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Cool Dudes in Europe

Climate change denial amongst conservative ‘white’ men

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Abstract

Why are certain categories of people more likely than others to regard climate change as ‘fake news’? This thesis aims to replicate and expand on two earlier articles from McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) who show that conservative white men are more likely to be climate change deniers in the US and Norway, respectively. This phenomenon is called the cool dude-effect. Theories about the cool dude-effect builds on research in risk perception and political psychology implying that individuals aren’t susceptible to facts that challenge their worldviews. This thesis also adds an intersectional perspective on the cool dude-effect. The objective of this study is to search for the cool dude-effect in a broader European context. To test this, a multilevel logistic regression is used on data from European Social Survey containing 39,000 respondents from 21 European countries. The results indicate, although not with a strong significance, that the cool dude-effect can be seen in a broader European context, indicating that this is a general trend across Western countries.

Keywords: Cool dude-effect, climate change denial, ESS, multilevel logistic regression,
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1 Introduction

Climate change is regarded by many as the biggest existential threat to humankind (EUobserver 2019) (NASA 1) (IPCC 2018). Almost all research indicates that climate change is happening, and that it is caused by human activity (UCSUSA 1) (IPCC 2018) but there are still individuals that deny these facts. Who are these climate change deniers?

This thesis aims to get a better understanding of who some of these climate change deniers are. To do this I expand on two earlier articles that has looked at conservative white men to see if they are more likely to be climate change deniers. The articles are *Cool dudes: The denial of climate change among conservative white males in the United States* by McCright and Dunlap (2011) and *Cool dudes in Norway: climate change denial among conservative Norwegian men* by Krange et al. (2019). The idea that conservative white men are more likely to be climate change deniers, the so-called cool dude-effect, builds from earlier research in risk perception and political psychology. I also add an intersectional perspective from ecofeminism to better understand the cool dude-effect. The results from the two earlier articles indicate that the cool dude-effect exists in the US and Norway.

The aim of this thesis is to test if the cool dude-effect exists in a broader European context. To do this, data from the European Social Survey has been used with answers from over 39,000 respondents in 21 European countries. The method used to test this relationship is a multilevel logistic regression model.

Some of the results diverge from earlier research regarding separate variables. My results indicate that being a male lead to a greater likelihood of being a climate change denier, having conservative values has no significant effect and being 'white' makes an individual less likely to be a climate denier. However, the cool dude-effect can still be seen, although with a weaker significance. This indicates that it is a general trend across European countries.

In part 2 of the thesis the theoretical framework is presented. Part 3 presents the results of earlier research. In part 4 the hypothesis of the thesis is presented. After that part 5 follows where the method is presented, together with a discussion of the data, operationalisation and the statistical model. In part 6 the results of the study are presented and discussed. The thesis ends in part 7 with a conclusion.

2 Theory

In this part I will present the theoretical basis of the thesis, mainly the ideas about the cool dude-effect. It will start with presenting the theories from the two articles that this essay builds from. First, I will present the original American article and the theoretical framework that it created. Then I will present the Norwegian article and how it adds the theories to a broader trend of resistance to social change. Lastly, I will present my addition to the theoretical framework on why an intersectional perspective is important to understand the cool dude-effect.

The theory that conservative white men are more likely to be climate change deniers comes from mainly two articles. The first one is named *Cool dudes: The denial of climate change among conservative white males in the United States* and is written by Aaron M. McCright and Riley E. Dunlap (2011). The other article is named *Cool dudes in Norway: climate change denial among conservative Norwegian men* and is written by Olve Krange, Bjørn P. Kaltenborn and Martin Hultman (2019).

McCright and Dunlap (2011) means that conservative white males are more likely to be climate change deniers, something that's called the cool dude-effect[1]. The theory of the cool dude-effect is built from a combination of different ideas from risk perception literature and political psychology. The main ideas that can explain the cool dude-effect is the white male effect, identity-protective cognition and system-justification tendencies.

The white male effect is a phenomenon, that has been empirically found, that white men are more acceptant of risks than other groups (McCright & Dunlap 2011). This effect can be seen in a lot of different situations, and across the US both nation-wide and regionally (McCright & Dunlap 2011). The white male effect is applicable to climate change as white males might trivialize the risks of global warming (Krange et al. 2019).

There is a lot of different theoretical explanations to why the white male effect exists but McCright and Dunlap (2011) focus their analysis on the identity-protection cognition thesis. The identity-protection cognition thesis comes from an article written by Kahan et al. (2007). The article states that individuals risk perception is formed by their cultural worldviews. It also states that people easier accept information from individuals from its in-group and easier refutes critical information from individuals from an out-group. Individuals acts like this to protect the status and self-esteem that they receive from being a member of a particular group. Kahan et al. (2007) also mean that the environmental danger is well applicable for the identity-protection cognition thesis. They mean that the white

[1] McCright and Dunlap do not explicably call this the cool dude-effect but the later article of Krange et al. (2019) has named it so.

male effect should be more likely to be seen there. This is because within a hierarchical worldview, men are viewed as having the public role in civil society and government as opposed to women who are viewed as having a domestic role. Environmental risks are challenging the social and governmental elites. Therefore, environmental risks threaten men's, and a particularly white men's, identity which would make them more dismissive of the risks.

Kahan et al. (2007) results indicate that their identity-protective cognitions theory is correct when it comes to explaining the white male effect. This has led McCright and Dunlap (2011) to speculate there is a similar effect in conservative white males' views on climate change.

McCright and Dunlap (2011) continue with adding research from Jost et al. (2008) that shows that conservative individuals are more likely to have system justification tendencies, meaning that they support the societal status quo and don't want to change it. Something that climate policy threatens.

Something that is worth to consider is that a lot of the research that McCright and Dunlap (2011) builds their theories from comes from an American context. For example, the article from Jost et al. (2008) equals the left – right scale to a liberal – conservative scale, this might not be as applicable in a European context. This means that it might lead to other results when testing these theories in another context.

Adding to these psychological effects McCright and Dunlap (2011) means that the fossil fuel lobby is a reason that conservative white males would be more likely to be climate change deniers. These actors have presented a message that climate change isn't real with the help of think tanks through different kinds of medias. If the average conservative white male sees the conservative white male elite as a part of their in-group, the identity-protection cognition will make them more susceptible of their message.

