



Factors Influencing Citizen Acceptance of Climate Policies

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Is there any support for governmental interventions targeting climate change?



nature climate change

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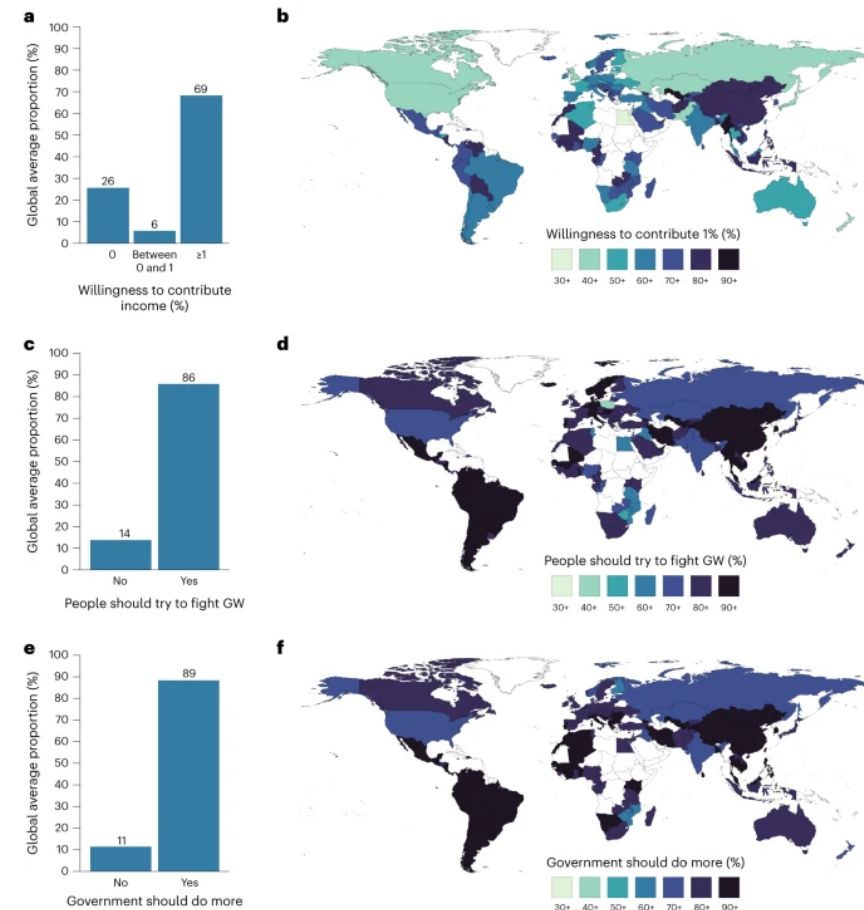
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Article | [Open access](#) | Published: 09 February 2024

Globally representative evidence on the actual and perceived support for climate action

[Peter Andre](#), [Teodora Boneva](#), [Felix Chopra](#) & [Armin Falk](#) 

Fig. 1: Widespread global support for climate action.



a,c,e, The global average proportions of respondents willing to contribute income (**a**), approving of pro-climate social norms (**c**) and demanding political action (**e**). Population-adjusted weights are used to ensure representativeness at the global level. **b,d,f**, World maps in which each country is coloured according to its proportion of respondents willing to contribute 1% of income (**b**), approving of pro-climate social norms (**d**) and demanding political action (**f**). Sampling weights are used to account for the stratified sampling procedure. Supplementary Table 4 presents the data. GW, global warming.



Special Eurobarometer 538 - May 2023

Climate Change

Fieldwork: 10/04/2023 – 05/06/2023

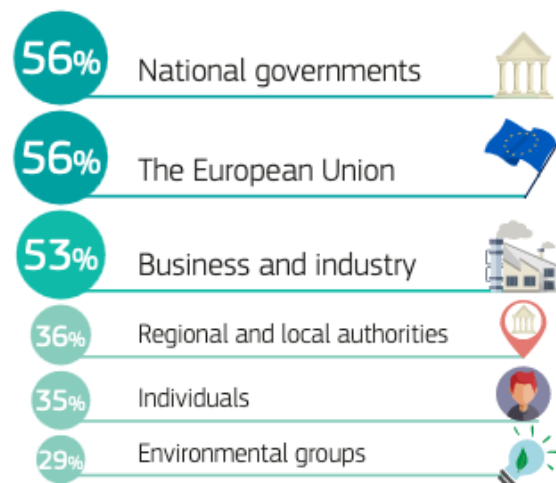
67% of EU citizens think that **their national government is not doing enough to tackle climate change**



