



Climate and social justice in Eastern and Southern Europe: The social nature of climate change

Attila Antal

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Attila Antal

Institute of Political Science, Faculty of Law

Eötvös Loránd University

Hungary

Email: antal.attila@ajk.elte.hu

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Abstract

I am dealing with the question of environmental and climate (in)justices in Eastern and Southern Europe in this paper. At first, I will refer to the theoretical pillars of environmental and climate justice and argue that there is an expanding sphere concerning environmentalism which has grounded the theory of climate justice. Environmental justice has expanded to include climate justice because – as will be elaborated here –the environmental justice movements increasingly argued that environmental and social conditions provide for individual and community needs, and that justice depends on environmental conditions. In the second part of this paper the connection between climate justice and social problems have been analysed. The investigation worked out here is based on a very important initiative called Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities and Trade (EJOLT) and its Environmental Justice Atlas. Demonstrating the social implications of climate injustice in Eastern and Southern Europe, I will focus on two main challenges related to environmental and climate injustice: the situation of the Roma communities in the region and the emerging case of fuel or energy poverty. This paper will conclude that we need to (re)enhance the social nature of environmental problems and this will strengthen the environmental consciousness in Eastern and Southern Europe. The related discourse of environmental and climate justice needs to be based on environmental identities constructed on ethnical and social solidarity.

Keywords Climate Justice, Environmental Justice, Eastern and Southern Europe, Solidarity, Environmental Identity.

1. Theorizing Environmental and Climate Justice

1.1 The Expanding Sphere of Environmental Justice

It will be argued here that there is a broadening and expanding discourse about environmental justice. I will briefly analyse the main notions of the expanded concerns of environmental justice. The earliest approaches concerning environmental justice focused on the inequity in the distribution of environmental bads (Bryant and Mohai 1992; Pellow 2004 and 2007). From that standpoint “environmental injustice was about social injustice being manifest in a host of environmental risks and bads” (Schlosberg 2013, 47). Bullard (2000) assumed that a core principle of environmental justice is that “all people and communities are entitled to equal protection of environmental and public health laws and regulations.”

These environmental problems are characterized as social injustices, which hurt not only poor people but communities of colour. From this standpoint, environmental injustice has been framed as eco-racism so the main explanatory focus of environmental problems was racism. Schlosberg puts it very clearly: “Environmental justice wasn’t simply about establishing the fact that more environmental bads and risks were being put on minority communities [...] The practice, and experience, of racism has been at the heart of environmental justice discourse in the United States [...]” (Schlosberg 2013, 39). According to Mohai, Pellow and Roberts environmental racism is the result of what happens when people fear that their lives and health are being disproportionately put at risk because of the colour of their skin or the sound of their accent (2009, 406).ⁱ The analysis of Roma population elaborated here is embedded in this environmental justice framework.

Benjamin Chavis, then executive director of the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, elaborated the term of environmental racism in the following way: “Environmental racism is racial discrimination in environmental policy making, the enforcement of regulations and laws, the deliberate targeting of communities of colour for toxic waste facilities, the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and the history of excluding people of colour from leadership of the ecology movements” (Bullard 2000 cited by Mohai, Pellow and Roberts 2009, 406). Thus, environmental racism “refers to any policy, practice, or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups, or

communities based on race or colour” (Bullard 1996 cited by Mohai, Pellow and Roberts 2009, 406).

Schlosberg points out that “[...] equity was a key frame in the initial consideration of environmental injustice. That early focus on inequity quickly expanded to include “a range of issues from the generally unequal nature of environmental protection to the distribution of a range of environmental goods as well as bads [...]” (Schlosberg 2013, 38). The three main directions where the concept of environmental justice has been expanded are the analysis of justice, the factors behind environmental injustices and the definition of the environment.

Mohai, Pellow and Roberts (2009, 406) pointed out the main factors of environmental injustices. The first factor deals with economic considerations, including both the impoverishment of impacted populations and the reasoning for industrial externalization of social and environmental costs. Their second point reveals that the industry and government seek the path of least resistance to development, and poor and racial minority communities make easier targets. Finally, a distinct form of racism simply associates communities of colour with pollution (Schlosberg 2013, 39).

Apparently, there is another explanation about the context of environmental justice and therefore claims concerning environmental justice remain contentious. Mohai, Pellow and Roberts show this wave of environmental justice and state that early environmental movements ignored social justice and equality issues and “there is not a consensus among environmentalists on whether broadening environmentalism to include justice is always a good idea” (Mohai, Pellow and Roberts 2009, 406).