Conservative white males have historically had disproportionally control of positions of power within the capitalist system (McCright & Dunlap 2011). This would lead to them being more willing to defend the capitalist order as they see an advantage of keeping the current system. Because a lot of climate-policy challenges the industrial capitalist economic system it will lead to conservative white men to oppose them and therefore show more of a system-justification tendency (McCright & Dunlap 2011).

Krange et al. (2019) builds from the theoretical framework presented above but they add that xenosceptic views also might be linked. They define xenoscepticism as "*suspicion or dislike of immigrants combined with the belief that immigration rates are too high*" (Krange et al. 2019, p 9). They link McCright and Dunlap's (2011) theories to a broader context of resistance against social change. They are also critical that it is limited to identification with the message of the conservative elite. They mean that it also links to white conservative male's defence of privileged and power positions. They add that rising wave of right-wing nationalism also has an effect and they mean that an individual with xenosceptic views are more likely to be climate deniers.

Krange et al. (2019) does not built a deeper theoretical case why this effect would exist. Their main inspiration for adding this effect are the results from

Forchtner and Kölvraa (2015) that show that nationalistic parties deny climate change on ideological basis. They seek to protect the national countryside so the goal of protecting nature isn't foreign for them, but the transnational aspect of climate change threatens countries sovereignty and therefore the facts of climate change can't coexist with these nationalistic ideals.

I would like to add that this can also be linked to trust. A person with more xenosceptic views shows a lack of trust of individuals not in its in-group. Therefore, it could be reason that these individuals would lack trust to other than immigrants, such as scientists. So, the reason that the right-wing nationalist and climate change denial coexist might be because both are founded on a lack of trust of the "other".

According to me the theories from McCright and Dunlap (2011) doesn't give a fulfilling explanation on why the combination of these three attributes should have effect beyond the individual attributes themselves. I mean that the inclusion of an intersectional perspective on which societal groups denies climate change might be helpful. Intersectionality is defined as "*the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power*" (Davis 2008, p 68). This means that it is important to consider how different power structures interact with each other.

What intersectionality can tell us is that it is possible to not see an effect from each separate main attribute but at the same time see a combined effect from all three attributes. This means that it is possible for these three attributes, male, 'white' and conservative, do not make an individual more likely to be a climate change denier but the power dynamics in combination leads these individuals to be more likely to be climate change deniers.

We can also see from ecofeminist literature why these should have a combined effect. The norm of what is a good life, that also is an unsustainable life, is shaped from the norm of a small group consistent of wealthy, mainly white, men living in Western countries (Kaijser and Kronsell 2014). White middle-class men's identity is closely linked to being a car owner (Kaijser and Kronsell 2014). Therefore, opposing their use of cars is a challenge against their identity. Added to this Kaijser and Kronsell (2014) mean that what is considered knowledge is closely linked to privilege. All this indicates that facts about climate change is challenging the privileged position that conservative white men hold in western societies and that would make them less likely to accept these.

3 Earlier research

In the following part I will present the result from earlier research about climate change denialism. To begin I will present the results from the two main articles that this thesis builds. Showing how the cool dude-effect has been tested empirically and the results of those articles. After that I will present a broader view of climate change denial research. A final discussion about climate change denial research that has been done in Europe will end this part.

To test the cool dude-effect McCright and Dunlap (2011) use a multivariate logistic regression on survey data collected by Gallup. The data is collected from ten surveys between 2001 and 2010 which they combined into pooled samples. They use five different measurements for climate denialism. I will discuss their operationalization in more detail in part 5.2 Operationalization. They range from if the individual doesn't believe global warming will ever happen to if the media exaggerates the effects of global warming. They start with finding a strong correlation between their cool dude variable and their climate denial variables. The results from the regressions shows that they have significance in their variables for male, white and conservative in the majority of their 15 different regression. Their dummy variable for conservative white male also has a significance indicating that the combination of being white, conservative and male makes an individual more likely to be a climate change denier beyond their separate effects. They conclude with "*Clearly the extent to which the conservative white male effect on climate change denial exists outside the US is a topic deserving investigation*" (McCright and Dunlap 2011, p 1171).

Krange et al.'s (2019) aims to test these results in another western country, namely Norway. They try to replicate the research design of McCright and Dunlap as close as possible with similar variables. Their biggest change is that they do not test for white as they do not see it as applicable in a Norwegian context, they mean that ethnic Norwegian is more applicable. They operationalize this as individuals whose both parents are born in Norway. They also add their theory about xenosceptic views which they operationalize as individuals who agree with the statement "We have enough immigrants and asylum seekers in our country" (Krange et el. 2019, p 5). Their results show that they do get a significance for their variables for male, conservative and their dummy for cool dudes, indicating that all these aspects makes an individual more likely to be a climate change denier, but not for their variable for Norwegian. This indicates that if being ethnic Norwegian doesn't have an effect but when an ethnic Norwegian also is conservative and male, they are more likely to be climate change deniers. The results for the xenosceptic variable also have a significant result as well as their dummy for xenosceptic cool dudes. Which shows that Norwegian conservative men are more likely to be climate change deniers if they also have more xenosceptic views.

Climate and environmental science denial: A review of the scientific literature published in 1990-2015 written by Björnberg et al. (2017) is a comprehensive look at research about denial of findings in environmental science. Their study shows that studies about climate change denial has increase a lot since 1990. They also show that the main geographically focus has been on countries in the Anglo-American sphere, showing that there is a need to look at other countries. Something that their study concludes is that factors that effect climate change denial are different in different countries.

There has been some research that has looked at views on climate change in a European context, notably *Political ideology and views about climate change in the European Union* by Aaron M. McCright, Riley E. Dunlap and Sandra T. Marquart-Pyatt (2016). The article tests if there is an ideological divide when it comes to views on the climate. They test respondents in 27 EU-countries with an OLS-regression. Their results indicate that people that define themselves as right-wing are less likely to believe that climate change is happening. But the authors themselves add that the opinion-data they examine comes from before the financial crisis 2008 and that most likely affects the results. Studies in the United States has showed that the financial crisis 2008 affected views on climate change (Scruggs and Benegal 2012).

I conclude this part with the three main points that earlier research has shown. The first point is that there seems to be a lack of research done in countries that aren't in the Anglo-American sphere. Secondly, the research that has focused on a broader European perspective is outdated. The last point is that now when the cool dude-effect has been seen in two western countries a broader study is needed to determine if this is a general phenomenon.

4 Hypothesis

My goal of this thesis is to replicate McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) on new data in a broader European context. The aim is to see if the cool dude-effect is a general trend across western countries which these earlier articles has indicated. So, my research question is:

Does the cool dude-effect exist in a broader European context?

I expect my results to follow the results from Krange et al. (2019) results as their research has been done in Norway, a country included in the European context I am testing. I deem it is likely that if the cultural phenomenon can be seen in such an environmentally friendly country as Norway (Krange et al. 2019) it can be seen in the rest of Europe. Therefore, my hypothesis is that I will find that men, individuals with conservative values and cool dudes are more likely to be climate change deniers, but 'white' (individuals with non-immigration background) does not have significant more likelihood be climate change deniers.

5 Method

In this part I will present the method that has been used in order to test my hypothesises. I will start with presenting the data from the European Social Survey which lies as the basis of this thesis. Then I will discuss the operationalization of the variables included in my statistical model. Lastly, I will present and explain the multilevel logistic regression that is use as the method in this thesis.

5.1 Data

The cool dude-effect has first been empirically seen in the US (McCright & Dunlap 2011). It has also been empirically confirmed in Norway, too see if the effect exists in another Western country (Krange et al. 2019). I aim to see if the cool dude-effect can be seen in more countries than these two. I will focus on Europe as it is western but also that there is need for a more recent study about climate change attitudes on the European continent.

The data that will be used to test the cool dude-effect comes from the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS is a cross-national organisation that surveys attitudes and values in their member countries and guest countries (ESS FAQ). They use strict random probability method to choose respondents in their survey (ESS Sampling). Each country "*must aim for a minimum 'effective achieved sample size' of 1,500 or 800 in countries with ESS populations of less than 2 million after discounting for design effects*" (ESS Sampling).

I will use the 8th edition, surveyed in 2016, which is the first edition that the ESS has asked about 'Public attitudes to climate change' (ESS Themes). To my knowledge there are no published articles that have used the 8th edition to research attitudes about climate change.

I will use the 21 of the 23 countries that have been included in the surveys 8th edition (ESS countries)[2]. I exclude Israel as it is not in Europe and I exclude the Russian federation as it does not have the same democratic freedoms as the other countries which very likely will affect the results (Freedom House 2019). The choice of countries that are included by ESS in the survey aren't chosen in methodological way. Those included are either member countries of ESS or guest countries for that specific round. This mean that even if the choice of respondents in each country is methodological sound the choice of countries is not. This means

[2] For a list of the countries included see table 4 in appendix

that the countries that are included aren't a perfect representation of all European countries.

5.2 Operationalization

5.2.1 Climate change denialism

Climate change denialism can take many shapes, it can be all from doubting human's effect on the climate to meaning that global warming isn't happening whatsoever. According to Krange et al. (2019) climate change denialism can take two forms, trend-denial and attribution-denial. Trend-denial indicates that an individual does not believe that the global temperature is increasing while attribution-denial indicates that the individual does believe that global warming is happening, but it is not due to human activity (not at all or only in a small part).

McCright and Dunlap (2011) used five different measurements for different aspects of climate denialism. Those range from if individuals think the media exaggerates to if the individuals do not believe the effects of climate change will happen. Krange et al. (2019) uses two different measurements as climate denialism, one that includes trend and attribution denialism and one that measures if individuals think media exaggerates climate change.

Because of limitation in the data I cannot replicate all of the dependent variables used in the two earlier articles. Although I will be able to test the most important variable, if an individual is a climate change denier (in either trend or attribution). To do this I will use the question D21 "*Do you think that climate change is caused by natural processes, human activity or both?"*. The answer alternatives can be seen in table 1 below.

Table 1 Answer alternatives for question D21

CODE	ANSWERS	OWN CODING
1	Entirely by natural processes	1
2	Mainly by natural processes	1
3	About equally by natural processes and human activity	0
4	Mainly by human activity	0
5	Entirely by human activity	0
55	I don't think climate change is happening	1
66	Not applicable	
77	Refusal	
88	Don't know	
99	No answer	

As we can see from the table 1 the answer alternatives include both trend and attribution scepticism. Similar to the earlier articles I will code climate change denial as a binary. I will code climate change denial as 1 and non-climate change denial as 0. I interpret answer nr 55 as a trend-denial and I interpret answers nr 1 and 2 as attribution-denial, therefore I code them 1. The problem with recoding an ordinal scale into a binary variable is that it creates a cut-off point that can be seen as arbitrary. Answer alternative nr 3 could also be seen as climate change denial as it doesn't follow scientific consensus as it shows that human activity is the major contributor to climate change (IPCC 2018). Although I will not code it as climate denialism as I deem the respondents who answer nr 3 shows an understanding of human impact on the climate even if it is not entirely factually correct. Though it is important to consider that if nr 3 were coded as climate change denialism over 50% of Europeans would fall into that category which shows that environmental awareness is quite low in Europe.

5.2.2 'White'

Because the power structures regarding race in the United States can't be directly applied to Europe (Foner 2015) Krange et al. (2019) change their variable to fit into a Norwegian context. They mean that a similar position of power comes from being ethnic Norwegian. To code this they ask individuals if an individual's parents are born in Norway or not. If an individual is born in Norway with two parents born in Norway, they are considered ethnic Norwegian.

Too code an individual as ‘white’ I’m using a similar operationalization as Krange et al. (2019). I code an individual as ‘white’ or ethnic European if an individual’s both parents are born in the country that the individual is living in.

