

EU Climate and Energy Policy in a Polarising World: Discussing Insights from the Ariadne Project, December 9, 2025

WHICH GROUPS SHOULD RECEIVE SUPPORT IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION? VULNERABILITY VS. DESERVINGNESS FOR DESIGNING RELIEF MEASURES

Simon Feindt (PIK) & Michael Pahle (PIK)



With funding from the:

AGENDA

- › Welcome and aim of the workshop (5 min)
- › Input by **Ariadne researchers** (Simon Feindt & Michael Pahle): Vulnerability vs. Acceptability (5 min)
- › Interventions by **Giulia Colafrancesco** (ECCO Institute) & **Alessia Fulvimari** (DG EMPL) (10 min each)
- › Input by **Jacob Edenhofer** (Oxford University): “Social acceptability” via deservingness: Promising avenue or cul-de-sac? (10 min)
- › Open discussion under **Chatham House rules** (45 min)
- › Concluding remarks (5 min)

With funding from the:

(SHORT-RUN) POLITICAL ISSUES

VS.

LONG-RUN ACCEPTABILITY



Carbon Pulse
Premium

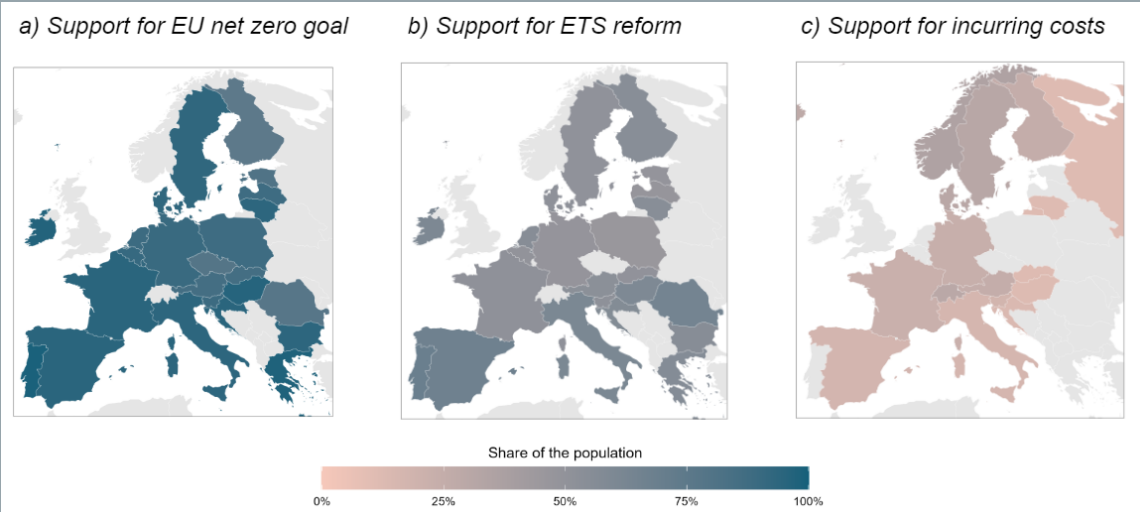
Campaigners press EU to safeguard Social Climate Fund as ETS2 faces delay
Carbon Pulse 2025



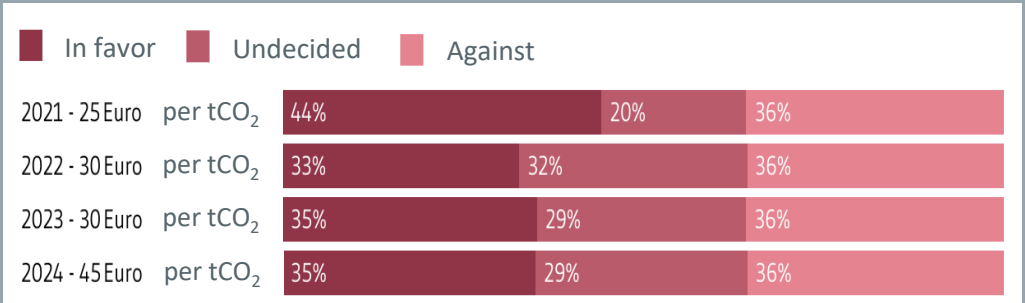
NEWS > ENERGY AND CLIMATE

EU countries blow climate deadline, putting funds for vulnerable people at risk

Governments are anxious about looming climate policies raising prices, but all but are now late on a plan to access EU aid.
POLITICO 2025



