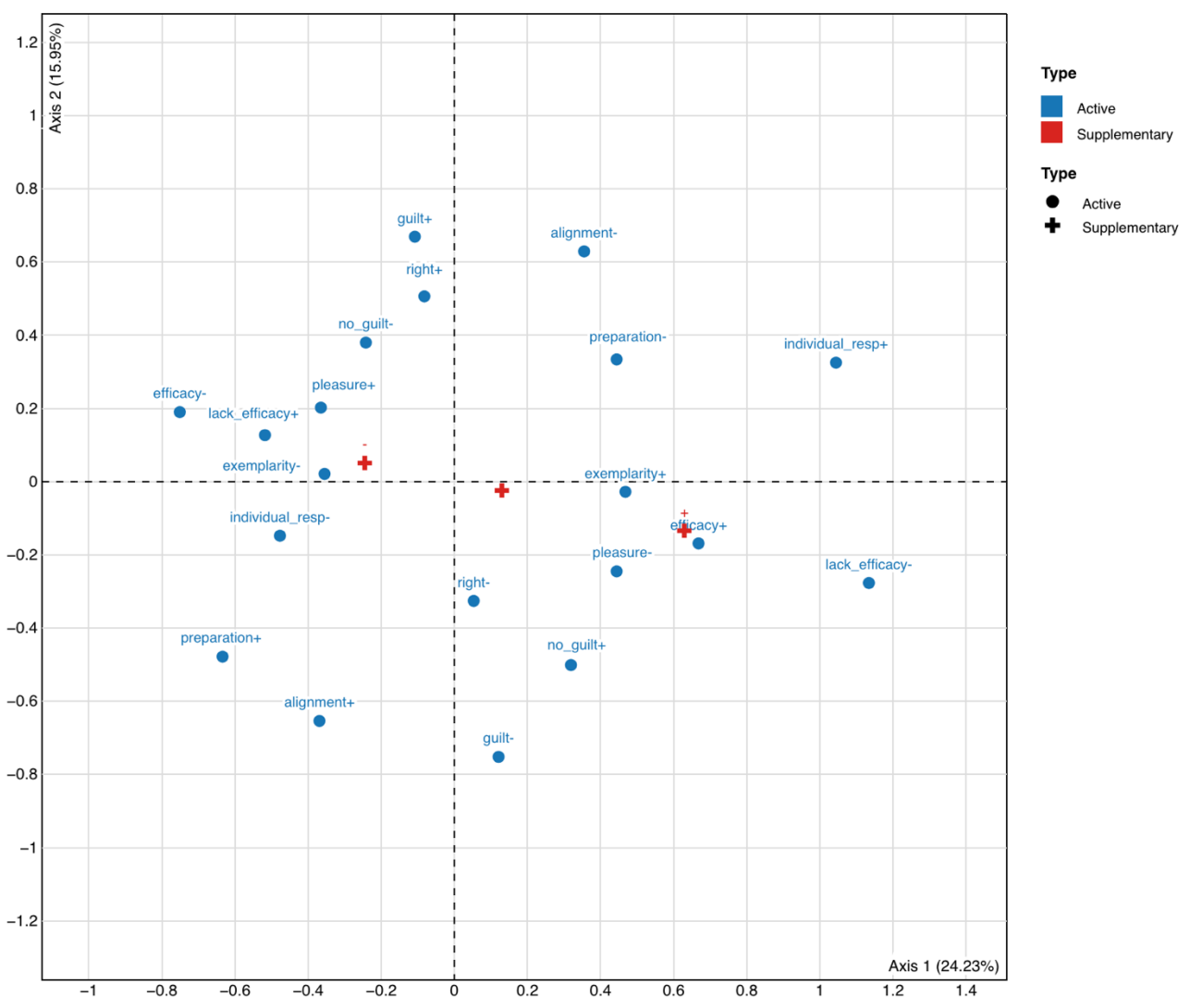
Figure 17. Variable plot. Educational level



With regard to religion, no substantial differences are observed in the positioning of respondents based on whether they come from atheist or believer families (the latter comprising only Catholics and one Protestant family). However, some distinction emerges when considering respondents' personal level of religiosity. Figure 18 shows the positioning of believers (+) and non-believers (-). Believers are predominantly positioned in the right-hand quadrants, whereas non-believers are mostly concentrated in the left-hand quadrants. This result suggests that religiosity is connected primarily to the strategic axis, rather than the normative-moral one. Several interpretations can be proposed. As previously noted, the strategic justification system often involves exemplarity—a logic of “ecological evangelization”—which may resonate with certain religious experiences or backgrounds. In this sense, being a believer may encourage an ethical stance centered on setting an example for others through one's ecological conduct. Complementing this is the salvific element: for some believers,

ecological practices may be experienced as a form of redemption or individual salvation in the face of large-scale ecological crises, reinforcing a sense of individual responsibility to act. In contrast, non-religious respondents are more likely to justify ecological engagement in terms of preparation for the future—a logic that emphasizes collective transformation and tends to reject the notion of individual salvation.

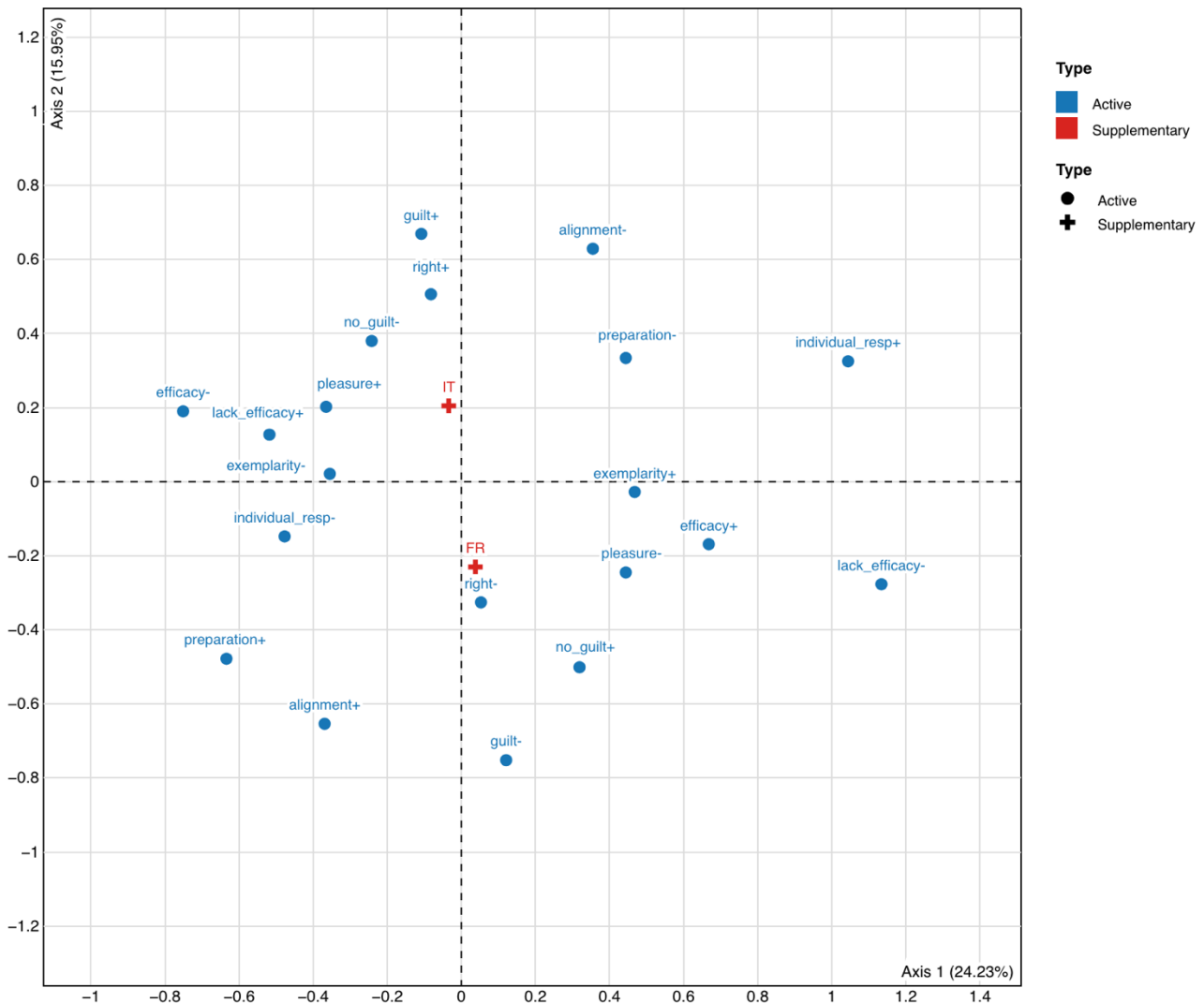
Figure 18. Religion. Variable plot



While religiosity shows no strong association with the use of moral justifications, national origin appears to play a more significant role. Figure 19 illustrates the positioning of Italian (IT) and French (FR) respondents on the space. A marked difference between the two groups emerges in relation to Axis 2, which corresponds to the normative-moral dimension of justification. The majority of French interviewees—15 out of 24—are located in the lower part of the space, associated with a system of justifications rooted in internal alignment, personal coherence, and preparation. The remaining nine

are positioned in the upper quadrants. Conversely, 16 out of 27 Italian respondents are positioned in the upper part of the space, associated with guilt and rightness, while 11 are in the lower quadrants.

Figure 19. Variable plot. Country of origin



The respondents' country of origin thus appears to have a distinguishing effect on the normative-moral axis of justification, while no meaningful differences emerge along the strategic axis. A particular focus can be placed on the discursive element of guilt. While there are some differences in the frequency of the word 'guilt' and its variations—mentioned on average three times per interview in the Italian sample, and twice in the French—the more significant contrast lies in the discursive centrality of guilt in Italian interviews. Among Italian respondents, guilt often emerges as a core justificatory element, around which other arguments are constructed. These reflections are not only more frequent, but also more developed and nuanced, with guilt often being deconstructed and

explored in its multiple dimensions. This dynamic becomes especially clear in the following excerpts from Bianca and Edoardo, who reflect on moments when they failed to adopt certain ecological practices:

Um... I feel conflicting emotions. I mean, I realize I don't carry the weight of the world on my shoulders. So if I don't do something once, nothing really changes. I know that. But at the same time, I tell myself "Okay, but if everyone thought that way, no one would do anything." So, there's a bit of guilt sometimes... When I give in, [...] maybe because there are major obstacles that prevent me from doing what I say I would, then I try to assess objectively how much of it is actually my responsibility and how much isn't... but yes, I do feel a little guilty in those moments. It's more a sense of responsibility—of irresponsibility—for not having behaved the way I should have in that situation. (Bianca i.5, Italian)

When I drive, knowing deep down that I could have taken public transport, I feel a bit guilty. When I eat meat when, deep down, I knew I could have found an alternative—I feel a bit guilty. [...] I'm not one of those people who clearly say that factory farming is very wrong, [...] I'm kind of detached from that issue—I still see it as a necessary evil. [...] Maybe that's hypocrisy, I know, but yeah—it's definitely a bad thing. It's not so much about feeling good because I managed to do something, but about feeling a bit guilty because I didn't. (Edoardo, i.12, Italian)

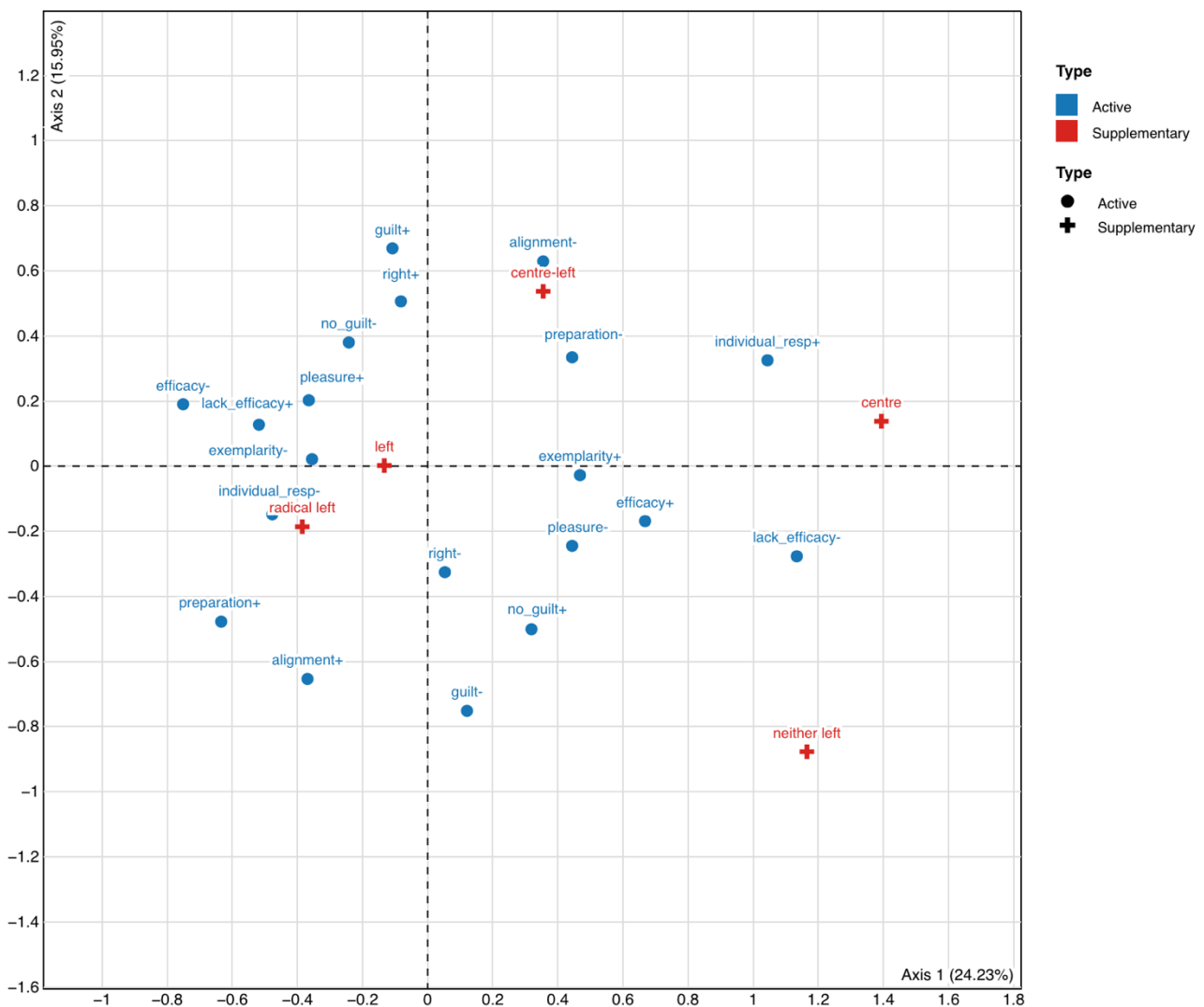
These cases show how guilt emerges as a deeply internalized moral element among Italian respondents, often leading to a process of self-evaluation regarding their ecological practices. In these accounts, ecological conduct is closely linked to reflections on responsibility, duty, legitimacy, and transgression, rather than to arguments grounded in personal alignment or inner coherence with one's values, which are more typical of other justificatory logics.

In France, by contrast, references to guilt are much more partial and elusive. The word guilt is often associated with an initial emotional response that tends to fade or disappear with increased ecological awareness. What is far more widespread among French respondents is the idea that ecological practices are justified by a sense of internal alignment—by being in agreement with one's own principles. The reasons for this association are certainly multiple and cannot be fully disentangled. However, national religious culture may represent a relevant factor. As noted above, explicit individual or familial religiosity does not appear to play a major role. Yet being socialized in a more secularized context, such as the French one, may contribute to a discursive tendency to avoid focusing explicitly on guilt when reflecting on personal behavior. In contrast, in the less secularized Italian context, discourses around guilt emerge more prominently, and the tension between obedience and transgression of ecological norms is more often framed in moral terms, implying a kind of internalized sanction.

An alternative interpretive key lies in the differing levels of maturity of the climate movements in the two countries. Discourses centered on guilt appear to be associated with an individualized way of understanding the climate crisis and one's own role within it. Several activists, for instance, describe guilt over not having acted ecologically as something particularly present during the early stages of ecological awareness—a feeling that tends to fade over time (see Chapter 5, section 3.6.4). Taken as a whole, the Italian and French climate movements may be situated at different stages of development and politicization. In France, the climate issue gained visibility earlier, particularly around the COP21 in Paris in 2015, which contributed to consolidating a tradition of collective climate action. In Italy, by contrast, climate mobilizations only began to take center stage around 2019, with the emergence of Fridays for Future. These different temporal dynamics may translate, at the individual level, into a greater or lesser reliance on guilt when reflecting on one's own ecological behavior. Where collective framings are stronger and more established, individual responsibility may be less emphasized—while in contexts where ecological awareness is more recent, guilt may play a more prominent role.

Respondents' political self-positioning also appears to be associated with specific areas within the justification space (Figure 20). A distinction emerges between those who identify with the radical left or left, who are predominantly located in the left-hand quadrants, and those who identify as center-left, center, or neither left nor right, who are more frequently found in the right-hand quadrants. These results are not unexpected: identification with the political left often enables a more critical perspective on individual action, leading to a downplaying of personal responsibility in relation to the climate crisis, as well as skepticism toward the notion of exemplarity. Instead, left-leaning respondents tend to adopt alternative justificatory strategies, frequently grounded in moral reasoning, identity, or future-oriented arguments. These include reflections on preparedness for life in a post-capitalist society, aligning with prefigurative political thought and the broader search for alternatives to capitalism (Monticelli 2022), often articulated through everyday practices of sustainable consumption (Forno and Wahlen 2022b). By contrast, respondents with moderate or non-aligned political positions are more likely to frame—or at least defend—their ecological practices in terms of their tangible outcomes, emphasizing efficacy and individual responsibility.

Figure 20. Variable plot. Individual political self-position



In addition to respondents' own political self-positioning, the political orientation of their parents—as described by the interviewees—also offers valuable insight (see Figures A16 and A17 in the Appendix G). Although some slight differences emerge between mothers and fathers, a general pattern can be observed: parents identified as politically left-leaning tend to be positioned in the left-hand quadrants, whereas those described as center, right-wing, or politically neutral (in the case of some fathers) are more frequently located in the right-hand quadrants. In short, respondents raised in left-wing families tend to draw on justifications that emphasize the limits of individual efficacy and responsibility, often invoking future-oriented or preparatory arguments. Conversely, those who describe their parents as center-right are more likely to mobilize justifications centered on efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity. This suggests that political socialization within the family plays a tangible role in shaping respondents' ecological reflexivity and the frameworks through which they interpret their environmental practices.

This finding further reinforces the central argument developed throughout this work: the valorization of everyday ecological practices often reflects a depoliticized understanding of the climate crisis—one that downplays structural inequalities in responsibility and promotes change through market-based solutions (Comby 2017; Kenis and Mathijs 2012). Such an approach tends to individualize environmental responsibility, presenting ecological action as a matter of personal ethics or consumer choice rather than collective political struggle. This logic of individualization appears to be associated not only with a specific social background—particularly among respondents from self-employed families—but also with lower levels of education, certain age groups (younger and older), degrees of religiosity, and moderate or apolitical political self-positioning. In these cases, personal ecological practices are framed as both exemplary and effective, reinforcing the idea that meaningful change can be enacted through individual effort within existing social structures. By contrast, skepticism toward the effectiveness or relevance of individual practices often signals a more radical political orientation—one that relocates responsibility from individuals to larger institutional and systemic actors, and envisions ecological transformation as inseparable from a broader critique of capitalism and prevailing social structures. This second perspective is more frequently observed among respondents from socio-cultural or dependent worker backgrounds, young adults with higher levels of education, no religious affiliation, and a political stance that is more radical and critical of the capitalist society. In the next section, I examine how these differing perspectives are shaped not only by social background but also by processes of secondary socialization within the climate movement itself.

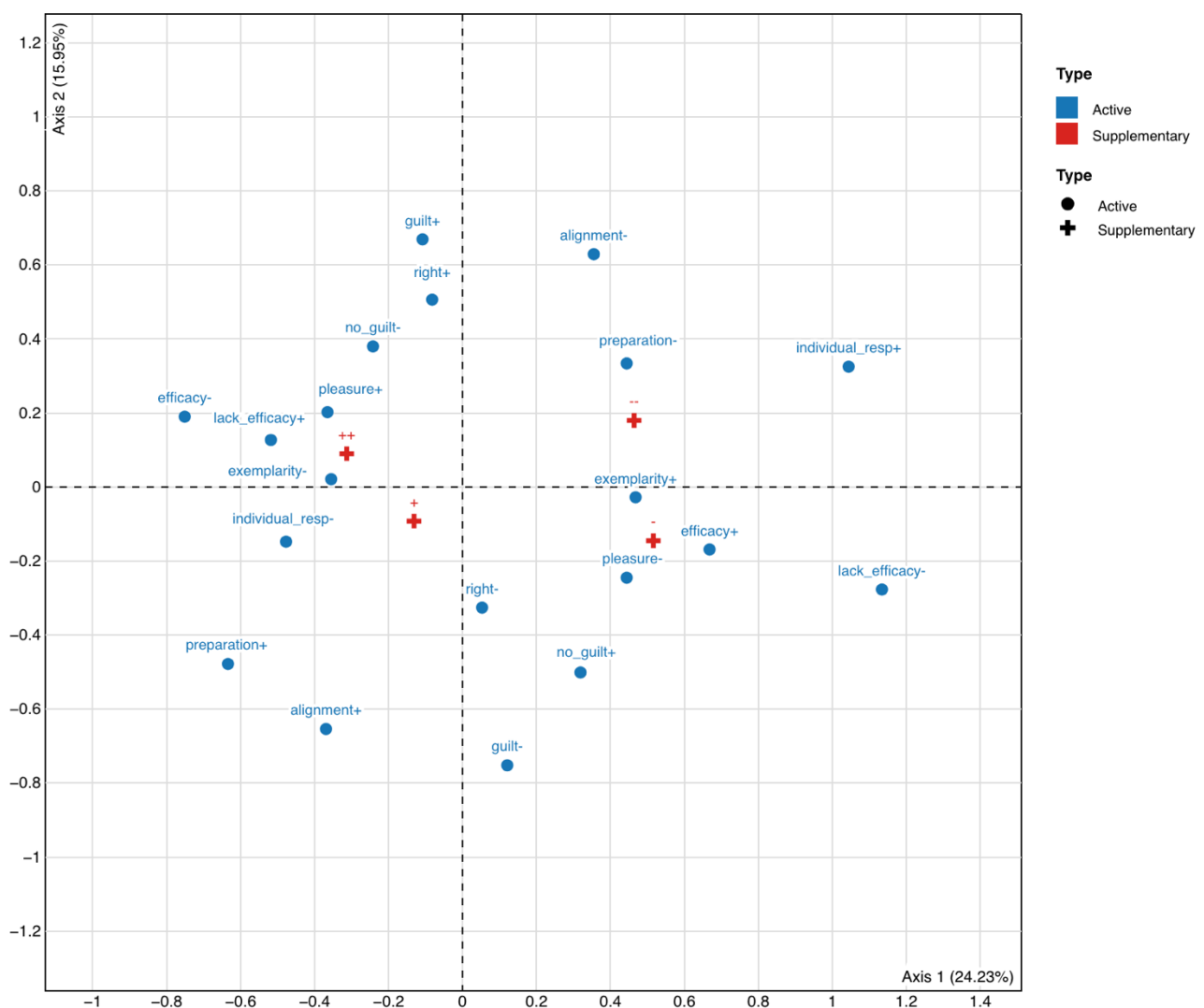
5. Activist Backgrounds and Justifications

Up to this point, I have examined the relationship between certain elements linked to primary and secondary socialization—such as social and family background, occupation, and socio-demographic status—and the adoption of specific systems of justification for everyday ecological practices. It is now necessary to consider another form of secondary socialization, one that falls within the sphere of activism and can be referred to as “activist socialization.” Social movement studies have long explored the biographical effects of political participation on activists (Downton and Wehr 1997; Fillieule et al. 2018; McAdam 1988). These studies have shown that involvement in a social movement can shape not only participants’ life trajectories, but also their political orientations and interpretive frameworks. In the Chapter 4, I examined how activist socialization is associated with the likelihood of adopting certain ecological practices. I now turn to the question of whether this form

of socialization also has an impact on how individuals justify those practices. The underlying hypothesis guiding the following analysis is that prolonged exposure within activist environments may influence how participants make sense of their individual actions, and, consequently, how they construct the justifications for those actions.

