

Short-term costs, citizen involvement, and the perceived legitimacy of political decisions on climate policy

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Day of Parliamentary Research
26th of June 2023

Climate crisis



Source: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/paris-agreement>

- Political leaders celebrated the Paris Agreement reached at COP21
- States regularly fail to reach their own goals (e.g. Willis et al. 2022)
- Call for institutional reform (e.g. Dryzek/Niemeyer 2019)

Deliberative mini-publics (DMP) and their effect on procedural fairness

- DMPs are “democratic innovations that are made up of ordinary, non-partisan, lay citizens”
(Elstub 2014, 167)
- Example: citizens' assemblies
(Ireland (Devaney et al. 2020), France (Giraudet et al. n.d.), United Kingdom (Elstub et al. 2021), Austria (Praprotnik et al. 2022))
- Literature on procedural fairness and direct democratic institutions
(e.g. Esaiasson et al. 2019, Werner/Marien 2022)

RQ: How do deliberative mini-publics on climate change affect citizens' perception of procedural fairness?

Hypotheses

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- **H2:** Decisions in favour of measures with high short-term costs (e.g. taxes on meat products) are perceived to be less fair than those in favour of measures without high short-term costs (i.e. climate education).

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- **H3:** The effect of including a DMP on fairness perceptions of the decision-making process (H1) is larger for issues with higher short-term costs.

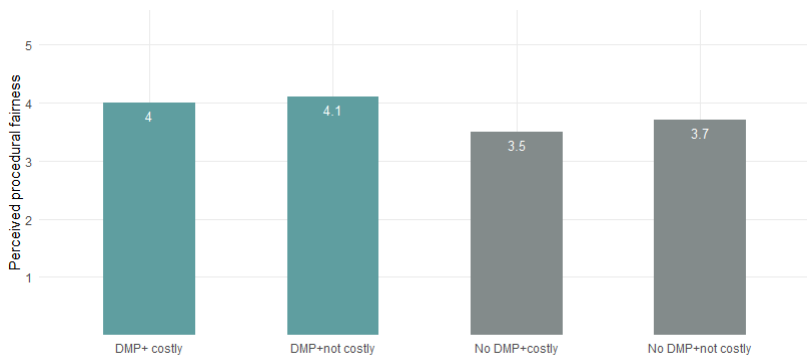
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Survey experiment

- Online survey
(part of the scientific evaluation of the Austrian Climate Assembly)
- N=1,673 residents in Austria
(16+ years and living in Austria for at least 5 years)
- Fieldwork: 13-27 June 2022
- 2x2 experimental design with fictitious newspaper articles:
 - ▶ with/without DMP
 - ▶ with/without costly policy measure
- DV: Procedural fairness measured on a 7-point-scale

Perceived procedural fairness across groups



Explaining fairness perception

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Deliberative mini-public (DMP) | 0.449*** | (6.63) | 0.469*** | (4.95) |
| Costly policy measure | 0.125* | (1.77) | 0.146 | (1.48) |
| DMP*Costly policy measure | | | -0.042 | (-0.31) |
| Outcome favourability | | | | |
| Fully disagree | <i>Reference</i> | | <i>Reference</i> | |
| Rather disagree | 0.938*** | (8.77) | 0.938*** | (8.77) |
| Rather agree | 1.431*** | (14.38) | 1.432*** | (14.38) |
| Fully agree | 1.587*** | (14.83) | 1.589*** | (14.82) |
| Constant | 2.439*** | (24.69) | 2.428*** | (23.16) |
| <i>N</i> | 1,673 | | 1,673 | |
| Adj. <i>R</i> ² | 0.154 | | 0.153 | |

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Conclusion

- DMPs have a positive effect on procedural fairness perception (e.g. Werner and Marien 2022)
- The policy measure does not effect fairness perception (costly vs. non-costly)
- Outcome favorability remains a strong predictor of fairness perception (e.g. Esaiasson et al. 2019)
- Future research on potential risks of disregarding DMP's recommendations

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