Based on Eurobarometer 538, Pahle et al. (2024), and Brehm & Gruhl (2024).



Support for CO₂ price in the building sector in Germany 2021-2024 (Ariadne WW-Panel)

With funding from the:



(SHORT-RUN) POLITICAL ISSUES

VS. LONG-RUN ACCEPTABILITY



Carbon Pulse
Premium

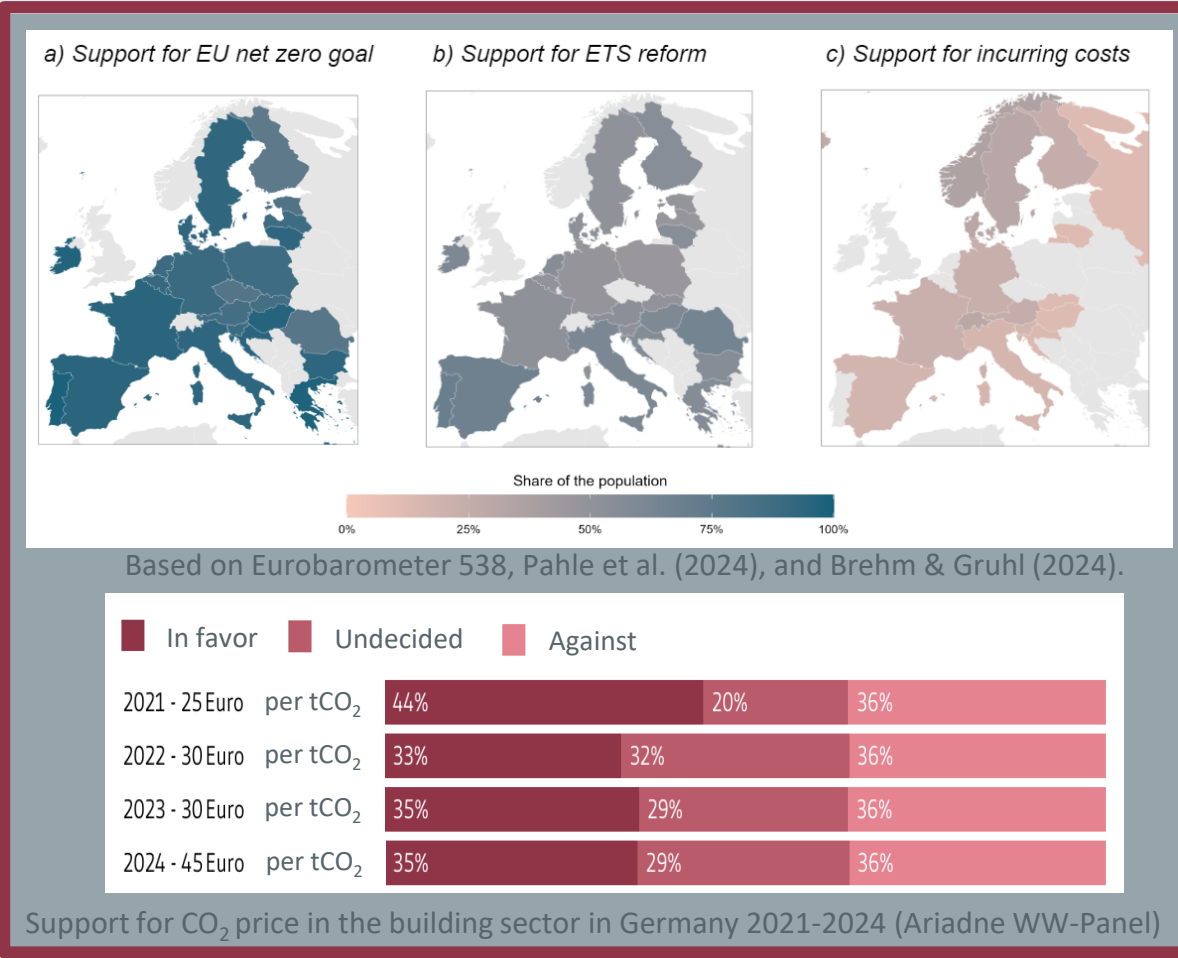
Campaigners press EU to safeguard Social Climate Fund as ETS2 faces delay
Carbon Pulse 2025