The analysis of justification space turns out to be very relevant in this regard. Figure 21 shows the projection of the variable ‘activist experience’ on the justification space. Activist experience has been coded as follows: (++) are respondents who have been active in a social movement organization (SMO) for at least 5 years; (+) are respondents who have been active for at least 1 year; (-) are respondents who have has liminal contacts with SMOs without fully participating; (--) are respondents who have no experience of participating in SMOs.

Figure 21. Variable plot. Activist experience



Categories (++) and (+) associated with a high level of activist experience are predominantly located in the left-hand quadrants, while those indicating weak or no activist experience tend to be positioned on the right. Although some dissonant cases do emerge, the pattern suggests that greater exposure to activist socialization within movement organizations may correspond with a different way of conceiving and justifying ecological practices. Respondents with limited activist experience—those whose participation in mobilizations is more occasional or distant—more frequently adopt systems of justifications centered on the strategic efficacy of individual practices, personal responsibility, and the importance of raising awareness for others. As discussed in the previous chapter, they are also the ones who tend to place greater value on their own ecological behavior, framing the transformation of everyday practices as a form of activism prolonged in their own personal sphere. This perspective is well illustrated by Teo, 18 years old, who has never been involved in activism beyond the 2019 climate strikes. In response to the question, “What have been the key moments in your experience of activism?”, he answers:

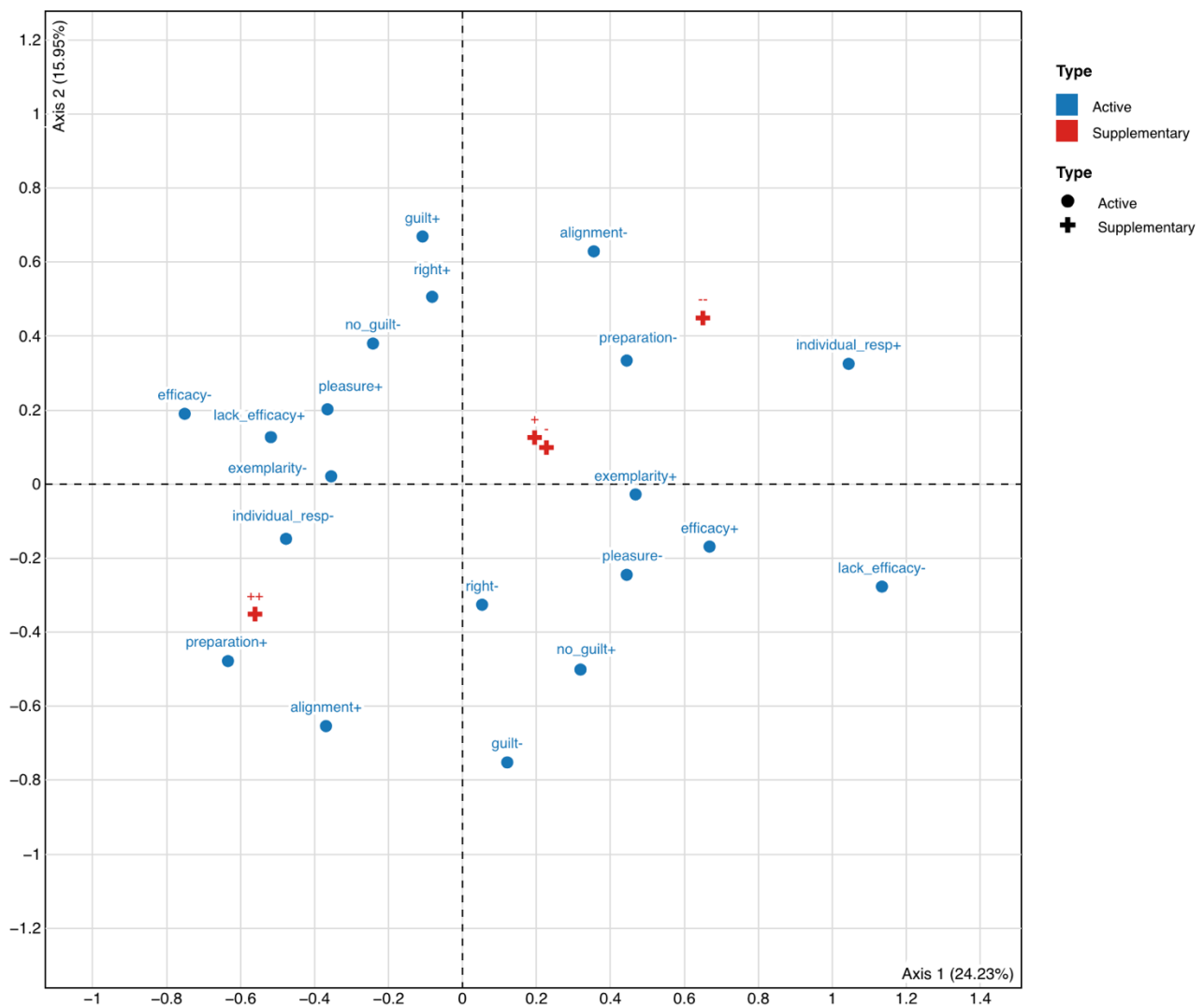
Well, the first moment was definitely back in 2019, because that was the first time people really started talking about Greta Thunberg. It was the first time this issue really became part of public discourse—also on social media there was a much stronger awareness, people were talking about it more, and so things started to shift a bit. From that point on, the issue stayed on my mind, and on the minds of many of my classmates, peers, acquaintances—it became more present. So maybe it doesn’t really count as “activism” in the strict sense, but more like a kind of passive activism, something that was reflected in attitudes or in everyday life. You know, you become more aware, you start paying more attention to certain things—like sorting your waste, or all those behaviors that aren’t a form of visible activism, not something you do to make a public statement, but more for yourself and your own circle. (Teo, i.9)

For those without significant activist experience, the continuity between collective protest and everyday ecological practices appears much more evident. The daily context becomes a space in which to reflect what was ‘learned’ during moments of collective participation. By contrast, activists with substantial movement experience often speak in terms of a disconnection between activism and ecological practices. As discussed earlier, several interviewees (Valentina, Benedetta, Veronica) describe how their initial awareness of the climate crisis led them to profoundly transform their everyday habits—such as changing their diet or embracing zero-waste practices. However, as their engagement in activism reinforced over time, this focus on individual practices began to generate a sense of frustration. This frustration stemmed both from the limited impact of individual actions and from the difficulty of fully adhering to new ecological principles while remaining embedded in broader social infrastructures and market dynamics. Among these profiles, a kind of rupture or discontinuity emerges—not because greater engagement leads to a reduced commitment to ecological

norms in everyday life (on the contrary, as discussed in the previous chapter, the two forms of engagement are closely related), but because the way in which everyday practices are interpreted begins to shift. What we observe is therefore a rupture in meaning, rather than in the practice. The practices remain consistent: ecological norms are internalized. However, the evaluation of one's own daily actions changes. New discourses emerge that undermine the perceived efficacy of those actions, reject individual responsibility, and instead justify continued adherence to ecological norms based on moral or normative considerations, or on a logic of preparation for the future.

Activist experience refers to the years spent in a group without necessarily capturing the position within the movement at the time of the interview. For this reason, I found it useful to code the current protesters' positions in the movement separately. I created the category 'activism level' containing four modes: (++) identifies core activists engaged in organizing actions or taking part in high-risk actions such as civil disobedience; (+) semi-core, flankers who frequently take part in protest actions but do not organize actions nor engage in civil disobedience; (-) semi-periphery, occasional protesters who take part in protest actions from time to time; (--) periphery, sporadic protesters who only exceptionally participate in marches. Figure 22 summarizes the positioning of these variables in the justification space.

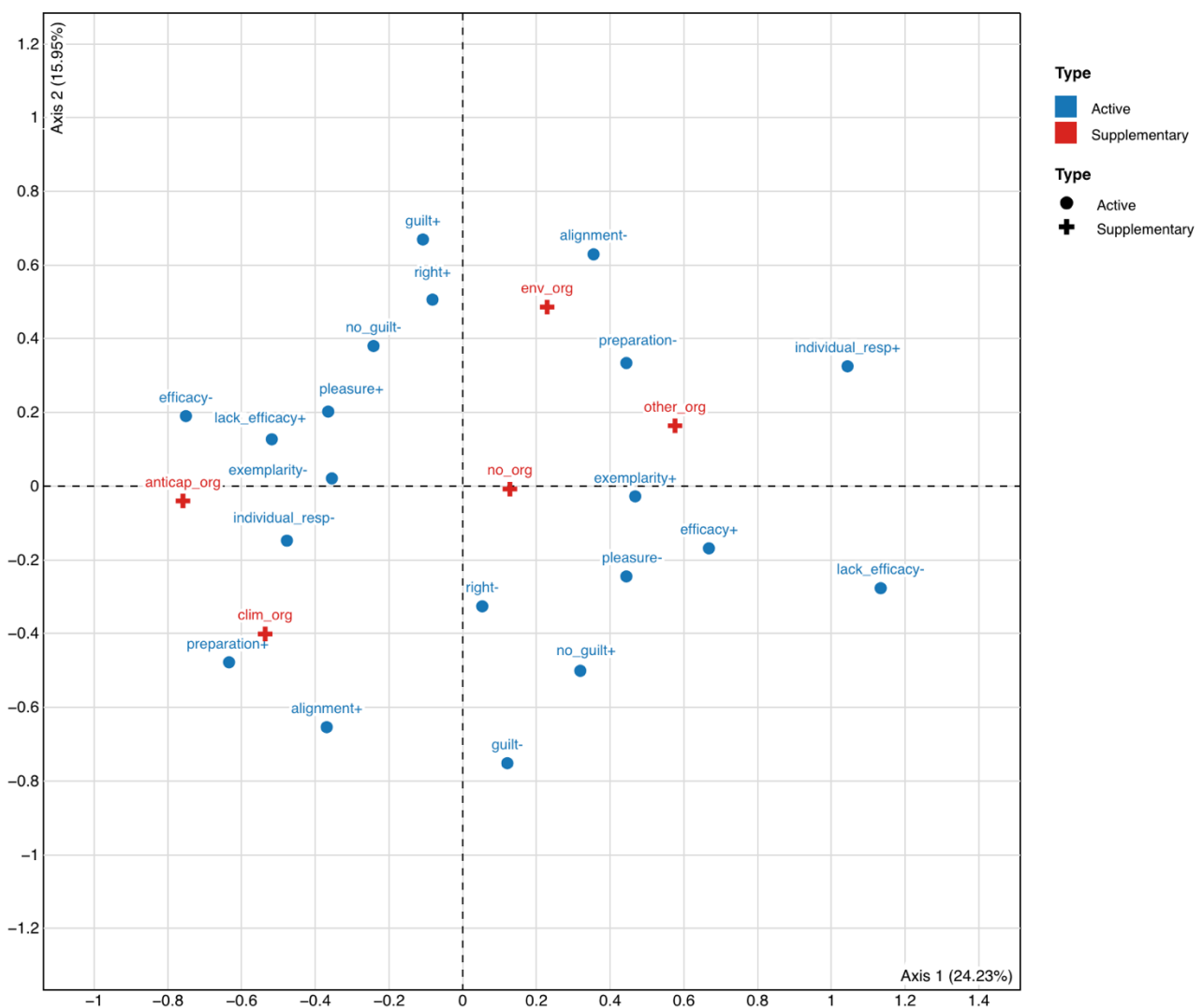
Figure 22. Variable plot. Activism level



As shown in the figure, the categories follow a transversal distribution across the two axes. The category corresponding to the highest level of activism (++) is located in the lower-left area, within quadrant 4, which is associated with preparation and internal alignment. The intermediate categories (+ and -) are positioned near the center of the axes, indicating that respondents with moderate levels of activism are scattered across all four quadrants. Finally, the category (--), representing those who participate only sporadically in mobilizations, is located in quadrant 2, which is associated with responsibility, efficacy, and also guilt. This result reinforces previous observations: a closer proximity to activist engagement tends to weaken the interpretation of ecological practices in terms of personal responsibility, whereas lower activist involvement tends to strengthen discourses centered on individual responsibility, guilt and effectiveness.

Finally, Figure 23 shows the position in the space of the different types of social movement organizations (SMOs) to which respondents belong (in cases of multiple affiliation I coded only the main organization to which the respondent affirmed to belong). I distinguished five modes: anti-capitalist organizations (e.g., Marxist organizations, social centers); climate organizations (including Fridays for Future, Youth for Climate, Extinction Rebellion, A22 network; Alternatiba); environmental organizations (e.g., Legambiente, EELV); other residual organizations (including trade unions, voluntary organizations); no affiliation.

Figure 23. Variable plot. Type of organization



Here too, the distribution cuts across both axes. Respondents affiliated with anti-capitalist organizations are significantly concentrated on the left-hand side of Axis 1, reflecting a clear rejection of logics centered on efficacy and individual responsibility. A similar orientation is observed among

respondents linked to climate organizations which are predominantly positioned in Quadrant 4. This quadrant is characterized by narratives that de-emphasize efficacy and individual responsibility, and instead promote internal alignment and future-oriented preparation. Much like anti-capitalist groups, many climate organizations have intentionally distanced themselves from the discourse of individual ecological action, choosing instead to critique what they describe as “the myth of the green consumer.” This position is clearly articulated by Greta, an activist involved in both Extinction Rebellion and Ultima Generazione at the time of the interview:

we have to somewhat debunk the ‘myth of the green consumer. (Greta, i.21, XR and UG activist)

By contrast, the category of more “traditional” environmental activists is located in a position diametrically opposed within the justification space—namely, in quadrant 2. Although respondents affiliated with these organizations are distributed across all four quadrants, their centroid is positioned in this area, which also reflects a logic of awareness-raising that frequently emerges in their interviews. This approach is well illustrated by Viviana, a volunteer with Legambiente, who states:

On food waste I did a campaign with Legambiente [...] the intent is kind of to raise awareness, to talk about sustainable alternatives. (Viviana, i.14, Legambiente)

Respondents affiliated with other types of organizations—or with no organizational affiliation at all—are relatively dispersed across all four quadrants, though they tend to be somewhat more concentrated on the right-hand side of the space.

Overall, these findings support the idea that activist dispositions—shaped through sustained exposure to movement socialization channels such as social movement organizations (SMOs)—play a significant role in shaping the types of arguments individuals draw upon to justify their ecological practices. The connection between systems of justification and activist socialization resonates with what Nick Crossley (2002, 2003) has described as the “radical habitus,” a concept introduced in Chapter 2 and further developed in Chapter 4 to analyze the effects of secondary activist socialization on the adoption of ecological practices. As previously discussed, this concept builds on Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of habitus (Bourdieu 1990), highlighting how prolonged participation in social movements generates specific dispositions that influence a wide array of life domains—from career choices to everyday lifestyle practices. Just as family and educational environments shape normative orientations, activist contexts cultivate particular behavioral standards that are perceived as legitimate. These internalized norms are then reproduced across various social settings, including

domestic routines, consumption habits, and everyday actions. It is therefore possible to take this reflection a step further and suggest that the radical habitus does not merely structure the adoption of practices, but also fosters specific ways of perceiving, evaluating and justifying these practices. Following Bourdieu's initial insight, habitus can be understood also as a system of interpretive schemes through which individuals perceive the world and assess their place within it. Choosing one kind of argument over another to justify ecological practices can therefore be seen as an expression of activist socialization. Demonstrators who participate only occasionally in protests, and who have not developed enduring activist dispositions, tend to emphasize material effectiveness, the role of the market, and the practical usefulness of a behavior in reducing emissions. At the discursive level, they frame these practices as "good practices"—a form of proper, civilized behavior that everyone should adopt and promote through exemplarity. On the opposite side, the possession of activist dispositions entails a reversal in the logic of justification. As suggested by Susanna, 25, who has been active in student movements since the age of 14:

Polluting or emitting more than necessary, in short, does not seem right to me. I don't think I do it politically.
(Susanna, i.2)

Precisely because the 'sense of the game' (Bourdieu 1990) cultivated within the movement highlights the potential risks of emphasizing the efficacy of individual practices—which may be perceived as depoliticizing, moderate, or market-oriented—experienced activists tend to adopt justificatory strategies that are less focused on practical effectiveness. For individuals with deeper experience and commitment within the movement, justifying the ecological practices they continue to adopt becomes a complex task, precisely because they harbor doubts about their actual impact and the risks of individualization that such practices entail. It means confronting the idea that a set of daily actions, which absorb time, energy, and resources, and deeply shape one's existence, may not in themselves carry a political meaning. In these cases, the emphasis shifts from defending the impact of these practices to articulating their ethical value. What emerges is a reversal of expectations: the most politicized activists tend to downplay the political significance of their everyday ecological practices, viewing them instead as routinized behaviors that nonetheless fulfill a normative obligation. In contrast, individuals with less experience and weaker ties to the movement—who are generally also less politicized—are more likely to reaffirm the political value of their ecological actions, framing them as expressions of active citizenship.

6. Conclusions

To summarize, this chapter complements the findings presented in the previous one. In Chapter 5, I presented the results of a qualitative analysis based on 51 in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants in climate mobilizations in Italy and France. The interviews explored respondents' everyday ecological practices, their reflections on these practices, as well as their social backgrounds, ideological orientations, and experiences with political participation and involvement in social movement organizations. The material was first analyzed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), followed by a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) conducted on a dataset derived from the QCA. Justifications—defined as the meanings and reflections associated with the adoption of ecological practices—were used as active variables (see Chapter 5 for more details on data coding and the implementation of the MCA). In Chapter 5, I examined how categories of justification were distributed across the factorial space, and then explored how certain combinations of these categories formed relatively coherent and distinct justification systems. However, in the previous chapter, variables related to social background, political orientation, and participation were excluded from the analysis. In the present chapter, I have therefore included these elements as supplementary variables—that is, variables that co-occur with the active ones and thus occupy a specific position within the justification space based on their associations, but without influencing the construction of the axes or the overall structure of the factorial space.

The analysis presented in this chapter demonstrates that the systems of justification employed by climate protesters to make sense of their everyday ecological practices are not independent of their social dispositions. On the contrary, clear patterns of association emerge when social characteristics are projected onto the justification space. These findings, however, should be interpreted with caution, as they do not allow for statistical generalization and do not exclude the presence of dissonant or hybrid profiles (Lahire 2005). Nonetheless, they suggest a certain structuring of arguments shaped by both primary and secondary socialization processes.

For example, the analyses conducted within the interview sample revealed patterns of association between family occupational background and the systems of justification used for ecological practices. Respondents whose parents were small business owners or self-employed were more likely to justify their ecological practices in terms of efficacy, to invoke arguments about the personal responsibility in facing the climate crisis, and to see themselves as role models when it comes to sustainable lifestyles. By contrast, the children of dependent workers, managers, and socio-cultural

professionals tended to be more critical of such individualizing arguments. Instead, they were more inclined to emphasize the need to prepare—through lifestyle choices as well—for living in a post-carbon world, and to articulate justifications rooted in moral reasoning or in alignment with personal principles.

The analysis revealed additional social factors associated with the two poles of the justification space. Employment in the private sector, younger and older age groups, lower levels of education, and higher levels of religiosity are all factors associated with the right-hand side of the justification space—corresponding to a system of justification centered on efficacy, responsibility, and exemplarity. In contrast, employment in the public sector, adulthood, higher levels of education, and the absence of religiosity are linked to alternative systems of justification that are more critical of individual responsibility. Nationality also plays a structuring role: the guilt-oriented pole is predominantly occupied by Italian respondents, while the coherence-oriented pole is more commonly associated with French respondents. This pattern suggests possible explanations related not only to national cultural traits, but also to differing levels of ecological awareness and movement maturity in the two national contexts. Finally, differences also emerge between individuals with a radical political orientation and extensive activist experience, and those who identify as more moderate or apolitical, with more limited involvement in activism. The former are positioned on the left side of the justification space; they tend to reject the emphasis on individual responsibility and instead frame ecological practices as transformative and oriented toward long-term systemic change. The latter, by contrast, highlight individual actions as immediate solutions to the crisis and adopt a more individualized perspective.

This latter finding is particularly significant insofar as it demonstrates that secondary socialization—within movement organizations—shapes the way activists reflect on their own lifestyles. In this sense, the concept of radical habitus, as proposed by Crossley (2002, 2003), takes on an even deeper meaning: exposure to a certain form of activist socialization not only influences what individuals do outside the activist sphere, but also how they interpret the meaning of those actions. These reflections can be challenging for activists. As several interviews revealed, many activists struggle to rationalize the continued presence of behaviors in their lifestyles that they no longer perceive as fully “political,” and therefore tend to reframe them in moral terms. In some cases, interviews proved particularly difficult to conduct precisely because the focus—individual practices—was seen by participants as marginal or illegitimate when compared to the more intense and meaningful experience of collective activism. More politicized activists tend to view their ecological practices as routine duties and normative obligations, while less politicized individuals emphasize their significance as acts of

citizenship and participation. Yet the persistence of these practices, and the diversity of meanings attributed to them, provides valuable insight into how secondary socialization within the movement operates.

Taken together, these findings point to a key insight: the type of arguments individuals use to justify their ecological practices may vary. However this variation happens within a limited range that depends on the type of socialization the actor has experienced. On this point, the study conducted by Balsiger and colleagues (2019) already proves that ordinary people have a limited political imaginary to rely on when they have to resonate about the sense of their ecological actions. The capacity to attribute meaning to ecological action is not evenly distributed. Some actors have access to more complex and critical interpretative frameworks, while others rely on narrower, often individualized narratives. On the same line, it is worthy to mention again the study by Ambrasat and colleagues (2016, 1009) that empirically proves the role of habitus as an individual “pattern of meaning making”. However, studies that examine the social factors associated with the ways individuals make sense of a given ecological practice remain limited.

In conclusion, the findings presented in this chapter—while exploratory—offer a meaningful insight: the act of justifying one’s ecological practices, whether in terms of ethics, strategy, responsibility, or preparation for the future, is not merely a matter of conscious choice, but also the expression of socially embedded dispositions. This is a significant point, especially considering that, as discussed in the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 and throughout the thesis, the fields of the sociology of dispositions and the sociology of justifications have seldom engaged in dialogue—partly for epistemological reasons. As stated in the theoretical framework, the aim of this research was not to merge these two approaches into a unified theory or to formulate a “third way” between the two schools. This work remains firmly rooted in the sociology of dispositions. However, the empirical findings offer insights that may be of interest not only to scholars of dispositions but also to those working within the sociology of justifications. Justifications—the ways in which individuals make sense of their actions—are not merely transpositions of internalized culture (as in Swidler’s toolkit approach), nor are they solely the outcome of normative processes that take shape in the moment of action (as theorized by Boltanski and Thévenot). They do not emerge in a social vacuum; rather, they are connected to prior socialization. As Bourdieu (1990, 1998) reminds us, habitus shapes what we do, but also how we think about what we do.

