

ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Statement of the problem. The nature of environmental challenges has changed considerably in recent decades. With an increase in technological risks in modern societies, the fear of a threatening environmental catastrophe, a global environmental crisis, is growing. Therefore, there is an ever-greater need for a global response to environmental problems.

Purpose of the research. The purpose of the present work is to reveal the attitudes of European people towards the environmental values and their desire to change the situation throughout the European continent.

The key findings. Values are an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. Cultural values refer to an entire culture's mind-set and the understanding shared by most members of a society and how these influence the attitudes and behaviours of a society.

People value nature for various reasons. One person is enchanted by nature's beauty while another appreciates nature's ability to produce timber or clean air. How people value nature is partly based on their beliefs and motives. The planet has a finite number of natural resources, therefore limiting humans' use of these resources is important for ensuring the long-term viability of the planet.

Cultural values, which do not change with situations, influence attitudes and in turn influence behaviours. European countries have their own unique social and cultural values, beliefs, norms, and characteristics. Although the European value system may appear similar to those of other societies, it possesses unique characteristics such as conflict, confusion, and change. Europeans have contrasting opinions on the right way of dealing with nature.

The climate change debate is increasingly focusing on individual responsibility. To be responsible for something is to accept personal accountability for an outcome.

Seventeen of the twenty best-performing countries according to the 2018 Environmental Performance Index are in Europe [7]. EPI ranks 180 countries on numerous indicators relating to environmental health and ecosystem vitality. Inequality is also lower in Europe than in any other world region. 14 of these 17 best-performing European countries per the 2018 EPI are in the EU, and income inequality is below the EU average in all but two of those countries. Some of the most unequal EU countries — such as Romania and Bulgaria — are also among the EU's worst EPI performers. A similar trend can be observed concerning corruption: The EU countries in which corruption was perceived to be a total or widespread problem by over 80% of people generally perform worse on the EPI compared to countries where corruption is lower than the EU average.

The French government is currently facing a two-sided challenge on climate policies. On the one hand, the protest of the Yellow Vests that originated in November

2018 against the planned doubling in the carbon tax — from 44.6 to 86.2e/tCO₂ in 2022 — led the government to halt the increasing trajectory that started at 7e/tCO₂ in 2014 [17, 2]. On the other hand, a large campaign called «Affaire du siècle» started in December 2018 against its inaction for the environment, gathering over two million signatories in a month. It is so far unclear how the tension between these two a priori antagonistic objectives will be resolved. In particular, one may wonder whether the two movements involve distinct groups with opposite interests, or rather reflect a commonly perceived inadequacy of the solution proposed by the government to address the climate threat. According to research, 65% are «willing to adopt an ecological lifestyle (for example, eat little red meat and make sure to use almost no gasoline, diesel nor kerosene)», assuming that «all states in the world agree to firmly fight climate change, notably through a transition to renewable energy, by making the richest contribute, and imagining that France would expand the supply of non-polluting transport very widely», while only 17% answer «No» (the others do not take a side) [17, 4–5]. Therefore, French people appear mostly aware and concerned about climate change.

All polls show that environmental protection is of great importance to the Germans. Every two years, the relevant federal agency interviews German residents on this topic, and the results of the studies are considered a reliable criterion.

In recent research, 73 percent of Germans expressed the view that the environment in their country as a whole is in good condition [6, 22]. Two important factors influenced this result: after endless disputes, Germany abandoned nuclear energy and confidently embarked on the path of active use of solar and wind energy. In Germany, nuclear power is seen as incompatible with a long-term renewable energy strategy, and a nuclear power phase-out is a central part of the country's energy transition or *Energiewende*. At the beginning of 2011, there were 17 nuclear power plants in operation in Germany, and by 2022 the last will have been closed. In addition, the German government put a high price tax on environmentally unfriendly activities, specifically fossil fuel use. Germany has extensive public and bicycle transportation networks, both of which encourage fossil fuel independence. Car use remains high, but younger generations are driving far less than their parents as car sharing becomes more popular and convenient. Making the cars that are on the road more efficient is also a priority. The German government has passed a law giving e-cars special rights and privileges, for example, for parking, to increase their use [1].

Meanwhile, about 50 percent of the respondents in Germany believe that environmental protection is important for ensuring the country's competitiveness in the future [6, 24].

In Spain, as in all developed European countries, there are serious environmental problems. However, it has already reached such a level of economic development that allows financing and implementing not only local environmental protection measures in areas with the most severe environmental conditions but also shaping a long-term national environmental policy. But in Spain, there are still many problems that need to be addressed. Personal transport exacerbates seasonal problems with air quality and traffic congestion in the major metropolitan areas in Spain, leading to health and economic costs. In the last two years, the Spanish authorities have taken additional measures to solve this problem, which have to be strictly implemented.

Still, one of the challenges for Spain is to ensure that environmental financing remains at an adequate level. Existent financial gaps in sectors such as nature protection or the support of green activities are delaying the correct environmental implementation of EU law and policies. Therefore, ensuring financial resources to reduce the implementation gap should be considered as a priority for the country [16, 5–6].

Conclusion. In the past decades, cultural values in Europe have not remained static but changed drastically from mostly materialistic to post-materialistic a systematic difference between countries was expected, based on their material wealth. We can say that in countries with a higher GDP per capita, the more non-materialistic cultural values predominate. If all members of a society incur personal costs to contribute toward sustainable management of a common good, then all receive a positive pay-off that exceeds the individual contribution. However, if an individual chooses not to contribute (i.e. incurs no personal cost) yet still receives a pay-off, that individual's gains are optimised at the expense of the marginal gains of all other individuals, thus contributions are no longer rational for anyone.

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ATTITUDES TO GREEN TECHNOLOGIES IN SWEDEN

Abstract. *The present article deals with the use of green technologies and the attitude of the Swedish population to the environment. It contains an overview of the major eco technologies used in the country. Its prior objective is to investigate the causality between Sweden's status as the greenest country in the world and population culture. The results of this investigation serve for reasoning the attitude of people to the environment in Sweden.*

Keywords: *green technology, environment, ecoculture, utilization, recycling, reusing, garbage, biofuel.*

Statement of the problem. In recent years, in terms of realization an environmentally friendly growth strategy, developed countries have been evolving green technologies. The most important stimulus for growth are the various steps of public policy. Nowadays, there are several definitions of the concept of «green» or environmentally friendly (environmental) technologies. The general approach provides achievement of main goal of reducing the negative impact on the environment, for example by reducing waste, improving energy efficiency and improving design to reduce the amount of consumed resources.

Purpose of the research. The purpose of the present work is to specify the role of Swedish mentality in the environmental policy of the country.