NEWS > ENERGY AND CLIMATE

EU countries blow climate deadline, putting funds for vulnerable people at risk

Governments are anxious about looming climate policies raising prices, but all but are now late on a plan to access EU aid.
POLITICO 2025



With funding from the:



THE CENTRAL ASSUMPTION OF THE SCP: ACCEPTABILITY THROUGH ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY

- **“88% of Europeans support a green transition that leaves no one behind”** [EC 2025](#)
- **Goal of the SCF: Contributing to leaving no one behind** in the transition to a low-carbon economy
 - Identify most-vulnerable households and companies through concepts such as energy/transport poverty
 - Address vulnerability
 - Generate public support for green transition



[EC 2025](#)

With funding from the:

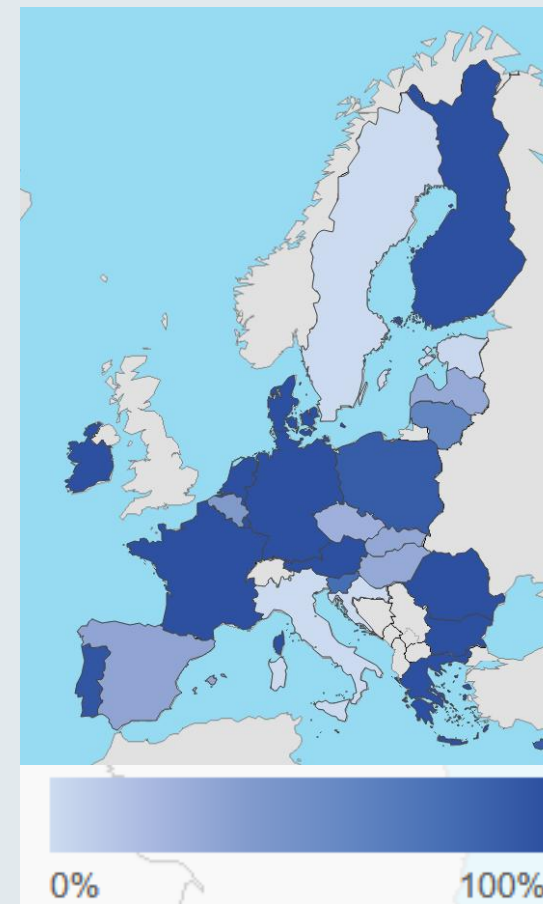
THE SCF DESIGN: A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

“A scandal”: Brussels pressed to tighten EU ETS revenue spending rules

Carbon Pulse 2025

- Clearer **criteria, timeline, and reporting requirements** compared to ETS1
- E.g.: first payment request can be made **before ETS2 implementation** but **after milestones and targets** have been achieved (But: only 4 plans submitted so far) EC 2025b
- **High measurability** → **objective criteria** for vulnerability

% of ETS revenue reported as spent on climate action and energy transition in 2024



EC 2025c

With funding from the:

IS FOCUS ON VULNERABILITY RIGHT FOR PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE?

