



Inclusive  
Science and  
European  
Democracies

Policy Brief Series

Promoting Deliberative Participation in Europe

**ENCOURAGING DIVERSE VOICES:  
INSIGHTS FROM POLISH MEDIA AND TWITTER  
DISCOURSE ON GREEN TRANSITION**

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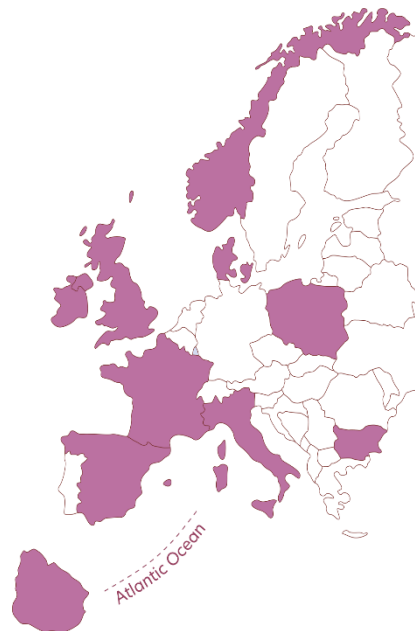
## Innovation Targets

▀ Taking **Citizen Science initiatives**, in all their diversity, as a **Methodological Toolbox** to improve participation and deliberation in Democracy.

▀ Taking the **role of science-based knowledge** in public policy and democratic decision-making – central to knowledge societies – to improve **Participatory and Deliberative Processes** and to complement **Representative Democracy**.

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# Encouraging Diverse Voices: Insights from Polish Media and Twitter Discourse on Green Transition

The intersection of climate change discourse and political polarization poses a critical challenge for democratic regimes, as seen in Poland's engagement with the European Green Transition.

This policy brief explores the extent to which the 'green transition' accelerates political and social divisions within Poland's democratic framework. Twitter debates, often characterized by simplified slogans, are anticipated to exhibit heightened polarization compared to professional media outlets. The ongoing tensions reflect broader European trends, where divergent perspectives on environmental policies manifest in protests and opposition.

Leveraging citizen science inputs, we delve into public sentiments to inform recommendations for fostering a more inclusive and informed dialogue on climate issues in Poland. Users' perspective on technology is one of the most significant factors influencing the adoption and usage of mobile data collection technologies.

## OUR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Develop** standards and training for journalists to improve climate reporting quality and mitigate polarization.
2. **Implement** media literacy programs to help the public identify misinformation and interpret polarized social media discourse.
3. **Support** additional research on grounded, localized impacts of green transition policies.
4. **Increase** science communication efforts focused on key polarizing issues like nuclear power.

## RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Using a citizen science approach and sentiment analysis, our research explored whether the "green transition" debate in Poland is polarizing across social media and news outlets. We examined Twitter and traditional media discourses to assess the degree of polarization around key green transition terms like "Fit for 55", "Green Deal", "Energy transition", and "Clean renewable energy".

## METHODS

A citizen science project was conducted on Facebook to gather associations with "green transition" from over 1,300 Polish users. In addition, 394 participants were surveyed for their views. The project took place during May-September 2022 and predominantly attracted male citizen scientists, deviating from the prevailing literature that typically associates environmental Citizen Science with higher female involvement. Using this data, frequently repeated terms were identified to search Twitter and 9 Polish news outlets. The final dataset

contains 64,116 tweets and 1,776 articles in Polish for the timeframe of 2019-2022. Sentiment and emotion were then analyzed using sentiment analysis to assess, among others, polarization. This multi-pronged approach combined Citizen Science, corpus linguistics, sentiment analysis, and social media analytics to explore green transition polarization in Poland.

## RESULTS

Our analysis shows a balanced discourse on the green transition in Polish media outlets, with no significant polarization observed across outlets and terms. However, Twitter reveals a three times higher level of polarization driven by Polish politicians using emotional language. While Polish media discourse is moderately politicized with a national perspective, the Polish Twitter discourse exhibits greater polarization, particularly around conflicts between Poland and the EU on the Green Deal.

## DISCUSSION

The media discourse on the green transition in Poland is set in the context of national politics, with references to the European Union and European Commission treated as main non-national actors.

The content presented in media outlets contains supporting and critical voices concerning actions aimed at introducing climate emissions cuts. The national perspective resonates very strongly, particularly on decarbonisation, which should not be surprising in a country with a long tradition of relying on coal mining. On Twitter, on other hand, constructing a nuclear power station arouses great interest. This topic seems very polarising, with many people having opposing stances towards that issue. Other frequently used keywords are "Germany", "France", "Polish Oil Company", "pressure", and "EU", which indicate that people were discussing the conflict between Poland and the EU concerning the Green Deal.

## RELEVANCE TO POLICY-MAKING

Key stakeholders for this policy brief include:

- Polish government ministries such as the Ministry of Climate and Environment, as well as the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology that shape national policies related to the green transition.
- The research insights would also be relevant for local and municipal governments in Poland that implement climate and energy programs on the ground.
- Polish and European climate, energy, and environmental NGOs active on these issues can use the findings in their advocacy and engagement efforts.
- Business associations, energy companies, utilities, manufacturing associations, and labor unions have a stake in green transition policies and debates.
- Academic researchers in fields like climate policy, energy policy, media studies, and political communication can further analyze the dynamics illuminated by the research.
- Polish and European media outlets reporting on climate and energy should understand polarization trends. The general Polish public and voters play a role as well.
- Finally, Polish and European policymakers can apply insights to mitigate polarization in this crucial policy area and enhance substantive, solution-oriented discourse.

ISEED maps and explores how inclusive science can support European democracies.

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