There are some limitations with defining an individual’s ethnicity this way. It would be naive to believe that an individual who live in Sweden whose parents are from Norway would face the same hardship as an individual whose parents are born in Iraq. For example, research has shown that immigration and integration policy in European countries discriminates Muslim immigrants (FitzGerald et al 2018). So, it is important to consider when interpreting the results that my operationalization is a simplification of the power structures regarding ethnicity in Europe, but they will still show an indication.

I will identify individuals as ‘white’ in this thesis, but I do not mean that this represents the same white as in the American study. I do this simply as it is a short word and the alternative ethnic European isn’t technically correct as there are 21 different countries that are defined separately.

5.2.3 Male

The two articles this thesis is based on has a binary view of gender, so will this study. Using binary view of gender when doing research has been criticised (Hyde et al. 2019) but because of limitations in the data it is not possible to do it in another way. ESS question about gender doesn’t give possibility of a non-binary analysis of gender as the only possibility is to answer either male or female, or else respondents are coded as refused to answer. Males are coded as 1 and females are coded as 0.

5.2.4 Conservative

The American and Norwegian article differs in how they operationalize conservatism. In McCright and Dunlap’s (2011) article they ask the respondents to define on a scale if how conservative they are. Krange et al. (2019) use three sub-questions about values that they combine into an index of conservatism, I will use a similar approach to this.

To operationalize conservative, I have used four questions from the ESS survey. Three of them comes from the category ‘Human values’ and one from the category ‘Welfare attitudes’. The first one is the statement “*Important to follow traditions and customs*” where the answer alternatives range from ‘Very much like me’ to ‘Not like me at all’. I chose this as tradition and being against radical change are fundamental parts of conservatism (O’Sullivan 2013). The second indicator, “*Important to do what is told and follow rules*”, represent the importance of a stable society ruled by law as the ideal of conservatism and the and the unwilling of breaking from current societal order (O’Sullivan 2013). The third indicator “*Important to live in secure and safe surroundings*” also indicates the importance

of a stable society but also opposition of radical change that defines conservatism (O'Sullivan 2013). The last indicator is "*Social benefits/services cost businesses too much in taxes/charges*" where the answer alternatives range from 'Agree strongly' to 'Disagree strongly'. I use this to indicate the views that a too expansive social safety net is harmful as well as the opposition of giving the government to much money as it only leads to political parties trying to buy votes with their politics (O'Sullivan 2013).

So, to indicate how conservative an individual is I have taken the average from the four question to create a conservative index. As the last question only has five answer alternatives while the other has six the highest possible value is 5,75, and the lowest is 1.

5.2.5 Cool dude

To test if conservative white men have a unique effect combined, beyond each separate attribute's effects, both McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) create a dummy variable, a cool dude variable. Where they have coded an individual as a 'cool dude' if they are white, male and a confirmed conservative voter. The last part differs from how they defined the variable independently as the conservative-variable is there defined on a scale. In their regression they use the confirmed conservative voter as control variable but when they create the cool dude-variable they include it as the main conservative indicator. I assume this is primarily to create a binary variable, but it is interesting how they change their indicator of conservative when it is separate and when it is combined. Even if I am a bit critical of defining conservative in different ways in different variables, I will do this as my aim is to replicate their research design.

To replicate the cool dude-variable I use my variables 'white' and male, but I have also created a variable for if a respondent is conservative voter or not. ESS asks all respondents which party they voted for in the last election. With this question I have coded the respondents as a conservative voter if they voted for a conservative party last election (value = 1) or not (value = 0). To define which parties are conservative I have used ESS Appendix A3 where they describe each party that has been included as an answer alternative. I have coded a party as conservative if they are described as conservative, nationalistic or Christian democratic. I use these indicators as I deem them close to how Krange et al. (2019) defines which parties are conservative. With this method I have made an extensive coding of 238 parties in 21 countries as conservative or non-conservative. The list of all the parties and the coding can be seen in table 5 in the appendix.

With the coding I have created the cool dude-variable. A respondent is defined as a cool dude (value = 1) if they are white, male and a confirmed conservative voter. The variable tests if there is a unique effect where individuals who possess these three traits are more likely to be climate change deniers.

Both McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) also tests if confident cool dudes are more likely to be climate change deniers. With confidence they mean cool dudes that self reportedly have a good understanding of climate

science. Because the ESS doesn't ask a question similar to this I will not be able to recreate this part.

5.2.6 Xenoscepticism

Krange et al. (2019) expands the theory linking it to broader streams of right-wing nationalism. They mean that an individual who have xenosceptic views are more likely to be climate change deniers. To operationalize this, they use the statement "*We have enough immigrants and asylum seekers in our country*" and see how much an individual agrees with it.

The ESS dataset has seven different questions that concern views on immigration. None of them are exactly like the one Krange et al (2019) used. To operationalize xenosceptic views I have used the question *"Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?"* is used where the answer alternatives range from "*Worse place to live*" (coded = 0) to "*Better place to live*" (coded = 10). This means that if the results follow Krange et al. (2019), that more xenosceptic individuals are more likely to be climate denier, the coefficient in the regression will be negative.

Krange et al. (2019) also adds the xenosceptic theory to the cool dude and creates a xenosceptic cool dude variable. To recreate this I have created a similar variable through multiplying the cool dude variable with the xenosceptic variable. This creates a variable where individuals who are not 'white' conservative men will get the value 0 and those who are will have a value between 0 – 10 to see how xenosceptic they are, this is to test if xenosceptic views has an added effect when they are harboured by cool dudes.

5.2.7 Control variables

The main goal of this thesis is to replicate McCright and Dunlap's (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) research, therefore in my base regression I will use the same control variables as they do. In some cases, I can have similar variables but in other cases I use proxy variables that can be assumed to control the same. I control for age, education, income, unemployment, parenthood, religion, and confirmed conservative party voter. McCright and Dunlap (2011) choose these variables because they have been empirically confirmed to have an effect on climate change views.

When it comes to education there could be a problem that my thesis looks across multiple countries with different school systems but ESS has created a harmonized scale across countries to simplify comparison across countries. The scale goes from 1 that indicates that the respondent has less than lower secondary education to 7 which indicates that the respondent has a higher tertiary education.