High **public acceptance**

Support for groups of
opposed and indignant?



High **social fairness**

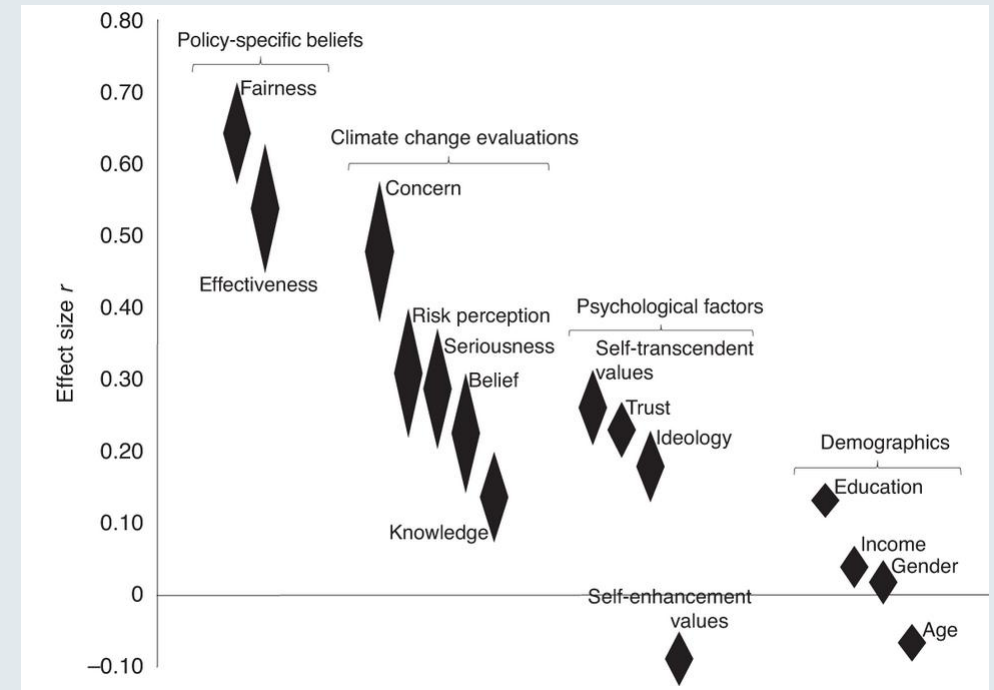
Support for groups of
unjustly burdened?

With funding from the:

WHY IS THERE A POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN FAIRNESS AND ACCEPTANCE

- Possible gap between **objective** and **perceived** burden (and its distribution)
- **Transfers and support measures** do **not necessarily** lead to political & social agreement
- ***Socially fair*** remains **disputed**

(Perceived) fairness most relevant factor for support



Bergquist et al., 2022

With funding from the:

AGENDA

- › Welcome and aim of the workshop (5 min)
- › Input by **Ariadne researchers** (Simon Feindt & Michael Pahle): Vulnerability vs. Acceptability (5 min)
- › Interventions by **Giulia Colafrancesco** (ECCO Institute, country-level perspective) & **Alessia Fulvimari** (DG EMPL, EU-level perspective):
 - **Are countries successful in targeting vulnerability? What are challenges and barriers?**
 - **Do you think that vulnerability-focused SCP (even if perfectly implemented) will help to garner public support?**
- › Input by **Jacob Edenhofer** (Oxford University): “Social acceptability” via deservingness: Promising avenue or cul-de-sac? (10 min)
- › Open discussion under **Chatham House rules** (45 min)
- › Concluding remarks (5 min)

With funding from the:

EU Climate and Energy Policy in a Polarising World: Discussing Insights from the Ariadne Project, December 9, 2025

WHICH GROUPS SHOULD RECEIVE SUPPORT IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION? VULNERABILITY VS. DESERVINGNESS FOR DESIGNING RELIEF MEASURES

Simon Feindt (PIK) & Michael Pahle (PIK)



With funding from the: