

# Majorities genuinely support global redistributive and climate policies worldwide

Surveys in 20 countries reveal strong public support for global policies such as a tax on millionaires to finance low-income countries or a carbon price to finance a global basic income. Survey experiments in Western countries confirm that support is sincere and that citizens prefer political platforms that include global redistribution policies.

## This is a summary of:

Fabre, A. et al. Majority support for global redistributive and climate policies. *Nat. Hum. Behav.* <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-025-02175-9> (2025).

## Publisher's note

Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

## The question

Global policies could address climate change and finance sustainable development. For example, a global 2% tax on individual wealth above US \$5 million could increase the national income of low-income countries by 50%, if merely one-third of the revenue were used for this purpose. The focus of our study is a specific policy aimed at addressing both climate change and poverty, called the Global Climate Scheme (GCS). It imposes a cap on carbon emissions to limit global warming below 2 °C. Emission rights would be auctioned each year to polluting firms and fund a global basic income, to alleviate extreme poverty. Although several governments are advocating for global solidarity levies, a key unknown is whether populations in wealthier nations are ready for such global policies. Although attitudes towards redistributive and climate policies at the national level have been studied extensively<sup>1</sup>, few studies have examined attitudes towards global policies<sup>2–4</sup>.

## The observation

We used a large-scale global survey of 40,680 respondents in 20 countries conducted in 2021 and 2022. This survey provided a piece of evidence that showed support for global policies. To assess the sincerity and robustness of support in Western countries, we surveyed 8,000 respondents from France, Germany, Spain, the UK and the USA, and used a wide variety of experiments. We tested social desirability bias with a list experiment, assessed universalistic values with a donation experiment, and simulated the effects of including global policies in a political platform on vote intentions with conjoint analyses.

The global survey revealed that 85% of people think that climate policies should be enacted at the global level (Fig. 1a). Support for a global emissions trading system is similarly high, and there is a consensus on an equal per capita allocation of emissions rights, which corresponds to the GCS.

In the surveys we conducted in Western countries, we made sure that the respondents understood the net cost of the GCS (for example, \$85 per month for the average American or £20 per month for a British person). Nevertheless, 76% of Europeans and 54% of Americans support the GCS.

Strong support also exists for other global redistribution policies, such as a global tax on millionaires that would finance low-income countries (69% in the USA and 84% in Europe (Fig. 1b). When asked how much of the revenue from such

a tax should go to low-income countries as opposed to funding domestic health and education, the average respondent prefers to allocate one-third of the revenue to low-income countries. When asked about their preferred amount of foreign aid, most of the respondents who are given information on the actual amount of foreign aid choose a bracket at least as high as the actual amount, and most of those without this information choose a bracket at least as high as the perceived amount. Another question confirms that majorities are willing to increase foreign aid (Fig. 1b), but only if certain conditions are met, such as ensuring that the aid is well spent and that other high-income countries also increase their contributions. In other words, its unilateral nature is one of the reasons why foreign aid is not as popular as global policies.

Our experiments confirm the robustness of support for global policies. A list experiment showed no evidence that people would exaggerate their support owing to social desirability concerns. An experiment in which respondents could donate to someone in need shows that European people and American people who voted for Joe Biden donate as much when the recipient is an African person as they would to a fellow citizen, although Trump voters donate less to African people. Conjoint analyses show that a political platform is more likely to be preferred if it includes the GCS or a global tax on millionaires, and that global policies rank high in policy prioritization. Our randomized experiments also show that a candidate would not lose vote intentions by supporting the GCS, and could even gain up to 11 points in France.

## Future directions

Our findings suggest an untapped potential for addressing global inequality and climate change through collaborative international action.

Although we used state-of-the-art methods to test the robustness of stated preferences, attitudes themselves may not be crystallized as global redistribution is not salient in political discussions. Therefore, opinions might change once the issue is publicly debated. Future research could use qualitative interviews to uncover how people feel and reason about global solidarity.

## Adrien Fabre

Centre International de Recherche sur l'Environnement et le Développement (CIRED), Paris, France.

