Climate Change and Political Conflict

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Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Winter Semester, 2025-26

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Class Room: Bergheimer Str. 58, Room 02.034	Class Hours: Tuesdays, 16:15-17:45

Description

This seminar explores the increasingly contentious politics of climate change within domestic political dynamics. It examines how climate change is transforming from a broad consensus issue into a polarizing political conflict that spans both electoral and civil society arenas. We investigate the causes and consequences of the political impasse surrounding climate-related reform, with a focus on the emergence of new cleavages, the role of political parties and movements, and the dynamics of citizen participation.

The seminar begins by surveying key theoretical approaches to understanding climate change as a political issue, from cleavage theory and party competition to social movement research and the study of political participation. Particular attention is given to the interplay between supply-side (political organizations and their strategies) and demand-side (citizens' attitudes and behavior) dynamics. Throughout the seminar, we engage with core debates on the politicisation of climate change, the rise of right-wing climate scepticism, the fragmentation of the environmental movement, and the mobilisation of new coalitions across Europe. We also examine how the climate crisis intersects with broader economic, cultural, and geopolitical developments, contributing to what some describe as a polycrisis era.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the seminar, students will achieve several key learning outcomes:

1. Familiarize themselves with the main theoretical approaches in the study of climate change as a political issue.

2. Become acquainted with the primary methodological approaches used in the study of related topics.

3. Develop the ability to evaluate research related to the themes discussed in the seminar.

4. Be able to pose a research question relevant to the seminar's themes.

5. Learn to effectively argue using the analytical concepts learned throughout the seminar.

Course Requirements

This seminar is designed for MA students. The seminar assumes no previous knowledge of the literature.

Weekly attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend, please email me before the respective session. In addition, active participation includes reading the assigned texts, engaging with in-class discussions, asking questions, contributing to debates, and providing constructive peer feedback.

Reading the texts is imperative for the success of the seminar; without having read the readings, the seminar will be very difficult to follow, and over time, the material will become overwhelming.

For 2 + 2 credit points	For 2 + 6 credit points
• Active participation in class	• Active participation in class
• Reading the literature	• Reading the literature
• **In-class presentation & student-led activity**	• **In-class presentation & student-led activity**
• **Creative project (see below)**	• **Term paper (6000 words)**

Office Hours

Office hours are by appointment. Please use Calendly via this link to register for office hours: https://calendly.com/endre-borbath/office-hour.

We can meet on site in room 03.033 (Bergheimer Str. 58, 69115 Heidelberg) or online via the following Zoom link: https://eu02web.zoom-x.de/my/eborbath. If the appointment is scheduled as a face-to-face meeting on campus but you would prefer to meet online, please send me an email or indicate this preference through the Calendly interface.

Online Learning

I provide the course literature in advance via Moodle (https://moodle.uni-heidelberg.de/) and also use the platform for general course information. Please contact me with any questions regarding the course literature, technical problems with Moodle, or other organizational issues.

Presentations

Students receiving credit for the seminar are required to give a presentation in one of the sessions. Each presentation should focus on a key **concept** related to the weekly topic and the broader theme of the seminar (see the list of suggested concepts in the weekly schedule below). You may choose to focus on a single concept or combine multiple concepts, and may prioritize **theoretical**, **empirical**, or mixed approaches depending on your interest.

Your presentation must go beyond the **required readings for the week**. While the recommended readings offer a starting point, you are expected to conduct your own **literature review**, incorporating additional academic sources to contextualize and critically assess the concept and its use in political science.

Presentation slots will be allocated in the first session.

Presentations should be **no longer than 10 minutes**. **Slides must be submitted by email no later than Monday at 9:00 AM prior to your presentation**. All slides will be made available to the class via Moodle.

A strong presentation will address some of the following guiding questions:

- **Definition:** How is the concept defined? Are there competing definitions or debates around it?

- **Disciplinary use:** How is the concept used in political science? What is its intellectual or disciplinary history?

- **Relevance:** How does the concept connect to the broader themes of the seminar?

- **Operationalization:** Has the concept been measured or applied empirically? How is it operationalized in research?

- **Causal role:** What are the causes or consequences associated with this concept in the literature?

- **State of the art:** How precisely is the concept defined and used in empirical research? Are there challenges or innovations in its application?

Not all questions will apply to every concept. Focus on those most relevant to your chosen topic.