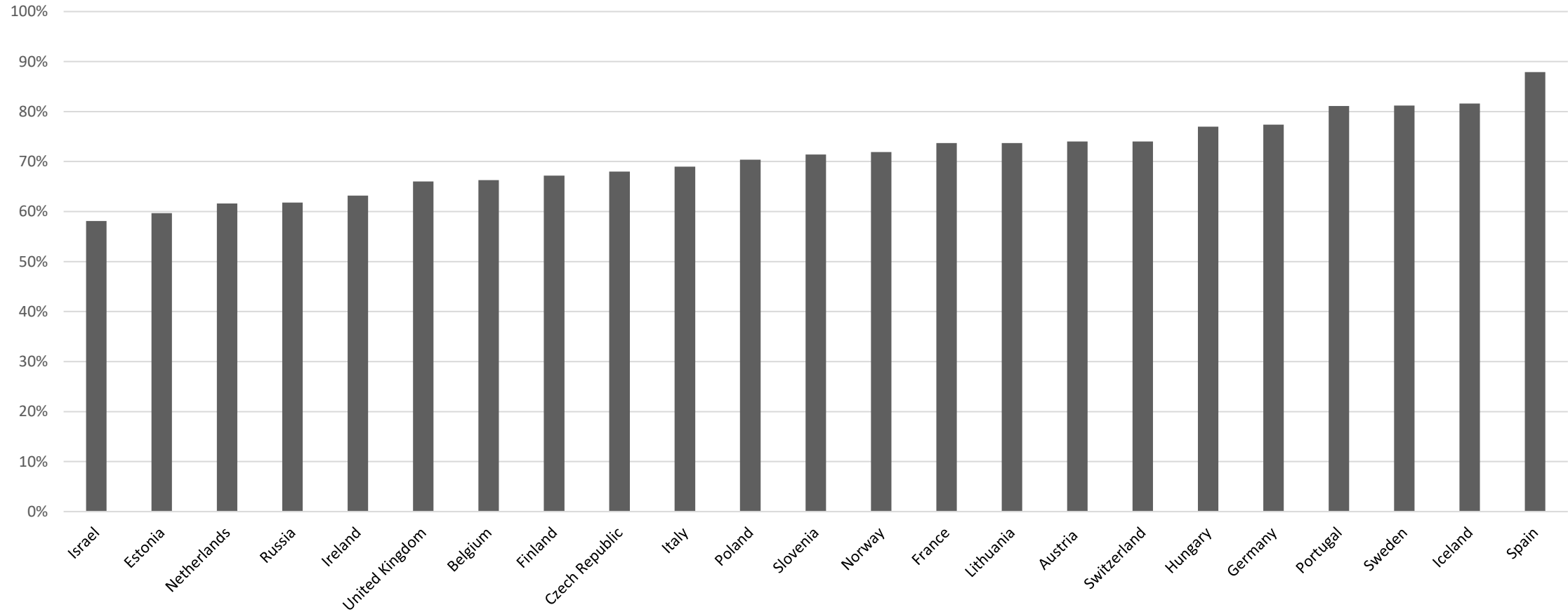
The national government...

is **not doing enough** for **67%**
is **doing enough** for **23%**
is **doing too much** for **5%**
Don't know 5%

More than half of EU citizens think that **national governments and the EU are responsible for tackling climate change**



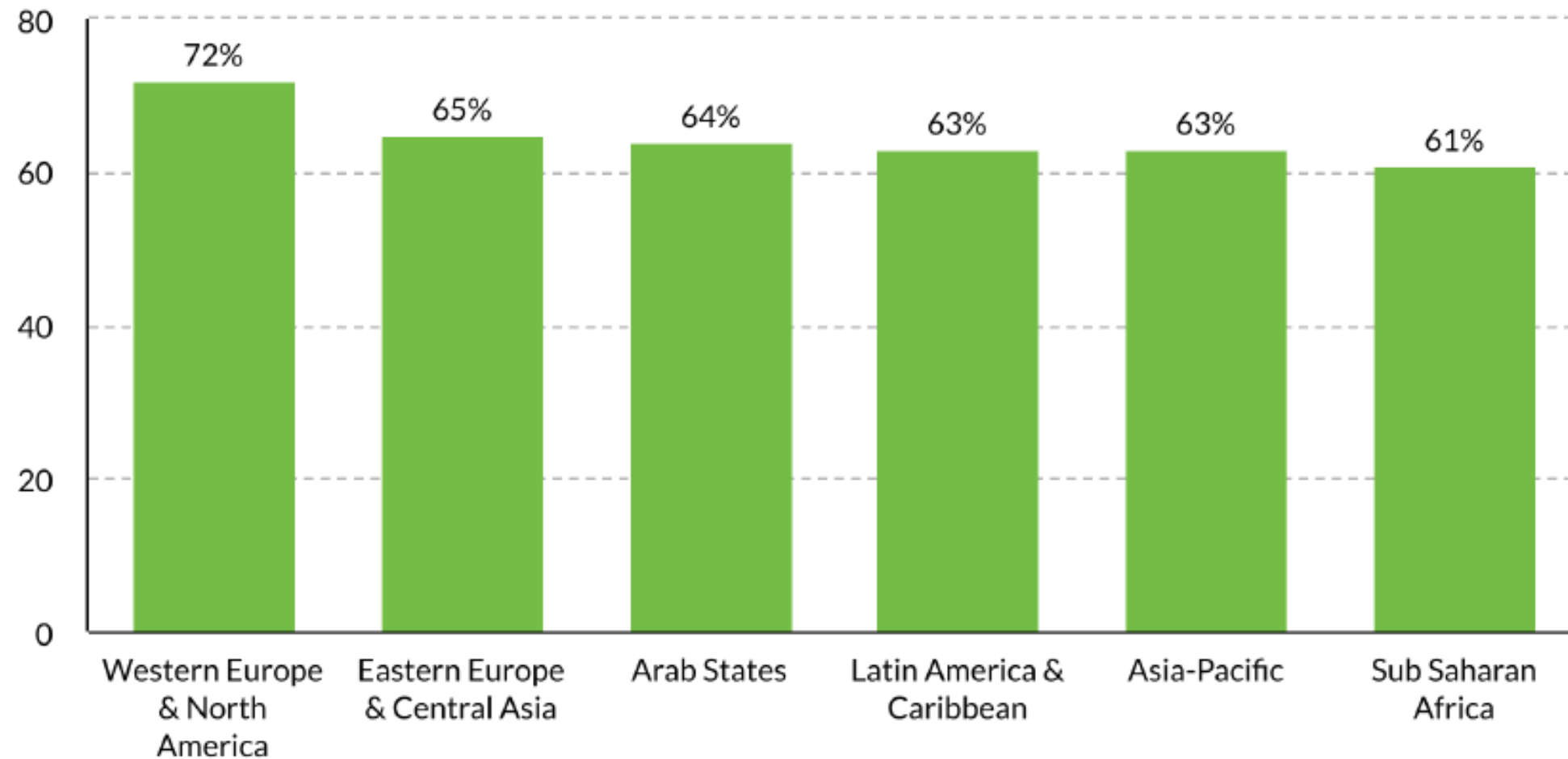
Climate concern



Agreeing with the statement "Climate impacts will be bad"

Source: European Social Survey Round 8, 2016-2017. Post-stratification weights have been applied for country-level analysis.

