

In Europe, climate change counter movement think tanks are conservative and neoliberal

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Credit: Universitat Pompeu Fabra - Barcelona

To date, numerous studies have looked at think tanks and networks involved in the climate change counter-movement in the US. Now, for the first time, the most important contrarian climate change think tanks in Europe have been studied systematically. The study whose first author, Núria Almiron, is a researcher with the UPF Department of

Communication, covers a 24-year period (1994-2018) and takes account of the messages issued in six European countries, in four languages.

For the first time, an organized [climate change](#) counter-movement led by [conservative groups](#) in Europe has been studied rigorously

"We have studied the messages issued with reference to climate change since this topic first emerged. The discourse we have found is a carbon copy of that used by American denialists. They repeat the same thing, even in some cases where climate change does not exist," says Núria Almiron. "As in the United States, in Europe contrarian think tanks have a neoliberal ideological stance," she adds.

The study, carried out within the framework of the THINKClima project, funded by the Spanish National Research Agency (AEI) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), was published on 9 September in the international journal *Climatic Change*, and in addition to Almiron it also involved Maxwell Boykoff, a researcher at the University of Colorado, Boulder (USA); Marta Narberhaus, a researcher at the International University of Catalonia; and Francisco Heras, an independent researcher.

This study documents for the first time that activities against climate change constitute a global counter-movement that is also present in the EU

The authors considered eight European climate change counter-movement think tanks, in six countries, studying their messages in four different languages. Their [content analysis](#) has shown that the messages issued by European organizations against climate change are very similar to those broadcast in the US. In short, this study documents for the first time that activities against climate change constitute a global counter-movement that is also present in the EU.

Therefore, the main conclusion of the research is that although the organized climate change counter-movement had been associated with the US, mainly due to the powers that be related to the [coal industry](#) and the political and cultural opposition to environmental movements, and although its influence in Europe is more modest, the study highlights that there is an organized counter-movement in Europe led by conservative think tanks.

More information: Núria Almiron et al, Dominant counter-frames in influential climate contrarian European think tanks, *Climatic Change* (2020). [DOI: 10.1007/s10584-020-02820-4](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-020-02820-4)

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