In addition to your individual 10-minute input, each student is also expected to lead a short student-led activity (approximately 510 minutes) immediately following their presentation. Choose one of the following formats:

1. **Small Group Discussion:** Pose a question related to your concept and have classmates break into pairs or small groups for 5 minutes. Then facilitate a brief class discussion to share insights.

2. **Mini-Debate:** Ask two volunteers to take opposing sides on a controversy or tension related to your concept, and moderate a short debate.

3. **Apply to a Scenario:** Present a real-world case or scenario and ask classmates to apply the concept. Facilitate a brief discussion on their responses.

Feel free to choose the format that best fits your concept and presentation style.

Creative project

Students **taking the seminar for four credits** must prepare a creative project related to the seminar's theme. This project may take the **form of a scientific poster presenting a phenomenon, a short podcast, a video reel, an audio or video interview, or two reading notes based on one or more texts discussed in the seminar.** Other formats are also possible, but please consult with me in advance.

If you choose to prepare a podcast, reel, or interview, aim for a short format, **typically between 2 and 15 minutes (e.g., for an interview), preferably on the shorter side.** For interviews, potential interviewees might include activists, (local) politicians, policymakers, or experts from think tanks or academia. This type of content **may also be prepared in German.** If time allows, I would like you to present these projects in class.

If you choose the reading notes option, I expect two texts of about 1,500-2,000 words each. **These notes may not be written for the same week, nor for the week when you are presenting in class.** The reading notes **must be written in English.** Each note should critically evaluate the central argument of the respective reading(s), situate it within broader debates, assess its contribution to the literature, and offer your own perspective on the topic. As a suggestion, a reading note might address the following questions:

1. What is the text's central theoretical or analytical thesis? What type of empirical or other evidence is provided to support this thesis?

2. How do you evaluate the text? To what extent does it succeed in supporting its thesis? How does it compare to other literature on the topic? What are its strengths and weaknesses?

3. What are your key takeaways? Are there any questions you would like to raise in class? What directions for future research can you identify after engaging with the text(s)?

Term Paper

A term paper should be 6000 words, including references and footnotes. The deadline for this paper is the end of the winter term, **31st March 2026**. The paper is the final 'product' of the seminar, allowing you to showcase what you have learned throughout the semester. **The term paper should present a clear, central thesis and develop it through a coherent argument supported by evidence.** This is the critical requirement for assessment. **You are strongly encouraged to discuss the topic of your paper with me in advance** to ensure it aligns with one of the three paper types and meets the expectations of the assignment.

There are three common types of term papers: (1) an empirical analysis, (2) a research proposal, or (3) a book review. The first type, the empirical analysis, provides an in-depth examination of one or more empirical cases, focusing on political conflict related to climate change. This could take the form of a qualitative case study of a specific election, the profile of a party, or a social movement. It might also address a research question through quantitative analysis. Examples of such questions include: how attitudes toward climate change affect voting for radical right parties; to what extent mainstream parties have incorporated environmental protection into their manifestos after 2019; or whether environmental protests are more common during electoral campaigns. In this type of paper, students are expected to apply the analytical frameworks and theoretical approaches discussed in the seminar to analyze their case(s) and to formulate a clear central argument or conclusion. Even when focusing on a single case, the paper should situate it within a comparative and generalizable perspective.

In a research proposal, the student not only formulates a research question but also makes a theoretical proposition or a set of hypotheses based on a critical review of a relevant strand of literature. In addition to what we have discussed in the seminar, the paper should also refer to further reading. To the extent possible, it should go beyond summarizing existing studies by critically engaging with them and using the debate to frame an original argument or a set of hypotheses. In addition, the paper should formulate an appropriate research design to study the argument or hypotheses, including a brief discussion of methodology (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods), operationalization, and potential data sources.

The third type of paper is a review of a book published in the last 15 years by a major university press on a topic related to the seminar. A book review is expected to summarize the book's central argument, review the structure in which the argument is presented, and consider the extent

to which the empirical evidence supports the main argument. A vital element of a successful review is to situate the book within relevant debates and literature. Does it challenge, support, or extend previous studies? How does its approach differ from or complement other major works in the field? The purpose of this is to assess whether the contribution the book claims to make is indeed new to the literature and to what extent it represents a 'breakthrough' or an incremental step in relevant debates. Reading some existing reviews to familiarize yourself with the genre may be helpful. Three journals that regularly publish book reviews are Comparative Political Studies, Party Politics, and Social Movement Studies.