Figure 2. Public Belief in the Climate Emergency, by Region



"Do you think climate change is a global emergency?" (UNDP, 2021)



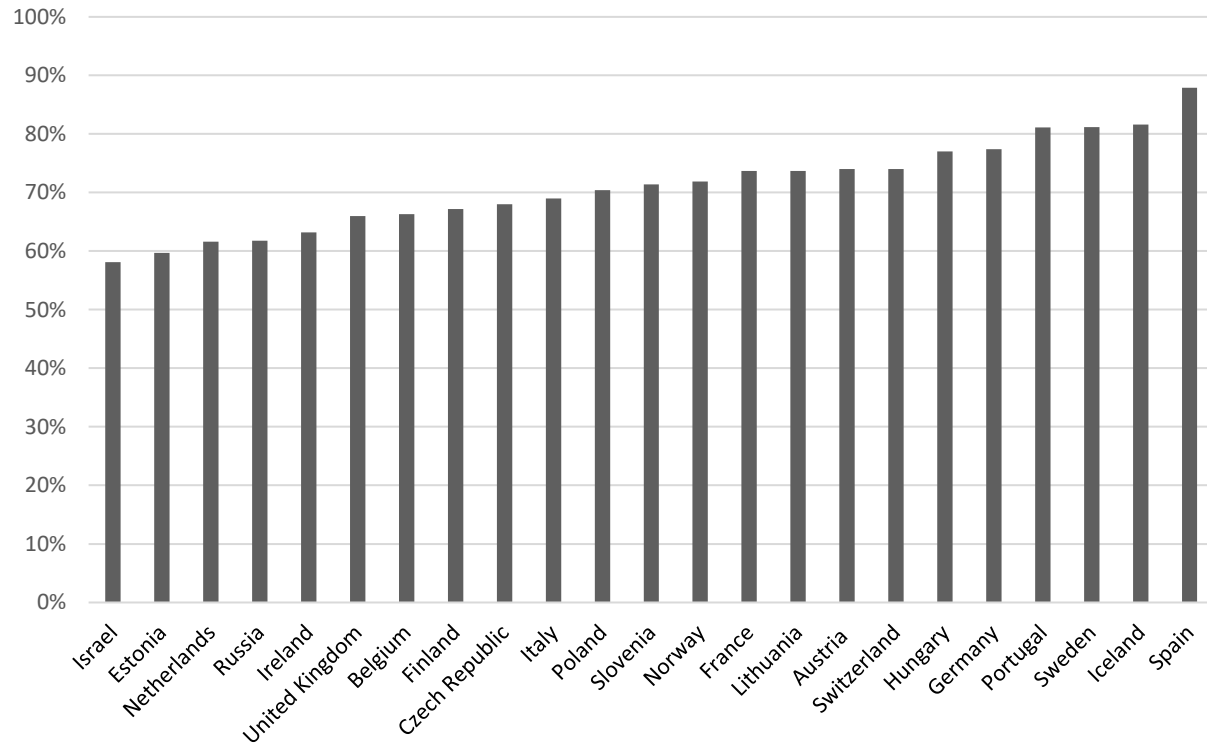
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Climate politics – what is really at stake?

- Even the slightest specification of what is required is impacting on people's attitudes

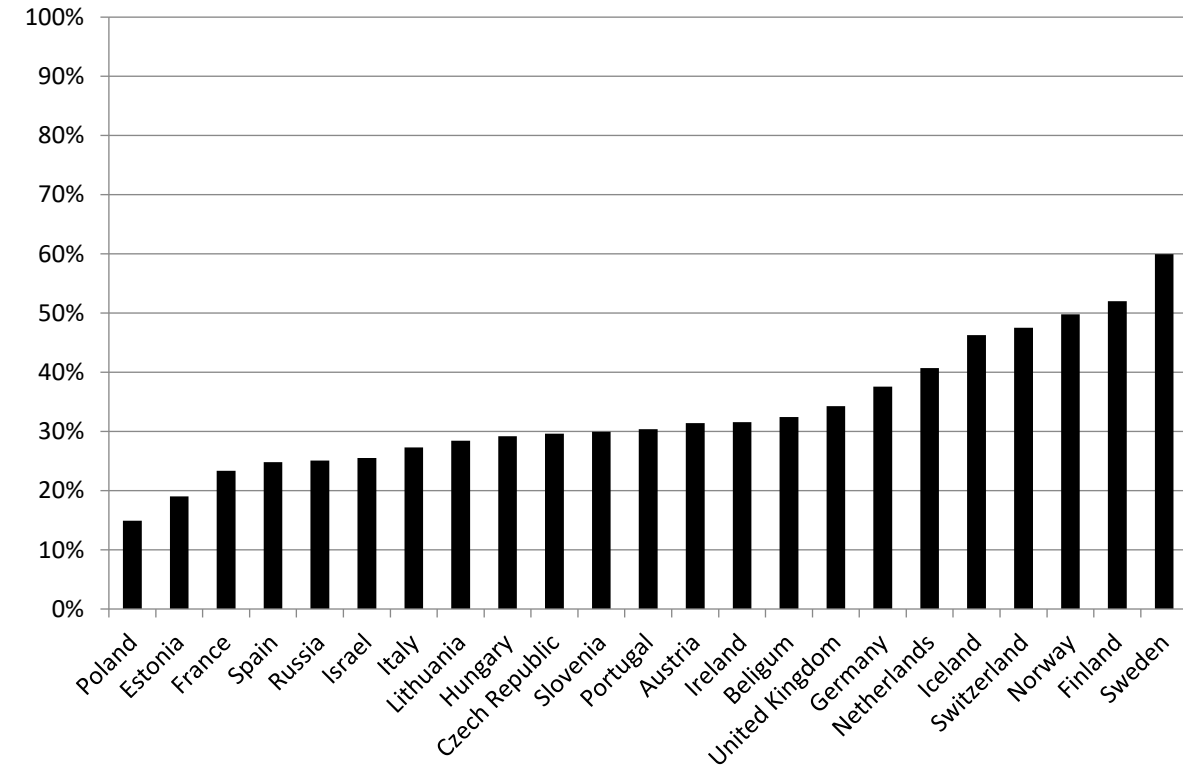


Climate concern and Climate policy support



Agreeing with the statement “Climate impacts will be bad”