We can say that the discourse of race and ethnicity are “important aspects in understanding popular environmentalism, but they may not be central in every setting where environmental injustices are present” (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 5). Martínez-Alier (2003) cautions against applying “environmental racism” as a universal framework to all environmental injustices.

Nevertheless, there is a broadening environmental justice discourse which has absorbed several issues and has been applied a global level. It has been argued by Schlosberg that this discourse can be seen which extends beyond individual human beings and conceptualizes community level justice and justice beyond the human (2013, 40). The concept of environmental justice has become a broad framework which contains “analyses of

transportation, access to countryside and green space, land use and smart growth policy, water quality and distribution, energy development and jobs, brownfields refurbishment, and food justice” (Schlosberg 2013, 40).

1.2 The Theoretical Implications of Climate Justice

Debates over environmental justice have created an overarching phenomenon and the nature of climate justice and injustice has become arguable as well. According to Schlosberg (2013, 38): “Climate change has pushed environmental justice to more broad considerations of both environment and justice.” We can say that climate justice has become one of the main concepts of environmental justice. Several environmental problems which were previously seen as environmental justice questions currently can also be analysed using a climate justice framework.

At first climate justice concerns applied existing conceptions of distributive and social justice to climate change (Schlosberg 2013, 38). This means that climate justice discourses focused on distributive fairness (Shue, 1993), historical responsibility and restorative justice (Agarwal and Nurnain 1991), or a per capita equity approach to emission allowances (Singer 2004). Climate change has been interpreted as an environmental phenomenon of social injustices by several climate change movements.

Climate change made the theory of environmental justice a more problem-based approach and focused on understanding and articulating the crisis caused by climate change at global and local scale. Two main shifts framed the concept environmental justice and these turning points pushed the environmental justice debates toward climate justice questions. . On the one hand, Schlosberg is convinced that “the breadth of the understanding of environmental and climate justice here both includes and moves beyond local environmental conditions, to expand the environmental justice frame and engage broader conceptions of social and global justice” (Schlosberg 2013, 47). On the other hand, the disastrous damages and catastrophes caused by climate change turned the discourse of environmental justice to local experiences, for instance the resilience of communities. “Environmental and climate justice activists and movements regularly address the actual material experience of changing environmental conditions, impacts on everyday life, and, crucially, the potential ways functioning and development are threatened.” (Schlosberg 2013, 47) So, the increasing vulnerability to

climate change at global and local levels as well as the demands of adaptation in an altered climate shaped the concept of climate justice.

Environmental justice has been expanded to climate justice, because the environmental justice movements increasingly addressed that the environmental and social conditions “provide for individual and community needs” and justice depend on environmental conditions (Schlosberg 2013, 48). Environmental justice movements in the United States promoted the case of environmental injustice at global level. Mohai, Pellow and Roberts pointed out that climate justice concerns have evolved from a rights-based approach: “Much of the existing research on the internationalization of risks comes from legal scholars wrestling with problems of international and domestic law on the waste trade – specifically the legislation and treaties enacted to control these activities [...]. The legal literature centres mainly on one major pressing question: To what extent can domestic regulation and international agreements control or minimize the waste trade?” (Mohai, Pellow and Roberts 2009, 419). Nations who suffer from imported waste and the impact of climate change are communities from the Global South populated by a high percentage of people living in poverty. In a certain sense climate justice is a globalized concept of environmental justice and movements. For instance, shipping electronic waste creates a massive transfer of hazardous waste products from North to South (Mohai, Pellow and Roberts 2009, 420). We can say that climate justice refers to the injustice dilemmas caused and exacerbated by climate change. As Mohai, Pellow and Roberts argued (2009, 420): “[c]limate change reflects and increases social inequality in a series of ways, including who suffers most its consequences, who caused the problem, who is expected to act, and who has the resources to do so” (IPCC 2007; Kasperson and Kasperson 2001). Climate justice can be understood not only in the context of individuals, but between states, race, ethnicity, class.

Posner and Weisbach reject “the claim that climate change policies should be based on corrective justice or on an effort to redistribute from rich to poor” (2010, 169). They argue that allocating emissions permits on a per capita basis causes several ethical problems: “Such an allocation is not easy to justify from the standpoint of any ethical theory, and efforts to insist on it may well derail a climate treaty, ensuring serious harms to poor people in poor nations.” (Posner and Weisbach 2010, 169). They suggest that wealthy people have moral obligations to help poor people in developed and developing country as well. As the impact of climate change increases the differences between the rich and poor, this obligation has

been increased. They raise the very interesting point that it is not necessary that this obligation should be carried out through climate change treaties.ⁱⁱ Posner and Weisbach are convinced that an effective climate treaty will likely generate a surplus which is distributed between the parties who join the treaty because it must be designed to make signatories better off (2010, 170).

2. Climate Justice and Social Problems in Eastern and Southern Europe

2.1 The Region and Climate Change

I will investigate here climate justice relationships of Eastern and Southern Europe (ESE). For political, geographical, economical and historical reasons this region can be analysed according to very similar perspectives. Disasters, environmental and social impacts caused by climate change could create a common system of challenges in the ESE region. The region contains 17 states: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the mean annual temperature is projected to increase between 1 and 3 °C until the middle of the century and up to 5 °C by the end of the century Pavlik (Anders et al. 2013, 24-24) (*Figure 1* illustrates the projected change in temperature for the middle of the 21st century).ⁱⁱⁱ This rise in average temperature will cause several social and political problems across the region. It has been predicted that the “European warming will be higher than the global mean temperature increase [...] In the autumn and winter months the temperature change in North and Eastern Europe will be higher (up to 3 °C) compared to Southern Europe (1–1.5 °C).” (Anders et al. 2013, 25).

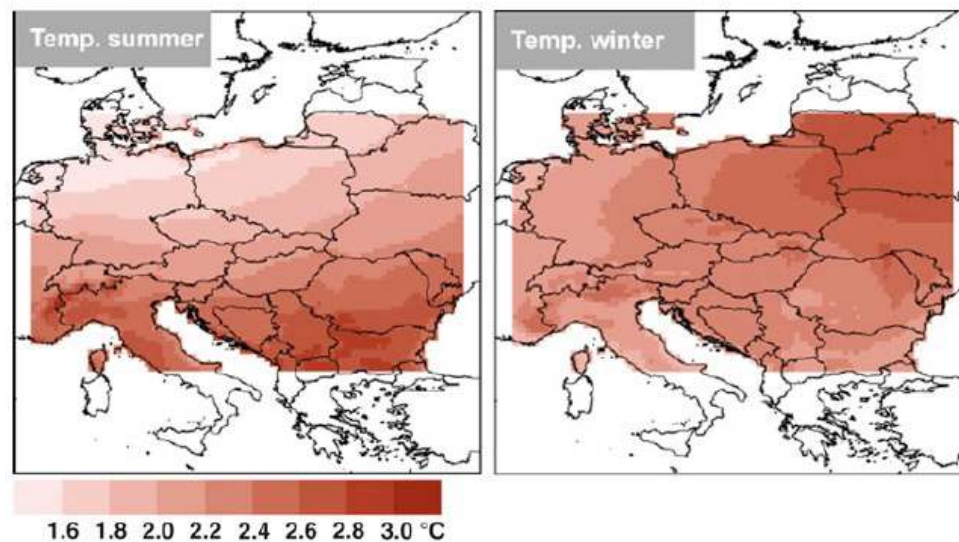


Figure 1 Change of simulated mean temperature in Central and Eastern Europe in winter and summer as the multi-model mean 2036–2065 relative to 1971–2000 for the A1B greenhouse gas emission scenario (Source: Anders et al. 2013, 25).

They concluded that “[f]or all of Central and Eastern Europe a clear temperature rise is visible for the future which is projected to become more distinct at the end of the century. A general pattern is that the projected increase of temperature is highest during summer and lower during winter.” (Anders et al. 2013, 26).

To better understand the climate justice problems in the ESE region, it is necessary to show the relevant details about the climate change. The maps of Environmental Justice Atlas by Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities and Trade (EJOLT)^{iv} highlight the spatial mal-distribution of climate change sources and its impacts. *Figure 2* shows CO₂ emissions/capita and *Figure 3* is dealing with the case of carbon debt.^v The climate debt was defined at the People’s Summit in Bolivia in 2010, where it was stated that “the overconsumption of the available capacity of the Earth’s atmosphere and climate system to absorb greenhouse gases by the developed countries has run up a climate debt to developing countries and mother Earth” (UNFCCC 2010, 15). CO₂ emissions per capita and climate debt can be considered together, whereas positive figure constitutes a debt, while a negative is a claim (Warlenius, n.a.). One of the EJOLT project’s main areas of focus is ecological debt, including climate debt, which is mainly based on carbon debt.

