



Is technological neutrality fit to guide EU decarbonisation?

Technological neutrality is a key principle in EU policymaking but it is rarely useful in the context of complex transformations.



What is the principle of technological neutrality?



Regulation should not impose or restrict specific technologies, allowing markets to determine outcomes.



ORIGINS

Developed to address rapid technological changes in information and communication

NOW



Invoked as a guiding principle for all technology-related policymaking, including emission reductions and clean energy



Why is it inadequate for most decarbonisation policies?

Academic research shows that...



Technological neutrality is based on the **myth of a “neutral baseline”** but markets and technologies are shaped in specific contexts



In practice, it favours existing technologies and **discriminate against innovations**



It **fails on coordination**: transforming industries requires coordinated investments across infrastructure, supply chains, skills and demand



How is technological neutrality used in EU politics?

In most cases, technological neutrality falsely presents political choices as technical problems, avoiding democratic public debates.

Concrete policy cases reveal 3 patterns:

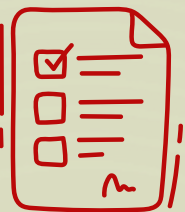
- * Used **reactively** as a communication strategy to oppose a trajectory seen as politically costly
- * **Shifts the debate** towards individual technologies and averts discussions on feasibility and responsibility
- * Mostly used to protect vested interests and **delay necessary choices** and just transition planning



Which alternative frameworks can guide an efficient transition towards climate neutrality?



Mission-oriented governance



Conditional industrial policy



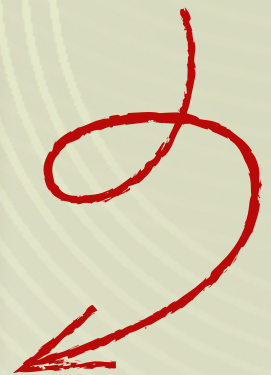
Standards-led⁷⁵ transition pathways



Infrastructure-first planning

The study also presents  **communication techniques** *to counter fake neutrality arguments*

Learn more about technological neutrality and alternative framings to shape better climate policies



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