

# 4th International ESS Conference

## Turbulent times in Europe: Instability, insecurity and inequality

### 15-17 April 2019 | University of Mannheim

#### C2. Public Perceptions of Climate Change and Energy Security

Climate change and energy security are among the most important threats the world is facing today and are expected to become important drivers of future insecurity and conflict. Warming of the climate system is now considered unequivocal and poses serious risks to both natural and economic systems. Decisions about decarbonising energy supplies to mitigate climate change need to be considered in relation to other energy challenges. Ensuring a reliable and secure supply of energy has become increasingly important in the light of a decline in global oil and gas production, as well as geopolitical tensions arising from increased energy interdependencies at regional and international scales. Action that different governments may take in response to these issues is however dependent on public perceptions in different countries, as policy makers may be less likely to act if their electorates do not think they are a priority.

The session will consist of presentations covering different aspects of public perceptions of climate change and energy security, using data from the Climate Change and Energy module of ESS round 8. The module was designed to create a comprehensive theoretically-grounded dataset of public attitudes to climate change, energy security and energy preferences; and involved a conceptual framework covering beliefs about climate change; climate and energy security concerns; personal norms, efficacy and trust; and energy preferences regarding energy-supply sources and energy-demand reduction.

Papers are invited that will contribute to a better understanding of the situated nature of attitudes to energy and climate change, including papers that (1) provide detailed cross-national (and regional) comparative analyses, in particular those that consider both differences and communalities in attitudes to energy and climate change; (2) develop and test individual-level theoretical models regarding the topic; and (3) examine how national-level socio-political, economic and environmental factors shape attitudes across Europe. In addition, papers are invited that (4) explore methodological issues in cross-cultural research, for example regarding measurement equivalence of core concepts of the module.

#### Keywords:

Climate change; energy security; environmental attitudes

#### Session Organisers:

Wouter Poortinga and Lorraine Whitmarsh, Cardiff University  
Gisela Böhm, University of Bergen  
Stephen Fisher, University of Oxford  
Linda Steg, University of Groningen

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