

Press Release- G20 Summit: these leaders have the largest carbon footprint

- Analysis from travel platform fromAtoB compared international flights taken by G20 heads of state
- Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe notched up the most CO2 emissions with his international flights
- Theresa May took 51 flights, ten of which were to and from Brussels to negotiate over Brexit
- Trump took fewer international trips than other heads of state, but those flights he did take were long-haul and used up considerable resources

Berlin, 2nd July 2019. It was one of the key topics for discussion at the G20 Summit last weekend, as major world powers ramp up their efforts to tackle climate change. But are world leaders being conscientious about their own travel?

Travel portal fromAtoB (www.fromatob.com) wanted some answers, so they conducted research into all the flights taken by various G20 leaders in 2018, to see who had the biggest carbon footprint.

While China as a whole accounts for the largest portion of CO2 emissions, with the amount rising sharply since 2000, president Xi Jinping was not the worst offender when it came to his own personal travel.

Japan's prime minister Shinzō Abe was responsible for the highest emissions of any G20 leader, with his flights to and from the island nation covering the biggest distance and burning the most fuel. He took a total of 38 flights in his Boeing 747-400 in 2018, travelling 128,000 miles (207,000 km) and emitting nearly 14,500 tonnes of CO2 gas.

US president Donald Trump came in second place, flying across 81,400 miles (131,000 km) and emitting nearly 11,550 tonnes of CO2 gas. President Trump made 16 international visits by plane in 2018, the longest being his trip to Singapore for the North Korea-United States Summit in June.

Among European leaders, Angela Merkel took a whopping 83 flights, but the majority of these were short haul flights to European destinations. French president Emmanuel Macron meanwhile took 77 flights in 2018, while Theresa May took 51 flights.

For European leaders, the biggest trip of the year was to the G20 Summit 2018 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which took place from 30th November to 1st December. As part of ongoing Brexit negotiations, Theresa May took a string of flights to Brussels- in February, June, July, October and December.

But the number of flights taken and miles crossed doesn't tell the full story. The type of aircraft also had a significant impact on carbon emissions. When all factors were taken into account, Trump's Boeing 747-200B emitted the most CO2 gas- 0.09 tonnes per square km. The full original research results can be viewed here (insert link).

Methodology: The analysis took all state travel across national borders into account. Internal flights were not included in the research. CO2 emissions are based on the average values for the individual types of aircraft identified by ICAO.

As Australia, Mexico, Indonesia and Switzerland refused to provide travel information, we only looked at the countries shown in the table below.

The King and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia did not undertake any state travel abroad between October 2017 and February 2019.

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Press Contact:

Carmen Cracknell | carmen.cracknell@tonka-pr.com | +49 30 403647 604