Formatting

Please format the term paper according to the following guidelines:

- **Title page:** include the paper title, course name, semester, your name, student ID, department/institution, and email address.

- **Font & spacing:** use a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times, Palatino) with 1.5-line spacing; footnotes in 10-point font, single spacing.

- **Margins & layout:** all margins should be at least 2.5 cm.

- **Page numbers:** number all pages (except the title page) consecutively, placed at the bottom center or bottom right.

- **Structure:** include a table of contents with section and subsection titles and page numbers. Use meaningful headings (avoid merely Section 1, 2, 3). You do not need to number the sections or subsections.

- **Abstract:** all papers must include an abstract of no more than 250 words. See my recommendation on writing a suitable abstract below.

- **Sections:** the paper should consist of an *Introduction*, *Main Body*, and *Conclusion*. Use subsections as needed, but avoid over-fragmentation. Format headings as follows: level 1 - 14-point bold; level 2 - 12-point bold; level 3 - 12-point italic. Do not use more than three levels.

- **Figures and tables:** all figures and tables must have a number, a title, and a note. Each should be self-explanatory. If you use color, ensure that it remains distinguishable when printed in black and white.

- **Citations & footnotes:** mark all non-original arguments or borrowed ideas with citations, ideally using the Chicago citation style. I recommend using a reference manager such as Zotero (see below).

- **Bibliography / References:** at the end, list all sources cited in alphabetical order. Do not include works not cited in the text.

- **Appendices:** appendices (if needed) do not count toward the main text length; label them clearly (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.).

- **Declaration of originality:** include a short statement (on the title page or at the end) confirming that you have written the paper independently and used only the stated sources.

Academic Writing and Reading

On writing research papers:

Minkoff, Scott L. 2012. "A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science," https://kevinlyles.digital.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_v4.pdf.

On writing a good abstract:

Gilardi, Fabrizio. 2021. "Good Abstracts: A Template," https://www.fabriziogilardi.org/resources/papers/good-abstracts.pdf.

Templates for writing:

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. 2018. *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing.* Fourth edition. New York: W. W. Norton. ISBN: 0-393-63167-2. https://tinyurl.com/bdec4eex.

General tipps for writing

Catherine de Vries' Substack: Respect the Marble (https://catherineeunicedevries.substack.com)

On reading efficiently:

Pacheco-Vega, Raul. 2020. "Reading Strategies," http://www.raulpacheco.org/resources/reading-strategies.

Note: Raul Pacheco-Vega's blog is a valuable resource for academic writing in general!

Software Recommendation:

I use Google Scholar and Zotero (both freely available) for literature search. For note-taking, I use Obsidian (also freely available). I recommend that you learn how to use these software tools (or their alternatives), as the investment pays off later during your studies. YouTube has many tutorial videos, and I am also happy to help if you have questions.

Academic Integrity and Mental Health

Plagiarism

Students must comply with the university policy on academic integrity found at https://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/service/detecting-plagiarism. In addition, please also familiarize yourself with the Study Guide https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/politikwissenschaften/bachelor_recht.html. Not knowing the rules is no excuse for plagiarism!

Use of AI

If you use AI (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) to write your term paper, you are required to be transparent about it. More specifically, list the prompts and answers in a separate appendix at the end of the term paper. This appendix does not count towards the word count.
You do not need to list the use of AI for grammar corrections (e.g., DeepL Write, Grammarly, etc.). You are also allowed to use AI for coding, data analysis, and programming, but remember to critically evaluate AI-generated content and use it as a supportive tool rather than as a primary author.
Please remember always to respect the rules of academic integrity and honesty! Plagiarism will be handled according to university policy.

Mental Health

Many students feel overwhelmed by the tasks and responsibilities during their studies, especially if they are new to Germany and Heidelberg. This is normal! If you feel that you are not able to cope alone, please consider approaching the psychosocial counselling service offered free of charge by the student services at https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/study/advisory-services/psychosocial-counselling-for-students-pcs. If you are having difficulties, e.g., with the term paper, please do not hesitate to approach me.

Schedule and Readings

Block I: Introduction

Session 1, 14.10.2025 - Introducing the Seminar

- Getting to know each other

- Introduction to the syllabus

- Clarifying expectations

Block II: Climate-Related Political Mobilization

Session 2, 21.10.2025 - Conflict Structures

- What are the main cleavage lines in contemporary European democracies?