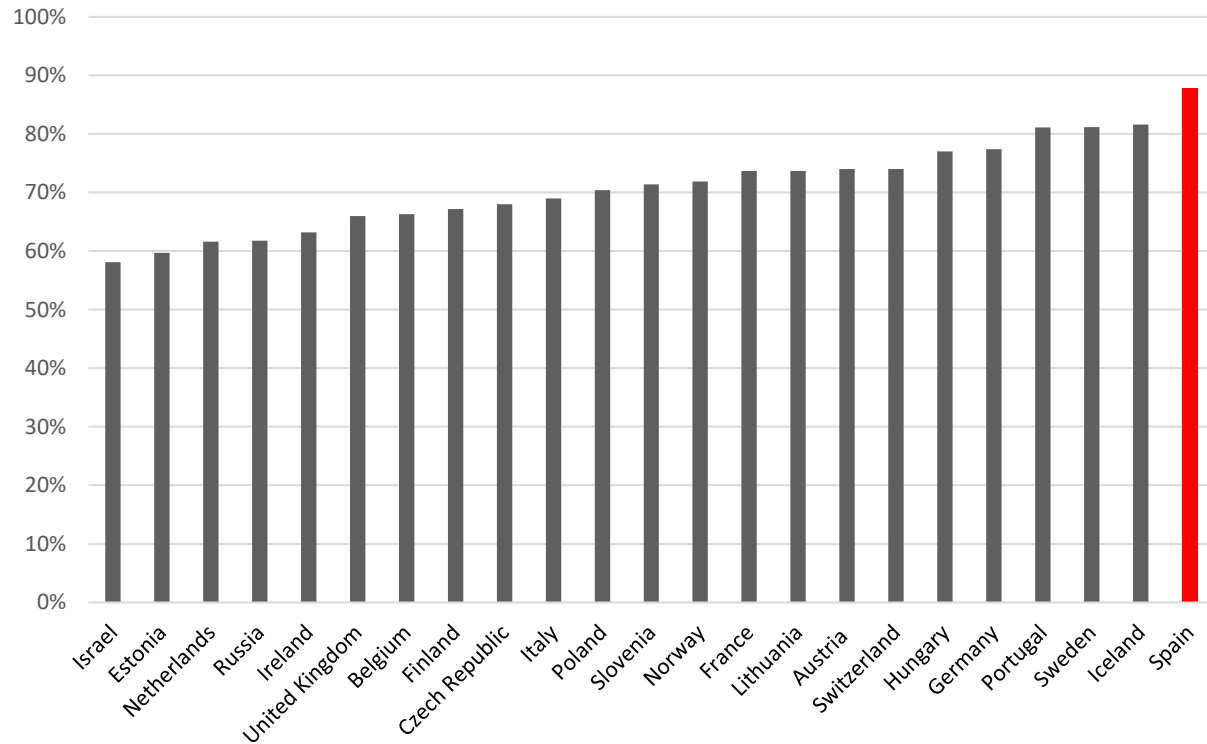
Source: European Social Survey Round 8, 2016-2017. Post-stratification weights have been applied for country-level analysis.



To what extent are you in favor or against the following policies in [country] to reduce climate change?” and five response categories ranging from “strongly in favor” (1) to “strongly against” (5). To measure support for taxes we use “Increasing taxes on fossil fuels, such as oil, gas and coal,”

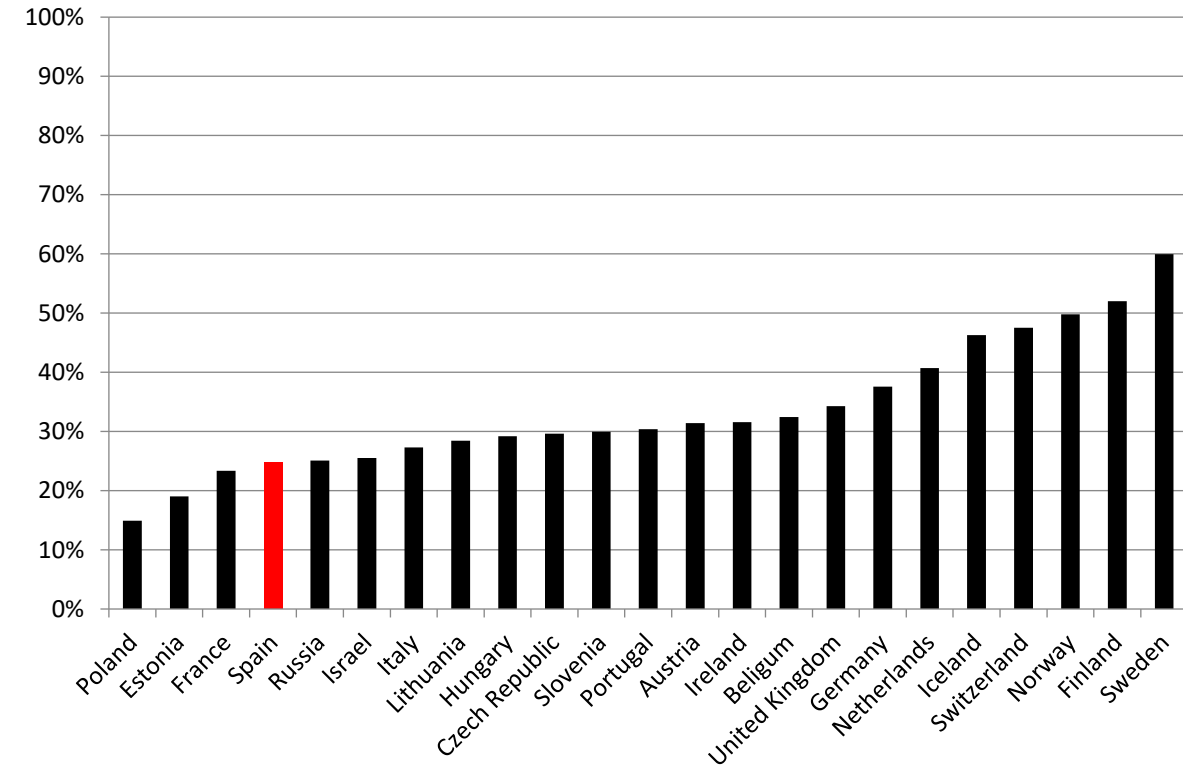
Davidovic & Harring (2020)

Climate concern and Climate policy support



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Davidovic & Harring (2020)

The principle-implementation gap

Citizens are concerned about climate change at the same time as they express resistance against effective policies aimed at combatting what they are worried about in the first place.....

