

## Accepted Manuscript

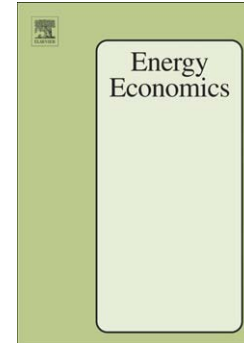
Political orientation, environmental values, and climate change beliefs and attitudes: An empirical cross country analysis

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PII: S0140-9883(17)30032-4  
DOI: doi:[10.1016/j.eneco.2017.01.022](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eneco.2017.01.022)  
Reference: ENEECO 3553

To appear in: *Energy Economics*

Received date: 29 June 2015  
Revised date: 4 January 2017  
Accepted date: 29 January 2017



Please cite this article as: Ziegler, Andreas, Political orientation, environmental values, and climate change beliefs and attitudes: An empirical cross country analysis, *Energy Economics* (2017), doi:[10.1016/j.eneco.2017.01.022](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eneco.2017.01.022)

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## Political orientation, environmental values, and climate change beliefs and attitudes: An empirical cross country analysis

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January 2017

### Abstract

Based on unique data from representative computer-based surveys among more than 3400 citizens, this paper empirically examines the determinants of several climate change beliefs and attitudes in three countries which are key players in international climate policy, namely the USA, Germany (as largest country in the European Union), and China. Our econometric analysis implies that political orientation in the USA is by far more relevant for general climate change beliefs and beliefs in anthropogenic climate change than in Germany and China. Furthermore, US and German citizens with a conservative, but not green identification significantly less often support publicly financed climate policy, while US and German respondents with a social-green identification and Chinese respondents belonging to the Communist Party have a significantly higher willingness to pay a price premium for climate-friendly products. However, our econometric analysis overall reveals that environmental values, which are measured by a New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) scale, are the major factor for climate change beliefs and attitudes in all three countries and thus play an even more dominant role than political orientation. In addition, environmental values weaken the differences in several climate change beliefs and attitudes between a right-wing and a left-wing identification. These interaction effects between political orientation and the NEP scale are especially strong in the USA, only relevant for the support of publicly financed climate policy in Germany, and negligible in China. Our estimation results suggest alternative strategies such as specific communication campaigns in order to reduce the climate change skepticism in conservative and right-wing circles in the USA and to increase the support of climate policies among such population groups.

JEL classification: Q54, Q58, A13

Keywords: Climate change beliefs, climate policy, price premium for climate-friendly products, political orientation, environmental values, NEP scale, econometric analysis

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