- How is the politicization of climate change integrated into broader conflict lines?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *cultural dimension; GAL-TAN; cultural and economic issues; punctuated equilibrium*

Required:

Schwander, Hanna, and Jonas Fischer. 2025. "From a cultural to a distributive issue: Public climate action as a new field for comparative political economy." *Regulation & Governance* 19 (2): 303–328. https://doi.org/10.1111/rego.12620.

Ford, Robert, and Will Jennings. 2020. "The Changing Cleavage Politics of Western Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23 (1): 295–314. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-052217-104957.

Recommended:

Hooghe, Liesbet, and Gary Marks. 2018. "Cleavage theory meets Europes crises: Lipset, Rokkan, and the transnational cleavage." *Journal of European Public Policy* 25 (1): 109–135. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1310279.

Session 3, 28.10.2025 - Green Parties

- How has the emergence of Green parties affected European party systems?

- How have Green parties politicized climate change over time?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *issue ownership; politicization; history of Green parties; voters of Green parties; Green parties in government*

Required:

Abou-Chadi, Tarik. 2016. "Niche Party Success and Mainstream Party Policy Shifts How Green and Radical Right Parties Differ in Their Impact." *British Journal of Political Science* 46 (2): 417–436. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123414000155.

Marquardt, Jens. 2024. "How Greens turn gray: Green Party politics and the depoliticization of energy and climate change." *Frontiers in Political Science* 5. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2023.1301734.

Recommended:

Dolezal, Martin. 2010. "Exploring the Stabilization of a Political Force: The Social and Attitudinal Basis of Green Parties in the Age of Globalization." *West European Politics* 33 (3): 534–552. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402381003654569.

Session 4, 04.11.2025 - Radical Right Parties

- Why do radical right parties increasingly politicize climate change?

- Is the polarization on climate change by radical right parties more of a proactive or a reactive strategy?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *strategic issue competition; issue yield theory; movement and counter-movement dynamics; history of radical right parties; voters of radical right parties*

Required:

Dickson, Zachary P., and Sara B. Hobolt. 2025. "Going Against the Grain: Climate Change as a Wedge Issue for the Radical Right." *Comparative Political Studies* 58 (8): 1733–1759. https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140241271297.

Malm, Andreas, Kristoffer Ekberg, Christina Englund, Johanne Tagmose Grønkjær, Martin Charlier, Olivia Medin, and Ståle Holgersen. 2025. "Green national paradox? How the far right turned Sweden from a (reputed) pioneer of climate mitigation to an obstructor." *Political Geography* 122:103390. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2025.103390.

Recommended:

Honeker, Alex, and Jae-Jae Spoon. 2025. "This land is our land: Radical right parties and the environmental issue in Europe." *Party Politics* online first. https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688251347882.

Session 5, 11.11.2025 - Mainstream Parties

- How do social-democratic and conservative/Christian-democratic parties integrate positions on climate change into their overall ideological profiles?

- What possible trade-offs do these parties face in taking a clear position on this issue?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *issue trade-offs; mainstream responses to radical right parties; mainstream responses to Green parties; mainstream convergence; voters of social-democratic or Christian-democratic parties*

Required:

Häusermann, Silja, and Herbert Kitschelt. 2024. "Introduction and Theoretical Framework." In *Beyond Social Democracy: The Transformation of the Left in Emerging Knowledge Societies,* edited by Silja Häusermann and Herbert Kitschelt, **only from page 23 (section 1.4) to page 53 (until the end of section 1.5)**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-1-009-49682-7. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009496810.

Båtstrand, Sondre. 2015. "More than Markets: A Comparative Study of Nine Conservative Parties on Climate Change." *Politics & Policy* 43 (4): 538–561. https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12122.

Recommended:

Abou-Chadi, Tarik, Silja Häusermann, Reto Mitteregger, Nadja Mosimann, and Markus Wagner. 2025. "Trade-Offs of Social Democratic Party Strategies in a Pluralized Issue Space: A Conjoint Analysis." *World Politics* 77 (3): 419–467. https://doi.org/10.1353/wp.2025.a964462.

Ungureanu, Camil, and Marc Sanjaume-Calvet. 2025. "The blurred lines between center-right and far-right: Reverse contamination and the Peoples Partys environmentalism in Spain." *Party Politics* 31 (4): 646–659. https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688241242275.