To operationalize income level, I use household income level. This is because it is the only measurement regarding income that is included in the dataset. But it

also has the advantage that it shows individuals who themselves have a low or no income but has a partner with a high income because that individual will still have big purchasing power even if that individual's income is low. The variable goes from 1 to 10 where each number represent a decile of the country's income level they fit in.

The original articles control for if the individual has a full-time job. I've not been able to create a variable that controls for full-time job because of a limitation in the data. Instead I control for if an individual is unemployed, which I mean should have a similar effect. To do this I have combined the statements "*Doing last 7 days: unemployed, actively looking for job*" and "*Doing last 7 days: unemployed, not actively looking for job*". If a respondent has answered yes on any of those two statements they are coded as unemployed, 1, otherwise they been coded as 0.

To control for if an individual is a parent, I have used the question "*Children living at home or not".* With this I unfortunately miss parents whose children has moved away from home but Krange et al. (2019) use a similar operationalization. If they have children living at home, they are coded 1, if not they are coded 2.

McCright and Dunlap (2011) controls for religiosity through asking if an individual is Christian or not. Krange et al. (2019) does not control for religiosity. I use a scale where the respondents define how religious they are, from "*Not at all religious*" (coded = 0) to "*Very religious*" (coded = 10).

Similar to the earlier articles I use confirmed conservative voter as a control variable. A discussion about how I classified conservative party voter can be seen above in the part 5.2.5 Cool dudes.

In both McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) they control for environmental movement identity. I will not use this variable as I deem the variable to have problems with reverse causality. It is important to consider that the regression analysis to do not control for reverse causality (Teorell & Svensson 2007, s 176). That means that if the y-variable effects the x-variable it will have significant result in the regression and seem like the x-variable effects the y-variable. Therefore, it is important to have variables that has a clear theoretical one-way causality. When it comes to environmental identity which McCright and Dunlap (2011) range from "unsympathetic" to "active participant in environmental movement" there is a possibility that the causal relationship goes the other way. If an individual is a climate change denier, they do not have an incentive to be active in a environmental movement. It may be that the movements they use to code aren't working with climate change but other environmental issues but neither McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) define these groups.

5.3 Statistical model

To test if McCright and Dunlap's (2011) theories works in a broader European context I have used a multilevel logistic regression. The difference here from the two original articles is the addition of multilevel modelling, this is because the dataset includes respondents in different countries. I will start to describe how a basic logistic regression function. After that I will describe how the multilevel modelling works and why I chose to use it in this thesis.

As my dependent variable is a binary variable, i.e. a variable that only can take the values 0 or 1, I cannot use a traditional linear regression. With a linear regression it is assumed that the dependent variable theoretically can take a value between $-\infty$ and $+\infty$ (Sommet and Morselli 2017), something a binary variable can't do. Therefore, a logistic regression is needed.

A logistic regression runs a bit different than a linear. Instead of predicting the mean value of an outcome variable, a logistic regression gives the conditional probability that an outcome variable equals the value one at a specific value of a predictor variable (Sommet and Morselli 2017). This means that the model describes the relationship between an independent variable and the probability that the outcome of the dependent variable equals one (Sommet and Morselli 2017).

As the data is collected in different countries it might lead to problems for the model. It is reasonable to believe that respondents are likely to answer in similar ways as their countrymen as they are affected by the same societal structures. This breaks a fundamental assumption in linear models, the assumption that there is no correlation between the residuals (Sommet and Morselli 2017). If the respondents are nested in clusters (in this case countries) they are more likely to answer in the same way. The multilevel model aims to control for these intra-cluster effects (Sommet and Morselli 2017). To do this the data is needed to be classified in to two (or more in other cases) levels. In this case the lower level is the respondents and the higher level is the countries. This creates a hierarchical dataset.

The creation of two levels comes with two implications. One is that the intercept is allowed to vary between clusters. This means that there is a difference between the fixed intercept, meaning an average intercept from the overall sample, and the random intercept variance, meaning the variation between the intercept in one specific country over another (Sommet and Morselli 2017). The other implication is that the effect of a lower-level variable is able to vary between clusters (Sommet and Morselli 2017) (Buxton 2008). Meaning that for example the effects of the conservative variable on that the climate denial variable equals one can vary between countries (Sommet and Morselli 2017) (Buxton 2008).

Multilevel modelling offers several advantages from using dummy variables for each cluster (Buxton 2008). The main advantage for this thesis is that it skips having to add many more parameters, in this case 20 dummy variables (a dummy for each country but one) would have been needed to be included.

6 Results

In this part I will present the results of the thesis. I will begin with some basic descriptive statistics of the data used in the regression analysis. After that I will present the regressions that has been done for the study. The results of the regression will thereafter be discussed.

6.1 Descriptive statistics

In the table below descriptive statistics of each variable included in the regressions is presented.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Climate denial	38036	0,0856	0,27985	0	1
Male	39391	0,4763	0,49944	0	1
'White'	39172	0,8386	0,36782	0	1
Conservative	36074	3,8699	0,7931	1	5,75
Cool Dude	39165	0,1208	0,32601	0	1
Age	39272	49,434	18,570	15	100
Education	39277	3,9159	1,8451	1	7
Household income	32647	5,2686	2,7320	1	10
Unemployed	39400	0,0587	0,23517	0	1
Parent	39389	1,6577	0,47447	1	2
Religious	39088	4,4681	3,1219	0	10
Conservative voter	39400	0,2545	0,43559	0	1
Xenosceptic	38223	4,9966	2,3625	0	10
Xenosceptic Cool dude	38005	0,5796	1,7474	0	10

As we can see from the variable Climate denial 8,56% of the Europeans included in the survey-data are considered climate change deniers. This means that approximately 9 of 100 people in Europe do believe climate change isn't happening or is not (mainly) due to human activity.

Of the respondents 12% consists of conservative white men. This means that if the cool dude-effect can be confirmed a considerable part of Europe's population are more likely to be climate deniers.

The average age is 49 among respondents, 5,87% are unemployed and the average education is almost 4 which indicates they have finished upper tier upper secondary school.

Household income is the variable with the lowest amount of observations on 32,647. Because a regression analysis needs data for each variable included this will lead to fewer observation for the regressions. A discussion how I deal with this is presented in the next part.