How can this gap be explained?



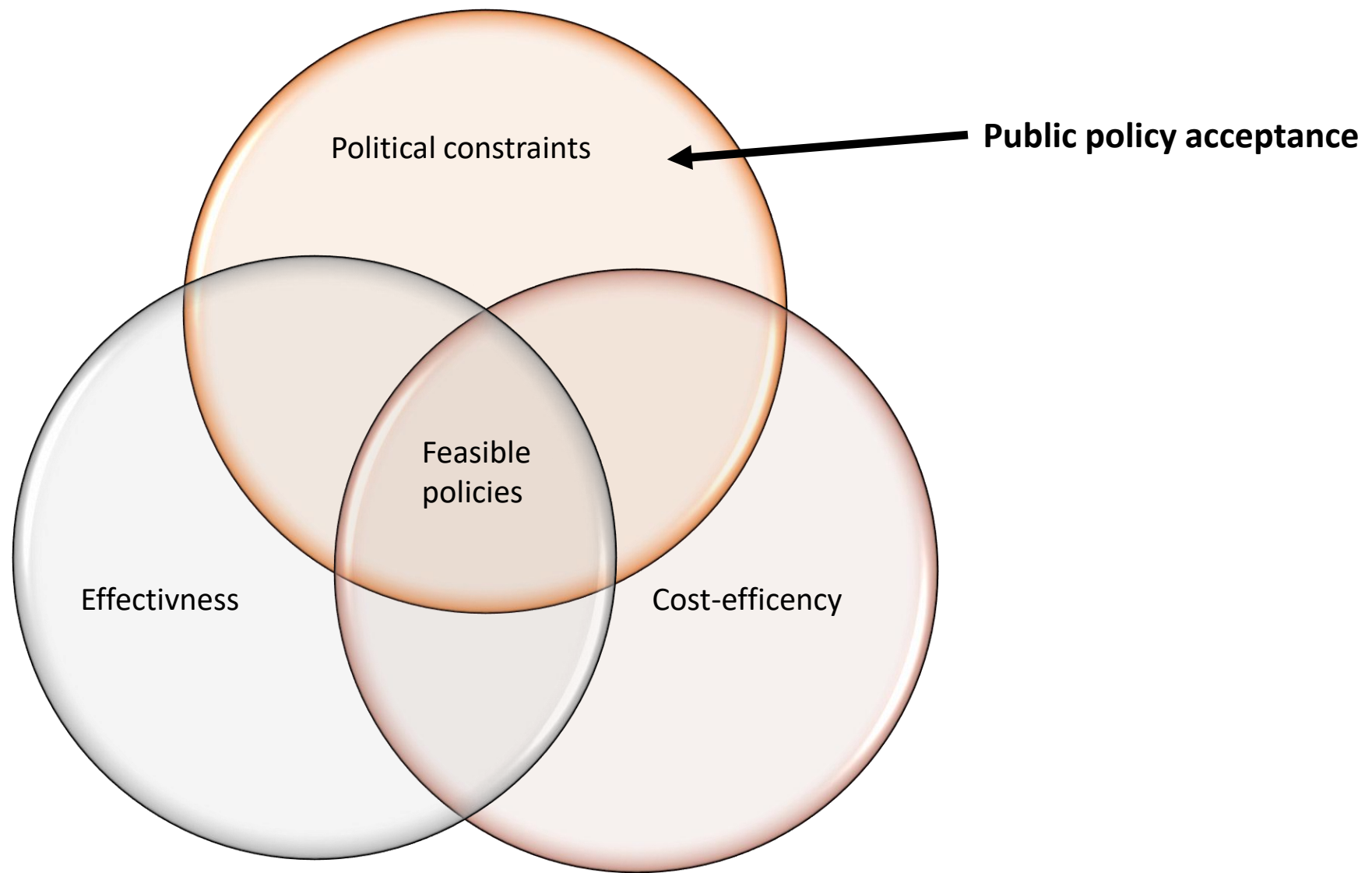
The report (and forthcoming book)

The Expert Group on Public Economics (an independent committee under the Swedish Ministry of Finance)

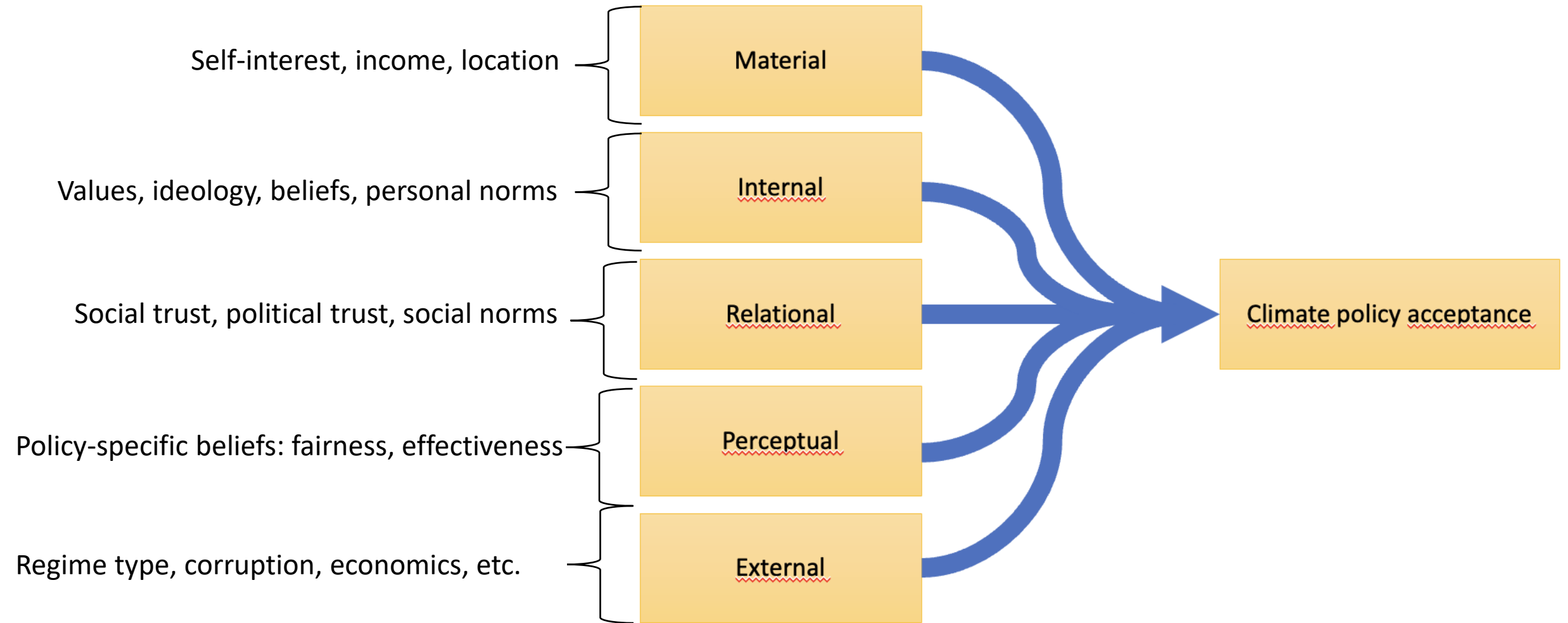
Review and analysis of existing research concerning (1) **factors** correlating with acceptance, (2) how policy **design** can impact on acceptance and (3) a focus on **public** acceptance

Path of Least Resistance:
An ESO-report on the acceptance of climate policy instruments





Factors impacting on public policy acceptance



What matters
the most?



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Meta-analyses of fifteen determinants of public opinion about climate change taxes and laws

[Magnus Bergquist](#) , [Andreas Nilsson](#), [Niklas Harring](#) & [Sverker C. Jagers](#)

[Nature Climate Change](#) **12**, 235–240 (2022) | [Cite this article](#)

Conditions

- Approx. 120.000 respondents
- 89 data sets
- 33 countries (a LARGE majority of studies from OECD countries!)



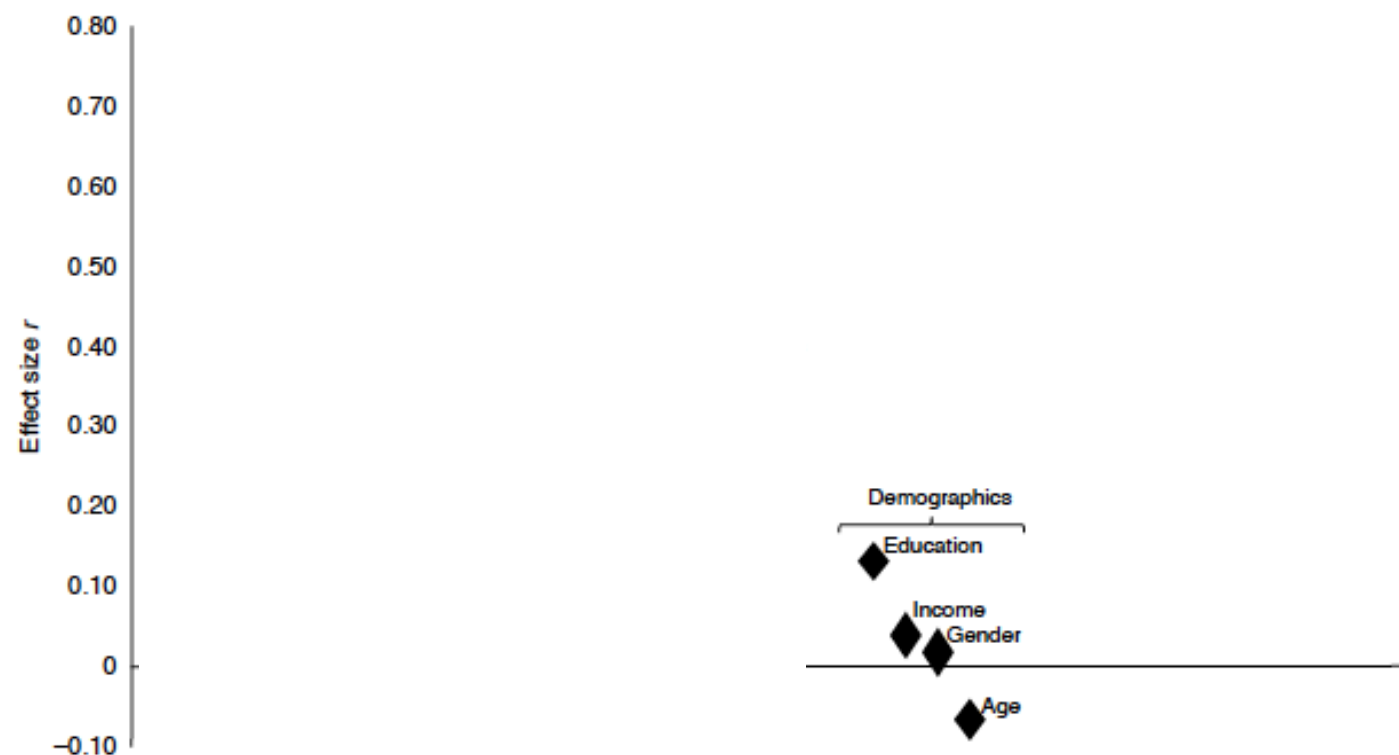


Fig. 1 | Visual summary of the relationship between determinants and public opinion about climate change taxes and laws. Higher levels of ideology represent identifying as left or liberal. Gender is coded 0, male; 1, female. Geometrical centres of the diamond shapes represent mean values and end-points represent $\pm 95\%$ CI.