Session 6, 18.11.2025 - Climate Movements

- To what extent does the rise of climate movements represent a rupture in environmental mobilization?

- How do climate movements interact with political parties?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *confrontational forms of protest; similarities and differences in the mobilization strategies of FFF & XR; party-movement interactions; coalitions and elite allies in social movement studies; new social movements*

Required:

Moor, Joost de, Michiel De Vydt, Katrin Uba, and Mattias Wahlström. 2021. "New kids on the block: taking stock of the recent cycle of climate activism." *Social Movement Studies* 20 (5): 619–625. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2020.1836617.

Butzlaff, Felix. 2025. "Who is responsible for addressing climate change? How party systems shape movement-party cooperations and understandings of democracy in Germany and Austria." *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft* 19 (1): 69–91. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12286-025-00638-x.

Recommended:

Giugni, Marco, and Maria T. Grasso. 2015. "Environmental Movements in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Heterogeneity, Transformation, and Institutionalization." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 40 (1): 337–361. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-102014-021327.

Session 7, 25.11.2025 - Western Europe from a Comparative Perspective

- To what extent does the pattern of climate politicization observed in Western Europe extend to Central and Eastern Europe?

- How do parties in Central and Eastern Europe approach the issue of climate change?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *issue salience; normalization of the radical right; historical differences in cleavage formation; post-communist legacies and their effect on patterns of party competition; democratic backsliding*

Required:

Grzymala-Busse, Anna, Piotr Jabkowski, and Mariusz Baranowski. 2025. "How green is my party? Programmatic stances towards environmental protection in Europe." *Party Politics* online first. https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688251362003.

Witajewska-Baltvilka, Baiba, Florenta-Elena Helepciuc, Diana Mangalagiu, and Arpad Todor. 2024. "Politicization of climate change and Central and Eastern European countries stance towards the European Green Deal." *Global Environmental Change* 89:102932. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2024.102932.

Recommended:

Lubarda, Balsa, and Vuk Cadenovic. 2025. "The issue with the far-right talking points: the empirical challenges of assessing far-right ecologism among environmental activists." *Journal of Political Ideologies* online first. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2024.2346197.

Block III: Climate-Related Attitudes and Participation

Session 8, 02.12.2025 - Attitudes Toward Climate Change

- To what extent are attitudes toward climate change independent from attitudes on other issues at the individual level?

- What are the key causes of individual-level attitudes toward climate change?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *issue-preference dimensions; the role of social class in structuring issue preferences; the role of natural catastrophes in influencing climate-related attitudes*

Required:

Kenny, John, and Peter Egge Langsæther. 2023. "Environmentalism as an independent dimension of political preferences." *European Journal of Political Research* 62 (4): 1031–1053. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12549.

Bechtel, Michael M., Federica Genovese, and Kenneth F. Scheve. 2019. "Interests, Norms and Support for the Provision of Global Public Goods: The Case of Climate Co-operation." *British Journal of Political Science* 49 (4): 1333–1355. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123417000205.

Recommended:

Hoffmann, Roman, Raya Muttarak, Jonas Peisker, and Piero Stanig. 2022. "Climate change experiences raise environmental concerns and promote Green voting." *Nature Climate Change* 12 (2): 148–155. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-021-01263-8.

Session 9, 09.12.2025 - Electoral Preferences

- To what extent are attitudes toward climate change influenced by partisanship?

- How do climate-related attitudes influence voting behavior?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *attitude polarization; differences in climate-related attitudes between Green and radical right voters; electoral preferences and climate-related attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe; under what conditions are climate-related attitudes associated with non-participation?*

Required:

Coffé, Hilde, Sam Crawley, and Josh Givens. 2025. "Growing polarisation: ideology and attitudes towards climate change." *West European Politics* online first. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2024.2435727.

Otteni, Cyrill, and Manès Weisskircher. 2022. "Global warming and polarization. Wind turbines and the electoral success of the greens and the populist radical right." *European Journal of Political Research* 61 (4): 1102–1122. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12487.

Recommended:

Fisher, Stephen D., John Kenny, Wouter Poortinga, Gisela Böhm, and Linda Steg. 2022. "The politicisation of climate change attitudes in Europe." *Electoral Studies* 79:102499. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2022.102499.

Session 10, 16.12.2025 - Non-Electoral Participation

- What are the drivers of non-electoral forms of climate-related participation?