Chapter 7 – Conclusions

1. Introduction

Drawing conclusions from a research project that has unfolded over more than four years presents several challenges. Yet it also offers a valuable opportunity not only to engage with the findings that have emerged, but also to reflect on the broader research trajectory, from the initial questions that inspired the project to the evolving insights that have shaped it over time. While not all of the initial research questions have been fully answered, leaving certain aspects unresolved is part and parcel of academic inquiry, opening space for future exploration and refinement. In this concluding chapter, I aim to revisit the main results of the analyses conducted, interpreting them in light of the theoretical frameworks that have guided this work. In doing so, I will highlight both the original contributions of the dissertation and its limitations, as well as potential directions for future research. The chapter is structured as follows: I begin by briefly restating the core problem that has guided the inquiry. I then review the key findings that emerged from the empirical analyses presented in the previous chapters, outlining their implications. I conclude by discussing the limitations of the study and suggesting avenues for further research building on the insights developed here.

2. The Ambivalence of Everyday Ecology

This dissertation investigates the space occupied by everyday ecology within the broader context of contemporary climate mobilization. I defined Everyday Ecological Practices (EEPs) as a range of practices adopted by individuals in their daily lives for ecological reasons and involving various dimensions of private life, such as consumption, restraint, and self-production, including for instance changes in diet, the adoption of anti-waste strategies, the purchase of bulk or second-hand goods, and the self-production of vegetables or personal care products. In particular, it focuses on the social characteristics associated with the adoption of such practices, as well as on the systems of meaning and justification through which they are sustained—with specific attention to their persistence, despite ongoing ambiguity concerning their role.

One key to understanding this question lies in examining how dominant approaches to environmental sustainability have increasingly framed ecological responsibility in individualistic terms—primarily as a matter of modifying personal consumption patterns. In recent decades, environmental policy has increasingly embraced an approach to climate solutions grounded in the integration of market

mechanisms with environmental protection—a paradigm commonly referred to as ecological modernization. This perspective aims to incorporate environmental concerns into existing political and economic structures, promoting the co-evolution of market growth and ecological sustainability (Buttel 2000; Hajer 1997; Mol 2000; Spaargaren 2000). In parallel, a process of individualization of public and collective responsibilities has taken shape, leading to the progressive decentralization of accountability and the transfer of the burden for addressing ecological issues from the state to market actors, including consumers (Beck 1994; Giddens 1991). As a result, there has been a growing appeal to individual responsibility in the face of collective risks such as global warming (Döbbe and Cederberg 2024; Giddens 1991, 2009; Kelly 2001; Lebedeva 2023; Soneryd and Uggla 2015). Since the 1990s, this process has led to the institutionalization of ecological norms, primarily through public strategies aimed at promoting environmental protection by regulating individual behavior (Dubuisson-Quellier 2016). This is exemplified by policy frameworks, such as those introduced during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, which outlined guidelines for sustainable consumption addressed to governments, communities, and households (Dobré 2002). This model of governance, grounded in the logic of responsabilization (Thörn and Svenberg 2016), seeks to cultivate proactive and autonomous “citizen-consumers” capable of reducing pressure on environmental resources while simultaneously sustaining economic growth.

The outcome of these processes aligns with what Stolle and Micheletti (2013), in their seminal work on political consumerism, define as the “individualized responsibility-taking”. Their analysis suggests that broader social phenomena—such as globalization, the risk society, and the declining influence of the nation-state—have weakened the accountability traditionally attributed to the state in managing issues such as environmental problems. As a result, citizens are increasingly called upon to assume responsibility for issues that can no longer be addressed solely through state intervention, particularly through their consumption choices. This shift places consumers under a specific form of responsabilization characteristic of the environmental governance model, which promotes mechanisms of self-regulation and voluntary action by private actors (including consumers), in place of traditional top-down regulatory approaches (Pellizzoni 2004).

While the interconnected processes of environmental risk, ecological modernization, and individualization have led to a transformation in the distribution of environmental responsibility within contemporary societies, climate justice movements that have emerged in recent years have strongly contested this process of responsabilization. Building on demands previously voiced during mobilizations around the UN-sponsored climate conferences (COPs), the wave of climate protests

that gained momentum after 2018—particularly school strikes and civil disobedience campaigns—has brought renewed attention to the central role of the state as a key actor responsible for climate action. This reflects a clear shift away from framing climate change as a matter of individual responsibility (Comby 2015) toward a repoliticization and radicalization of climate issues (Comby and Dubuisson-Quellier 2023). According to de Moor et al. (2021), this new cycle of climate activism has marked a “return to the state”, with activists primarily demanding that governments take decisive action to halt climate change. As a result, climate justice mobilizations call for moving beyond the model of individual responsabilization and action advanced by ecological modernization theory.

However, this renewed call for state accountability presents inherent ambiguities and raises important questions about the role of individuals in addressing the climate crisis. Research on the 2019 wave of climate protests highlights this tension. On one hand, many young participants expressed a persistent belief in individual responsibility: a significant proportion of respondents stated that climate change should primarily be addressed through voluntary changes in personal lifestyle (de Moor et al. 2020; Wahlström et al. 2019). On the other hand, other findings from the same study complicate this picture. When asked “What should be done to address this problem?” (i.e., climate change), only 17% identified individual behavioral change as the main solution, while 48% favored a top-down approach and 13% supported more radical interventions (Svensson and Wahlström 2021). An emblematic example of this duality can be found in a statement published on the website of Extinction Rebellion Italy: “We value making changes to our lifestyle, such as changing our diet, holiday destinations, consumption styles and so on (however, personal responsibility can be overstated and is based, to some extent, on privilege)”³⁶. The statement simultaneously affirms the relevance of lifestyle changes while also cautioning against overreliance on individual responsibility—a position that reflects the ambivalent stance of many activists.

Climate activists find themselves at the center of a contradiction: they are engaged in a movement that assigns responsibility for climate action primarily to governments, yet they have grown up in a context that, for decades, has promoted the notion that individuals must bear responsibility through their consumption patterns, choices, and lifestyles. This tension is reflected at the individual level. Several studies show that climate activists are also highly engaged in adopting everyday ecological practices as part of their habits (Alexandre et al. 2021; Boucher et al. 2021; Martiskainen et al. 2020; Posmek 2023; Zamponi et al. 2022). At the same time, other research points to a growing contestation of such practices (Pickard et al. 2020; Stuart 2022; Trott 2023), as their strategic value is increasingly

³⁶ <https://extinctionrebellion.it/chi-siamo/extinction-rebellion/> (accessed 4 february 2025).

questioned in light of the scale and urgency of the climate crisis and the perceived need for collective and political action. The persistence of EEPs among activists—despite the ambivalent meanings attached to them—raises important questions. It is precisely this articulation between practices and their meanings that lied at the heart of my research.

How is individual responsibility articulated in the context of a repoliticization of the climate issue and the growing emphasis on collective responsibilities? Are ecological practices adopted uniformly within the climate mobilization context? What other the factors guiding the adoption of such practices? And how are they reflexively justified? These are the questions that have guided me throughout this research. In order to operationalize these problems, I formulated the following research questions:

RQ1. What are protesters' dispositions related to the adoption of everyday ecological practices?

RQ2. What justifications do protesters deploy when referring to their everyday ecological practices?

To address these questions, I adopted a dispositional approach to examine the structural conditions associated with activists' embracement of ecological conduct. In particular, the study—based on a protest survey (N=1646)—first enabled me to assess the extent to which ecological practices were adopted within a sample of climate protesters in Italy and France. The quantitative analysis, conducted through logistic and OLS regressions, allowed me to examine the associations between variables related to social dispositions—rooted in both primary and secondary socialization—and the adoption of ecological practices, both individually and as a whole. This enabled me to outline a profile of the main characteristics of ecological “practitioners.” In this regard, notions such as eco-habitus (Carfagna et al. 2014; Haluza-DeLay 2008) and radical habitus (Crossley 2003) were instrumental in grounding the analysis and offering a deeper understanding of the patterns observed.

Secondly, the investigation of 51 in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants in climate demonstrations allowed me to engage with their reflexive sphere—that is, with how they relate to their everyday choices and how they assign meaning to them. The theoretical framework of the sociology of justifications, both in its general formulation (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Swidler 2001) and in its application to ecological reflection (Balsiger et al. 2019; Lorenzen 2016), enabled me to approach these reflections not as the outcome of purely motivational, rational, or value-based choices, but rather as expressions of a particular political culture and therefore as manifestations of different forms of socialization.

The orientation of this research has been primarily exploratory. Despite growing interest in the relationship between personal conduct and political activism, studies examining the diffusion of individual practices within climate mobilizations remain relatively limited. Even fewer have investigated the social dispositions that underpin both the adoption of these practices and the meanings activists attribute to them. This dissertation set out to address that gap by offering insights intended to encourage deeper reflection on these dynamics.

By examining how ecological practices are adopted and justified, this study sheds light on the ways in which social dispositions influence both action and reflection. It offers a framework for understanding how such practices acquire meaning, legitimacy, and coherence in the eyes of those who enact them. Moreover, it contributes to a deeper understanding of the interrelation between individual practices and collective political engagement within climate activism, and more broadly, of how political participation can shape everyday conduct and foster new forms of subjectivity. In what follows, I revisit the key findings of the empirical analysis, outlining their specific contributions to the existing literature and the implications they entail.

3. Dispositions, Justifications, and Everyday Ecological Practices: Key Findings from the Research

3.1 Social Dispositions and EEPs

In this section, I synthesize the main findings of the dissertation. For a more detailed and systematic analysis, the reader is referred to the concluding sections of Chapters 4, 5, and 6. I begin by summarizing the key results presented in Chapter 4, which are based on survey data collected during climate mobilizations in Italy and France. This analysis revealed a heterogeneous pattern in the adoption of EEPs. Although, overall, the activists surveyed displayed a strong inclination toward ecological practices—an expected result—there were nonetheless significant differences in the types of practices adopted. The most widely adopted practices were typically related to consumption—such as buying seasonal fruits and vegetables, second-hand or unpackaged products, and boycotting specific brands—or to restraint, such as reducing energy use or avoiding waste. These practices generally do not require a radical transformation of daily routines; rather, they can be integrated into existing lifestyles with relative ease and without significant sacrifices in time, energy, money, or social life. By contrast, other practices were more divisive and less widely adopted. These included giving up air travel, adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet, growing one's own food, making personal care or textile products at home, or participating in alternative food consumption networks. Such practices require a different domestic setup, a higher degree of personal investment, and are often

associated with social or familial pressures—as well as with a certain stigma. These dynamics also emerged clearly from the qualitative interviews, particularly in relation to choices such as avoiding meat consumption or refraining from flying. In terms of national samples, the data reveal both similarities and differences between Italians and French respondents. While certain practices—such as buying seasonal products, limiting energy use, and adopting anti-waste strategies—are widespread in both countries, Italians appear particularly engaged in waste-reduction practices, such as limiting purchases and upcycling products. By contrast, French respondents are more involved in transformative and demanding practices, such as reducing meat consumption or renouncing air travel, indicating a generally higher level of personal ecological commitment. This is further confirmed by the OLS regression results: while nationality is not significantly associated with greater adoption of general ecological practice indices, being French is significantly associated with broader adoption of the set of less common and more demanding practices.

Furthermore, the regression analysis revealed a range of social dispositions associated both with the individual ecological practices examined and with the cumulative adoption of such practices. In this discussion, I will focus on what I consider to be the most important social factors in relation to the adoption of these practices: class membership, gender, political radicalism, and activism experience. These elements are distinct and derive from different social processes. Some, such as gender and class membership, are shaped by primary socialization—especially within the family context—whereas others, like political radicalism and activism experience, are linked to socialization within political contexts and social movements. Nonetheless, each of these elements is strongly associated with the adoption of ecological practices, particularly those that are less widespread.

Class membership—or, more precisely, affiliation with a specific class fraction based on parental occupational background—correlates with numerous ecological practices, both when considered individually and through aggregated indices. In fact, respondents with parents employed in socio-cultural professions are those most likely to adopt EEPs, whether considered individually or as an aggregate. This finding is relevant because it implies that, in the context of climate mobilization, the association between middle-class affiliation and the adoption of ecological practices—as thoroughly documented in the literature (Carfagna et al. 2014; Koos 2012; Stolle and Micheletti 2013)—is not uniform. Rather, within the middle class, specific fractions (namely, those from socio-cultural and, to some extent, technical professional backgrounds) are more likely to adopt EEPs, in contrast to individuals from more market-oriented and managerial households (e.g., small business owners and managers). This diversity challenges the idea of a homogeneous eco-habitus across middle classes and suggests instead that ecological practices are concentrated within the dominated fraction of the

dominant classes (Bourdieu 1987). Such results further reinforce the notion of social diversity within climate mobilizations. Indeed, previous studies have shown that although the middle class is overrepresented in climate mobilizations, examining additional social characteristics reveals a broader diversity of social profiles (Gaborit et al. 2024; della Porta and Portos 2021). The study of ecological practices, therefore, adds an additional layer of variability to the social spectrum of climate mobilization. In the individual practice of climate activists, mere middle-class affiliation is insufficient; rather, it is the belonging to a particular class fraction that proves relevant.

The second key factor to highlight is gender. Identifying as a woman, as opposed to the reference category of ‘man’, was positively associated with the majority of ecological practices, as well as with the aggregated indices measuring overall engagement. It is noteworthy that individuals identifying as women were not necessarily more likely to engage only in practices traditionally associated with femininity—such as self-producing clothing or cosmetics, upcycling, or domestic behaviors like purchasing seasonal produce, buying unpackaged goods, or applying anti-waste strategies. They were also more likely to adopt practices that transcend traditional gender roles, such as boycotting products, reducing consumption, buying second-hand, changing dietary habits. The correlation between gender and the adoption of ecological practices is not unexpected: numerous studies have shown that women are generally more likely than men to engage in ecological behaviors (Boström et al. 2005; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Koos 2012; O’Shaughnessy and Kennedy 2010; Zelezny et al. 2000). However, it is particularly interesting to observe that this correlation persists even within a specific context such as that of climate mobilization. Traditional interpretations explaining why women are more engaged in ecological practices than men often point to the idea that consumerism represents a more accessible space for women’s political participation, and that women are often socialized to prioritize ethical concerns—such as family health and animal welfare—when making consumer choices (Stolle and Micheletti 2013; Zelezny et al. 2000, 445). From a more critical perspective, however, some scholars challenge the notion that women’s environmental behavior merely reproduces a caring disposition. Tindall et al. (2003), for example, emphasize that women environmentalists—more so than their male counterparts—face the dual burden of paid and unpaid domestic labor, and often invert this potential constraint on biographical availability by transforming daily routines into spaces for enacting pro-environmental behavior. This insight aligns with O’Shaughnessy and Kennedy’s (2010, 561) observation that, through their everyday practices, women actively “create social change and are, for the most part, aware of this.” While ecological engagement may, in some cases, constitute an additional constraint for women—reinforcing an eco-maternalist logic that ties environmental care to the domestic sphere and thus exacerbates gendered alienation (MacGregor 2011)—it can also be seen as an opportunity to renegotiate social values. By

adopting ecological practices, women expose and challenge hegemonic masculinity, which is often embedded in polluting behaviors (Stoddart and Tindall 2011), and in doing so, actively distance themselves from it. This gendered distinction emerged clearly in the interviews: in numerous cases, women described themselves as the primary agents of ecological change in the household, in contrast to their male partners or sons. The fact that gender socialization continues to shape who is most committed to transforming everyday conduct—even within a progressive, egalitarian, and ecologically oriented context like the climate movement—is a significant finding. It highlights the enduring power of gender norms, even in politicized spaces. At the same time, the findings show that women do not merely reproduce these socialization patterns: they also appropriate ecological practices as a way to consciously distance themselves from the polluting behaviors typically associated with men in the domestic sphere.

The third key factor is political radicalism. While most studies on ecological practices and political consumerism consistently highlight a clear divide between the political right and left—with such practices being more commonly associated with left-wing orientations (Boström et al. 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2013), more fine-grained analyses of divisions within the left are less common and yield more ambivalent results. The findings presented in this dissertation, however, show that identification with the radical left and support for a break from capitalism are strongly associated with the adoption of ecological practices. This association can be interpreted in different ways. Activists who believe that renouncing capitalism is necessary may be more inclined to adopt ecological practices because they see the climate crisis as inevitably requiring changes both at the macro-social level (economic transformation) and at the micro-social level (habitual and lifestyle changes). From this perspective, adopting such practices is a way to prepare for the future. However, the relationship between political radicalism and the adoption of EEPs can also be interpreted through the lens of internal intransigence: endorsing a major project of social transformation and systemic change implies the need to align one's personal life with one's political convictions. What is particularly striking is that political radicalism correlates most clearly with the adoption of the least common practices in the sample—especially those related to giving up meat, avoiding air travel, and engaging in self-production of food or household items. This result becomes even more meaningful when read alongside another finding: believing that climate change should be addressed through lifestyle change is associated only with the adoption of the some common practices, but not with the more demanding or transformative ones. While support for individual behavioral change may encourage certain forms of ecological engagement, it does not significantly increase the likelihood of embracing practices that require deeper commitments or substantial lifestyle shifts. Additionally, believing that the climate crisis stems from poor individual behavior does not necessarily lead to

higher engagement in ecological practices. Overall, these findings support the argument—explored more deeply through the interviews—that belief in individual responsibility and the perceived impact of one’s ecological actions does not automatically translate into full behavioral alignment. The attitudinal element that makes a decisive difference is not the assumption of individual responsibility, but political radicalism. Belief in the need for structural transformation is what appears to drive the enactment of transformation in everyday life. These empirical insights, while in need of further validation, lend support to the argument that concepts such as individualized responsibility-taking (Stolle and Micheletti 2013), widely used in the literature on political consumption and participation, are not sufficient to fully explain the relationship between activists and ecological practices. While these concepts are useful in describing the conduct of certain segments of the climate movement—particularly the more moderate, who reproduce the logic of the citizen-consumer—they fail to capture the practices of more radical actors, who reject market-oriented solutions altogether. Research on critical consumption (Balsiger 2014; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018) has highlighted its dual nature: it can function both as a tool of reform within the system and as a strategy for exiting the market. This ambivalence is clearly reflected in the ecological practices of climate activists, and helps explain why more transformative behaviors tend to be adopted by the most radical sectors—those committed to enacting alternatives to the capitalist market system in their everyday lives.

Finally, membership in an organization—particularly in environmental organizations—and prolonged participation in climate protest events are strongly associated with a higher likelihood of adopting EEPs in everyday life. These findings suggest that ecological practices and lifestyle changes are not merely a matter of individual motivation or personal attitude. Rather, they are significantly shaped by involvement in collective organizational frameworks. Individuals who take part in movement-oriented groups, especially those focused on environmental issues, are more likely to integrate ecological practices into their daily routines. These effects remain significant even when controlling for socio-demographic and socio-economic variables. Drawing on the insights of Nick Crossley, and particularly his concept of radical habitus, one can argue that such practices reflect a learned disposition that develops through ongoing participation in collective action. The influence of activist socialization is evident across a wide range of ecological practices examined in this study. It is especially salient in the adoption of more demanding and transformative practices—such as changing one’s diet or transportation habits—as well as in practices more directly linked to collective engagement, such as boycotting or joining alternative consumption networks. However, this influence also extends to less divisive or less demanding actions, such as reducing waste or purchasing second-hand items. In this sense, the findings provide clear support for Crossley’s theory of radicalism and the concept of radical habitus, according to which “Radicalism is not merely a

matter of what radicals do in the formal political arena, but equally affects the way they work, their domestic circumstances and even the way in which they dress” (Crossley 2002, 54–55). Similarly, ecological commitment does not end at the threshold of political participation; it extends into domestic life, consumption choices, practices of restraint, and self-production. This does not mean that ecological practices do not exist prior to engagement in collective action. Indeed, several of the interviews I conducted revealed that activists had adopted ecological practices before becoming involved in mobilization. In some cases, these early behaviors served as a gateway to climate awareness and subsequent activism. However, as participation in the movement deepens, the perceived effectiveness of these practices may decline, even though their adoption does not. This, again, is a strong indicator of the emergence of a radical habitus—one that transcends rational, outcome-oriented decision-making. Instead, it signals a deeper, embodied orientation that sustains and expands ecological practices within the lived experience of activism. Experience in activism manifests not only at the individual level, but also at the broader level of the movement, and in this sense, the differences between Italians and French respondents offer an additional interpretative key. As mentioned, the data reveal a greater tendency among the French to adopt the most demanding and transformative practices. This can be interpreted as an effect of the greater maturity of the French climate movement compared to the Italian context, where mobilizations around climate issues had already emerged in 2015 on the occasion of COP21. This greater collective experience appears to foster deeper personal transformations and more consistent engagement at the individual level.

3.2 Justifications and EEPs

Another set of key findings concerns activists’ reflexivity and the ways in which they make sense of their engagement in everyday ecological practices. These results specifically address the second research question: What justifications do protesters deploy when referring to their everyday ecological practices? They are primarily drawn from the analysis of in-depth interviews conducted with participants in climate mobilizations in France and Italy, as detailed in Chapters 5. The analysis was based on 51 semi-structured in-depth interviews. Following a qualitative content analysis (QCA), I identified and grouped eight categories of justification—efficacy, individual responsibility, exemplarity, guilt, preparation, alignment, right, and pleasure—as well as two forms of “anti-justification”: lack of efficacy, and guilt removal, understood as counter-arguments that explicitly reject certain rationales for engaging in ecological practices. These categories were recoded into a dataset used as the basis for a Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), which allowed for the exploration and visualization of the relationships among justifications within the factorial space. The

MCA revealed that climate activists justify their practices through a wide variety of arguments that combine into broader justificatory systems. While ecological practices play a central role in activists' everyday lives, the meanings attributed to them are heterogeneous and deeply interwoven.

The space of justifications emerging from the MCA is structured along two primary axes. The first axis differentiates between justifications for adopting ecological practices that appeal to the strategic efficacy of individual action—emphasizing personal responsibility and often converging with a logic of exemplarity—and those that reject these arguments, instead interpreting ecological practices as preparatory steps toward adapting to a future society. The second axis is more moral-normative in nature: it contrasts moral arguments—such as guilt and rightness—with justifications grounded in personal value alignment and a rejection of guilt-based reasoning. Within this space, justifications cluster into specific configurations that I define as ‘systems of justification’. Each system offers a distinct way of ascribing meaning to ecological practice, while also accommodating internal tensions and contradictions. These systems are formed through the aggregation of multiple justificatory arguments, reflecting the notion that justifications are not singular or static, but rather consist of interconnected and sometimes conflicting elements that individuals mobilize to navigate complex and evolving situations (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Swidler 2001).

