

Political attitudes towards renewable energy

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Renewables and the public

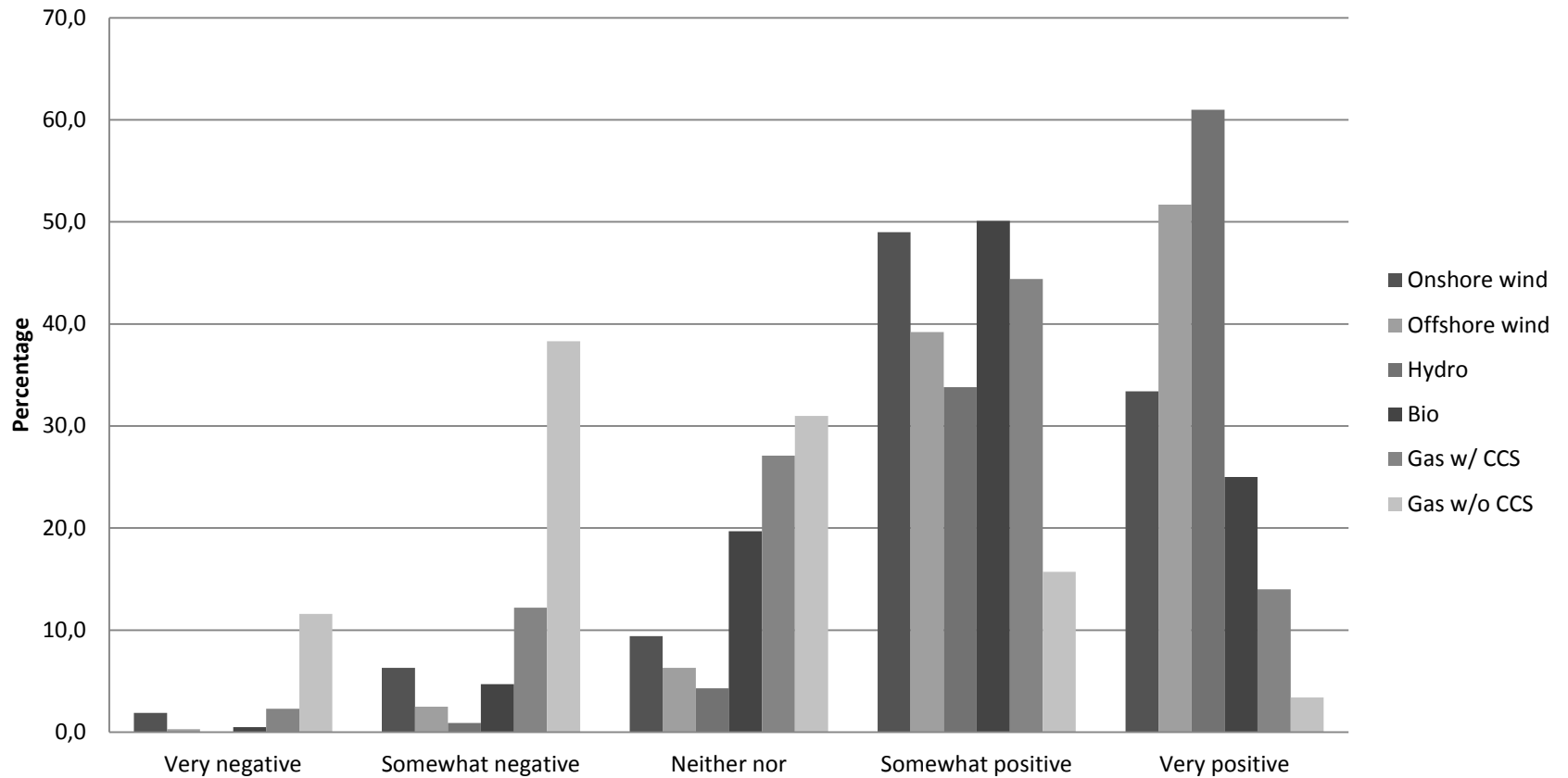
- How do people view renewables?
 - What influences their views?
- Explain opposition to or support for RE
 - A topic of policy interest
- Most studies so far have looked at specific instances of resistance or support
 - Publics-in-Particular
 - But what about Publics-in-General?

Design

- Location matters
 - NIMBY
- Knowledge deficits
- We wish to look at classical socio-demographics
 - Especially stated political views
- Two surveys: N=1500, N=1045

People are supportive of RE

Attitudes to different energy technologies



Re: Previous research

- We don't find anything special connected to geography or education
 - Does not mean they don't matter
- There are some socio-demographic factors at play

- Age: 60+ are sceptical towards wind, pro-gas
- Gender: women positive to bio, not to gas
- Income: No correlation

Table 1
Regression results for energy technologies.

	Onshore wind	Offshore wind	Hydro	Bio	Gas with CCS	Gas w/o CCS
Constant	4.405	4.611	4.497	3.907	2.766	2.560
Age	-.07*	-.10**	.05	.00	.26**	.04
Gender	-.00	.01	-.19**	.11**	-.15**	.05
Income	-.01	-.02	-.03	-.04	-.01	.11**
Education	-.07*	-.04	.05	-.00	-.02	-.10**
Labour Party	.01	.08	.01	.03	.12**	-.05
Progress Party ^a	-.02	.01	.02	-.02	.04	.06
Conservative Party	.11**	.13**	.07	-.01	.12**	.04
Christian Democrat Party	.02	.03	.03	-.01	-.02	-.08*
Centre Party	.02	.07	-.06	-.01	.04	-.02
Socialist Left Party	.02	.08*	-.01	.06	.04	-.13**
Liberal Party ^b	.05	.06	-.01	.03	.07*	-.11**
R-squared	.02	.02	.06	.02	.13	.07
N	1017	1007	1011	969	910	904

Standardized coefficients reported.

* Indicate significance at the .05 and .01 level, respectively.

** Indicate significance at the .05 and .01 level, respectively.

^a The Progress Party can be characterised as right-wing populist.

^b The Liberal party roughly corresponds to the UK liberal democrats.

Political block preference

- Views on renewables correlate with political self-identification
- Voters of «environmental» parties prefer renewables, sceptical to gas
- Voters of «industrial» parties prefer gas or even coal

Table 2
Correlations between political blocks and statements about the environment.

	Industry	Environment
I am worried about the consequences of global warming	-.13**	.16**
I think climate change is caused by human action	-.18**	.21**
Norway doesn't put enough effort into constructing new renewables	.07*	.04
The world's energy demand will have to be met by oil and gas for a long time	.18**	-.20**
More hydro is needed for Norway to meet its emissions goals	.12**	-.13**
The Norwegian power industry is concerned about climate change	.03	-.08**
The Norwegian power industry is concerned about conservation	.05	-.11**
The Norwegian power industry is developing more climate friendly production techniques	.04	-.09**

* Denote significance below the .05 and .01 level, respectively.

** Denote significance below the .05 and .01 level, respectively.

- Also correlates to general statements about climate change and the role of industry
- «Industry»: Less worried about climate change
- «Environment»: Skeptical about oil/gas and the power industry in general

Political party preference

- Right-wing voters tend to go for «economic» technologies, left-wing for the perceived «environmental» ones
- «Center» voters less clear
- In general: gas is most divisive

To conclude

- No surprises
- Still, some valuable findings:
 - Publics-in-General can be a useful category
 - Party blocks rather than individual parties
 - Industrial/environmental rather than left/right
 - Might explain the taming of conflict
 - Hope for active policy?