- To what extent does the profile of climate-related participants differ from participants in other issue areas?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *leadership effects on participation in climate-related protests; the role of class in driving non-electoral climate-related participation; issue-specific participation; linking actor strategies and individual-level participation*

Required:

Giebler, Heiko, Johannes Giesecke, Macartan Humphreys, Swen Hutter, and Heike Klüver. 2025. "Mobilizing Europes citizens to take action on migration and climate change: behavioral evidence from 27 EU member states." *Journal of European Public Policy* online first. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2025.2512032.

Porta, Donatella della, and Martín Portos. 2023. "Rich kids of Europe? Social basis and strategic choices in the climate activism of Fridays for Future." *Italian Political Science Review* 53 (1): 24–49. https://doi.org/10.1017/ipo.2021.54.

Recommended:

Wahlström, Mattias, and Katrin Uba. 2024. "Political icon and role model: Dimensions of the perceived Greta effect among climate activists as aspects of contemporary social movement leadership." *Acta Sociologica* 67 (3): 301–316. https://doi.org/10.1177/00016993231204215.

Session 11, 06.01.2026 - <mark>NO CLASS</mark>

- Epiphany holiday

Block IV: Climate-Related Collective Identities

Session 12, 13.01.2026 - Affective Polarization and Climate Change

- What is the role of emotions in driving polarization on climate change?

- To what extent and how are emotions strategically mobilized by political actors?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *affective polarization; emotions in climate-related communication; mobilizing and de-mobilizing emotions; stable or volatile emotions*

Required:

Knüpfer, Curd, and Matthias Hoffmann. 2025. "Countering the Climate Cult Framing Cascades in Far-Right Digital Networks." *Political Communication* 42 (1): 85–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2024.2332762.

Remsö, Amanda, Emma A. Renström, and Hanna Bäck. 2025. "Climate change threats and affective polarization. Exploring the role of negative emotional reactions." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 25 (2): e70020. https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.70020.

Recommended:

Versteegen, Peter Luca. 2024. "We love, they hate: Emotions in affective polarization and how partisans may use them." *Political Psychology* 45 (6): 1031–1049. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12955.

Session 13, 20.01.2026 - Climate-Related Group Identities

- Are climate-related attitudes crystallizing into group identities?

- What are the implications of emerging in-group and out-group dynamics around climate issues?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *in-group and out-group identities; dimensions of social identification; drivers of social identification*

Required:

Masson, Torsten, and Immo Fritsche. 2021. "We need climate change mitigation and climate change mitigation needs the We: a state-of-the-art review of social identity effects motivating climate change action." *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences,* Human Response to Climate Change: From Neurons to Collective Action, 42:89–96. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2021.04.006.

Fielding, Kelly S., and Matthew J. Hornsey. 2016. "A Social Identity Analysis of Climate Change and Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors: Insights and Opportunities." *Frontiers in Psychology* 7. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00121.

Recommended:

Hornsey, Matthew J., and Kelly S. Fielding. 2020. "Understanding (and Reducing) Inaction on Climate Change." *Social Issues and Policy Review* 14 (1): 3–35. https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12058.

Session 14, 27.01.2026 - Climate Change in the Era of Polycrisis

- How has the politicization of climate change evolved in the aftermath of Russia's war on Ukraine?

- To what extent has the war changed individual-level attitudes and behavior related to climate change?

Possible concepts for the presentations:

- *the role of crises in structuring patterns of party competition; the role of crises in shaping individual-level attitudes and behavior; issue attention during crises; geopolitics and climate-related polarization*

Required:

Wiertz, Thilo, Lilith Kuhn, and Annika Mattissek. 2023. "A turn to geopolitics: Shifts in the German energy transition discourse in light of Russias war against Ukraine." *Energy Research & Social Science* 98:103036. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2023.103036.

Masch, Lena, Ronja Demel, David Schieferdecker, Hanna Schwander, Swen Hutter, and Jule Specht. 2023. "Shift in Public Opinion Formations on Defense, Energy, and Migration: The Case of Russias War Against Ukraine." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 35 (4): edad038. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edad038.

Recommended:

Weko, Silvia. 2022. "Communitarians, cosmopolitans, and climate change: why identity matters for EU climate and energy policy." *Journal of European Public Policy* 29 (7): 1072–1091. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2021.1918751.

Session 15, 03.02.2026 - Concluding Discussion and Feedback Session

- Feedback session on the content and organization of the seminar, with an open discussion on what you learned, liked, or found challenging.