Strategic systems of justification—which emphasize the tangible outcomes of EEPs—are closely intertwined with arguments centered on individual responsibility, particularly the notion that everyone must “do their part” to address the climate crisis. These systems also draw on the valorization of one’s ecological actions as exemplary gestures intended to influence the behavior of others (Weber 2013b). This perspective frames individuals as central political actors who contribute to social change through their consumption choices. It reflects the concept of individualized responsibility-taking (Stolle and Micheletti 2013), whereby responsibility for confronting global issues is increasingly transferred from the state to the citizen. In this justificatory framework, ecological commitment is understood as a form of citizenship that is compatible with market logic (Dobson 2007), in which lifestyle changes are valued primarily for their capacity to raise awareness and mobilize others. This justificatory system is particularly distinctive in that it constructs a symbolic hierarchy between those who have adopted ecological practices—thus becoming exemplary figures—and those who have not yet done so. This system of justification, while expressed by a minority of interviewees, is nonetheless significant. It illustrates the pervasive influence of the individualization process in shaping how ecological issues are understood and acted upon. Moreover, the interviews reveal that individuals who employ this justificatory system tend to adopt only the

most common, socially accepted, and accessible actions, while often avoiding more demanding and transformative ones. This paradox reveals a specific way in which these interviewees relate to ecological practices: they are conceived as a means of contributing to the mitigation of the ecological crisis and, at the same time, of experiencing a sense of belonging to the movement. Such commitment does not require a radical disruption of everyday life, but rather the selective incorporation of certain practices into an already existing model of consumption.

On the other hand, alternative systems of justification emerge where attachment to strategic arguments is lacking. Indeed, most interviewees perceive individual ecological practices as inadequate to address the scale of the climate crisis. They articulate arguments that emphasize collective responsibility—both in terms of the origins of the crisis (capitalism, wealthy elites, colonialism, state inaction) and in the attribution of responsibility for action, which is assigned primarily to national governments, public authorities, and international governance bodies, rather than to private individuals. For these activists, the persistence of ecological practices is justified through multiple, interconnected rationales. One such rationale frames these practices as a form of preparation for life in a post-climate-crisis society. Ecological practices that may not yield immediate results or strategic benefits are often interpreted as long-term investments—in time, effort, or economic cost—that accrue meaning over time. In this perspective, what are now marginal and seemingly inadequate practices become tools for reshaping individual and collective subjectivities in view of a future society.

In parallel, moral justifications play a significant role. These activists navigate the moral tension that arises from the continuous transformation of their lifestyles in an ecological direction while simultaneously rejecting the external significance of that transformation. In this context, moral norms serve as a key foundation for legitimizing the performance of these practices. These norms manifest in two primary ways. First, through the experience of guilt: the reasoning is not “I do this because it matters,” but rather, “What happens if I don’t?” Even when decoupled from the discourse of individual responsibility, guilt may function as a form of moral self-discipline—an internalized regulatory mechanism that sustains ecological commitment and personal transformation. Second, feelings of satisfaction or moral gratification for having acted “rightly” further reinforce this commitment. Together, guilt, duty, and moral gratification form a coherent system of justifications that supports the adoption of ecological practices. However, a subset of interviewees explicitly reject guilt as a valid justification—viewing it as still too closely aligned with individualist framings—and instead legitimize their ecological engagement through the pursuit of consistency between their

values and their behavior. Being in harmony with oneself, aligning practices with beliefs and minimizing dissonance between one's principles and one's actions, becomes a central justification for a number of activists. Often, this stance is marked by a strong ethic of non-complicity and a refusal to participate in systems perceived as harmful or unjust, whether to humans or non-humans. Rather than seeking measurable impact, these practices express a commitment to both personal and collective transformation. As a result, it is precisely those interviewees who invoke these alternative justifications who, despite a general devaluation of ecological practices, prove to be the most deeply engaged. They adopt demanding forms of engagement—particularly in areas such as food, transportation, and voluntary simplicity—that often have significant repercussions on their social and domestic infrastructure. What emerges, then, is that adherence to an ethical norm—rather than the actual impact of the practice—signals a deeper form of commitment, one that extends across the entire domain of existence.

3.3 Justifications and Dispositions

These systems of justification are not entirely disconnected from the social characteristics of those who adopt them. By using a feature of Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) that allows supplementary variables to be projected onto the space defined by the active variables, the exploratory analysis presented in Chapter 6 shows that variables related to primary and secondary socialization processes co-occur with specific justifications. These variables thus occupy distinct positions within the justification space. The analysis therefore highlights that the systems of justification employed by climate protesters to make sense of their everyday ecological practices are closely linked to their social dispositions.

For instance, patterns of association emerge between respondents' family occupational backgrounds and their systems of justifications. Individuals whose parents were small business owners or self-employed workers tend to justify their ecological practices in terms of strategic efficacy, invoking arguments centered on individual responsibility in addressing the climate crisis, and viewing themselves as role models for sustainable lifestyles. Conversely, the children of dependent workers, managers, and socio-cultural professionals are more critical of such individualized rationales. They are more likely to emphasize the need for preparation—particularly collective preparation—for confronting future societal configurations, including the practical transformation of the self and one's habits. These arguments are often articulated alongside moral justifications or appeals to coherence between personal principles and actions.

Justificatory arguments that emphasize individualization tend to be associated with lower levels of education, specific age groups (particularly the youngest and oldest), varying degrees of religiosity. In these cases, personal ecological practices are often framed as both exemplary and effective, reinforcing the belief that meaningful change is achievable through individual action within existing social structures. In contrast, skepticism toward the effectiveness or relevance of individual practices is more commonly found among young adults with higher levels of education and no religious affiliation.

Similarly, a moderate political orientation—aligned with the principles of ecological modernization and responsible consumer choice—is more common among those who employ justificatory systems grounded in efficacy, individual responsibility, and exemplarity. In contrast, more radical activists—who question the compatibility of market-based and capitalist production systems with resolving the climate crisis—tend to reject such arguments. Instead, they justify their engagement through principles of preparation, coherence, and the moral gratification of having done the “right thing”.

This pattern is particularly evident among activists with prior experience in social movements. These individuals often find themselves in the complex position of rejecting ecological practices as individualized responses to the climate crisis, while simultaneously feeling compelled to adopt and maintain them in their personal lives. This evidence underscores the significant role of secondary socialization—within movement organizations and structures—not only in shaping individual behavior outside of collective frameworks, but also in influencing the meanings attributed to ecological practices in everyday life. These findings take the concept of radical habitus (Crossley 2002, 2003) to a deeper analytical level, extending its relevance beyond embodied practice to include processes of interpretation and reflexive awareness. In this sense, not only practices themselves but also the ways individuals make sense of them appear to be shaped by socialization processes. More politicized and experienced activists tend to frame their ecological practices as routine duties and normative obligations, whereas less politicized and distant interviewees are more likely to view them as expressions of citizenship and participation. The sociological analysis thus reveals that the persistence of these practices—and the diversity of meanings attributed to them—offers valuable insights into how activist experience permeates everyday life and informs individuals’ understanding of their own actions.

3.4 Between Structure and Reflexivity: Concluding Remarks and Implications

This research sought to explore how ecological practices are adopted, justified, and experienced by climate activists in France and Italy. The findings reveal that the adoption of ecological practices is shaped by social dispositions—including gender, class, political radicalism and activist experience—suggesting that both primary and secondary socialization processes play a significant role. While some results—such as the association between ecological engagement and factors like gender or class—confirm patterns identified in previous research (Carfagna et al. 2014; Dubuisson-Quellier 2018; Koos 2012), other elements—emerging specifically within the context of mobilization—also come into play. These latter findings reinforce an idea already present, albeit implicitly, in Bourdieu’s work: that habitus is not static, but plural and dynamic. From this perspective, activism can be understood as a site of ongoing socialization—one in which new dispositions take shape and begin to orient everyday ecological conduct.

These social elements influence not only the likelihood of adopting certain practices, but also the meanings activists assign to them through reflexive justification. On one hand, individuals with more moderate political orientations and lower levels of activist involvement tend to frame their ecological practices in strategic terms, as actions aimed at achieving specific outcomes. Their practices are often limited to relatively accessible forms of engagement that do not require a deep transformation of lifestyle. On the other hand, activists with greater experience and more radical political outlooks tend to interpret their ecological practices as a form of personal transformation—a continuous effort to align actions with personal values. For this group, everyday ecology entails a meaningful reconfiguration of daily life, often aimed at withdrawing from consumerist logics. In their view, ecological practices serve both to reinforce ecological consciousness and to cultivate a sense of preparedness for an anticipated post-crisis future. In a context marked by deep ambivalence—between ecological urgency, rejection of individualization, and the desire for subjective coherence—the field of environmentalism offers fertile ground for understanding how political subjectivities are shaped through everyday life.

The implications of these exploratory findings for social movement studies concern the interrelations between collective action and individual practice. The fact that particularly radical activists, who are deeply engaged in collective action, also integrate ecological practices into their daily lives opens the way for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between individual conduct and collective mobilization. Rather than being treated as separate or mutually exclusive, these two spheres should be seen as deeply interconnected dimensions of political engagement. Moreover, the findings support

the idea that political radicalism and activist experience are not only drivers of biographical transformation (Downton and Wehr 1997; Fillieule et al. 2018; McAdam 1988), but also foster what Melucci (1989, 71) refers to as the “molecular experience of individuals [...] who practice the alternative meanings of everyday life.” Such everyday practices can help sustain political consciousness and prepare the ground for mobilization, even during phases of latency. Through these daily choices, activists maintain a continuous attentiveness to political alternatives, thereby nurturing the potential for future collective action.

Additional implications concern the sphere of critical consumption. Although this analysis was conducted within a relatively narrow social segment, it nonetheless offers insights that may be relevant—and potentially extended through further research—to other social groups. Importantly, adopting certain critical consumption practices does not necessarily entail a comprehensive transformation of one’s daily routines. Even in a context marked by high ecological awareness, the uptake of some practices remains limited and shaped by specific social factors. Primary socialization—and especially gender socialization—emerges as a particularly powerful driver of critical consumption: even within a politicized, progressive, ecological, and egalitarian context, gendered distinctions in practice adoption are strikingly evident. Investigating more deeply the reasons behind this persistence—and, conversely, the lower prevalence of such practices among men—represents a promising direction for future research on critical consumption. Moreover, promoting narratives that emphasize individual responsibility does not necessarily lead to a broader diffusion of ecological or critical consumption behaviors. In fact, the most transformative practices appear to be more strongly associated with attitudinal factors such as political radicalism and a desire for systemic change. Traditional narratives of individual responsabilization and sustainable lifestyle norms may not resonate uniformly across social groups and may be rejected especially by those who align more with the ecological norm. This apparent paradox calls for further investigation into the ways in which different actors respond to dominant ecological narratives—and into the conditions under which critical practices are embraced by individuals.

Finally, for critical sociologists, the analysis of reflexivity offers a valuable lens through which to observe social dispositions in action. To date, empirical studies adopting the justification framework have rarely combined it with an analysis of social dispositions or structural determinants. This may reflect a broader epistemological divide: on one side, sociology of dispositions, which emphasizes how social structures shape practices; on the other, the sociology of justification, which focuses on how individuals interpret and justify their actions, often independent of their social backgrounds. My aim was not to propose a “third way” between these traditions, nor to reduce reflexivity to a rhetorical

exercise. Rather, in line with the principles of critical sociology, I argue that individuals' reflections on their actions must be understood as shaped by the material and symbolic conditions in which those actions are embedded. Reflexivity does not arise in a social vacuum, nor can it be fully explained through rational or motivational reasoning alone—it is also the expression of internalized social dispositions and worldviews shaped by lived experience.

This exploratory effort inevitably involved some degree of epistemological tension. Nonetheless, by drawing together the sociology of dispositions and the sociology of justification, this research aimed not only to identify *who does what*, but to reconstruct the social and symbolic contexts within which ecological action takes shape, acquires meaning, and becomes subject to debate, justification, or critique. Without claiming to resolve the tensions inherent in combining these approaches, this thesis offers analytical tools to reflect on how social dispositions inform individual reflexivity; how justificatory frameworks sustain ecological practices; and, more broadly, how collective participation can influence both everyday conduct and the meanings individuals attach to their actions. In doing so, it lays the groundwork for future research into the ways reflexivity is shaped by structural social factors and the dispositions acquired over the course of individual biographies. Before concluding, it is important to acknowledge the limitations and challenges encountered during the research process—an exercise that will also serve to introduce some possible directions for further investigation.

4. Limitations: Theoretical, Methodological, and Analytical Considerations

Every research project inevitably entails certain limitations, which may be theoretical, methodological, or analytical in nature. This thesis—an experience I primarily lived as a formative journey into the practice of research—is no exception. The development of the research object, the formulation of research questions, and the selection of theoretical and analytical tools unfolded progressively, adapting to discoveries, constraints, and emerging insights over time. Throughout the course of the study, some initially central concepts were set aside, while others—such as the theme of justification—gradually assumed a more prominent role. This shift was not anticipated in the original research design but emerged inductively during the analysis of interview data, where activists' reflective references to their everyday practices proved analytically relevant. As a result of this evolution, certain choices were made: for instance, I opted to devote greater attention to the qualitative analysis of justifications, rather than to the initially prioritized quantitative focus on the social characteristics of ecological practices, as the former appeared to offer more innovative and insightful interpretative angles. The approach adopted in this research was predominantly exploratory

and inductive, reflecting the limited availability of empirical studies on this topic. The codebook was constructed by drawing both on the existing literature and on themes that emerged directly from the data. From a methodological standpoint, the use of Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) on a recoded dataset derived from 51 interviews entails certain constraints. While MCA proved valuable for jointly mapping a range of variables and actors within a relational space, it remains a technique sensitive to coding practices and the selection of active variables. The relatively limited number of interviews calls for caution in interpreting the results. Nevertheless, the analysis yielded a strong degree of internal coherence and a high interpretability of the main axes—indicating that the results correspond to meaningful social structures within the sample. Still, further validation—potentially through alternative methods—remains a necessary step for future research.

The quantitative component of this research also presents certain limitations, primarily related to two areas: the methodology of data collection and the design of the questionnaire. Regarding the former, the protest survey—which I had previously experienced as an interviewer within the *Quantité Critique* collective—proved to be an effective technique for reaching heterogeneous segments of the protesting population. However, like all survey-based methods, it is subject to potential biases (in sample selection, administration, and respondents' interpretation of questions), which I have attempted to account for with due caution in the analysis. I nonetheless chose to retain this method, as it enabled me to gather specific data on variables often overlooked in the literature, and to do so in two different national contexts. The second limitation concerns the questionnaire itself, which was designed at a relatively early stage of my doctoral journey. The first climate demonstrations included in the study took place in September 2021, at a time when my research questions had not yet fully crystallized and my familiarity with the relevant literature was still developing. Thanks to the guidance of my supervisors, I was able to construct a robust questionnaire; nevertheless, some dimensions that later proved central—most notably the analysis of justifications—were not yet incorporated. Finally, my quantitative training evolved in parallel with the data analysis process: I learned tools, methods, and analytical logics while working directly with the data and in the field. Although I approached the analysis with considerable care, I cannot rule out the possibility of errors or inaccuracies. Despite these limitations, I regard the work carried out as a solid foundation for future developments. Some findings corroborate existing literature, while others open up less-explored avenues that merit further investigation. The next section will outline several potential directions for future research and the questions that remain open.

5. Open Questions and Future Research Trajectories

As anticipated, this research journey has led me to formulate a series of questions concerning the role of ecological practices within the climate movement. While I have sought to address some of these issues, many others remain unresolved. In what follows, I aim to outline potential avenues for future investigation that emerged from this study and that may serve as starting points for further empirical and theoretical exploration. A first open question concerns what happens to activists' everyday ecological practices in the long run, especially as the protest cycle decreases. Social movement studies have extensively examined macro-structural dynamics in the aftermath of protest waves (Koopmans 1993; Porta and Tarrow 1986; Tarrow 1993). Among these contributions, Melucci's work is particularly valuable in helping us understand what occurs to micro-dynamics when mobilization enters a phase of latency—potentially paving the way for future cycles of activism (Melucci 1996). Biographical studies have further shown how participation in movements can have lasting effects on individuals' life trajectories—shaping personal, family, and professional choices (Downton and Wehr 1997; Fillieule et al. 2018; McAdam 1988). However, the long-term effects of activism on micro-level daily practices—as opposed to broader life choices—remain comparatively underexplored. This research has offered some preliminary insight into this area, but data collection took place during a phase of relative collective engagement. A longitudinal perspective would be necessary to assess whether the radical habitus identified in this study persists, fades, or evolves over time.

A second line of inquiry involves the situated and relational dynamics of ecological practices. In the interviews, several respondents described moments of tension and negotiation in everyday settings: for instance, how a family lunch becomes a site of conflict around dietary choices, how holiday destinations raise ethical dilemmas within a couple, or how organizing a post-meeting dinner in an environmentalist group can lead to unexpected outcomes. Having an ecologically engaged partner may heighten one's own commitment—or conversely, induce a sense of relaxed vigilance. While these episodes were not the main focus of the thesis, they hint at the richness of everyday moral negotiations around ecological choices. It is important to note, however, that interviews can only capture the respondent's perspective, and not the voices of all actors involved in those interactions. Participant observation—used for instance in studies exploring ecological practices collective spaces (Madon 2022; Posmek 2023)—could thus offer valuable complementary insights. Future research could explore questions such as: In what moments do ecological considerations yield to other priorities? What forms of reflection arise in everyday confrontations over environmental choices? How does social pressure shape individual decision-making?

A further direction involves extending the analysis of everyday practices and their justifications to other movements. Feminist scholarship, in particular, has produced a substantial body of work on individual practices, which I could only engage with partially in this thesis (Wade 2011; Walter 1990). Similarly, the field of migrant solidarity and refugee support activism (Monforte, Maestri, and d'Halluin 2021) offers promising ground for applying a similar analytical lens. In both cases, exploring the interplay between dispositions and justifications may yield new insights into processes of micro-activation and moral engagement in different social contexts.

Finally, this study reinforces an emerging line of inquiry into the relationship between the concepts of justification and disposition, as previously discussed in the concluding remarks. Studies that attempt to connect practice, dispositions, and justifications remain challenging, partly due to the epistemological divergences that underpin the traditions from which these concepts emerge. Overcoming these obstacles is not straightforward: it requires theoretical and analytical tools capable of holding together structure and reflexivity. Nonetheless, encouraging a dialogue between these two sociological perspectives may contribute to a better understanding of contemporary social practices. Future research that addresses the interaction between structural dispositions and reflexive justifications could help clarify how individuals interpret and navigate the tensions between social norms, values, and everyday conduct.

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Appendices

Appendix A (Chapter 3)

Questionnaire

(Simplified and shortened version; only variables used in Chapter 4 of the thesis are included. Other variables included in the original questionnaire but not used in the thesis are not shown.)

What is your employment situation?

1. Lower secondary school student
2. High school student
3. University student
4. Unemployed
5. Employed
6. Retiree
7. Other

Are you...?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Non-binary

What is your age (please indicate the number of years: 18, 19, 20 etc)

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1. Elementary School Certificate
2. Middle School Certificate
3. High School Diploma
4. Bachelor's Degree
5. Master's Degree
6. PhD
7. other

What is your father's occupation?

What is your mother's occupation?

Which social class would you say you belong to?

1. Upper class
2. Upper middle class
3. Lower-middle class
4. Working class
5. Popular class
6. None
7. Don't know

Are there times during the month when you face real financial difficulties?

1. no
2. yes, sometimes

3. yes, every month
4. I prefer not to answer

Do you receive a scholarship?

1. No
2. Yes

Do you do any paid work in addition to your studies?

1. No
2. Yes

What is your profession?

Do you have....

1. Permanent contract
2. Fixed-term contract
3. Internship contract
4. Self-employed
5. other

Do you consider yourself as belonging to a particular religion or religious denomination?

- 0.no
- 1.yes

If yes, which one?

1. catholic
2. protestant
3. jewish
4. Islamic
5. Buddhist
6. Other
7. I prefer not to answer

Which of the following terms would you use to describe the place where you grew up?

1. A big city
2. The suburbs of a big city
3. A small town
4. A village
5. A farm or country house
6. Other

In politics, people sometimes speak in terms of 'left' and 'right'. Where would you place yourself?

1. Radical left
2. Left
3. Centre
4. Right
5. Far-right
6. Neither left nor right
7. I prefer not to answer

Where would you place your father?

1. Radical left
2. Left
3. Centre
4. Right
5. Far-right
6. Neither left nor right
7. I prefer not to answer

Where would you place your mother?

1. Radical left
2. Left
3. Centre
4. Right
5. Far-right
6. Neither left nor right
7. I prefer not to answer

Had you ever taken part in a climate strike or march before this one?

1. Never
2. Once
3. More than 1
4. More than 5

Have you ever taken part in demonstrations for reasons other than climate?

0. no
1. yes

What cause have you protested for?

1. women's rights
2. labor rights / trade union strikes
3. animal rights
4. education
5. LGBTQ+ rights
6. migrants' rights
7. peace
8. Against COVID-related measures

0.no

1.yes

Are you involved in one or more associations?

1. Student collective / student union
2. Trade union
3. Political party / youth wing of a political party
4. Women's rights organization
5. Cultural association
6. Environmental / ecological / animal rights organization
7. Migrant or anti-racist organization
8. Church or religious organization

9. I am not a member of any organization

0.no

1.yes

There are many things people can do to prevent or promote change. Have you, in the past 12 months...

1. Contacted a local or national politician?
2. Signed a petition or an open letter?
3. Donated money to a political group or organization?
4. Boycotted certain brands, products, or companies?
5. Taken part in a direct action (blockade, occupation, civil disobedience)?
6. Confronted the police?
7. Used violent forms of action (against property or people)?
8. Reduced your overall consumption of products?
9. Limited your household energy use?
10. Bought second-hand goods (such as clothes, bikes, mobile phones, etc.)?
11. Changed your diet?
12. Given up a flight for environmental reasons?

1. Yes

2. No, but I could do it

3. No and I'll never do it

How many times a week do you eat meat?

1. Vegan

2. Vegetarian

3. Once per week

4. Between 2 and 4 times

5. More than 4 per week

6. All days

Are you a member of an AMAP/GAS

0. No

1. yes

How often do you engage in the following environmentally friendly behaviors?

1. Buying seasonal fruits and vegetables
2. Buying products without packaging
3. Adopting methods to avoid food waste
4. Limiting the use of heating/air conditioning
5. Creatively reusing products instead of throwing them away
6. Giving up the use of a car

1. Never

2. Rarely

3. Often

4. Always
5. Not applicable in my case

Have you ever engaged in DIY (do-it-yourself) production of...

1. Food products (fruits and vegetables, urban gardening, etc.)
2. Cosmetics (soap, toothpaste, creams, etc.)
3. Clothing

0. no
1. yes

Thinking about climate change/global warming makes you feel...

1. Angry
2. Hopeful
3. Anxious
4. Afraid
5. Powerless

1. not at all
2. not very
3. quite
4. very much

For each of the following statements, please indicate whether you 'Strongly disagree', 'Somewhat disagree', 'Somewhat agree', or 'Strongly agree'.

1. To solve the climate crisis it is necessary to exit capitalism
 2. It would be acceptable to introduce a birth control policy to get out of the climate crisis
 3. Stopping climate change must primarily be accomplished through voluntarily lifestyle change
 4. Demonstrating without changing one's lifestyle is useless
 5. Environmental problems have reduced my confidence in the future
 6. There is still time to get out of the climate crisis
 7. Technological innovation will solve the climate crisis
1. strongly disagree
 2. somewhat disagree
 3. somewhat agree
 4. strongly agree

How much trust do you generally have in the following institutions?