6.1 Regressions and results discussion

I have created five regression models. These five can be seen in table 3 below. In the table the first number is the coefficient of each variable. If the coefficient is significant it is represented by a star where each star represents a lower significance level. The value in parentheses indicates the variables standard error. If a variable has a positive coefficient it means that an individual with a higher value in that variable is more likely to be a climate change denier on average. If the variable has a negative coefficient the opposite is the case. A coefficient is only interpreted if it is significant.

Regression 1 is the most basic regression, it includes the variables Male, White and Conservative each separately but does not include the combined Cool dude-variable, all the control variables are included. Regression 2 adds the Cool dude-variable. Regression 3 adds the variable for xenoscepticism and regression 4 adds the xenosceptic cool dude variable. Regression 5 is similar to regression 2 except it excludes the variable household income, this is because it is the variable with most missing answers. When it has been excluded the number of observations goes from 29,441 observations included to 34,566. I have not been able to determine if the missing variables are because of systematic reason or not. Therefore, I include regression 5 in order to see if the results differ when 5,000 more respondents are included, but that regression does not control for the individual's household income.

Table 3: regressions

VARIABLES	(1) Climate denial	(2) Climate denial	(3) Climate denial	(4) Climate denial	(5) Climate denial
Male	0.404***	0.357***	0.414***	0.385***	0.298***
	(0.0439)	(0.0509)	(0.0445)	(0.0490)	(0.0466)
'White'	-0.0958	-0.114*	-0.120*	-0.134**	-0.122**
	(0.0612)	(0.0621)	(0.0620)	(0.0628)	(0.0578)
Conservative	0.0554*	0.0542*	0.0336	0.0325	0.0445
	(0.0298)	(0.0298)	(0.0303)	(0.0304)	(0.0276)
Age	0.00760***	0.00761***	0.00755***	0.00753***	0.00895***
	(0.00131)	(0.00131)	(0.00133)	(0.00133)	(0.00116)
Education	-0.0942***	-0.0946***	-0.0840***	-0.0841***	-0.114***
	(0.0133)	(0.0133)	(0.0136)	(0.0136)	(0.0116)
Household income	-0.0327***	-0.0324***	-0.0294***	-0.0292***	
	(0.00921)	(0.00922)	(0.00934)	(0.00935)	
Unemployed	0.00485	0.00484	0.00566	0.00590	0.117
	(0.0989)	(0.0989)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.0876)
Parent	0.0554	0.0578	0.0623	0.0640	0.0551
	(0.0492)	(0.0492)	(0.0498)	(0.0498)	(0.0442)
Religious	5.55e-05	-5.29e-05	0.00696	0.00682	0.00198
	(0.00777)	(0.00777)	(0.00789)	(0.00789)	(0.00721)
Conservative Voter	0.288***	0.201***	0.271***	0.218***	0.175***
	(0.0491)	(0.0689)	(0.0496)	(0.0627)	(0.0640)
Cool Dude		0.165*			0.182**
		(0.0899)			(0.0840)
Xenoscepticism			-0.0463***	-0.0501***	
			(0.0101)	(0.0104)	
Xenosceptic Cool Dude				0.0216	
				(0.0152)	
Constant	-2.843***	-2.802***	-2.609***	-2.561***	-2.902***
	(0.202)	(0.203)	(0.210)	(0.213)	(0.185)
Country level constant	0.188***	0.187***	0.179***	0.178***	0.189***
	(0.0612)	(0.0610)	(0.0583)	(0.0581)	(0.0610)
Observations	29,441	29,441	28,982	28,982	34,566
Number of groups	21	21	21	21	21

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The male-variable has a significance below 1% in all five regressions. The coefficients are positive in all five regression, indicating a robust result. The positive coefficients mean that men are more likely to be climate deniers. So, our results follow the results from the two earlier articles and my hypothesis. This indicates that the theories linked to masculinity and climate change denial are correct.

The 'white'-variable have a significant relationship on the 10%-level with climate change denialism in two of the regressions and on the 5%-level in two others. In the base regression, regression nr 1, the variable isn't significant. The coefficients are negative meaning that non-'white' individuals are more likely to be climate deniers. This goes against what earlier research has shown. McCright and Dunlap (2011) showed that in the US white individuals are more likely to be climate deniers and Krange et al. (2019), maybe more relevant as they use similar operationalization, couldn't see any significance. The results imply that individuals in Europe who have an immigration background is more likely to be climate deniers. Something that goes against my hypothesis. It is an interesting result because the theoretical framework focuses that it is the position of power, and the threat that climate change poses to that power, that makes individuals unable to accept the facts but these results indicate that the persons in position of power are more likely to accept the facts. As this result goes against earlier research and what the theory stipulates further research is needed to understand this result.

The conservative-variable is significant on the 10%-level in only two of the regression and the rest are non-significant. The coefficients are positive which mean that the more conservative a person is the more likely the person is to be a climate change denier. However, as there is only two regression who have significance and those are only at the 10%-level it is reasonably to consider that having conservative values does not make an individual more or less likely to be a climate denier. This is an interesting result as this goes against earlier research. In the two earlier articles the effect of conservatism had strong significance. My results indicate that a more conservative individual is not significantly more likely to be a climate denier. This goes against my hypothesis and earlier research. Both McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019) has significance results that conservative individuals are more likely to be climate deniers. The reason for these results might be that conservatives still have more societal justification tendencies, but they believe that climate change can be stopped with the current system. Then the facts about climate change wouldn't challenge their worldview and therefore they would be susceptible to the facts.

The weak significance in regression 1 and 2 disappears when the variable for xenosceptic views are included in regression 3 and 4. Which might indicate that the reason there is significance in regression 1 and 2 is because conservatives hold on average more xenosceptic views and therefore we see a significance in those two but it actually because of the xenosceptic views.

Interesting to note is before I excluded my proxy-variable for environmental movement identity I had strong significance for conservatism in all five regression.

I excluded the variable as I deemed it problematic in regard to two-way casualty (see discussion above in part 5.2.7 Control Variables). That might be the reason my results differ from the two earlier articles.