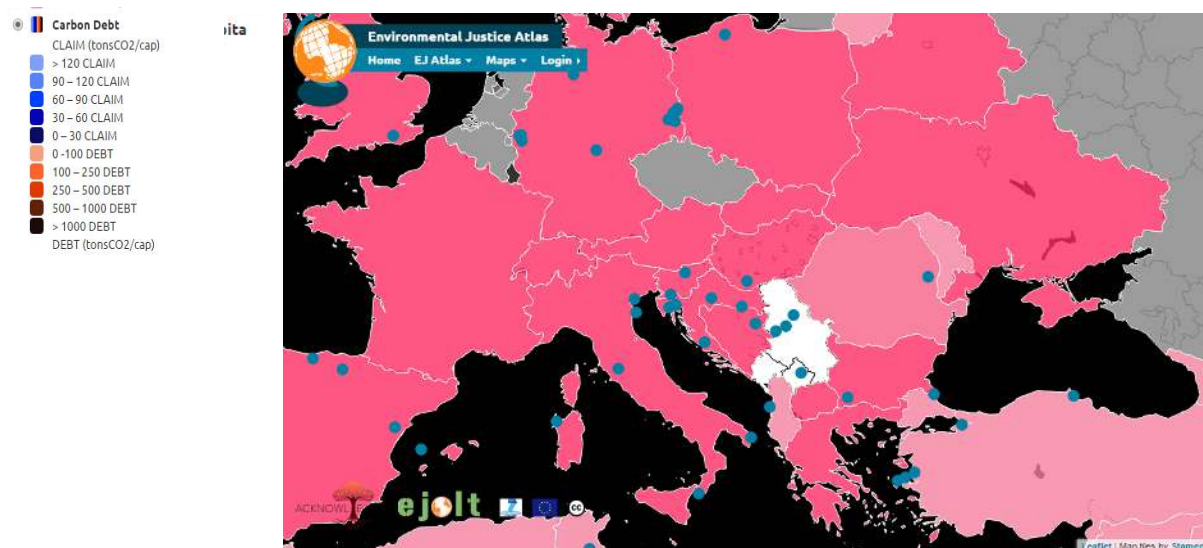


Figure 2 CO₂ Emissions/Capita in Eastern and Southern Europe (Source: EJOLT).

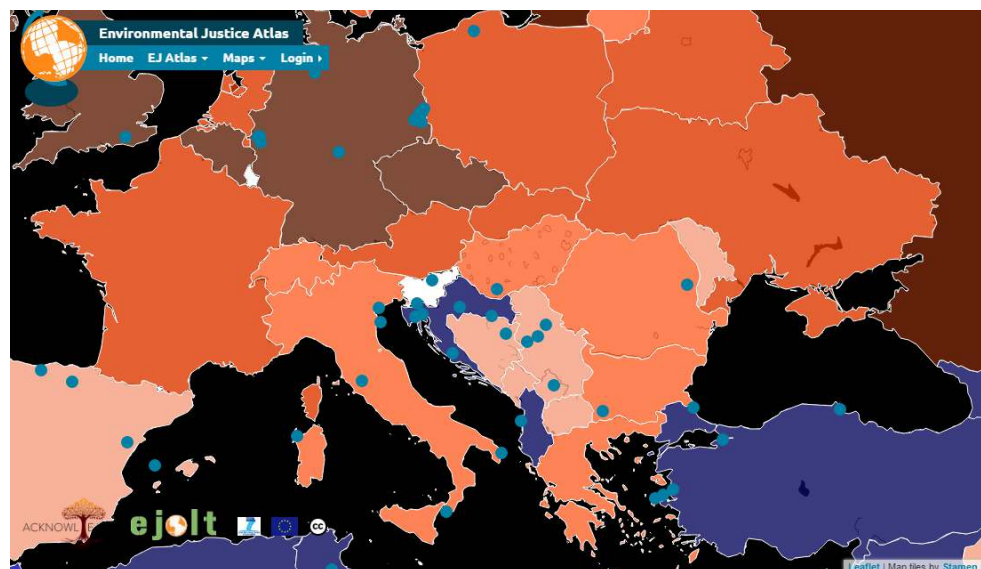


Figure 3 Carbon Debt in Eastern and Southern Europe (Source: EJOLT).