1. The Italian/French government
2. The Italian/French parliament
3. The European Union
4. The United Nations
5. The police
6. Businesses and the market
7. Environmental groups

1. not at all
2. not very

3. quite
4. very much

Appendix B (Chapter 3)

Interview grid

Dimension	Indicator	Question
Participation/Socialization	Social networks	First of all, I ask you to make the effort to remember the demonstration of Do you remember if you were alone or with someone?
	Participation in previous protests	Was that your first climate protest or had you already participated in other climate demonstrations in the past? Have you ever done other actions, such as acts of civil disobedience?
	Membership in organizations / activist journey	Are you or have you been part of any organization (environmentalist or otherwise)? Can you tell me in general about your activist journey?
Individual practices and justifications	Types of ecological practices	Now I would like to ask you to focus on your daily life. Regarding your behaviors, what are the ecological practices you carry out most frequently?
	– Food	Regarding food, have you changed your diet for environmental reasons? Probe: What have you stopped consuming or consume differently? [Meat, cheese, imported goods, out-of-season fruit and vegetables, packaged products?]
	– Transport/travel	When you travel, are there any means of transport you avoid? How has your way of traveling changed? [Plane, ship]
	– Purchases/anti-consumption	Regarding purchases, do you do anything to reduce them? [Upcycling objects, actions to reduce food waste]
	– Boycott	Are there any brands you boycott? Probe: For what reason?
	– Self-production	Regarding self-production, is there anything you produce yourself? [Vegetables, cosmetics, clothes, objects]
	Meaning of practices	Summing all this up, why do you adopt these practices? Probe: Do you believe in their effectiveness?

Meaning/role adopting practices	of	If these practices are not effective, why do you adopt them anyway? Probe: Do you think adopting these practices helps you in a specific way? How?
Ethics related adopting practices	to	How do you feel when you adopt practices that reduce your environmental impact? Probe: How do you feel instead when you're unable to adopt a specific ecological practice?
Effort		Do these practices tire you?
Activist identity vs. daily ecologist	vs.	Do you feel more satisfied with yourself when you take part in a demonstration or when you make an ecological choice in your daily life?
Relationship between practices and collective action	and	Do you think that participating in the movement also influences your daily practices?
Domesticity		Do you think you adopt more or different practices compared to your family members? Compared to whom specifically?
Gender		In your opinion, as a man or a woman, do you think you adopt different or more practices than your friends or family members of the opposite sex?
Relationship between practices and friends/family	and	Do you ever talk to someone about these practices? For example, discussions about meat or air travel with your friends or family?
Climate crisis, modernization, representations and politics	Motivation	Now let's leave aside the topic of ecological practices and focus on your vision of ecology.
Victims of the crisis (diagnostic)		What is the main motivation that drives you to act on climate issues? Probe: Why? What or who do you think are the main victims of the climate crisis?
Responsible for the crisis (diagnostic)		Who or what do you think is the main cause of the climate crisis?
Techno vs political ecology (prognostic)		Among all the possible solutions, which one would you choose?
Temporality		Thinking about the consequences of the climate crisis, do you believe it is unstoppable or that there is still time to resolve it?
Preparation		Do you feel that you yourself will suffer the consequences of the crisis? [If yes] Are you doing anything to be prepared? [Choices about housing, children, work]

Personal background	Emotions	What emotions do you feel when thinking about the climate crisis? [Fear, anger, hope] Do these emotions activate or block you?
	Energy and technology	Do you think technological development could be a solution to the climate crisis? Probe: What do you think about nuclear energy?
	Capitalism / revolution-reform	What do you think about capitalism? Do you believe that solving the crisis requires a radical transformation of society or just reforming certain aspects?
	Political orientation	How would you define yourself politically?
	State vs. autonomy	Do you think the solution should come from the bottom up, from communities, or be implemented from the top down, by the state?
	Age	Can you tell me how old you are?
	Type of education/occupation	Are you a student or a worker? What is your field of study or employment?
	Parents' occupation	What do your parents do for a living?
	Environmentally aware parents	Do you talk about climate issues with your parents?
	City of origin / current city	Where did you grow up? Where do you currently live?

Appendix C (Chapter 3)

List of interviews

Interview	Pseudonym	Protest	Age	Gender	Length.	Date
I.1	Manuela	Milan climate justice march	30	W	1h32	08/04/2022
I.2	Susanna	Milan climate strike	25	W	1h01	11/04/2022
I.3	Giada	Florence climate strike	26	W	1h09	13/04/2022
I.4	Luca	Milan climate justice march	19	M	1h31	21/04/2022
I.5	Bianca	Florence climate strike	21	W	1h29	28/04/2022

I.6	Valentina	Milan climate justice march	24	W	1h44	28/04/2022
I.7	Vania	Milan climate strike	55	W	1h33	29/04/2022
I.8	Giacomo	Milan climate justice march	59	M	1h43	13/05/2022
I.9	Teo	Milan climate strike	21	M	1h51	24/06/2022
I.10	Samuele	Rome Anti-G20	24	M	3h26	31/07/2022
I.11	Benedetta	Rome Anti-G20	27	W	2h55	31/08/2022
I.12	Edoardo	Florence climate strike	23	M	1h40	01/09/2022
I.13	Alessio	Florence climate strike	30	M	1h02	15/09/2022
I.14	Viviana	Naples climate strike	27	W	1h25	19/11/2022
I.15	Carla	Milan climate strike	22	W	1h06	03/12/2022
I.16	Riccardo	Naples climate strike	41	M	1h53	06/12/2022
I.17	Federico	Florence climate strike	18	M	1h13	06/12/2022
I.18	Fabio	Milan climate strike	19	M	1h33	08/12/2022
I.19	Armando	Florence climate strike	56	M	1h26	09/12/2022
I.20	Costanza	Rome Anti-G20	26	W	1h37	13/12/2022
I.21	Greta	Rome Anti-G20	27	W	2h23	14/12/2022
I.22	Milena	Climate Camp	58	W	1h55	19/12/2022
I.23	Eike	Naples climate strike	20	M	1h18	19/12/2022
I.24	Enrico	Milan climate strike	41	M	1h18	21/12/2022
I.25	Stella	Milan climate justice march	38	W	1h01	22/12/2022
I.26	Elisabetta	Milan climate justice march	25	W	1h06	28/01/2023
I.27	Veronica	Rome Anti-G20	32	W	1h16	27/02/2023

I.28	Marcel	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	65	M	1h05	22/02/2023
I.29	Louise	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	55	W	2h02	23/02/2023
I.30	Emile	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	22	M	1h18	02/03/2023
I.31	Élianne	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	48?	W	0h52	02/03/2023
I.32	Laura	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	24	W	1h09	05/03/2023
I.33	André	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	26	M	0h45	06/03/2023
I.34	Justine	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	50	W	1h23	09/03/2023
I.35	Amelie	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	30?	W	1h17	20/03/2023
I.36	Isabelle	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	64	W	1h18	18/04/2023
I.37	Giselle	Marche Look Up 12 Mars 2022	66	W	1h32	28/04/2023
I.38	Ferdinand	Academie du climat	43	M	0h54	02/05/2023
I.39	Lydia	Academie du climat	22	W	0h39	05/05/2023
I.40	Lars	Academie du climat	23	M	1h39	22/06/2023
I.41	Fabian	Greve 25 sept.	25	M	1h08	24/07/2023
I.42	Jordan	Greve 25 sept.	27	M	0h59	28/07/2023
I.43	Violette	Greve 25 sept.	49	W	1h35	07/08/2023
I.44	Nina	Grève 3 mars 2023 Nantes	22	W	1h19	09/10/2023
I.45	Aymeric	Grève 3 mars 2023 Nantes	52	M	1h01	11/10/2023

I.46	Léonie	Marche 4 mars 2023 Bordeaux	30	W	0h53	26/10/2023
I.47	Ettore	Marche 4 mars 2023 Bordeaux	22	M	1h06	28/10/2023
I.48	Chloé	Marche 4 mars 2023 Bordeaux	22	W	0h56	31/10/2023
I.49	Maeva	Marche 4 mars 2023 Bordeaux	22	W	1h01	01/11/2023
I.50	Bernard	Marche 4 mars 2023 Bordeaux	68	M	0h35	07/11/2023
I.51	Sophie	Grève 3 mars 2023 Nantes	52	W	1h29	13/11/2023

Appendix D (Chapter 3)

Coding framework

1. Activist experience

1.1 adopted repertoires

- 1.1.1 climate protests participation
- 1.1.2 other protests participation
- 1.1.3 climate meetings/assemblies
- 1.1.4 civil disobedience
- 1.1.5 symbolic actions
- 1.1.6 external support to civil disobedience
- 1.1.7 seminars
- 1.1.8 cleaning
- 1.1.9 fundraising
- 1.1.10 online actions
- 1.1.11 petitions

1.3 activist history

- 1.3.1 teenage years
- 1.3.2 young adulthood/university
- 1.3.3 adulthood

1.4 membership

- 1.4.1 active membership
- 1.4.2 paying subscription only
- 1.4.3 proximity without affiliation

- 1.4.4 past membership
 - 1.4.5 no affiliation
 - 1.5 participating with someone
 - 1.5.1 friends
 - 1.5.2 members of org
 - 1.5.3 partner
 - 1.5.4 schoolmates
 - 1.5.5 family members
 - 1.5.6 alone
 - 1.6 climate activism centrality
 - 1.6.1 high
 - 1.6.2 moderate
 - 1.6.3 low
 - 1.7 activist identity
 - 1.7.1 not considering as a climate activist
 - 1.7.2 occasional climate activist
 - 1.7.3 part of the climate movement
 - 1.7.4 militant outside the climate mov
 - 1.7.5 occasional militant outside the climate
 - 1.8 participation in other movements
 - 1.8.1 student movement
 - 1.8.2 catalan movement
 - 1.8.3 peace movement
 - 1.8.4 commons
 - 1.8.5 antagonist movement
 - 1.8.6 labour movement
 - 1.8.7 anti-police movement
 - 1.9 climate awareness
 - 1.9.1 school
 - 1.9.2 Greta Thunberg
 - 1.9.3 extreme event
 - 1.9.4 relatives/friends
 - 1.9.5 demonstrations
 - 1.9.6 online/readings
 - 1.9.7 film/book
 - 1.9.8 sustainable consumption
 - 1.9.9 Nicolas Hulot

2. Eco Practices

- 2.1 recycling
 - 2.1.1 compost
- 2.2 plastic reduction
- 2.3 water saving
- 2.4 energy saving

- 2.5 meat reduction
 - 2.5.1 veganism
 - 2.5.2 vegetarianism
 - 2.5.3 flexitarianism
 - 2.5.4 eat meat only at family dinners
- 2.6 local products
- 2.7 bulk products
- 2.8 bio
- 2.9 flight
 - 2.9.1 flight renounce
 - 2.9.2 flight limitation
- 2.10 car
 - 2.10.1 car renounce
 - 2.10.2 car limitation
 - 2.10.3 electric car
- 2.11 purchase reduction
- 2.12 second hand
- 2.13 self-production
- 2.14 boycotting
- 2.15 objects
 - 2.15.1 making things last
 - 2.15.2 repairing
 - 2.15.3 anti-waste
- 2.16 zero waste
- 2.17 donating/bartering
- 2.18 GAS/AMAP
- 2.19 bank account
- 3. Anti eco practices
 - 3.1 recycling
 - 3.2 plastic reduction
 - 3.3 water saving
 - 3.4 energy saving
 - 3.5 meat consumption
 - 3.5.1 meat consumption (only white meat)
 - 3.5.2 fish consumption only
 - 3.5.3 meat consumption (but reduced)
 - 3.6 non-local products
 - 3.7 bulk products
 - 3.8 bio
 - 3.9 flight use
 - 3.10 car use
 - 3.10.1 car use
 - 3.10.2 car limitation
 - 3.11 no purchase reduction

- 3.12 buying new things
- 3.13 do not self-production
- 3.14 do not boycott
- 3.15 objects
 - 3.15.1 making things last (no)
 - 3.15.2 repairing (no)
- 3.16 zero waste
- 4. Justifications
 - 4.1 emphasising
 - 4.2 efficacy
 - 4.2.1 market impact
 - 4.2.2 institution impact
 - 4.2.3 general efficacy
 - 4.3 responsibility
 - 4.3.1 I feel responsible
 - 4.3.2 everyone is responsible
 - 4.4 feeling good
 - 4.4.1 deactivating anxiety
 - 4.4.2 adventure/discovery
 - 4.4.3 feeling good
 - 4.4.4 satisfaction
 - 4.5 guilt
 - 4.5.1 past guilt
 - 4.5.2 current guilt
 - 4.5.3 guilt for not doing enough
 - 4.5.4 de-culpability
 - 4.5.5 non-complicity
 - 4.5.6 anticipated guilt
 - 4.7 exemplarity
 - 4.7.1 talking
 - 4.7.2 leading by example
 - 4.8 alignment
 - 4.8.1 coherence
 - 4.8.2 principle
 - 4.8.3 overcoming dissonance
 - 4.8.4 legitimacy/peer pressure
 - 4.9 rightness
 - 4.9.1 because it is right
 - 4.9.2 because it is a duty
 - 4.9.3 because it is ethical/moral
 - 4.9.4 because it would be illegal
 - 4.10 preparation
 - 4.10.1 training

- 4.10.2 elasticity
 - 4.10.3 surviving
 - 4.12 integrated motivation
 - 4.13 capacity
 - 4.11 control
 - 4.14 justification based on context
 - 4.15 health reasons
 - 4.16 economic benefit
 - 4.17 perfectionism
 - 4.18 anti-speciesism
- 5. Anti-Justifications
 - 5.1 de-emphasising
 - 5.2 lack of efficacy
 - 5.2.1 no market impact
 - 5.2.2 no institution impact
 - 5.2.3 general lack of efficacy
 - 5.3 responsibility
 - 5.3.2 against individual responsibility
 - 5.4 no feeling
 - 5.5 guilt removal
 - 5.7 against exemplarity
 - 5.8 alignment
 - 5.8.1 no coherence
 - 5.8.2 principle
 - 5.8.3 overcoming dissonance
 - 5.8.4 legitimacy
 - 5.9 against ethicism/rightness
 - 5.10 no preparation
 - 5.11 lack of control
 - 5.12 lack of strategic belief
 - 5.13 lack of capacity belief
 - 5.14 lack of effort
 - 5.15 difficulties
 - 5.15.1 economic difficulties
 - 5.15.2 time limits
 - 5.15.3 infrastructural limits
 - 5.15.4 health reasons
 - 5.16 contradictions of eco-practices
 - 5.17 against perfectionism
 - 5.18 no anti-speciesism
 - 5.19 lack of information
- 6. Social circles and eco-practices
 - 6.1 friends
 - 6.2 parents/family

- 6.3 siblings
- 6.4 partner
- 6.5 grandparents
- 6.6 children

7. Frames

7.1 diagnostic frames

7.1.1 victims

- 7.1.1.1 intersectional victims
- 7.1.1.2 non-human victims
- 7.1.1.3 conservationism
- 7.1.1.4 poor/subalterns/proletarians
- 7.1.1.5 global south
- 7.1.1.6 youth
- 7.1.1.7 people
- 7.1.1.8 elderly people
- 7.1.1.9 women

7.1.2 responsables

- 7.1.2.1 political institutions
- 7.1.2.2 capitalism
- 7.1.2.3 companies
- 7.1.2.4 human beings
- 7.1.2.5 billionaires/rich
- 7.1.2.6 western countries
- 7.1.2.7 old generations
- 7.1.2.8 overpopulation
- 7.1.2.9 industry and intensive
agroculture
- 7.1.2.10 western people
- 7.1.2.11 infinite growth

7.2 prognostic frames

- 7.2.1 government action
- 7.2.2 system change
- 7.2.3 companies action
- 7.2.4 transnational governance
- 7.2.5 encouraging protest
- 7.2.6 strenghtening democracy
- 7.2.7 disenchanting solutions
- 7.2.8 renunciations/limitations
- 7.2.9 invest in renewables
- 7.2.10 invest in education/research
- 7.2.11 citizen assemblies
- 7.2.12 increase control
- 7.2.13 invest in sustainable infrastructures
- 7.2.14 decrease working hours

- 7.2.16 birth control
 - 7.2.15 sustainable consumption
 - 7.2.17 socialism
 - 7.2.18 redistribute wealth
 - 7.2.19 to ban car
- 7.3 motivational frames
 - 7.3.1 urgency
 - 7.3.2 rightness
 - 7.3.3 people suffering
 - 7.3.4 generational injustice
 - 7.3.5 being on right side
 - 7.3.6 care
 - 7.3.7 duty
 - 7.3.8 guilt
 - 7.3.9 planet dignity
 - 7.3.10 doing something for others
 - 7.3.11 to support the Global south
 - 7.3.12 to overcome the State
- 7.4 temporality of the crisis
 - 7.4.1 5/10 years
 - 7.4.2 20/30 years
 - 7.4.3 50 years
 - 7.4.4 100 years
 - 7.4.5 still on time to stop
 - 7.4.6 still on time to reduce damages
 - 7.4.7 no longer in time
- 7.5 repertoires efficacy
 - 7.5.1 march efficacy
 - 7.5.2 civil disobedience
 - 7.5.3 violent actions
- 7.6 impact of the crisis on oneself
 - 7.6.1 strong
 - 7.6.2 moderate
 - 7.6.2 weak
- 7.7 collapse
 - 7.7.1 gradual collapse
 - 7.7.2 immediate collapse
 - 7.7.3 don't know
- 8. Politics
 - 8.1 capitalism
 - 8.1.1 pro-capitalism
 - 8.1.2 anti-capitalism
 - 8.1.3 ambivalent
 - 8.2 revolution/reform

- 8.2.1 reform
 - 8.2.2 revolution
 - 8.3 topdown/bottomup
 - 8.3.1 top down
 - 8.3.2 bottom up
 - 8.4 self-positioning
- 9. Adaptation
 - 9.1 place
 - 9.2 job
 - 9.3 children
 - 9.5 consumption-production
 - 9.6 no adaptation
 - 9.7 limitations
 - 9.8 physical resistance
 - 9.9 helping others
- 10. emotions
 - 10.1 anxiety
 - 10.2 fear
 - 10.3 melancholy
 - 10.4 hate/ anger
 - 10.5 resignation/hopeless/sadness
 - 10.6 hope
 - 10.7 sorrow
 - 10.8 frustration
 - 10.9 uncertainty
- 11. Socio-demo
 - 11.1 occupation
 - 11.2 age
 - 11.3 education
 - 11.4 birth place
 - 11.5 father occupation
 - 11.6 mother occupation
 - 11.7 father politics
 - 11.8 mother politics
 - 11.9 religion

Appendix E (Chapter 4)

Table A1. Comparison of the adoption of everyday ecological practices between Italian and French national representative samples and the samples of protesters interviewed in the two countries.

	Italian protest sample	French protest sample	Italian national sample		French national sample	
Boycotted a brand, product, company (already done)	63%	82%	Boycotted a product or brand due to its impact on climate change (yes)	31% (1)	Boycotted a product or brand due to its impact on climate change (yes)	43% (1)
Reduced purchase of products (already done)	86%	51%	Avoiding buying products made in distant countries (systematically or almost systematically)	34% (1)	Avoiding buying products made in distant countries (systematically or almost systematically) Consumed less (already done)	28% (9) 53% (10)
Bought second-hand goods (already done)	78%	81%	Purchased a second-hand product in the last three years	45% (2)	Avoiding buying new goods in favor of repairing or buying second-hand (Yes)	19% (11)
			Bought and/or sold second-hand items	57% (3)	Bought second-hand clothes rather than new (already done) Buying second-hand good rather than new (systematically or almost systematically)	30% (10) 23% (9)
Changed your diet (already done)	68%	75%	Changed diet for environmental reasons	48% (4)	Adjusted your diet (Yes)	25% (11)
Given up a flight (already done)	30%	53%			Given up a flight for leisure (Already done) Avoiding taking planes whenever possible (systematically or almost systematically)	47% (10) 36% (9)
Meat Consumption per week (Vegan + Vegetarian + Once a week or less)	61%	65%	Limiting your meat consumption (systematically or almost systematically)	29% (1)	Limited meat consumption in my household (Already done) Limiting your meat consumption (systematically or almost systematically)	51% (10) 29% (9)
Vegan	9%	5%	Are you a vegetarian? (I am vegan)	2% (6)	I do not eat any animal products	0.3% (12)
Vegetarian	20%	27%	Are you a vegetarian? (yes)	7% (6)	I eat no meat, fish or seafood	0.8% (12)
Once a week or less	31%	31%	I sometimes eat meat, but I am trying to reduce my meat consumption	23% (5)	I eat meat once a week or less	5% (12)
Are you a member of an alternative food network? (yes)	13%	13%	Shopping through a solidarity purchasing group	12.3% (7)		
Note: (1) Enquête Obs'COP. Ipsos, 2020. (2) Indagine Legacoop-Ipsos sulle scelte dei consumatori, 2023. (3) Osservatorio Second Hand Economy di BVA Doxa, 2022. (5) Smart Protein report 'What Consumers Want', 2021. (6) Eurispes 36° Rapporto Italia, 2024. (7) Osservatorio per la coesione e l'inclusione sociale (Ocis), 2018. (8) Studio OpinionWay-Smartway: Gli italiani e lo spreco alimentare, 2022. (9) Enquête Obs'COP. Ipsos, 2023 (10) Enquête ADEME « Les représentations sociales du changement climatique ». OpinionWay, 2022.						

- (11) Enquête INJEP « Agir pour l'environnement : comportements et aspirations des 18-30 ans »
- (12) FranceAgriMer. Ipsos, 2020.
- (13) Étude OpinionWay-Smartway : Les Français et le gaspillage alimentaire, 2022.

Table A2. Mean Adoption Rates and Differences in Ecological Practices Across EEP Adoption Categories. N=1256.

EEP	Mean (Whole Sample)	Mean (EEPs 0-6)	Mean (EEPs 7-8)	Mean (EEPs 9-11)	Mean (EEPs 12+)	Difference (EEP 0-6 vs. 7-8)	Difference (EEP 7-8 vs. 9-11)	Difference (EEP 9-11 vs. 12+)
Fruit	0.94	0.85	0.90	0.97	1.00	-0.05	-0.07	-0.03
Anti-waste	0.92	0.73	0.88	0.97	0.99	-0.15	-0.09	-0.02
Heating	0.84	0.63	0.80	0.88	0.96	-0.17	-0.08	-0.08
Second hand	0.79	0.38	0.71	0.88	0.96	-0.33	-0.17	-0.08
Reduced purchase	0.76	0.38	0.66	0.84	0.94	-0.28	-0.18	-0.10
Unpackaged	0.72	0.34	0.60	0.83	0.96	-0.26	-0.23	-0.13
Boycott	0.68	0.35	0.58	0.80	0.92	-0.23	-0.22	-0.12
Diet	0.68	0.24	0.52	0.77	0.98	-0.28	-0.25	-0.21
Car	0.68	0.40	0.56	0.73	0.88	-0.16	-0.17	-0.15
Upcycling	0.55	0.15	0.41	0.59	0.85	-0.26	-0.18	-0.26
Self-prod vegetables	0.53	0.26	0.38	0.55	0.81	-0.12	-0.17	-0.26
Flight	0.37	0.11	0.23	0.37	0.67	-0.12	-0.14	-0.30
Meat	0.32	0.06	0.13	0.30	0.68	-0.07	-0.17	-0.38
Self-prod cosmetics	0.25	0.05	0.08	0.23	0.57	-0.03	-0.15	-0.34
Self-prod clothes	0.24	0.05	0.13	0.24	0.46	-0.08	-0.11	-0.22
Alternative food network	0.13	0.04	0.05	0.12	0.26	-0.01	-0.07	-0.14

Table A2 reports the mean adoption rate of each ecological practice (recoded as a binary variable) across the full sample and within categories of respondents defined by their level of EEP adoption (measured by the EEP-16 index). It also presents the differences in average adoption rates between these categories. The table illustrates how low-effort practices (e.g. consuming seasonal fruit and vegetables, anti-waste strategies) are widely adopted even by those with the lowest overall EEP scores. In contrast, more demanding practices (e.g. upcycling, self-production, giving up flights) show much larger differences across categories, confirming that these practices are concentrated among the most engaged protesters.

