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CLIMATE CHANGE ATTITUDES AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are global threats, as shown in the European Commission 2021 Survey. They have consequences for the global society and environment. Over 90 percent of EU citizens perceive climate change as a serious problem and assume that the national government should set more ambitious goals relating to climate policy. Although it is still unclear how the pandemic impacts public concerns about climate change and perceptions of climate policies, it is evident that their influence on one another is significant and that neither of them can be effectively mitigated without considering their interdependencies. Therefore, this paper examines the factors influencing the relationship between climate change attitudes and COVID-19 in Croatia. The results show that the pandemic triggered 26.5 percent of citizens to consider taking some action or measures to combat climate change. Most citizens think the climate policy should be stricter and motivate citizens to change their behavior. Trust, gender, environmental concerns, expected impacts on household expenditures for energy, and expected impacts on climate change primarily influence differences in climate change attitudes among citizens. Research is based on data collected through a 2021 survey of citizens 18 years and older. Chain-referral sampling methodology was used to collect answers. 590 responses were collected. This kind of research in Croatia is relatively rare, and some of the presented findings can provide additional insights and guidelines for policymakers to formulate integral and multisectoral mitigation strategies.

Key words: behavior, citizens, climate change, COVID-19 pandemic, renewable energy, survey

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