From these perspectives, we can say that ESE has relatively moderate CO₂ emissions/capita results, nevertheless this region has a high carbon debt capacity which means huge risks in the light of climate injustices.

2.2 The Nature of Climate Injustice in ESE

According to the EJOLT Environmental Justice Atlas the number of environmental justice problems has increasingly grown in ESE^{vi} and some of these problems have a direct relationship with climate change (*Figure 4*). However, climate-related problems are not on the political agenda in this region.



Figure 4 Environmental Justice Related Cases in Eastern and Southern Europe (Source: EJOLT).

After the regime changes a new chapter has begun in the environmental history of the post-communist region. It has been proven by the collapse of communist regimes that there is a huge environmental and social bomb caused by the environmental irresponsibility. Unfortunately, the environmental and social systems have not been improved by the new liberal and capitalist systems as it would be required to disarm this bomb. The core problems with method of implementation of democracy in this region are in conjunction with the environmental, climate and social problems. In my point of view there is a strong connection between the social and climate (or environmental) injustices. Moreover, the social problems appear in environmental contexts and the victims do not realize the environmental nature of these challenges. For instance, the most vulnerable groups are facing several climate change induced problems and at the same time they do not have effective democratic representation in the ESE political communities. They are voiceless and there is a huge lack of representation in the sense of environmental and energy democracy (Antal 2015).

Therefore, this region has not only huge carbon or ecological debt potential, but the risk of vulnerability caused by climate change is also relatively high in ESE compared to other parts of Europe (*Figure 5*), as was shown in the summer of 2017.

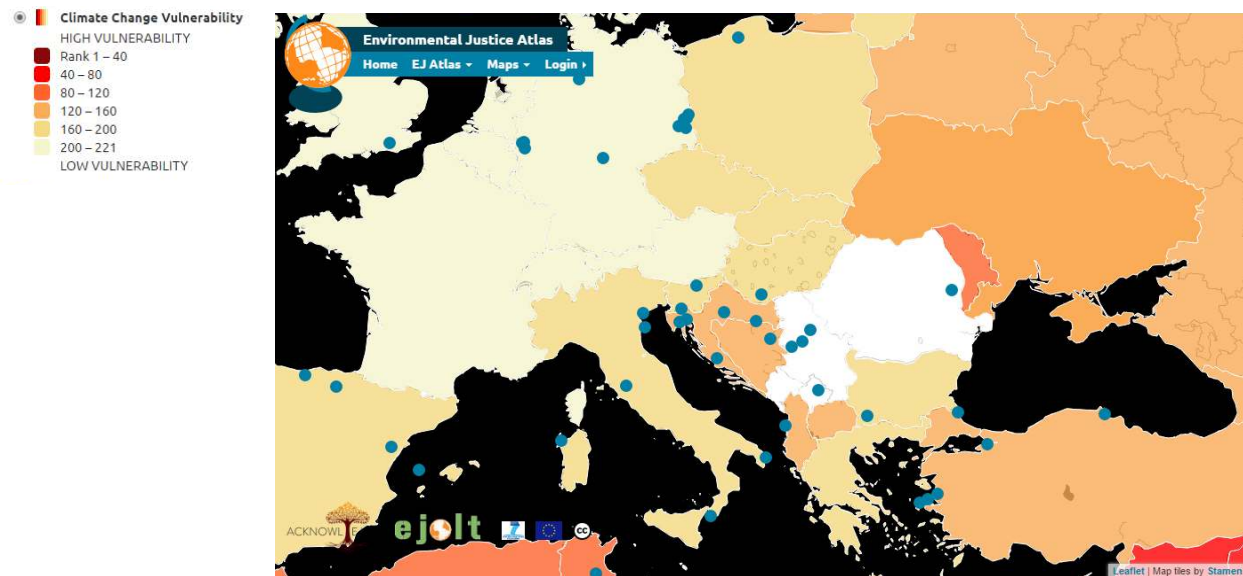


Figure 5 Climate Change Vulnerability in Eastern and Southern Europe.

