

Risk Avoidance through Transition, Legitimate Expectations and Issues of Justice

Schuppert, Fabian ¹

¹ Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland

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ABSTRACT

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If some of the most severe risks associated with anthropogenic climate change are to be avoided swift and radical social, economic, cultural and political transitions are necessary. However, whenever such rapid and far-reaching change is required, we should carefully consider how such change is going to affect issues of justice, not just in terms of distributing the burdens associated with climate transitions (which is part of what is commonly called climate justice), but also with regard to wider issues of social and global justice (and possibly even intergenerational justice). In this paper I will look at the issue of domestic energy transitions and investigate in which way or form our normative concern for risk avoidance and for protecting legitimate expectations to carry on with one's projects and ways of living need to be balanced, as well as how this balancing act can and possibly should impact existing inequalities in the social distribution of risk, vulnerability and power. I will end with a set of rough responses to some existing pressing policy questions, such as whether compensation is owed to employees in industries displaced by climate transitions.



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