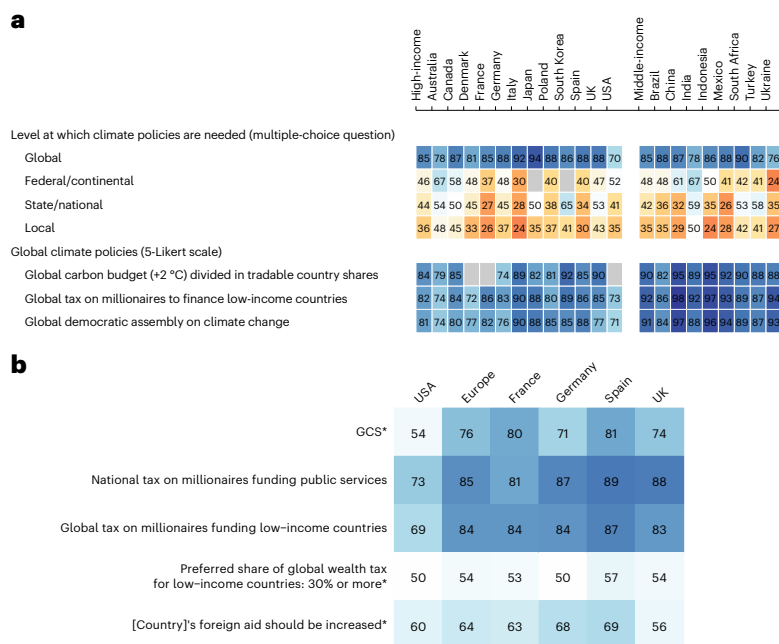
## EXPERT OPINION

"This bold article addresses the important topic of international public opinion about global governance reforms to tackle some of the most pressing transnational challenges: climate change and world poverty. The governance and policy proposals that the authors study are

innovative and consequential. A particular strength of their paper is that they explore the practical details of public opinion on how such transformational reforms and measures could be implemented."

**Farsan Ghassim, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.**

## FIGURE



**Fig. 1 | Support for global redistributive and climate policies. a**, Global survey ( $n = 40,680$ ). **b**, Western survey ( $n = 8,000$ ). The numbers represent relative support (that is, the percentage of 'Somewhat' or 'Strongly support' among non-indifferent answers, except for the multiple-choice question (in a) and for GCS (percentage of yes in a yes–no question), preferred share (percentage of answers  $\geq 30\%$ ) and foreign aid (percentage of unconditional or conditional increase rather than decrease or stable aid) (in b; marked by asterisks). Shares of indifferent answers range from 10% to 37%, with quartiles 15%, 20% and 26%. © 2025, Fabre, A. et al., CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

## BEHIND THE PAPER

In 2020, I was invited to join the research team when the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) funded an international survey on attitudes towards climate policies<sup>1</sup>. Although our focus was on national policies, we were struck by the strength of support for climate policy at the global level. Some of us were sceptical that the support shown for global redistributive policies was genuine. The team decided to let me find

out whether the results were robust by using a new survey.

The new survey results confirmed the initial findings and showed that support for global redistribution is strong and genuine.

When I discovered the confirmatory results, I thought they were too important to be left to academia. I decided to write a book<sup>2</sup> and communicate these results to the general public and policymakers. **A.F.**

## REFERENCES

1. Dechezleprêtre, A. et al. Fighting climate change: international attitudes toward climate policies. *Am. Econ. Rev.* **115**, 1258–1300 (2025).  
**An article presenting attitudes towards climate change and national climate policies using representative surveys in 20 countries.**
2. Andre, A., Boneva, T., Chopra, F. & Falk, A. Globally representative evidence on the actual and perceived support for climate action. *Nat. Clim. Change* **14**, 253–259 (2024).  
**An article reporting strong support for climate action and underestimation of the support using representative surveys in 125 countries.**
3. Carattini, D., Kallbekken, S. & Orlov, A. How to win public support for a global carbon tax. *Nature* **565**, 289–291 (2019).  
**An article surveying attitudes towards a global carbon tax in five countries.**
4. Ghassim, F. & Pauli, M. Who on Earth wants a world government, what kind, and why? An international survey experiment. *Int. Stud. Q.* **68**, 1–16 (2024).  
**An article reporting strong support for a democratic world government focused on global issues using representative surveys in 17 countries.**
5. Fabre, A. The global climate plan: a global plan to end climate change and extreme poverty. SSRN <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4850808> (2024).  
**A online book developing a policy proposal elaborated from the GCS.**

## FROM THE EDITOR

"The climate crisis requires urgent action, but such action is costly, especially for citizens of contributing countries. The work by Fabre et al. stood out to us because it addresses the fundamental question of whether there is public support for redistributive policies. The take-home messages have direct practical relevance in addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our times." **Editorial Team, Nature Human Behaviour.**