

CSD lecture announcement

Priors, belief updating and attitudes to nuclear power risk

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VIP Room, Ravelijn Building

The paper uses data from a set of eleven surveys carried out throughout Europe between 1978 and 2008 to investigate the determinants of attitudes toward nuclear power risk. It first assesses how left-right ideological priors shape the orientation toward this type of energy source; subsequently it employs an objective measure of risk (proximity to the closest operating nuclear power plant, measured by the great circle distance formula) to assess how proximity conditions the impact of priors on risk attitudes. Finally, it evaluates, via Bayesian inference, how belief updating operates, under different ideological priors, degree of proximity and over the short and long period, in the wake of major nuclear power accidents. Evidence fleshes out the dynamic conditional effects of priors, objective risk, occurrence of major accidents and belief updating on risk attitudes.

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