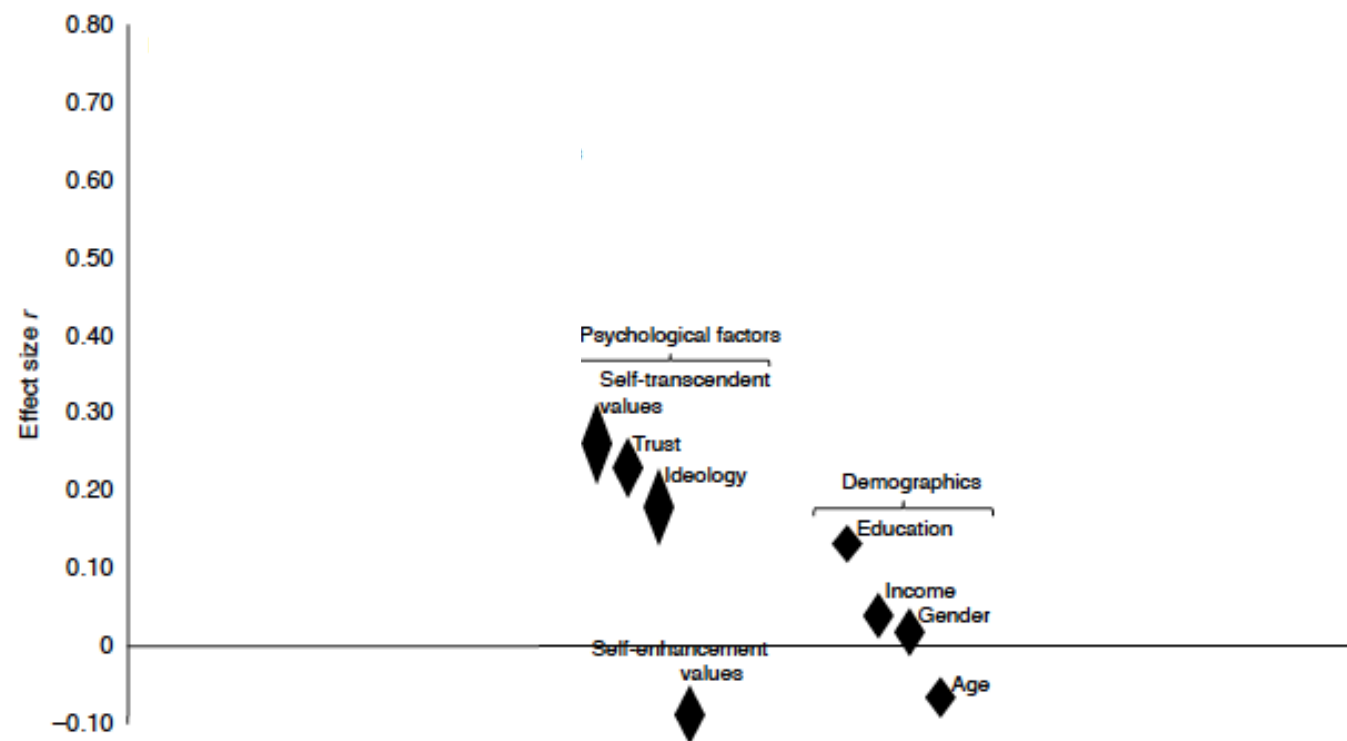


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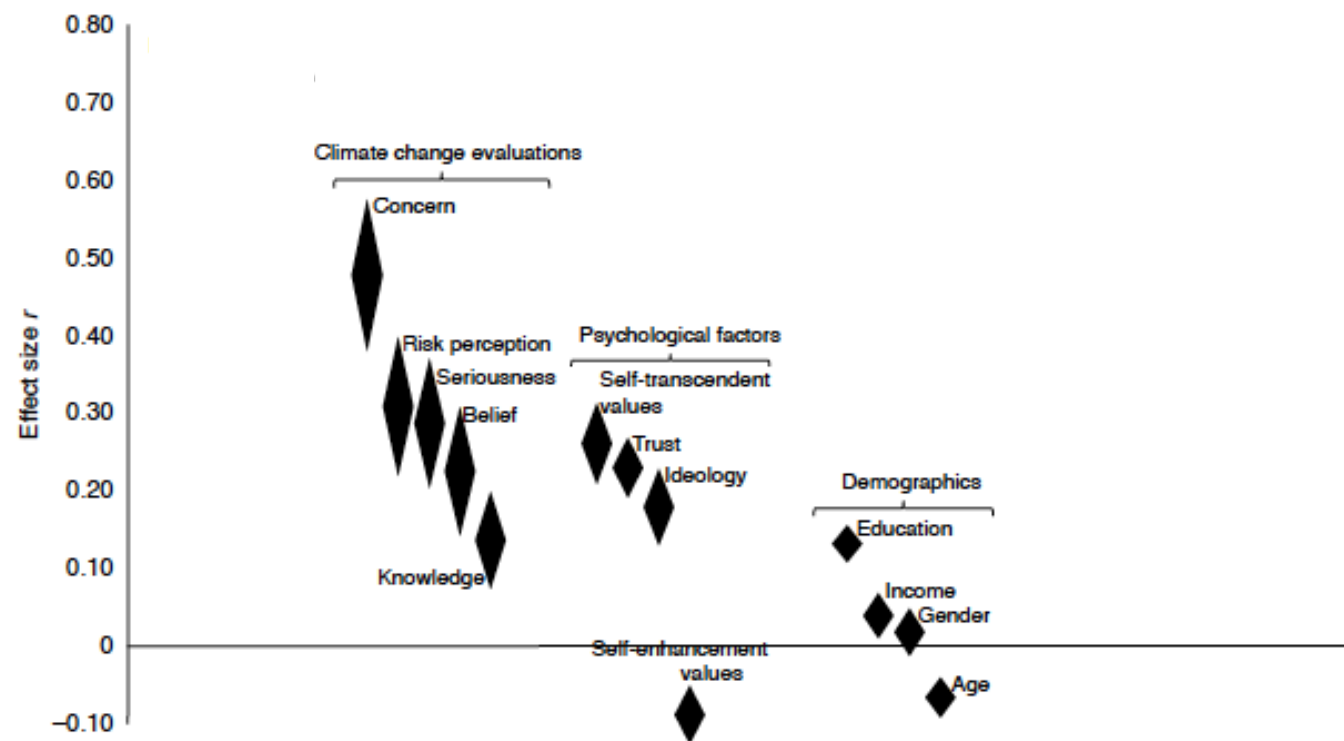


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Perceived fairness and effectiveness!