Table A3. Father's socio-professional category. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1-16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17-19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Father																			
Self-employed/Commercial	0.403* (0.149)	0.448* (0.142)	0.740 (0.212)	1.586 (0.522)	1.128 (0.329)	0.731 (0.194)	0.826 (0.197)	1.167 (0.292)	0.713 (0.177)	0.831 (0.192)	1.098 (0.294)	0.978 (0.231)	0.887 (0.217)	1.220 (0.364)	1.227 (0.348)	0.744 (0.318)	-0.298 (0.228)	-0.620* (0.315)	-0.0531 (0.162)
Employee/Worker/Inactive	0.840 (0.266)	1.120 (0.369)	1.134 (0.276)	0.980 (0.218)	1.054 (0.220)	1.038 (0.210)	1.204 (0.238)	1.119 (0.218)	0.796 (0.150)	1.172 (0.218)	1.242 (0.245)	1.117 (0.217)	1.055 (0.210)	0.842 (0.204)	0.978 (0.215)	0.751 (0.266)	0.0685 (0.181)	-0.0509 (0.237)	0.000915 (0.106)
Constant	9.031** (3.325)	5.131** (1.727)	3.915** (1.164)	2.205* (0.578)	5.076* (1.377)	3.549* (0.878)	2.483** (0.567)	0.830 (0.195)	1.342 (0.311)	0.520* (0.115)	0.743 (0.178)	0.463* (0.107)	0.332** (0.0781)	0.0848* (0.0256)	0.153* (0.0442)	0.0851* (0.0362)	6.811** (0.231)	8.279* (0.304)	1.295** (0.138)
Observations	811	811	811	811	811	648	811	811	811	811	649	811	811	651	650	811	811	647	649
R-squared																	0.072	0.099	0.121
Pseudo R2	0.0579	0.0645	0.0156	0.0455	0.161	0.0223	0.0289	0.101	0.0676	0.0625	0.0458	0.0757	0.0609	0.0874	0.0775	0.0363			
Prob > Chi2	0.000811	0.000	0.470	0.000928	0.000	0.0968	0.00251	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.224			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Father's socio-professional category: Exec./Prof./Intern.

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A4. Mother's socio-professional category. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	
	Seasonal fruit/veg		Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Mother																				
Self-employed/Commercial	0.419*	0.672	1.021	0.700	1.336	1.178	0.959	1.449	0.805	0.909	1.095	1.108	0.948	1.365	0.855	0.948	-0.111	-0.0241	0.120	
	(0.185)	(0.310)	(0.442)	(0.276)	(0.520)	(0.446)	(0.325)	(0.563)	(0.264)	(0.278)	(0.379)	(0.363)	(0.339)	(0.530)	(0.388)	(0.516)	(0.357)	(0.535)	(0.225)	
Employee/Worker/Inactive	0.935	1.165	0.828	0.685	1.191	0.999	0.645*	0.726	1.163	0.766	0.759	0.816	1.142	0.650*	0.781	0.917	-0.263	-0.457*	-0.176	
	(0.248)	(0.325)	(0.174)	(0.138)	(0.223)	(0.184)	(0.110)	(0.122)	(0.206)	(0.129)	(0.139)	(0.140)	(0.200)	(0.143)	(0.158)	(0.281)	(0.167)	(0.224)	(0.106)	
Constant	8.769**	4.585**	4.399**	2.717**	4.740**	3.318**	2.807***	1.013	1.329	0.599*	0.874	0.546*	0.324**	0.0846**	0.181**	0.0926**	6.966**	8.375**	1.351**	
	(3.228)	(1.508)	(1.300)	(0.714)	(1.261)	(0.808)	(0.642)	(0.234)	(0.305)	(0.131)	(0.204)	(0.125)	(0.0765)	(0.0249)	(0.0499)	(0.0370)	(0.227)	(0.294)	(0.135)	
Observations	832	832	832	832	832	667	832	832	832	832	668	832	832	670	669	832	832	666	668	
R-squared																	0.073	0.101	0.119	
Pseudo R2	0.0638	0.0495	0.0155	0.0428	0.160	0.0200	0.0374	0.0967	0.0688	0.0590	0.0468	0.0756	0.0647	0.0953	0.0768	0.0319				
Prob > Chi2	0.000585	0.00332	0.4706	0.00116	0.000	0.139	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.223				

Prob > F 0.000 0.000 0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Mother's socio-professional category: Exec./Prof./Interm.

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A5. Household professional category. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand purchase	Reduced car	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Household																			
Intermediate household	0.679 (0.233)	0.874 (0.237)	1.034 (0.252)	1.035 (0.241)	0.926 (0.190)	0.975 (0.212)	0.768 (0.146)	1.311 (0.265)	0.847 (0.171)	0.994 (0.180)	0.962 (0.198)	0.838 (0.159)	1.140 (0.220)	1.106 (0.265)	1.187 (0.276)	0.912 (0.272)	-0.107 (0.184)	-0.245 (0.248)	-0.0252 (0.123)
Employee household	0.776 (0.353)	1.375 (0.627)	0.991 (0.314)	0.651 (0.185)	0.988 (0.260)	0.768 (0.200)	1.206 (0.326)	1.084 (0.270)	0.927 (0.238)	0.834 (0.211)	0.847 (0.218)	1.004 (0.258)	1.016 (0.261)	0.846 (0.272)	0.745 (0.225)	0.825 (0.353)	-0.0983 (0.235)	-0.276 (0.312)	-0.121 (0.148)
Small entrepreneurs household	0.360* (0.175)	0.439 (0.196)	0.636 (0.241)	1.057 (0.421)	0.844 (0.344)	0.803 (0.281)	0.872 (0.294)	0.771 (0.254)	0.580 (0.180)	0.885 (0.273)	0.692 (0.233)	0.619 (0.196)	0.736 (0.268)	1.083 (0.451)	0.977 (0.387)	0.566 (0.370)	-0.676* (0.319)	-1.047* (0.441)	-0.335 (0.198)
Worker or inactive household	0.402* (0.182)	1.014 (0.553)	1.274 (0.512)	0.747 (0.266)	1.339 (0.472)	1.286 (0.422)	0.628 (0.189)	0.942 (0.272)	1.007 (0.313)	0.900 (0.265)	1.464 (0.474)	1.126 (0.342)	1.502 (0.495)	0.856 (0.325)	0.904 (0.304)	0.671 (0.436)	-0.125 (0.295)	-0.138 (0.374)	0.107 (0.177)
Constant	9.435* (3.747)	4.929* (1.811)	3.920** (1.245)	2.454* (0.684)	5.208* (1.468)	3.670* (0.983)	2.668*** (0.638)	0.806 (0.199)	1.378 (0.341)	0.558* (0.129)	0.842 (0.216)	0.516* (0.124)	0.329** (0.0830)	0.0831* (0.0274)	0.155* (0.0483)	0.0856* (0.0369)	6.888* (0.240)	8.386* (0.314)	1.345* (0.146)
Observations	803	803	803	803	803	643	803	803	803	803	644	803	803	646	645	803	803	642	644
R-squared																	0.074	0.102	0.123
Pseudo R2	0.0620	0.0607	0.0162	0.0450	0.163	0.0239	0.0331	0.101	0.0702	0.0610	0.0470	0.0786	0.0650	0.0871	0.0788	0.0365			
Prob > Chi2	0.0003 87	0.0013 0	0.509 7	0.0026 7	0.000	0.130	0.00207	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.346			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Executive/professional household

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A6. Respondent's occupation. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)

VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Occupational status																			
high school student	2.003 (1.413)	1.035 (0.579)	1.583 (0.682)	1.226 (0.494)	0.693 (0.272)	1.892 (0.821)	1.412 (0.524)	0.413* (0.175)	0.362* (0.139)	1.589 (0.538)	1.755 (0.726)	1.242 (0.456)	0.237*** (0.0890)	0.793 (0.405)	1.521 (0.803)	2.975* (1.392)	-0.277 (0.362)	-0.324 (0.507)	-0.186 (0.264)
university student	1.253 (0.673)	1.166 (0.494)	1.604 (0.552)	1.174 (0.381)	0.780 (0.251)	1.978 (0.730)	1.339 (0.398)	0.694 (0.247)	0.885 (0.280)	1.090 (0.297)	1.220 (0.424)	1.730 (0.504)	0.764 (0.220)	0.638 (0.270)	1.190 (0.538)	1.170 (0.409)	0.159 (0.302)	-0.0180 (0.421)	-0.136 (0.228)
techno professional	8.369* (9.055)	1.120 (0.516)	3.842* (2.055)	0.939 (0.322)	0.866 (0.339)	1.120 (0.505)	1.017 (0.349)	0.694 (0.286)	1.493 (0.556)	1.205 (0.383)	1.385 (0.587)	1.822 (0.593)	0.711 (0.242)	0.554 (0.297)	0.832 (0.549)	1.107 (0.426)	0.334 (0.353)	-0.0640 (0.534)	-0.0982 (0.246)
soccult professional	16.63* (18.01)	1.509 (0.639)	1.413 (0.480)	1.078 (0.326)	0.558 (0.179)	2.065 (0.760)	1.459 (0.439)	0.745 (0.259)	1.554 (0.496)	1.176 (0.308)	1.515 (0.497)	0.980 (0.275)	1.117 (0.308)	1.177 (0.453)	1.156 (0.507)	1.289 (0.414)	0.263 (0.284)	0.532 (0.390)	0.120 (0.224)
skilled dependent worker	2.242 (1.437)	1.192 (0.564)	1.368 (0.536)	1.264 (0.441)	0.985 (0.375)	0.918 (0.347)	1.566 (0.537)	0.801 (0.309)	0.854 (0.288)	1.350 (0.405)	1.238 (0.454)	1.220 (0.379)	0.767 (0.244)	0.653 (0.286)	0.726 (0.385)	1.122 (0.428)	0.237 (0.332)	0.0563 (0.437)	-0.202 (0.239)
inactive	11.48* (11.53)	2.801 (1.563)	1.744 (0.740)	1.647 (0.602)	0.943 (0.364)	1.191 (0.474)	1.748 (0.636)	1.352 (0.582)	0.952 (0.340)	1.076 (0.333)	1.179 (0.437)	1.519 (0.484)	0.761 (0.255)	0.969 (0.441)	1.283 (0.631)	1.264 (0.504)	0.516 (0.318)	0.572 (0.425)	0.00389 (0.241)
other	1.973 (1.081)	1.957 (0.929)	1.515 (0.541)	1.684 (0.577)	0.680 (0.237)	1.235 (0.449)	1.681 (0.534)	0.731 (0.262)	1.093 (0.354)	2.249** (0.640)	1.641 (0.569)	1.644 (0.489)	0.657 (0.197)	1.079 (0.435)	1.215 (0.553)	0.574 (0.230)	0.404 (0.301)	0.470 (0.397)	0.0193 (0.229)
Constant	11.60* (6.084)	3.734* (1.606)	3.161** (1.159)	1.977* (0.640)	7.142** (2.550)	1.993 (0.728)	2.336** (0.719)	2.841** (1.025)	1.763 (0.563)	0.545* (0.152)	0.665 (0.229)	0.471 (0.142)	0.496* (0.148)	0.177** (0.0748)	0.0866* (0.0411)	0.186* (0.0686)	7.286* (0.307)	8.788* (0.419)	1.621* (0.225)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.084	0.110	0.104
Pseudo R2	0.109	0.0509	0.0154	0.0391	0.141	0.0188	0.0407	0.101	0.0632	0.0467	0.0293	0.0652	0.0456	0.0995	0.0975	0.0661			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.181	0.000	0.000	0.0704	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Respondent's socio-professional category: Manager

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A7. Student job. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Student job																			
student job: yes	1.232 (0.406)	1.125 (0.367)	1.021 (0.259)	1.491 (0.369)	1.567* (0.344)	1.309 (0.323)	0.909 (0.199)	1.485 (0.341)	1.624* (0.381)	0.986 (0.196)	1.511 (0.339)	1.100 (0.221)	0.950 (0.189)	0.983 (0.252)	0.952 (0.250)	0.828 (0.315)	0.305 (0.200)	0.434 (0.276)	0.118 (0.139)

Constant 30.73* 2.428 2.288 1.274 2.712 4.711*3.603* 1.043 1.871 0.259* 0.396 1.090 0.995 0.147* 0.0512* 0.214 6.883**8.085**1.554**
 (48.92) (2.601)(1.931) (0.828) (1.843) (3.364 (2.265) (0.704) (1.168) (0.147) (0.366) (0.613) (0.554) (0.110) (0.0425) (0.336) (0.615) (0.860) (0.416)
)

Observations	529	529	529	529	529	421	529	529	529	529	422	529	529	422	422	529	529	421	422
R-squared																	0.087	0.108	0.102
Pseudo R2	0.0811	0.0647	0.0161	0.0625	0.141	0.0248	0.0740	0.0516	0.0510	0.0572	0.0773	0.0477	0.0333	0.0703	0.0961	0.0630			
Prob > Chi2	0.000160	0.0097	0.711	0.000600	0.000	0.302	0.000	0.00213	0.0010	0.000	0.000	0.000570	0.0217	0.00385	0.000	0.0883			
Prob > F	3	9		5				6				1					0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: student job: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A8. Father Political self-positioning. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Father																			
Centre-Right	0.771 (0.201)	1.204 (0.235)	0.933 (0.153)	1.237 (0.178)	1.393* (0.185)	0.965 (0.138)	0.889 (0.114)	1.163 (0.160)	1.259 (0.164)	1.078 (0.124)	0.693** (0.0926)	1.084 (0.127)	1.144 (0.139)	0.836 (0.136)	1.117 (0.185)	0.758 (0.128)	0.163 (0.117)	-0.161 (0.169)	-0.121 (0.0835)
Neither left nor right/Undeclared	0.415* (0.112)	0.965 (0.241)	0.604** (0.111)	0.743 (0.129)	1.107 (0.204)	0.928 (0.156)	1.032 (0.167)	0.731* (0.114)	0.872 (0.139)	1.086 (0.161)	0.725* (0.118)	1.098 (0.168)	0.877 (0.143)	1.019 (0.197)	1.093 (0.207)	0.788 (0.179)	-0.261 (0.156)	-0.451* (0.204)	-0.0993 (0.0945)
Constant	31.27* (13.03)	4.386* (1.323)	5.346** (1.358)	2.193* (0.459)	4.514* (0.971)	2.962* (0.668)	3.320*** (0.673)	1.923** (0.404)	1.540* (0.299)	0.711 (0.128)	1.069 (0.222)	0.625 (0.121)	0.346** (0.0714)	0.153** (0.0390)	0.0903* (0.0246)	0.262* (0.0666)	7.411* (0.196)	8.980* (0.271)	1.595* (0.130)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.082	0.108	0.102
Pseudo R2	0.0886	0.0458	0.0149	0.0401	0.140	0.0107	0.0385	0.0976	0.0518	0.0384	0.0301	0.058	0.0281	0.0941	0.0955	0.0549			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0324	0.000	0.000	0.181	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: father's political positioning: left

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A9. Mother Political self-positioning. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)

VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Mother																			
Centre-Right	0.851 (0.233)	0.926 (0.185)	0.708* (0.115)	0.910 (0.133)	1.420* (0.200)	1.278 (0.196)	0.786 (0.104)	0.926 (0.132)	1.136 (0.153)	0.901 (0.108)	0.771 (0.108)	1.000 (0.124)	1.190 (0.150)	1.020 (0.172)	0.945 (0.164)	0.717 (0.124)	-0.0751 (0.125)	-0.219 (0.181)	-0.0403 (0.0868)
Neither left nor right/Undeclared	0.684 (0.173)	0.805 (0.187)	0.637* (0.116)	0.688* (0.114)	1.060 (0.185)	1.022 (0.166)	1.033 (0.162)	0.542** (0.0833)	0.849 (0.113)	1.011 (0.146)	0.876 (0.138)	1.098 (0.160)	0.963 (0.150)	1.037 (0.193)	1.015 (0.186)	0.644 (0.149)	-0.328* (0.148)	-0.494* (0.200)	-0.0949 (0.0930)
Constant	27.15** (10.90)	4.931** (1.495)	5.790** (1.453)	2.459** (0.505)	4.649** (0.979)	2.673** (0.593)	3.438** (0.693)	2.132** (0.442)	1.620 (0.311)	0.764 (0.136)	0.994 (0.204)	0.647 (0.122)	0.342** (0.0695)	0.142** (0.0364)	0.0966** (0.0261)	0.263** (0.0656)	7.500** (0.191)	8.992** (0.265)	1.560** (0.128)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.081	0.109	0.101
Pseudo R2	0.0782	0.0455	0.0153	0.0385	0.140	0.0123	0.0399	0.102	0.050	0.0385	0.0271	0.0579	0.0279	0.0931	0.0952	0.0571			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0370	0.000	0.000	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: mother's political positioning: left

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A10. Bad Lifestyle. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/Veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Bad lifestyle is the cause agree	2.756 (1.789)	1.966 (0.836)	1.067 (0.371)	0.648 (0.174)	1.323 (0.299)	1.566 (0.513)	1.981* (0.541)	1.610 (0.524)	0.708 (0.167)	1.176 (0.279)	0.903 (0.289)	1.336 (0.299)	0.400** (0.118)	0.704 (0.243)	1.719 (0.694)	1.248 (0.407)	0.201 (0.227)	0.293 (0.389)	-0.151 (0.194)
Constant	11.71** * (5.429)	2.836* * (1.125)	8.734** * (3.364)	3.598** * (1.004)	1.132 (0.262)	4.496** * (1.911)	2.164** (0.534)	3.967** * (1.195)	2.623** * (0.655)	0.584* (0.133)	1.641 (0.605)	1.519 (0.345)	0.545* (0.143)	0.400* (0.149)	0.0473* ** (0.0252)	0.198** * (0.0650)	7.554** * (0.242)	9.581** * (0.447)	2.139** * (0.218)
Observations	704	704	704	704	704	319	704	704	704	704	321	704	704	320	320	704	704	318	320
R-squared																	0.073	0.126	0.086
Pseudo R2	0.0601	0.0535	0.0405	0.0538	0.0293	0.0496	0.0451	0.0468	0.0442	0.0453	0.0490	0.0220	0.0544	0.0669	0.131	0.0546			

Prob > 0.0280 0.0010 0.0308 0.000 0.0024 0.0552 0.000 0.00068 0.000350.000 0.0325 0.026 0.0003620.001500.000 0.0050
Chi2 7 1 6 8 2 2
Prob > F 0.000 0.000 0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: global warming is primarily the consequence of wrong individual choices: disagree

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A11. Anger. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Anger																			
yes	1.057 (0.352)	1.839* (0.430)	1.408 (0.303)	2.005** (0.366)	1.664** (0.305)	0.969 (0.210)	1.451* (0.252)	1.839** (0.359)	1.586* (0.287)	1.544* (0.265)	0.954 (0.193)	1.235 (0.211)	1.211 (0.225)	1.048 (0.250)	1.536 (0.431)	0.935 (0.233)	0.812** (0.202)	0.627* (0.297)	0.0836 (0.125)
Constant	23.15** (10.74)	2.721* (0.955)	3.604*** (1.114)	1.222 (0.321)	3.263** (0.877)	2.991** (0.874)	2.250** (0.570)	1.133 (0.310)	1.091 (0.274)	0.494** (0.117)	0.942 (0.256)	0.536* (0.129)	0.303*** (0.0777)	0.137** (0.0449)	0.0632* (0.0242)	0.246** (0.0768)	6.700** (0.270)	8.301** (0.379)	1.463** (0.170)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.090	0.108	0.101
Pseudo R2	0.0756	0.0509	0.0114	0.0438	0.141	0.0106	0.0401	0.0990	0.0523	0.0410	0.0250	0.0584	0.0273	0.0931	0.0968	0.0525			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.136	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Thinking about the climate crisis makes you feel angry: No

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A12. Optimism. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Optimism																			
yes	1.374 (0.416)	1.619* (0.393)	1.451 (0.276)	0.988 (0.152)	1.262 (0.198)	1.045 (0.160)	1.147 (0.167)	0.957 (0.135)	1.134 (0.160)	1.224 (0.160)	1.297 (0.187)	1.161 (0.156)	1.548** (0.209)	1.308 (0.224)	1.305 (0.222)	1.771* (0.307)	0.418* (0.135)	0.621* (0.186)	0.401* (0.0924)
Constant	22.79** (8.695)	4.234** (1.276)	4.523** (1.122)	2.321* (0.470)	4.900* (1.048)	2.875* (0.624)	3.062*** (0.603)	2.015** (0.409)	1.619* (0.305)	0.701* (0.122)	0.849 (0.170)	0.627 (0.117)	0.319*** (0.0654)	0.134** (0.0342)	0.0891* (0.0233)	0.195* (0.0478)	7.344* (0.192)	8.738* (0.264)	1.447* (0.121)

Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258	
R-squared																		0.083	0.113	0.115
Pseudo R2	0.0773	0.0488	0.0126	0.0357	0.138	0.0106	0.0384	0.0940	0.0495	0.0392	0.0269	0.0583	0.0319	0.0948	0.0968	0.0605				
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0977	0.000	0.000	0.137	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000				
Prob > F																		0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Thinking about the climate crisis makes you feel optimistic: No

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A13. Anxiety. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Anxiety																			
yes	0.969 (0.238)	1.029 (0.193)	1.672** (0.252)	1.086 (0.151)	1.295 (0.173)	1.130 (0.158)	1.325* (0.168)	1.406* (0.188)	1.476* (0.188)	1.237 (0.146)	0.954 (0.127)	1.397* (0.172)	1.188 (0.155)	1.046 (0.172)	1.427* (0.250)	0.968 (0.171)	0.483** (0.124)	0.471* (0.171)	0.138 (0.0797)
Constant	24.96** (10.11)	4.612** (1.467)	3.522** (0.916)	2.189** (0.470)	4.355** (0.992)	2.682** (0.631)	2.614*** (0.552)	1.581* (0.349)	1.279 (0.262)	0.638* (0.122)	0.930 (0.202)	0.518* (0.104)	0.320*** (0.0684)	0.139** (0.0384)	0.0738** (0.0216)	0.236* (0.0621)	7.121* (0.210)	8.572* (0.291)	1.449** (0.131)

Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258	
R-squared																		0.087	0.110	0.102
Pseudo R2	0.0756	0.0447	0.0174	0.0359	0.139	0.0110	0.0404	0.0972	0.0538	0.0396	0.0251	0.0611	0.0276	0.0931	0.0981	0.0525				
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.00406	0.000	0.000	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000				
Prob > F																		0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Thinking about the climate crisis makes you feel anxious: No

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A14. Fear. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Fear																			
yes	1.302 (0.238)	1.090 (0.193)	2.155** (0.252)	1.014 (0.151)	1.309* (0.173)	1.263 (0.158)	1.172 (0.168)	1.246 (0.188)	1.426* (0.188)	1.284* (0.146)	0.927 (0.127)	1.206 (0.172)	1.082 (0.155)	0.958 (0.172)	1.183 (0.250)	0.969 (0.171)	0.434** (0.124)	0.397* (0.171)	0.0390 (0.0797)