In my view, this situation identifies two main climate injustices. . The first one affects the most vulnerable sociocultural groups in this region which are the Roma communities. The second one is related to the lower (and upper) middle class groups and called energy poverty. These groups are suffering the most from the daily consequences (extreme weather conditions) of climate change.

2.3 The Theoretical Aspects of Environmental/Climate Justice in ESE

The environmental justice movement was said to be “a post-materialist movement supported largely by young, white, middle-class citizens” (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 5). This approach has mistakenly led to a common-sense perception that low-income and socially excluded groups are not interested in and even more care less about the environment than their middle-class, majority counterparts. Doherty and Doyle (2006) argued that there are three major frames in transnational environmentalism: post-colonial, post-materialist, and post-industrial environmentalisms. Martínez-Alier (2003) pointed out the "environmentalism of the poor” which combines elements of post-colonial and post-industrial environmentalist approaches and addresses the preservation of traditional ecological knowledge and the struggle for environmental justice. In the ESE region, both post-colonial and post-industrial aspects can be found in the environmental critique concerning environmental justice (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 5). Nevertheless, there is a confluence of environmental activism and lessons learned from US civil rights-based environmental activism which “has fundamentally shifted the discourse on environmental harms toward a more intrinsic or inherent valuation of

humans and nature and points to previously untapped possibilities for integration” (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 6). The environmental and climate justice discourse has been influenced by this phenomenon and it is obvious that anti-racism and environmentalism go hand in hand. I agree with the approach of Harper, Steger and Filčák who based their theory on Ladányi and Szelényi’s analysis of post-socialist patterns of social exclusion (2006) and argue “that in the case of Roma in CEE, spaces inhabited by low-income Roma have come to be ‘racialized’ during the post-socialist era, intensifying patterns of environmental exclusion along ethnic lines” (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 6).

Environmental justice advocacy in the US is based extensively on the civil rights movement and was linked to bottom-up, community-based activism. In contrast to the US situation, in the UK environmental movements are led by environmental organizations with a highly-educated staff and international expertise (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 6). These are the main ways of constructing and theorizing environmental justice. We can understand their conclusion which is relating to Central and Eastern Europe but can be generalized concerning the ESE region: “These possibilities could be expressed in CEE through the integration of environmental protection and social inclusion. To date, attempts at such policy integration or activist alliances have been rare; post-socialist policies addressing the conditions of Roma communities have been framed through an ethnic lens as ‘Roma issues’, resulting in an ethicized policy silo [...]. For mobilizations to be effective, activists in CEE must develop a vocabulary for addressing environmental injustices that is analytically applicable and strategically effective in the context of the European Union and especially at the local and national level [...]” (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 7).

Summarizing, we need a common and well-established discourse concerning environmental injustices which is overlapping between environmental and social inclusion concerns. This new approach needs to be based on an identity politics which creates ethnic identities which could be a step toward creating shared environmental identities.

2.4 Roma Population and Climate Justice: From “Roma-issue” to Climate Discourse

The environmental injustices concerning Roma people originated in the environmental transition following 1989, when the low-income Roma population in the region bore the brunt of the post-socialist economic transformation. The Roma minority has suffered from

the following environmental problems and injustices: unequal access to sewage or wastewater treatment; unequal access to household water; unequal access to green space and playgrounds; waste management and illegal dumping by outsiders as well as residents; energy, including household energy efficiency and access to fuel for heating and cooking; poor housing quality, which relates back to energy efficiency, access to public infrastructure, and human health (Steger, 2007). The harmful effects of climate change (problems with drinking water; floods; heat waves) will disproportionately affect the Roma minority and will cause very similar environmental and climate injustices theorized as eco-racism. Without a common climate governance structure in the ESE region, the massive climate and social injustices will cause incalculable damages.

It has been pointed out by Tamara Steger that the state of the Roma communities and refugees demonstrates the urgency of an environmental justice agenda in the ESE region (Steger 2007, 19). From her standpoint, the environmental and climate justices questions concerning Roma people have been investigated in the social justice and anti-racism: “While it is widely known that the Roma experience racial prejudice and discrimination, more attention is needed on how this is reflected in their living conditions and manifested as health problems through the distribution of environmental benefits and harms [...] While Roma take on a disproportionate share of the burden of environmental harms, they are frequently denied the benefits such as access to water and other natural resources.” (Steger 2007, 19).

