

# International attitudes toward climate policies

## Focus

## Key links

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### **Policies to address climate change have been historically difficult to implement.**

The OECD and The Social Economics Lab at Harvard teamed up to understand why, and surveyed over 40 000 respondents across 20 of the world's most carbon-emitting countries (representing 72% of global CO2 emissions).

By addressing citizen's concerns, governments can help build public support for urgently needed climate action.

## How can governments bring citizens on board?

While there is broad agreement across countries that climate change is an important problem, there is limited willingness to adopt behavioural changes to reduce emissions with current policies, in particular to:

- limit driving
- limit heating and cooling your home
- limit beef consumption.

## Three things government can do

### Accelerate the availability of low-carbon alternatives

Green alternatives to polluting technologies need to be made widely available via public infrastructure (e.g. public transport) and subsidies for adoption (heat pumps, electric vehicles) targeted at exposed households.

Many people already support policies like:

- mandatory and subsidised insulation of buildings
- green infrastructure programmes and subsidies to low-carbon technologies.

Making public transport widely available increases support for bans of combustion engine cars by about 10% on average across all countries.

Opposition to climate policies is in fact correlated with “carbon dependence”: lack of public transport, car usage and (to a lesser extent) gasoline expenditure.

Higher levels of education and having children are correlated with higher support, across countries. But overall, socio-economic factors are less important in predicting policy support compared to “carbon dependence”.

## **Ensure that vulnerable groups are not disproportionately affected by climate policies**

The perception that a climate policy may be regressive explains much of the lack of support. This is particularly true for energy taxation and carbon pricing.

Since support for carbon taxes strongly depends on revenue use, carbon pricing can receive strong support from citizens if:

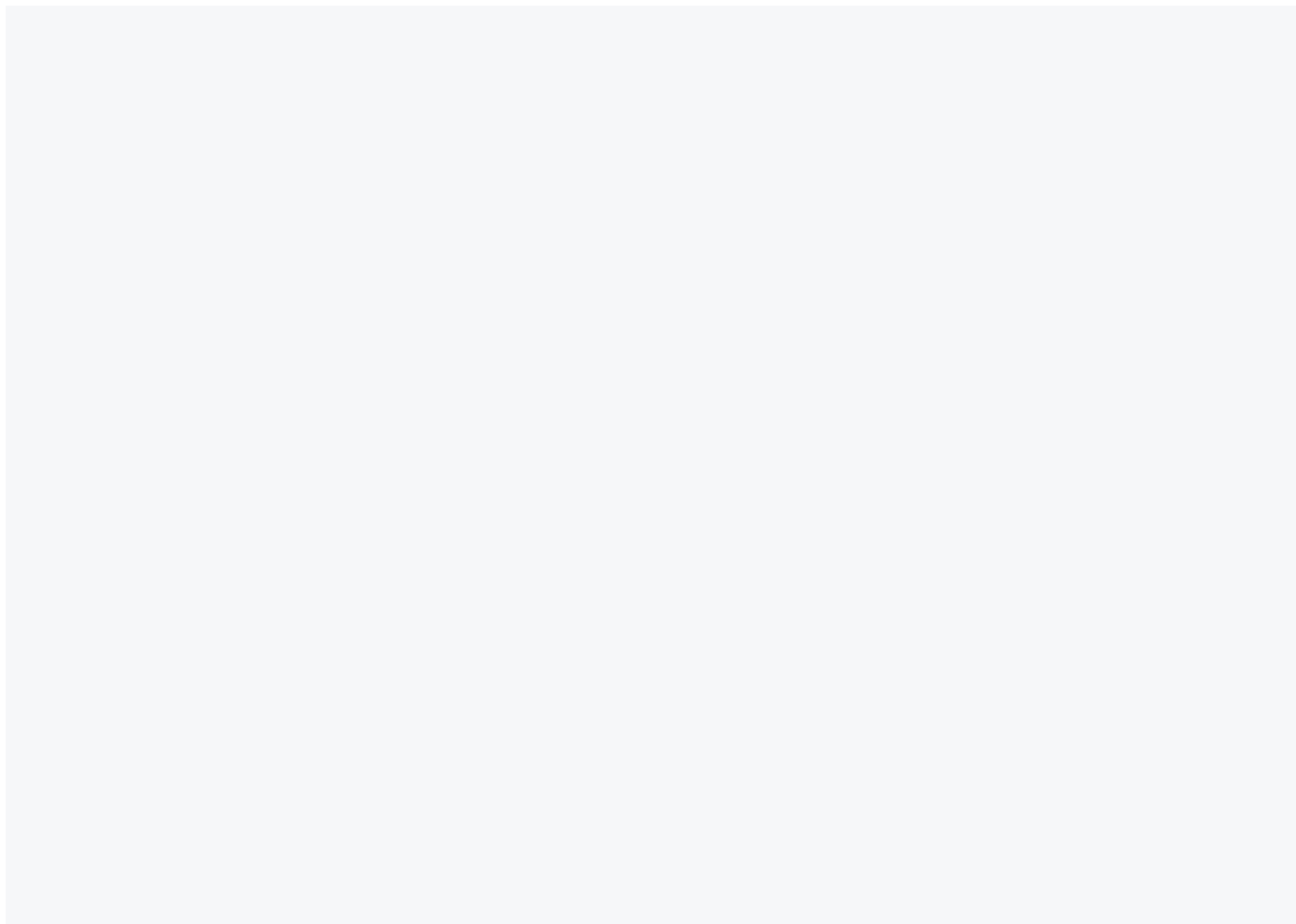
- revenues are used to fund green infrastructure and low-carbon technologies
- revenues are redistributed to households with lower incomes or households strongly affected by the carbon tax (for example in rural areas), via lower income taxes or cash transfers.

## **Inform citizens about how climate policies work and who they affect**

A key finding of this report is that communicating information to the public on how climate policies work increases policy support, especially for policies for which support is low – such as carbon taxes.

Information campaigns should explain:

- How do climate policies reduce emissions?
- What are the individual costs of the climate policy?
- Who will gain and who will lose from the climate policy?



## Access the responses

To access to the micro data, please contact the authors:

- [Antoine Dechezleprêtre](mailto:antoine.dechezlepretre@oecd.org) ([antoine.dechezlepretre@oecd.org](mailto:antoine.dechezlepretre@oecd.org))
- [Stefanie Stantcheva](mailto:sstantcheva@fas.harvard.edu) ([sstantcheva@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:sstantcheva@fas.harvard.edu))
- [Tobias Kruse](mailto:tobias.kruse@oecd.org) ([tobias.kruse@oecd.org](mailto:tobias.kruse@oecd.org))



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## Data insights by country

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**A lire:**

[Les Français et les politiques climatiques](#) élaborée en collaboration avec le [Conseil d'analyse économique](#)