	(0.2 92)	(0.1 96)	(0.3 15)	(0.1 35)	(0.1 69)	(0.1 69)	(0.14 2)	(0.1 59)	(0.1 73)	(0.1 44)	(0.1 18)	(0.1 40)	(0.13 2)	(0.1 47)	(0.19 1)	(0.1 58)	(0.1 18)	(0.1 64)	(0.0 764)
Constant	20.6 4** *	4.46 0** *	3.25 0** *	2.29 4** *	4.42 4** *	2.53 6** *	2.87 6*** *	1.74 6** *	1.3 47	0.6 35*	0.9 43	0.5 82*	0.34 4*** *	0.14 7** *	0.08 57** *	0.23 6** *	7.18 8** *	8.64 7** *	1.51 7** *
	(8.0 99)	(1.3 82)	(0.8 29)	(0.4 89)	(0.9 88)	(0.5 83)	(0.59 3)	(0.3 75)	(0.2 67)	(0.1 18)	(0.2 00)	(0.1 13)	(0.07 26)	(0.0 389)	(0.02 44)	(0.0 597)	(0.2 04)	(0.2 84)	(0.1 29)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.086	0.109	0.100
Pseudo R2	0.0774	0.0449	0.0288	0.0357	0.139	0.0125	0.0388	0.0954	0.0534	0.0403	0.0252	0.0589	0.0270	0.031	0.0959	0.0525			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.0634	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Thinking about the climate crisis makes you feel frightened: No

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A15. Powerlessness. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Powerlessness																			
yes	1.009	1.037	1.145	0.812	0.804	1.120	0.952	1.003	0.828	0.847	0.840	0.767*	0.915	1.100	0.985	0.939	-0.221	-0.125	-0.0767
	(0.234)	(0.188)	(0.171)	(0.112)	(0.103)	(0.151)	(0.119)	(0.128)	(0.102)	(0.0951)	(0.109)	(0.0878)	(0.108)	(0.172)	(0.155)	(0.157)	(0.118)	(0.167)	(0.0805)
Constant	24.22** *	4.588** *	4.484** *	2.686** *	6.073** *	2.680** *	3.281***	1.989**	1.911*	0.830	1.020	0.785	0.384***	0.134** *	0.0960** *	0.242** *	7.605** *	8.970** *	1.594** *
	(9.776)	(1.460)	(1.159)	(0.601)	(1.405)	(0.631)	(0.702)	(0.433)	(0.394)	(0.157)	(0.223)	(0.156)	(0.0825)	(0.0367)	(0.0275)	(0.0636)	(0.212)	(0.298)	(0.137)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.080	0.105	0.101
Pseudo R2	0.0756	0.0447	0.0303	0.0371	0.138	0.0110	0.0380	0.0939	0.0502	0.0391	0.0261	0.0602	0.0270	0.033	0.0951	0.0526			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.153	0.000	0.000	0.117	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Thinking about the climate crisis makes you feel powerless: No

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A16. Confidence. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/Veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Confidence																			
agree	1.021 (0.298)	0.817 (0.190)	1.480* (0.251)	0.942 (0.148)	1.192 (0.201)	1.497* (0.203)	0.955 (0.139)	1.390* (0.195)	1.400* (0.195)	1.604** (0.210)	0.855 (0.111)	1.710* (0.239)	1.390* (0.201)	0.937 (0.148)	1.160 (0.183)	0.641* (0.121)	0.421* (0.134)	0.457* (0.165)	0.0932 (0.0774)
Constant	20.20* (9.317)	4.366* (1.505)	3.613** (1.039)	2.430* (0.592)	4.657* (1.257)	2.341* (0.543)	2.750*** (0.650)	1.870** (0.442)	1.461 (0.328)	0.565** (0.121)	0.978 (0.210)	0.468* (0.108)	0.339*** (0.0847)	0.145** (0.0399)	0.0794* (0.0223)	0.341* (0.0967)	7.228* (0.228)	8.619* (0.279)	1.491* (0.131)
Observations	1,228	1,228	1,228	1,228	1,228	1,225	1,228	1,228	1,228	1,228	1,227	1,228	1,228	1,226	1,226	1,228	1,228	1,224	1,226
R-squared																	0.105	0.110	0.099
Pseudo R2	0.0741	0.0528	0.0186	0.0479	0.138	0.0164	0.0454	0.0933	0.0514	0.0440	0.0256	0.0703	0.0420	0.0939	0.0980	0.0593			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0572	0.000	0.000	0.0123	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: environmental problems have reduced my confidence in the future: disagree

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A17. Still Time. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/Veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Still time																			
agree	0.721 (0.222)	1.068 (0.262)	0.805 (0.138)	0.785 (0.124)	0.993 (0.178)	1.075 (0.152)	0.776 (0.117)	0.681** (0.0974)	0.955 (0.135)	1.083 (0.146)	0.935 (0.124)	0.833 (0.119)	0.756 (0.113)	0.802 (0.133)	0.907 (0.143)	1.797** (0.345)	-0.234 (0.133)	-0.287 (0.166)	-0.0957 (0.0792)
Constant	34.09** (18.92)	4.426** (1.565)	4.943** (1.450)	2.552** (0.640)	3.892** (1.097)	2.893** (0.705)	2.901*** (0.728)	2.696** (0.665)	1.744* (0.409)	0.609* (0.135)	0.958 (0.214)	0.737 (0.182)	0.409*** (0.106)	0.156** (0.0446)	0.0845* (0.0250)	0.217** (0.0668)	7.512** (0.230)	8.948** (0.284)	1.590** (0.135)
Observations	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,057	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,059	1,058	1,059	1,059	1,058	1,058	1,059	1,059	1,057	1,058
R-squared																	0.099	0.106	0.097
Pseudo R2	0.0982	0.0363	0.0104	0.0478	0.102	0.0110	0.0410	0.0911	0.0481	0.0376	0.0203	0.060	0.0425	0.0966	0.102	0.0696			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.0032	0.528	0.000	0.000	0.219	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00277	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: there is still time to get out of the climate crisis: disagree

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A18. Techno-optimism. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand purchase	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Techno-optimism agree	0.901 (0.216)	0.712 (0.136)	0.965 (0.147)	0.759* (0.104)	0.866 (0.117)	0.929 (0.123)	1.107 (0.143)	1.022 (0.130)	0.758* (0.0937)	0.893 (0.101)	0.994 (0.126)	0.629* (0.0756)	0.722** (0.0890)	0.680* (0.108)	1.178 (0.177)	0.752 (0.134)	- (0.120)	-0.329* (0.160)	- (0.0742)
Constant	25.39* (9.967)	5.402* (1.698)	4.993** (1.243)	2.588* (0.534)	5.499* (1.188)	2.988* (0.660)	3.047*** (0.607)	1.976** (0.406)	1.864* (0.358)	0.772 (0.137)	0.903 (0.184)	0.773 (0.146)	0.406*** (0.0827)	0.163** (0.0417)	0.0887* (0.0239)	0.256* (0.0634)	7.590* (0.194)	9.005* (0.272)	1.618* (0.127)
Observations	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,258	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,646	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,260	1,259	1,646	1,646	1,256	1,258
R-squared																	0.083	0.107	0.106
Pseudo R2	0.0758	0.0478	0.00972	0.0381	0.137	0.0107	0.0382	0.0939	0.0516	0.0386	0.0250	0.0645	0.0302	0.0974	0.0959	0.0545			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.174	0.000	0.000	0.132	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: technological innovation will solve the climate crisis: disagree

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A19. Membership in groups controlled by household status. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand purchase	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Household techno professional household	1.671 (0.685)	1.925 (0.685)	1.919* (0.583)	1.305 (0.394)	1.144 (0.299)	1.061 (0.313)	1.151 (0.286)	1.279 (0.333)	1.116 (0.300)	1.675* (0.401)	0.783 (0.219)	1.010 (0.247)	0.919 (0.232)	0.684 (0.229)	1.503 (0.482)	1.489 (0.620)	0.509* (0.244)	0.537 (0.347)	-0.0469 (0.167)
soccult professional household	1.557 (0.562)	2.738* (0.886)	1.981** (0.522)	1.692 (0.472)	1.208 (0.274)	1.101 (0.279)	1.132 (0.246)	1.503 (0.372)	0.871 (0.197)	1.669* (0.358)	1.172 (0.283)	0.868 (0.191)	1.043 (0.229)	1.095 (0.317)	1.361 (0.385)	1.582 (0.579)	0.551* (0.217)	0.687* (0.305)	0.0963 (0.135)
self-employed household	2.332	1.265	1.008	1.367	1.400	1.033	1.281	1.251	1.013	1.541	0.992	0.683	0.780	1.023	1.216	1.999	0.330	0.348	-0.0601

	(1.140)	(0.458)	(0.307)	(0.461)	(0.432)	(0.308)	(0.352)	(0.355)	(0.283)	(0.398)	(0.289)	(0.184)	(0.214)	(0.362)	(0.410)	(0.884)	(0.271)	(0.366)	(0.161)
residual	1.872	2.338*	1.781	0.921	1.536	1.250	1.034	1.070	1.128	1.130	1.134	1.066	1.446	0.733	1.146	1.327	0.455	0.480	0.0969
household	(0.766)	(1.007)	(0.562)	(0.292)	(0.433)	(0.362)	(0.275)	(0.287)	(0.299)	(0.296)	(0.322)	(0.281)	(0.382)	(0.254)	(0.376)	(0.687)	(0.255)	(0.355)	(0.151)
Membershi																			
p																			
No	0.682	0.778	0.920	0.482*	0.673*	0.937	0.745	0.501**	0.738	0.549**	0.651*	0.774	0.501***	0.470**	0.804	0.569	-	-	-
Membershi				**				*		*							0.864*	1.232*	0.475*
p																	**	**	**
	(0.201)	(0.206)	(0.202)	(0.0961)	(0.132)	(0.189)	(0.134)	(0.0901)	(0.137)	(0.0960)	(0.128)	(0.140)	(0.0961)	(0.113)	(0.175)	(0.196)	(0.169)	(0.222)	(0.105)
Two	1.199	0.737	0.862	4.529*	1.302	1.030	0.916	1.141	0.966	0.896	1.276	1.302	1.006	0.783	1.380	1.589	0.203	0.199	0.115
	(0.529)	(0.247)	(0.247)	(2.118)	(0.350)	(0.269)	(0.213)	(0.280)	(0.230)	(0.201)	(0.313)	(0.297)	(0.233)	(0.225)	(0.376)	(0.567)	(0.230)	(0.309)	(0.148)
More than	1.430	1.166	0.771	0.822	0.951	1.035	0.865	1.538	0.720	0.838	1.001	2.221*	0.787	0.933	1.119	2.815**	0.138	-	0.149
Two												*					0.0097		
	(0.862)	(0.582)	(0.299)	(0.332)	(0.292)	(0.344)	(0.268)	(0.577)	(0.218)	(0.259)	(0.331)	(0.686)	(0.247)	(0.336)	(0.407)	(1.121)	(0.317)	(0.428)	(0.218)
Constant	6.481*	3.369*	3.218**	2.183*	4.854*	3.243*	2.543***	0.927	1.553	0.491**	0.884	0.564*	0.418**	0.105**	0.136**	0.0611*	6.795*	8.257*	1.428*
	**	*		**	**	**								*	*	**	**	**	**
	(2.940)	(1.397)	(1.168)	(0.684)	(1.584)	(1.024)	(0.689)	(0.272)	(0.436)	(0.133)	(0.262)	(0.159)	(0.120)	(0.0379)	(0.0502)	(0.0292)	(0.282)	(0.377)	(0.167)
														)	)				
Observation	840	840	840	840	840	672	840	840	840	840	673	840	840	675	674	840	840	671	673
s																			
R-squared																	0.117	0.150	0.156
Pseudo R2	0.0680	0.0733	0.0301	0.0948	0.168	0.0210	0.0341	0.118	0.0706	0.0750	0.0587	0.0883	0.0833	0.106	0.0830	0.0661			
Prob > Chi2	0.0003	0.0004	0.226	0.000	0.000	0.357	0.00228	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
	59	83																	
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000
Robust standard errors in parentheses																			
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05																			
Reference categories are as follows: Manager household; Membership: One																			

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A20. Membership in Environmental, Ecological or Animalist groups. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES																			
Env/Eco/Animal org																			
yes	2.078*	1.813*	1.513*	2.069*	1.687*	1.368*	1.422**	2.152**	1.842*	1.476**	1.373*	2.456*	2.356***	1.401*	1.131	1.716*	1.164*	1.266*	0.590*
	*	*		**	**			*	**	*		**				**	**	**	**
	(0.606)	(0.377)	(0.248)	(0.308)	(0.232)	(0.193)	(0.187)	(0.299)	(0.245)	(0.167)	(0.178)	(0.284)	(0.278)	(0.209)	(0.178)	(0.268)	(0.109)	(0.159)	(0.0792)
Constant	19.35*	3.858*	4.053**	1.816*	4.278*	2.508*	2.742***	1.581*	1.299	0.617**	0.758	0.470*	0.254***	0.123**	0.0890*	0.187*	7.013*	8.369*	1.308*
	**	**	*	*	**	**						**		*	**	**	**	**	**
	(7.421)	(1.174)	(1.020)	(0.377)	(0.919)	(0.555)	(0.549)	(0.328)	(0.251)	(0.111)	(0.157)	(0.0885)	(0.0519)	(0.0318)	(0.0235)	(0.0469)	(0.186)	(0.257)	(0.118)
Observations	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,226	1,227
R-squared																	0.137	0.153	0.149
Pseudo R2	0.0866	0.0546	0.0148	0.0508	0.143	0.0139	0.0420	0.112	0.0595	0.0450	0.0300	0.0864	0.0541	0.0968	0.0976	0.0645			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.0216	0.000	0.000	0.0480	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000
Robust standard errors in parentheses																			

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Membership in environmental/ecological/animalist org: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A21. Membership in a Trade union. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Trade union yes	1.027 (0.543)	0.760 (0.256)	0.899 (0.271)	0.631* (0.141)	0.597* (0.151)	0.787 (0.197)	0.560* (0.126)	0.617* (0.149)	0.411** (0.0886)	0.716 (0.149)	0.802 (0.189)	0.866 (0.185)	0.901 (0.215)	1.045 (0.305)	1.142 (0.359)	1.429 (0.386)	-0.678** (0.248)	-0.572 (0.313)	0.0156 (0.162)
Constant	24.91** (9.444)	4.813** (1.420)	4.699** (1.152)	2.399** (0.477)	5.226** (1.102)	2.862** (0.625)	3.225** (0.635)	2.147** (0.436)	1.717** (0.321)	0.729 (0.127)	0.869 (0.175)	0.668* (0.123)	0.364** (0.0728)	0.139** (0.0357)	0.0916* (0.0244)	0.227** (0.0555)	7.478** (0.191)	8.886** (0.265)	1.526** (0.125)
Observations	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,226	1,227
R-squared																	0.084	0.110	0.107
Pseudo R2	0.0768	0.0466	0.0100	0.0377	0.137	0.0112	0.0414	0.0979	0.0564	0.0407	0.0270	0.0582	0.0276	0.0932	0.0972	0.0564			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.177	0.000	0.000	0.132	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Membership in a trade union: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A22. Membership in a Party. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Alter food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Party yes	1.238 (0.456)	0.599* (0.142)	0.929 (0.225)	0.903 (0.182)	0.666* (0.129)	0.939 (0.197)	0.694* (0.124)	0.790 (0.157)	0.701* (0.127)	0.575* (0.103)	0.757 (0.148)	1.206 (0.206)	1.419 (0.259)	0.547* (0.142)	0.792 (0.211)	0.899 (0.236)	-0.367 (0.200)	-0.693* (0.275)	-0.130 (0.126)
Constant	24.50** (9.382)	4.946** (1.468)	4.705** (1.151)	2.350** (0.468)	5.249** (1.101)	2.832** (0.623)	3.217** (0.632)	2.122** (0.432)	1.671* (0.314)	0.753 (0.131)	0.889 (0.180)	0.650 (0.120)	0.346** (0.0694)	0.153** (0.0390)	0.0967** (0.0257)	0.235** (0.0571)	7.473** (0.191)	8.943** (0.264)	1.547** (0.124)

Observations	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,228	1,228	1,614	1,614	1,226	1,227
R-squared																	0.081	0.114	0.108
Pseudo R2	0.0772	0.0501	0.00999	0.0356	0.137	0.0107	0.0401	0.0966	0.0501	0.0441	0.0276	0.058	0.0294	0.0976	0.0977	0.0551			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.149	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Membership in a party: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A23. Prior participation to climate protests controlled by household status. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand purchase	Reduced car	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Household																			
techno professional household	1.574 (0.639)	1.908 (0.674)	1.936* (0.597)	1.149 (0.345)	1.108 (0.290)	1.062 (0.311)	1.146 (0.288)	1.218 (0.316)	1.117 (0.302)	1.616* (0.381)	0.758 (0.209)	0.968 (0.236)	0.893 (0.226)	0.674 (0.227)	1.472 (0.470)	1.330 (0.552)	0.449 (0.244)	0.473 (0.346)	-0.0727 (0.162)
soccult professional household	1.578 (0.574)	2.801* (0.906)	2.186** (0.585)	1.796* (0.496)	1.244 (0.284)	1.134 (0.289)	1.152 (0.253)	1.587 (0.397)	0.880 (0.200)	1.748** (0.373)	1.204 (0.294)	0.878 (0.193)	1.053 (0.231)	1.138 (0.330)	1.342 (0.374)	1.641 (0.614)	0.615* (0.216)	0.776* (0.303)	0.108 (0.132)
self-employed household	2.377 (1.182)	1.269 (0.462)	1.029 (0.319)	1.367 (0.445)	1.414 (0.437)	1.062 (0.319)	1.322 (0.371)	1.265 (0.355)	1.032 (0.287)	1.541 (0.402)	1.042 (0.303)	0.685 (0.185)	0.799 (0.220)	1.029 (0.359)	1.236 (0.413)	1.907 (0.835)	0.353 (0.272)	0.405 (0.361)	-0.0385 (0.155)
residual household	2.078 (0.856)	2.532* (1.081)	1.915* (0.612)	0.961 (0.301)	1.646 (0.466)	1.298 (0.373)	1.147 (0.309)	1.212 (0.323)	1.211 (0.320)	1.216 (0.315)	1.254 (0.360)	1.117 (0.292)	1.673 (0.447)	0.861 (0.295)	1.213 (0.396)	1.446 (0.742)	0.611* (0.251)	0.697* (0.349)	0.183 (0.149)
Past Participation																			
Once	1.321 (0.532)	0.909 (0.359)	0.709 (0.217)	0.963 (0.286)	1.146 (0.326)	1.329 (0.397)	1.420 (0.362)	0.992 (0.279)	1.017 (0.289)	0.795 (0.208)	1.726 (0.534)	1.132 (0.309)	1.768 (0.524)	1.198 (0.463)	1.543 (0.541)	3.700* (2.459)	0.198 (0.275)	0.488 (0.374)	0.406* (0.160)
More than one	1.849 (0.668)	1.339 (0.469)	1.760 (0.519)	2.036* (0.542)	1.476 (0.357)	1.676 (0.447)	1.833** (0.410)	1.487 (0.367)	1.155 (0.287)	1.094 (0.253)	2.212** (0.613)	1.412 (0.324)	1.714* (0.445)	1.674 (0.569)	1.437 (0.474)	4.603* (2.804)	0.828* (0.226)	1.252* (0.311)	0.554* (0.133)
More than five	2.312* (0.952)	1.538 (0.584)	1.081 (0.331)	2.466* (0.727)	1.855* (0.493)	1.410 (0.398)	2.271*** (0.557)	2.649** (0.753)	1.583 (0.427)	1.293 (0.316)	3.278** (0.957)	2.351* (0.575)	3.012*** (0.804)	2.864** (1.017)	2.167* (0.733)	7.110** (4.318)	1.377* (0.243)	2.006* (0.325)	1.044* (0.148)
Constant	2.941* (1.537)	2.154 (1.116)	2.314 (0.999)	0.980 (0.369)	2.772* (1.062)	2.053 (0.786)	1.146 (0.375)	0.417* (0.150)	1.054 (0.372)	0.342** (0.115)	0.312** (0.123)	0.332* (0.112)	0.148*** (0.0541)	0.0384* (0.0184)	0.0788* (0.0371)	0.0111* (0.0077)	5.547* (0.328)	6.360* (0.441)	0.558* (0.187)
Observations	840	840	840	840	840	672	840	840	840	840	673	840	840	675	674	840	840	671	673
R-squared																	0.127	0.166	0.187
Pseudo R2	0.0719	0.0753	0.0462	0.0709	0.167	0.025	0.0431	0.117	0.0715	0.0684	0.0705	0.0910	0.0873	0.112	0.0865	0.0665			
Prob > Chi2	0.0003	0.0002	0.00754	0.000	0.000	0.173	0.000158	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			

Prob > F 0.000 0.000 0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Manager household; Past participation in climate demonstration: never

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A24. Prior participation to animal rights protests. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/Veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/ air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Animalist demonstrat ions																			
yes	1.474 (0.681)	1.726 (0.622)	1.615 (0.462)	1.833* (0.483)	1.614* (0.358)	1.112 (0.245)	1.345 (0.283)	2.223** (0.550)	3.056* (0.804)	1.423 (0.260)	1.666* (0.348)	1.950* (0.355)	5.036*** (0.971)	2.182** (0.488)	1.272 (0.306)	0.929 (0.252)	1.195* (0.156)	1.654* (0.224)	0.819* (0.126)
Constant	23.51* (9.950)	3.962* (1.303)	4.760** (1.260)	2.280* (0.495)	4.180* (0.949)	2.641* (0.616)	2.682*** (0.560)	1.769** (0.383)	1.351 (0.272)	0.741 (0.140)	0.829 (0.179)	0.534* (0.106)	0.302*** (0.0678)	0.139** (0.0371)	0.0966* (0.0265)	0.255* (0.0638)	7.242* (0.201)	8.593* (0.270)	1.452* (0.127)
Observatio ns	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,072	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,072	1,356	1,356	1,074	1,073	1,356	1,356	1,071	1,072
R-squared																	0.103	0.146	0.137
Pseudo R2	0.0701	0.0595	0.00987	0.0462	0.147	0.0143	0.0410	0.0946	0.0590	0.0424	0.0292	0.0623	0.0755	0.0987	0.0948	0.0506			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.374	0.000	0.000	0.0623	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Past participation in animalist demonstration: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A25. Prior participation to labor rights protests. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/Veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	After food network	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Labor rights demonstration																			
yes	1.005	1.150	1.005	0.950	0.611* **	0.707*	0.674**	0.951	0.563* **	0.875	0.982	0.777*	0.828	1.106	1.102	1.859* **	-0.332* *	-0.385*	-0.0275

	(0.257)	(0.224)	(0.161)	(0.136)	(0.0834)	(0.104)	(0.0884)	(0.130)	(0.0739)	(0.103)	(0.132)	(0.093)	(0.104)	(0.172)	(0.178)	(0.320)	(0.123)	(0.174)	(0.0862)
Constant	24.61*	3.936*	5.017**	2.489*	5.495*	3.159*	3.326***	1.991**	1.993*	0.822	0.902	0.654*	0.423***	0.154**	0.0961*	0.184*	7.541*	9.013*	1.585*
	**	**	*	**	**	**			**					*	**	**	**	**	**
	(10.89)	(1.334)	(1.370)	(0.553)	(1.278)	(0.762)	(0.718)	(0.442)	(0.408)	(0.159)	(0.200)	(0.135)	(0.0938)	(0.0419)	(0.0273)	(0.0488)	(0.209)	(0.285)	(0.134)
Observations	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,072	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,072	1,356	1,356	1,074	1,073	1,356	1,356	1,071	1,072	
R-squared																	0.080	0.113	0.099
Pseudo R2	0.0686	0.0572	0.00719	0.0419	0.152	0.0185	0.0455	0.0876	0.0571	0.0412	0.0249	0.0574	0.0319	0.0885	0.0942	0.0629			
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.000	0.612	0.000	0.000	0.0167	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000			
Prob > F																	0.000	0.000	0.000

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

Reference categories are as follows: Past participation in labor rights demonstration: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Table A26. Signing a Petition. Logistic regression results for individual EEPs (models 1–16) and OLS regression results for EEP indexes (EEP-12, EEP-16, EEP-6) (models 17–19). Odds Ratios are reported for logistic models; OLS coefficients for indexes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	
VARIABLES	Seasonal fruit/veg	Anti-waste	Limit heating/air	Second-hand	Reduced purchase	Given up using car	Unpackaged products	Boycotted a product	Changed your diet	Upcycling products	Produced vegetable	Given up a flight	Vegetarian/ veg	Produced cosmetics	Produced clothes	Produced network	After food	EEP-12	EEP-16	EEP-6
Signed a petition yes	1.443 (0.473)	1.343 (0.375)	1.054 (0.212)	1.842* ** (0.328)	2.227* ** (0.450)	1.080 (0.175)	2.053*** (0.336)	2.499** * (0.390)	1.924* ** (0.305)	1.476* (0.228)	1.555*** (0.236)	1.857* ** (0.328)	1.873*** (0.337)	1.891** (0.403)	1.874** (0.359)	1.612 (0.415)	1.127* ** (0.161)	1.439* ** (0.197)	0.569* ** (0.0881)	
Constant	26.07* ** (15.92)	3.782* * (1.536)	4.589** * (1.452)	1.460 (0.388)	2.204* * (0.649)	2.832* ** (0.733)	1.612 (0.422)	1.194 (0.310)	1.043 (0.258)	0.500** (0.119)	0.671 (0.158)	0.413* * (0.111)	0.219*** (0.0624)	0.0853* ** (0.0275)	0.0527* ** (0.0171)	0.193* ** (0.0666)	6.600* ** (0.262)	7.795* ** (0.319)	1.130* ** (0.140)	
Observations	1,076	1,076	1,076	1,076	1,076	1,074	1,076	1,076	1,076	1,076	1,074	1,076	1,076	1,076	1,075	1,076	1,076	1,073	1,074	
R-squared																	0.145	0.152	0.129	
Pseudo R2	0.113	0.0391	0.00682	0.0595	0.122	0.0106	0.0544	0.106	0.0633	0.0404	0.0256	0.0686	0.0477	0.105	0.109	0.0621				
Prob > Chi2	0.000	0.0026	0.770	0.000	0.000	0.214	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000				
Prob > F		1									4						0.000	0.000	0.000	
Robust standard errors in parentheses																				
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05																				

Reference categories are as follows: signed a petition: no

Note: All models include the following control variables, which are not displayed in the table: country, gender, age, education, subjective class, financial situation and place of growth.