The social discrimination towards the Roma community has led to geographical segregation which means that they have been confined to the most polluted or high environmental risk areas. Roma communities have insufficient access to environmental good such as clean water and sewage treatment (*Table 1*). Environmental and climate injustices contribute to devastating social conditions of these people, who do have an equal procedural and environmental rights incorporated by the constitutions ESE countries as non-Roma people. There is a huge tension between Roma and non-Roma people concerning the prevailing constitutional environmental rights sphere.^{vii}

	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Hungary	Romania	Slovak Republic
Running water	45	4	34	65	32
Toilet in the dwelling	75	15	46	65	44
Sewage treatment	51	6	63	62	46
Bathroom in the dwelling	70	12	41	66	37

Table 1 Percent of Roma population living in households without access to facilities in the dwelling in 2002 (Source: Steger 2007, 20).

There is another side of the social and environmental discrimination of Roma communities, “poorly insulated housing and the widespread use of dilapidated woodstoves waste residents’ energy resources and also contribute to respiratory ailments in the winter months” (Steger 2007, 20) and it is very common that in these segregated areas the people heat with household and other waste which contributes to the formation of smog.

These environmental burdens endured disproportionately by the Roma people will be increased because of the constantly occurring impact of climate change (Steger 2007, 21). This will influence the otherwise disappointing health records of the Roma communities.

In my view, the main problem in this field is that there is not a shared environmental identity or identity politics in the Roma communities. Harper, Steger and Filčák have pointed out that “Roma in CEE are rarely perceived as ‘environmental subjects’ by themselves or others although struggles for access to housing and public infrastructure have played a critical role in grassroots organizing in many Roma communities.” (2009, 7). This environmental consciousness would be indispensable to influence the democratic decision-making processes and elected politicians. Without a shared political identity these groups remain voiceless and powerless.

Nevertheless, this is a huge challenge because on the one hand “since 1989 there has been a push from both Romani activists and the Hungarian state [...] to identify and organize Roma as an ethnic group and to target policies towards them”, on the other hand “many activists and politicians fear that ‘ethnicizing’ political issues of Roma communities marginalizes those issues and promotes stereotypes, but without targeted programs, there is little incentive for members of the majority group to consult or include minorities” (Harper, Steger and

Filčák 2009, 11). To achieve this shared identity there is a basic need to create a coalition from environmentalist and Roma civil rights activists which can address the racial side of environmental injustices without enhancing stereotypes and creating an environmental discursive or geographical ghetto (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 11). Otherwise, Roma communities will bear the brunt of environmental and climate inequalities, because they are unable to mobilize social, political, and economic resources (Pellow, 2001).

2.5 Energy Poverty

In my view, energy or fuel poverty is a phenomenon which represents environmental and climate injustices not only in the marginalized social groups but in the middle class: not all low-income households are fuel poor and there are fuel-poor households that do not belong to the lowest income percentiles (Waddams Prince et al. 2006). Energy or fuel poverty is a part of the expanding sphere of environmental and climate injustices. According to Tirado and Ürge-Vorsatz “[t]he concept of fuel poverty can be located in the broad frame of the lack of or inadequate access to energy services, which refers to the lack access, mostly in developing countries to quality energy services as those provided, for instance, by electricity” (2010, 4). Fuel or energy poverty is about the quality and affordability of energy services, energy efficiency. It means the inability to afford adequate energy services for the household. A proposed definition of fuel poverty by Brenda Boardman who stated that this is an “inability to obtain adequate energy services for 10% of a household income” (1991, 201). This definition has been criticized because the lack of scientific rationality of the mentioned 10%. Tirado and Ürge-Vorsatz argue that fuel or energy poverty is a concept to be framed in more general considerations about poverty and deprivation (2010, 4). Nowadays, fuel or energy poverty is gaining in political importance, not just because of climate change, but because of rising energy bills and vulnerable customers.

Tirado and Ürge-Vorsatz state that “[c]onsidering the three factors often considered in the analysis of fuel poverty (energy prices, household income and energy performance of the residential stock), there are concerns about the incidence of this particular type of deprivation in CEE countries” (2010, 5). In more general terms, this is an emerging environmental and climate change caused deprivation in ESE. First of all, after the regime change in this region the state-owned energy monopolies have been privatized. The acceptance of the concept of full-cost recovery tariffs and liberalized energy markets have caused higher energy prices. ESE countries’ GDP per capita income is lower than the EU’s average. Moreover, “the high

energy consumption of the average residential unit is a consequence of the long-time subsidised energy prices and the lack of basic energy efficiency requirements” (Tirado and Ürge-Vorsatz 2010, 5-6.).^{viii}

On the one hand, there are not standardized measurement frameworks for energy poverty and no consistent systems for data gathering and there is little political discourse about these inequalities. On the other hand, fuel or energy poverty has become an emerging discourse of environmental or climate justice, even though the concept has not created a new structural identity. The social groups affected by the various levels of fuel or energy poverty are multi-coloured and are struggling with the different aspects of fuel or energy poverty. There is little group solidarity within the affected groups.