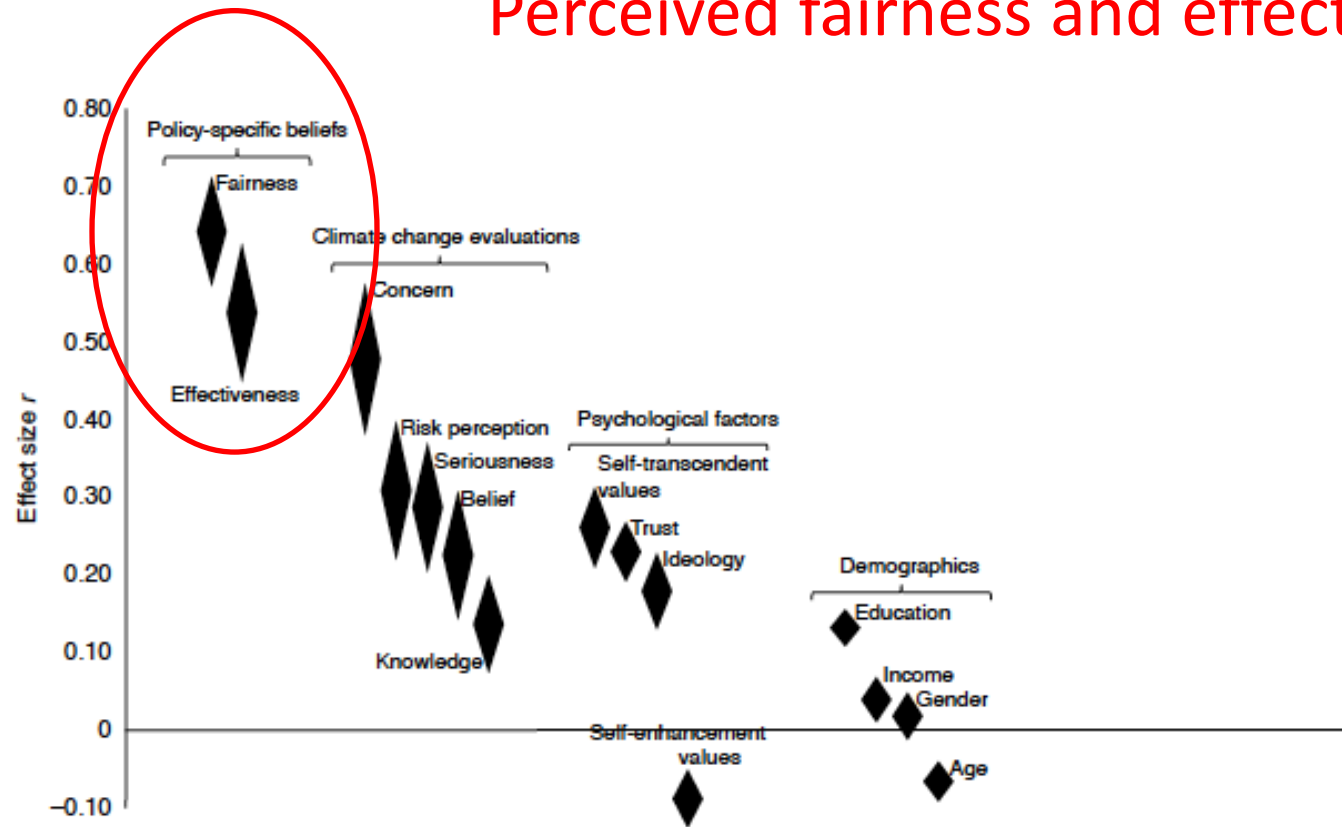


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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Limiting support for environmental policies: Unfairness is a more critical barrier than cost and ineffectiveness

Magnus Bergquist 

What is meant by fairness?



- Procedural Fairness
- Distributional fairness
- Less so material self-interest



- Procedural Fairness
- Distributional fairness
- Less so material self-interest

+

Harm avoidance

The background of the slide features a 3D graphic. At the center is a solid red circle. Surrounding this circle are twelve white, three-dimensional arrows. Each arrow is oriented radially, pointing away from the central red circle towards the edges of the frame. The arrows have a slight shadow, giving them a sense of depth. The overall composition is symmetrical and visually striking.

What changes acceptance and public opinion?

Categorization of factors influencing attitudes toward climate policy instruments

- A rather fragmented research field!
- As of yet....

Resources and costs

- Revenue use and compensation
- The distribution of costs among stakeholders

Information and communication

- Framing
- Norm signaling
- Knowledge-based interventions
- Terminology and naming

Structure and organization

- Policy packaging, sequencing, timing
- Procedures

Questions to be asked (based on what we know today)

- **Which policy instrument should be chosen?**
 - Prioritizing effectiveness, cost-efficiency, public acceptance or feasibility?
- **How should the policy instrument/package be communicated?**
 - Clarity about objectives, comparative advantages, and trade-offs is key
- **Which groups are affected, and how will this be perceived?**
 - Acceptance depends on both actual material consequences but also on subjective perceptions of fairness: Thus, anticipating both the real and the imagined distributional impacts of a policy.
- **How can a desired policy instrument be complemented?**
 - Complementary measures can serve both material and symbolic functions.
 - A carbon tax can be paired with tangible compensations (e.g., lower taxes on other goods, or with visible investments in local communities.
 - Signal that the revenues are being used for the public good.
 - Demonstrate that the policy forms part of a coherent and fair strategy, not a punitive or arbitrary imposition.



Thank you for your
attention!