Important to take into consideration is that I use two different variables for different kinds of conservativism. I also include the control variable confirmed conservative voter beyond the main variable which focuses on conservative values. Conservative voter dummy has significance on 1%-level in all five regressions, indicating that individuals that vote for conservative parties are more likely to be climate change deniers but not individuals with conservative values.

My results indicate that the cool dude-effect can be seen in a broader European context. The variable is significant in regression 2 on the 10%-level and in regression 5 on the 5%-level. These results are interesting as the separate variables do not all indicate that they should be more likely to be climate change deniers. Male has a positive effect, but conservative does not have a strong significant effect and 'white' individuals are less likely to be climate deniers. But the results indicate that when an individual possess all these traits, they are more likely to be climate deniers. This can be linked to ideas of intersectionality discussed in the part 2 Theory about how structures of power can interact with each other leading to other results. Here it seems that this combination of privilege and the identities linked to them makes it harder for conservative 'white' men to accept the facts regarding climate change. So, my results indicate, but not with a strong significance, that conservative 'white' men are more likely to be climate deniers and therefore it indicates that the cool dude-effect can be seen in a broader European context.

Something to remember here is that the individual conservative variable and the conservative indicator in the cool dude variable isn't the same. As I discussed in part 5.2.5 Cool dudes the variable is instead created, in the same way as earlier research, by the variable Conservative voter. As we can see from that variable it has a significance on the 1%-level in all five regression and a positive effect, meaning that individuals who vote for conservative parties are more likely to be climate deniers. Therefore, it's important to remember that the cool dude-effect is tested on conservative voters instead of individuals with conservative values.

The addition of the xenoscepticism by Krange et al. (2019) has a significant effect in both regression 3 and 4 on the 1%-level. The coefficient is negative but, in this case, it indicates that a more xenosceptic individual is more likely to be a climate change denier. This is because the question is coded so that an individual less critical of immigration has higher value. So, the results indicate that Krange et al. (2019) theory about individuals who have more xenosceptic views are more likely to be climate denier can be seen in a broader European context. Although the result does not support their theory about xenosceptic cool dudes. My results show no significant effect for the xenosceptic cool dude variable. This indicates that there is not extra effect when 'white' conservative men hold xenosceptic views. It is the views themselves that make individuals more likely do adopt climate change denial but not combined with the cool dude-effect.

As for the control variables we can see mixed results. As people age, they are more likely to be climate change deniers. So, does being a voter of conservative party. A higher education makes individuals less likely to be a climate change

denier. The same is true for individuals with a higher household income. Unemployment, religiosity and being a parent has no significance which indicates that it doesn't affect climate change denialism. We can also see that the constant for the country level in the multilevel modelling is significant which indicates that each country has a unique effect.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to answer the question *Does the cool dude-effect exist in a broader European context?* The cool dude-effect has been tested in two earlier articles by McCright and Dunlap (2011) and Krange et al. (2019). To test the cool dude-effect a multilevel logistic regression has been performed on data from over 39,000 respondents in 21 different European countries.

My results indicate that the cool dude-effect exists in Europe, although not with strong significance. My results for the individual variables for male, 'white' and conservative does show other results than earlier research. I find that men are more likely to be climate change deniers, but conservatives are neither more or less likely and 'whites' are less likely. That the cool dude-effect is seen even if the indicators themselves aren't all positive or significant is supported by the intersectional perspective added to the theoretical framework, which states that the interaction of power structures can lead to other results than when focusing on one area of privilege at the time.

The cool dude-effect has now been seen empirically in three different studies. This indicates that it is a general trend in western countries that conservative white men are more likely to be climate deniers. The results show that critical perspectives of power relations are important when studying climate politics and when deciding on climate policy. An intersectional perspective is needed when we see these results as the interaction of power structures influence how susceptible individuals are to the facts regarding climate change.

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9 Appendix

Table 4: Countries included in the study

Countries
Austria
Belgium
Czechia
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Lithuania
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom

Table 5: Coding of political parties as conservative or not

Country	***Party name***	***Conservative***
Austria		
	SPÖ	
	ÖVP	1
	FPÖ	1
	BZÖ	1
	Grüne	
	KPÖ	
	NEOS	
	Piratenpartei Österreich	
	Team Frank Stronach	1
Belgium		
	Groen!	
	CD&V	1
	N-VA	1

	Lijst Dedecker	
	SP.A	
	PVDA+	
	Vlaams Belang	1
	Open VLD	
	CDH	1
	Ecolo	
	Front National	1
	MR	
	PS	
	PTB	
	Parti Populaire	
Czechia		
	KSČM	
	ČSSD	
	TOP 09	1
	ANO	
	ODS	1
	KDU-ČSL	1
	Úsvit prime demokracie Tomia Okamury	
Estonia		
	EestiReformierakond	
	Eesti Keskerakond	
	Erakond Isamaa Res Publica Liit	1
	Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Erakond	
	Erakond Eestima Rohelised	
	Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond	1
	Eesti Iseseisvuspartei	1
	Üksikkandidaadid või muud	
	Eesti Vabaerakond	
	Rahva Ühtsuse Erakond	1
	Eestimaa Ühendatud Vasakparte	
Finland		
	The National Coalition Party	1
	Swedish People's Party (SPP)	
	The Centre Party	
	True Finns	1
	Christian Democrats	1
	Freedom Party	1
	Pirate Party	
	independence party	
	For the poor	
	Green League	
	Social Democratic Party	
	Left Alliance	

	Communist party	
	The communist workers party	
	Workers Party	
France		
	Nouveau Centre	
	FN (Front National)	1
	PR (Parti Radical Valoisien)	
	NPA (Nouveau Parti Anti-Capitaliste)	
	LO (Lutte Ouvri�re)	
	FDG (Front de Gauche)	
	Parti Radical de Gauche	
	MPF (Mouvement pour la France)	1
	PS (Parti Socialiste)	
	UMP (Union pour un Mouvement Populaire)	
	MODEM (Mouvement D�mocrate)	1
	EELV (Europe Ecologie Les Verts)	
	Autres mouvements �cologistes	
Germany		
	CDU/CSU	1
	SPD	
	Die Linke	
	B�ndnis 90/ Die Gr�nen	
	FDP	
	AfD	1
	Piratenpartei	
	NPD	1
Hungary		
	Fidesz - KDNP (Fidesz – Magyar Polg�ri	1
	Jobbik (Jobbik Magyarorsz�g�rt Mozgalom	1
	LMP (Lehet M�s A Politika)	
	MSZP-Egy�tt-DK-PM-MLP (Korm�nyv�lt�k)	
	Munk�sp�rt (Magyar Kommunista Munk�sp�r	
Iceland		
	Bjarta framt�–	
	Frams�knarflokkinn	1
	Sj�lfst��isflokkinn	1
	Flokk f�lksins	
	Húmanistaflokkinn	
	Flokk heimilanna	
	Al–––ufylkinguna	
	Samfylkinguna	