3. Conclusions: Environmental Identity and Solidarity, or towards a Populist View of Climate Change

According to my concerns elaborated in this paper, the social nature of environmental problems need to be (re)enhanced to strengthen the environmental consciousness in Eastern and Southern Europe. Access to information and social participation can create the mentioned environmental consciousness which is indispensable in the context of environmental justice. We need to find the right solution between the under- and over-ethicized frameworks concerning the ethnical problems caused by environmental and climate injustices. This means broadening racial and ethnic minority groups' participation in ecological activities can play an important role in transforming ecological attitudes and promoting social inclusion (Mohai1990).

I am convinced that the discourse of environmental and climate justice in Eastern and Southern Europe needs to be based on environmental identities constructed on ethnic and social solidarity. “Environmental justice reflects a growing wave of environmentalism as people seek justice in the distribution of environmental benefits and harms. Fundamental to this process is not only the application of distributive and procedural notions of justice, but a widening discourse on what constitutes an environmentalist and environmentalism. Further research on environmental justice [...] need to explore the opportunities and barriers to an emergent environmental identity amongst the Roma, and their capacity to generate ‘new vocabulary’ around that identity.” (Harper, Steger and Filčák 2009, 25).

In my view one of the main causes responsible for the failure of the case of environmental and climate justice in ESE is that the environmental justice movements concerned restricted themselves to one issue and avoided becoming involved with other social justice challenges. The examples of waste movements in the USA can show the ecopopulist direction. According to Szasz “waste/toxics movement's development has taken it in quite another direction. Its leading organizations explicitly identify the movement with what they depict as a long and proud history of social struggles in America, with the labor movement, the civil rights movement, the antiwar and New Left movements of the 1960s, and the women's movement” (1999, 150.).

I am convinced that there is a basic need to create vertical and horizontal solidarity structures in ESE societies. Without a broader social change agenda, the environmental and climate

justice movements cannot achieve success. This requires the reinterpretation of environmental and climate justice challenges in a populist way and the first step could be the mentioned goal to (re)enhance the social nature of environmental problems.

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ⁱ Moreover, the approach of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been based on this framework and defined environmental justice as “The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” Available: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice> (Accessed 1 January 2018).

ⁱⁱ Posner and Weisbach justify their skepticism with the following point: “It is not clear, for example, how best to discharge duties to the poor when they are ruled by corrupt governments or when powerful nations threaten or coerce them with bad intent.” (2010, 17).

ⁱⁱⁱ This scenario has been taken in a different form European Global Climate Models produced in the European project ENSEMBLES (Van der Linden and Mitchell 2009).

^{iv} Available: <https://ejatlas.org/> (Accessed 1 January 2018).

^v EJOLT refers the definition of carbon debt: “There, the carbon debt of country A is defined as (a) over-emission of CO₂ by country A overtime with respect to a sustainable level; i.e. emission levels that overshoot the absorption capacity of the atmosphere and are thus causing ecological impact in other countries and ecosystems beyond national jurisdiction; (b) over-emission of CO₂ by country A over time at the expense of the equitable rights to the absorption capacity of the atmosphere of other countries or individuals.” (Warlenius n.a., 2.). This concept of carbon debt has been elaborated by Eric Paredis (2008).

^{vi} 181 climate justice-related cases have been reported in the EJOLT database up to 17th March 2017. Available: <https://ejatlas.org/> (Accessed 1 January 2018).

^{vii} I have elaborated several assumptions according to the relationship between the procedural and connotational environmental rights (Antal 2014).

^{viii} Tirado and Ürge-Vorsatz add to this that “fuel poverty has been also linked to the inability of the region’s post-1989 democratic governments to provide an adequate level of social protection and to develop adequate policy frameworks for improving the thermal efficiency of the residential stock occupied by the lower income households” (2010, 6.).