Appendix F (Chapter 5)

Table A1. Frequency distribution for each active variable of the MCA

Tabulation of efficacy				Tabulation of lack of efficacy				Tabulation of individual responsibility			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
efficacy+	27	52.94	52.94	lack_efficacy+	35	68.63	68.63	individual_resp+	16	31.37	31.37
efficacy-	24	47.06	100.00	lack_efficacy-	16	31.37	100.00	individual_resp-	35	68.63	100.00
Total	51	100.00		Total	51	100.00		Total	51	100.00	
Tabulation of guilt				Tabulation of no_guilt				Tabulation of exemplarity			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
guilt+	27	52.94	52.94	no_guilt+	22	43.14	43.14	exemplarity+	22	43.14	43.14
guilt-	24	47.06	100.00	no_guilt-	29	56.86	100.00	exemplarity-	29	56.86	100.00
Total	51	100.00		Total	51	100.00		Total	51	100.00	
Tabulation of preparation				Tabulation of alignment				Tabulation of right			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
preparation+	21	41.18	41.18	alignment+	25	49.02	49.02	right+	20	39.22	39.22
preparation-	30	58.82	100.00	alignment-	26	50.98	100.00	right-	31	60.78	100.00
Total	51	100.00		Total	51	100.00		Total	51	100.00	
Tabulation of pleasure											
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.								
pleasure+	28	54.90	54.90								
pleasure-	23	45.10	100.00								
Total	51	100.00									

As suggested by Hjellbrekke (2018), all the active categories used in the analysis have frequencies above the minimum threshold of 5%

Table A2. Rate of inertia of the axes

Axis	rate	cum.rate	mrte	cum.mrate
1	24.2	24.2	79.0	79.0
2	16.0	40.2	13.8	92.8
3	14.3	54.4	7.1	99.9
4	10.4	64.8	0.1	100

Table A2 shows the unmodified and Benzecri's modified rate of variance³⁷ for both for single and cumulative axes. The first axis of the ACM explains 79% of the variance (24.2% of the unmodified rate), the second axis 13.8% of the variance (15.9% of the unmodified rate). The first two axes thus cumulatively explain 92.8% of the variance. Moreover, from the third axis onwards, the eigenvalues associated with each dimension decreases.

Table A3. Contribution of categories on axes 1

Variable	Category	Weight	Quality of representation	Contribution (left)	Contribution (right)	Total contribution	Cumulated contribution	Contribution of deviation	Proportion to variable
lack of efficacy	lack efficacy-	16	0,588		16.65	24.27	24.27	24.27	100
	lack efficacy+	35	0,588	7.61					
efficacy	eff-	24	0,501	10.96		20.7	44.97	20.7	100
	eff+	27	0,501		9.74				
Individual responsibility	individual_resp +	16	0,499		14.12	20.58	65.54	20.58	100
	individual_resp -	35	0,499	6.46					
preparation	preparation+	21	0,281	6.83		6.83	72.37	6.83	58.82

Only categories whose contribution is higher than the average are taken into account (Hjellbrekke 2018).

Table A4. Contribution of categories on axes 2

Variable	Category	Weight	Quality of representation	Contribution (left)	Contribution (right)	Total contribution	Cumulated contribution	Contribution of deviation	Proportion to variable
guilt	guilt-	24	0,503	16.7		31.55	31.55	31.55	100
	guilt+	27	0,503		14.85				
alignment	alignment+	25	0,411	13.14		25.77	57.31	25.77	100
	alignment-	26	0,411		12.63				
No guilt	no guilt+	22	0,191	6.8		11.96	69.27	11.96	100
	no guilt-	29	0,191		5.16				
right	right+	20	0,165		6.28	6.28	75.56	6.28	60.78
preparation	preparation+	21	0,16	5.89		5.89	81.45	5.89	58.82

³⁷ I have included the modified Benzecri rate in addition to the unmodified inertia rate because it is the one that provides the most realistic rate of variance; the unmodified inertia rate is generally more conservative and therefore more difficult to interpret (Hjellbrekke 2018). I have used R's 'explor' package to produce the graphs. This package, however, does not include Benzecri's modified rate, so it must be taken into account that the inertia rates shown in all the graphs are unmodified.

Appendix G (Chapter 6)

Figures A2-A3-A4. Individual plot. Manager, socio-cultural, technical household.

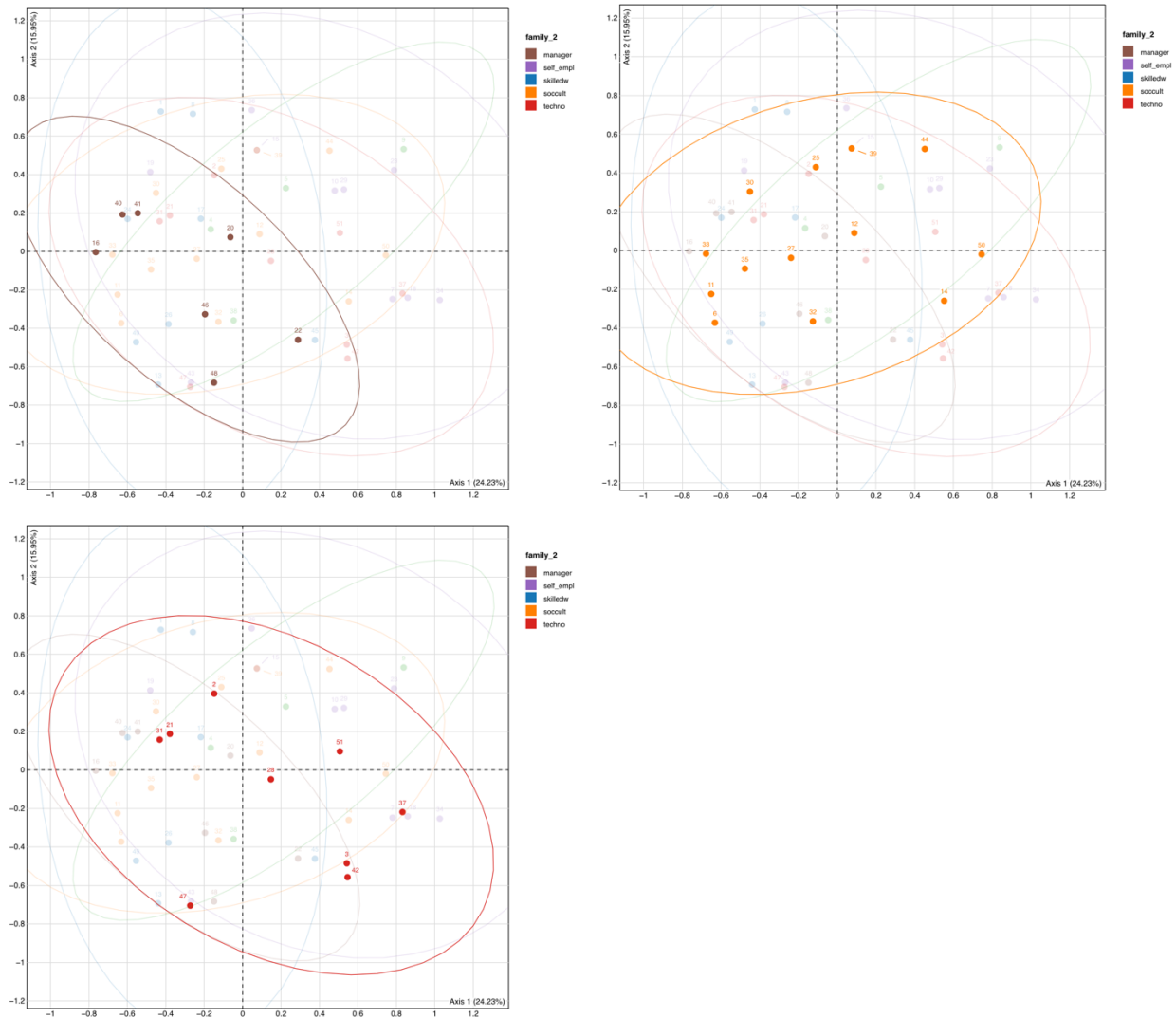
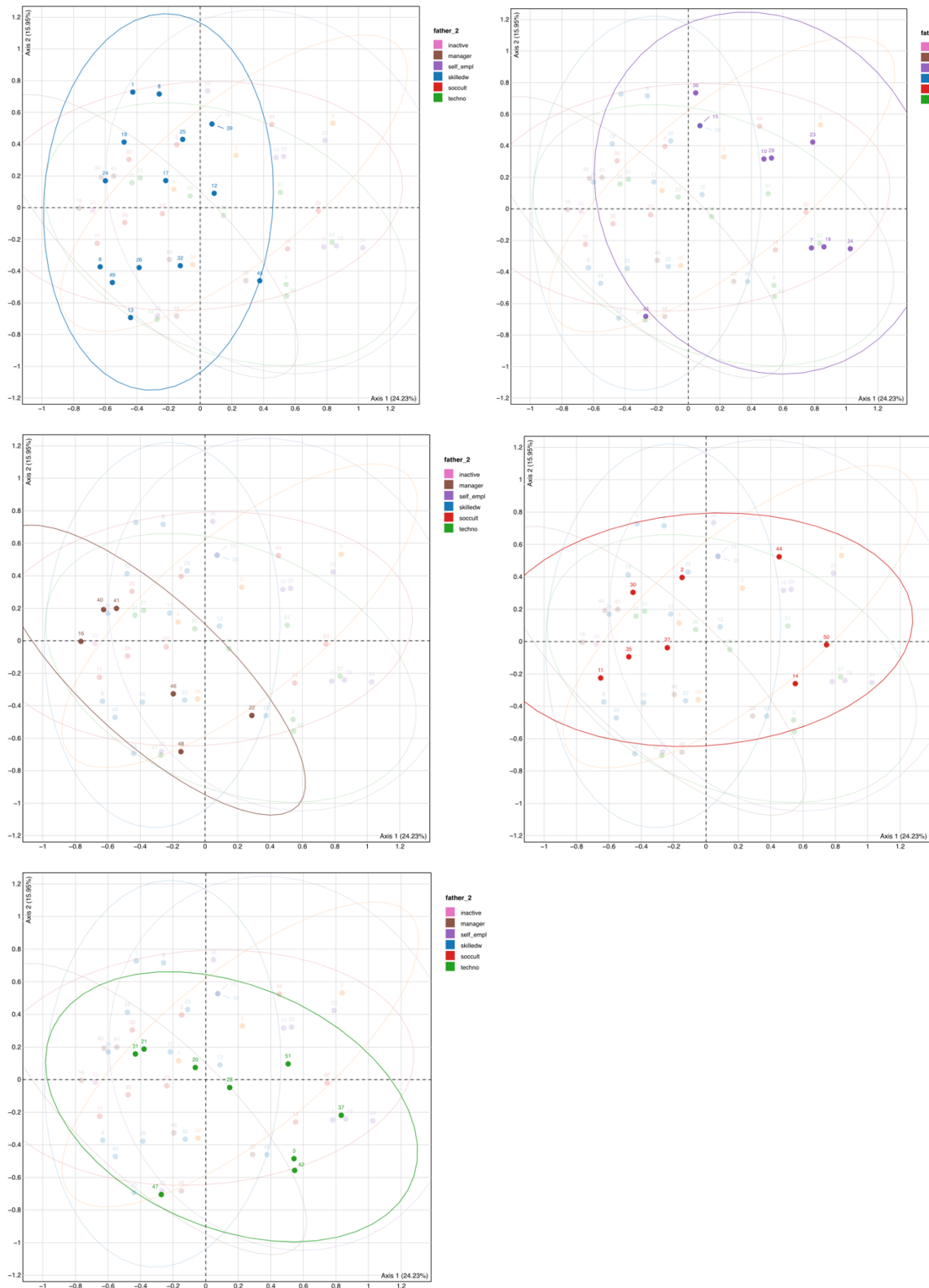


Figure A5-A6-A7-A8-A9. Individual plot. Father's socio-professional category. Skilled dependent workers, self employed, managers, socio-cultural, technical.



Figures A10-A11-A12-A13. Individual plot. Mother’s socio-professional categories.

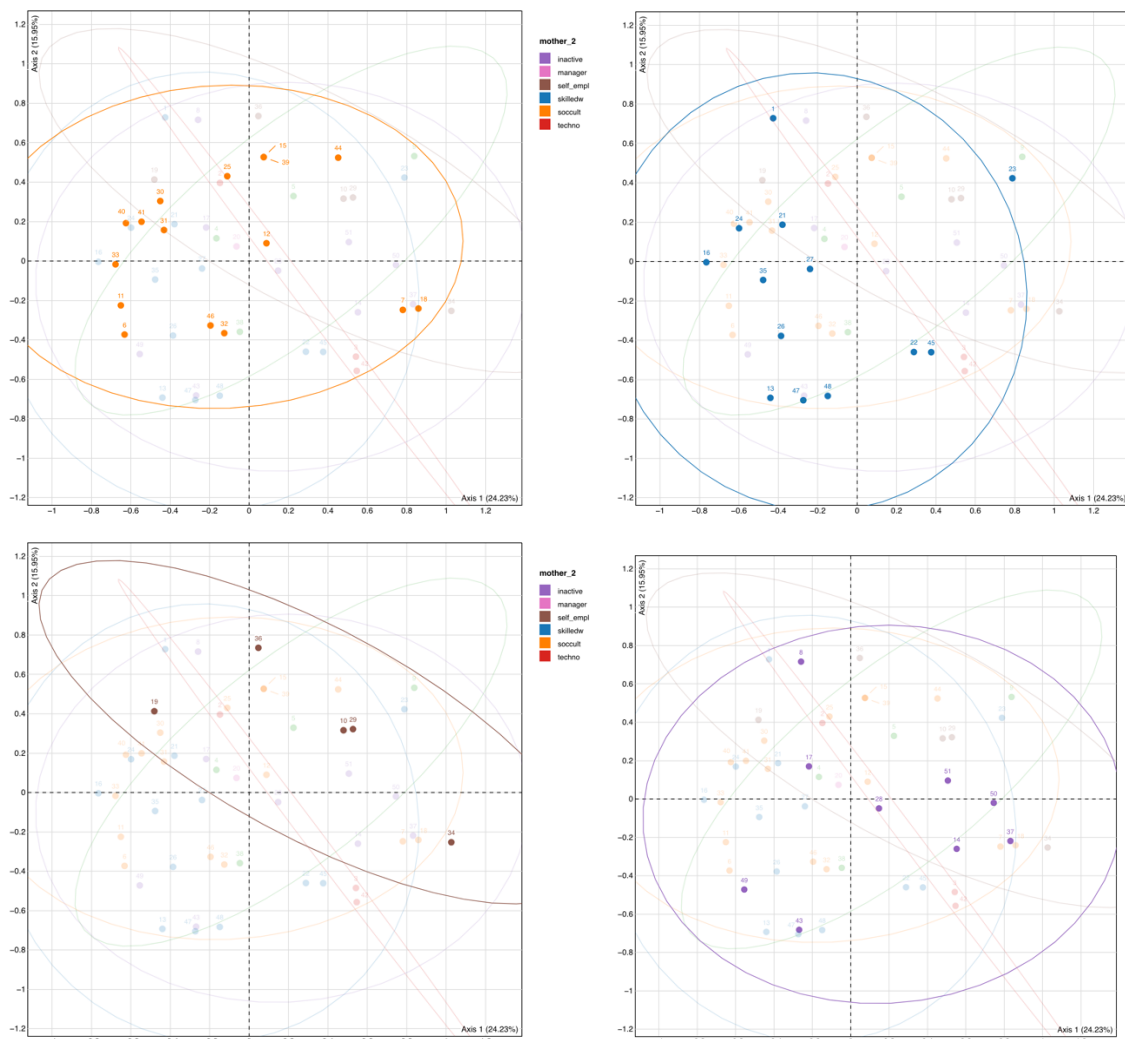


Figure A14-A15. Individual plot. Interviewees working sector.

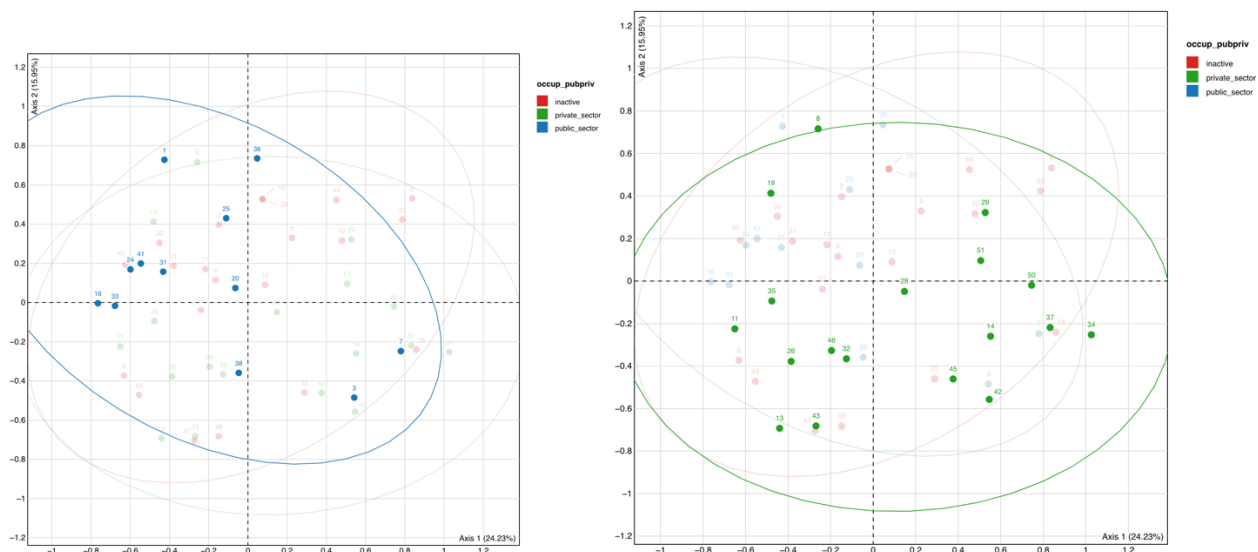
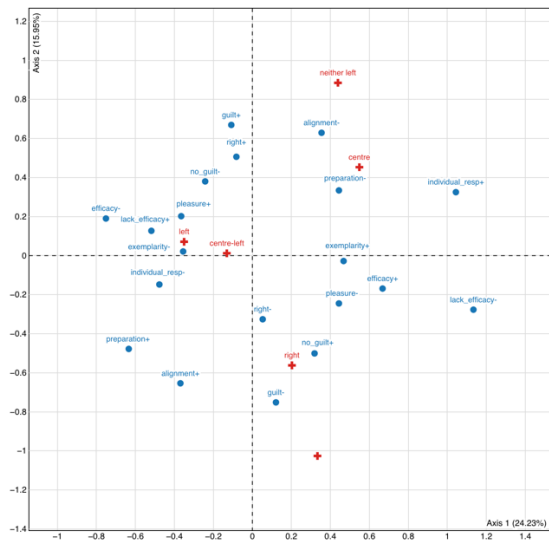
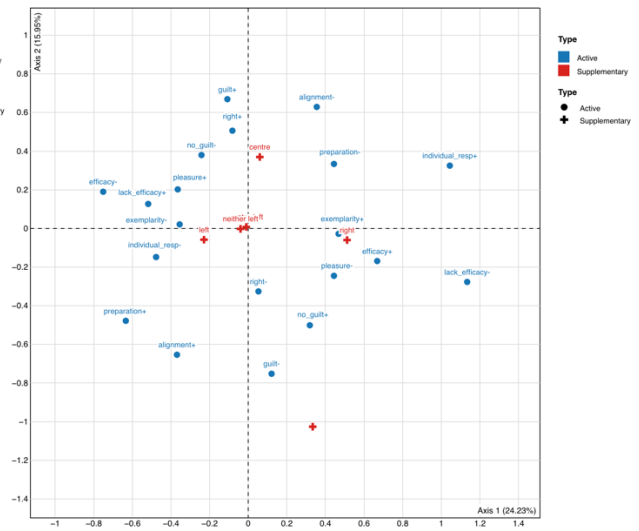


Figure A16-A17. Variable plot. Parent's political position



Type
 ■ Active
 ■ Supplementary
 Type
 ● Active
 + Supplementary



Type
 ■ Active
 ■ Supplementary
 Type
 ● Active
 + Supplementary