	D�gun	
	Vinstri hreyfinguna - gr�nt frambo�	
	P�rata	
	Vi�reisn	
	Íslensku þjóðfylkinguna	1
	Annað	
	Skila�i au�u	
Ireland		
	Anti-Austerity Alliance - People Before	
	Fianna F�il	1
	Fine Gael	1
	Green Party	
	Independents	
	Labour	
	Sinn F�in	1
	Social Democrats	
	Socialist Party - United Left Alliance	
Italy		
	Partido Democratico (PD)	
	Sinistra Ecologia e Libert� (SEL)	
	Rivoluzione Civile (Ingroia)	
	Movimento 5 Stelle	
	Scelta Civica (con Monti)	
	UDC	1
	FLI	1
	Popolo delle Libert� (PdL)	1
	Lega Nord	1
	Fratelli d'Italia	1
	Radicali Italiani (Amnistia giustizia e	
	FARE - Giannino	
	La destra	1
Lithuania		
	Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSD	
	Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian D	1
	Lithuanian Freedom Union (Liberals) (LL	1
	Coalition of S. Bu�kevicius and the Nat	1
	Party Order and Justice (TT)	1
	Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union (LV	
	Liberals' Movement of the Republic of L	
	Labour Party (DP)	
	Political Party 'The Way of Courage' (D	
	Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania-	
	Lithuanian Greens Party (LZP)	
	Political Party 'List of Lithuania' (LS	

	Anti-corruption coalition of K. Krivick	
Netherlands		
	People's Party for Freedom and Democrac	
	Labour Party	
	Party for Freedom	1
	Socialist Party	
	Christian Democratic Appeal	1
	Democrats 66	
	Christian Union	1
	Green Left	
	Reformed Political Party	1
	Party for the Animals	
	50PLUS	
Norway		
	The Party Red (R&#65533;DT)	
	Socialist Left Party (SV)	
	Labour Party (A)	
	Liberal Party (V)	
	Christian Democratic Party (KRF)	1
	Centre Party (SP)	1
	Conservative Party (H)	1
	Progress Party (FRP)	1
	Coastal Party (KYST)	1
	Green Party (MDG)	
Poland		
	KORWIN	1
	Kukiz'15	
	Modern Poland	
	Civic Platform	
	Polish Peasants' Party	
	Law and Justice	1
	Together Party	
	United Left	
Portugal		
	PTP-MAS-Agir	
	B.E. - Bloco de Esquerda	
	PCP-PEV - CDU - Coliga&#65533;&#65533;o Democr&#65533;tica U	
	JPP-JuntospeloPovo	
	L/TDA - LIVRE/Tempo de Avan&#65533;ar	
	NC-Nós,Cidadãos!	
	PPV/CDC - Partido Cidadania e Democraci	1
	PCTP/MRPP - Partido Comunista dos Traba	
	MPT - Partido da Terra	
	PDR-PartidoDemocráticoRepublicano	

	PNR - Partido Nacional Renovador	1
	PPM - Partido Popular Mon&#65533;rquico	1
	PS - Partido Socialista	
	PURP - Partido Unido dos Reformados e P	
	PAN - Pessoas-Animais-Natureza	
	PPD-PSD/CDS-PP - Portugal &#65533; Frente	1
Slovenia		
	DESUS - Demokraticna stranka upokojence	
	DL	
	NSI - Nova Slovenija &#65533; Kr&#65533;canski demokr	1
	PS - Pozitivna Slovenija	
	SD - Socialni demokrati	
	SDS - Slovenska demokratska stranka	1
	SLS - Slovenska ljudska stranka	1
	SMC - Stranka Mira Cerarja	
	VERJAMEM	
	ZAAB - Zavezni&#65533;tvo Alenke Bratu&#65533;ek	
	ZL - Zdru&#65533;ena levica (DSD, IDS in Stran	
Spain		
	Partido Popular - PP	1
	Partido Socialista Obrero Espa&#65533;ol - PSO	
	Unidos Podemos	
	Ciudadanos	1
	En Com&#65533; Podem	
	Comprom&#65533;s-Podemos-EUPV	
	Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya - ERC	
	CDC-PdeCAT	
	En Marea	
	EAJ-PNV	1
	EH Bildu	
	CC-PCC (Coalici&#65533;n Canaria)	
	PACMA	
Sweden		
	Centerpartiet	
	Folkpartiet liberalerna	
	Kristdemokraterna	1
	Milj&#65533;partiet de gr&#65533;na	
	Moderata samlingspartiet	1
	Socialdemokraterna	
	V&#65533;nsterpartiet	
	FI (Feministiskt initiativ)	
	Piratpartiet	

	Sverigedemokraterna	1
Switzerland		
	Swiss People's Party	1
	Social Democratic Party	
	FDP. The Liberals	
	Christian Democratic Party	1
	Green Party	
	Green Liberal Party	
	Conservative Democratic Party	1
	Evangelical People's Party	
	Federal Democratic Union	1
	Ticino League	1
	Swiss Labour Party	
	Pirate Party Switzerland	
United Kingdom		
	Conservative	1
	Labour	
	Liberal Democrat	
	Scottish National Party	
	Plaid Cymru	
	Green Party	
	UK Independence Party	1
	Other	
	Ulster Unionist Party (nir)	1
	Democratic Unionist Party (nir)	
	Sinn Fein (nir)	
	Social Democratic and Labour Party (nir)	
	Alliance Party (nir)	