


**PUBLIC CAPACITY FOR A JUST
GREEN TRANSITION.
THE COLLISION:
JUSTICE – SOCIAL REALITIES**

Maria Jeliaskova

Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences



Abstract: The article discusses the concept of public capacity. It presents results regarding: what are the attitudes, values and beliefs regarding justice in Bulgarian society; what are the assessments of the current state along the justice - injustice axis; what are the expectations in this direction related to the green transition; what, according to popular attitudes, are the conditions for the green transition to be just. It concludes that as far as visions on just green transition are concerned, Bulgarian society is more homogenized, at least for now, than the various basic individual differentiations, socio-economic processes, and policies aimed at deliberate fragmentation of society suggest.

Key words: public capacity, pro-social values, substantive and procedural justice, a fair society, just green transition

Author biography: Maria Jeliazkova, DSc., is Prof. at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. She is head of department "Public Policies and Social Change" and is an experienced researcher, engaged in review, analyze and recommendations in the fields of anti-poverty strategies, social integration, unemployment and active labor market policies. She has taken part in plenty of national and EU projects and has more than 70 publications in the fields. Jeliazkova teaches Social policy at Sofia University and at the University of National and World Economy. She is a member of the National Consultative Committee for Social Inclusion at the Council of Ministers in Bulgaria and a member of the Executive Committee of the European Anti-Poverty Network, Brussels.

Introduction

The project "Public Capacity for a Just Green Transition" is being implemented in the period November 2021-October 2025. During this period, serious transformations occurred in the significance, attitude, and attention to the green transition. Following various social and political processes, the so-called "green transition" is also associated with an intensive reformatting of goals at different levels, opposition of new against established

tasks, tendencies towards concentration of decision-making processes, including through convenient crisisifications. In general, it can be said that this affects both public attitudes and analytical focuses.

Within the project, we used traditional and well-established sociological research tools: literature review and desk research; representative sociological survey for Bulgaria; focus groups; in-depth interviews; citizen panels; as well as comparisons with results from other published empirical studies.

As can be seen in the title, the project attempts to analyze three basic concepts and the connections and interactions between them: public capacity, green transition, just transition. This raises a series of scientific questions, e.g. whether we focus on public capacity and its importance for implementing social changes, including, for example, a just green transition; or whether the main emphasis is on the green transition and different public attitudes towards it, as well as its possible fairness. In the course of implementation and analytical broadening of focus, including through revision and heated discussions, we attempt to consider the state and connections in the relationships between the three concepts in a balanced manner.

In this regard, it is important to clarify the concept of public capacity. Whose capacity are we actually talking about: the state capacity; the capacity of relatively small but active communities and groups; the society as a whole?

Aspects of public capacity

We started from the idea of understanding public capacity as state capacity, as policies and practical actions for implementing a green transition. In fact, if we open even now, the widely accessible, informative and systematizing dominant views overview of Artificial Intelligence, we will read that "Public capacity refers to the ability and resources of a government to effectively implement policies, provide public services and promote the social development of its citizens."¹

However, during the course of the project, we encountered a problem: state capacity poorly and increasingly poorly reflects developments in society, public attitudes and views; research in this direction is increasing, es-

¹ Public capacity - AI Overview, accessed on 17.09.2025



establishing clear and deepening faults. Among the vast number of examples available, I will only highlight one very recent one. A report by the European Environmental Bureau² analyzing European policies, tellingly contains in its title the slang youth English term for obsessions and delusions – The State of *Delulu*. State capacity has its essential aspects, elements and characteristics, but it does not represent public capacity.

In search of a different conceptual framework for public capacity, many studies find that NGOs and various communities (local, professional, interest-based, etc.) are usually analyzed, as well as different forms of expertise.³ These are, of course, important aspects of public capacity that we explore, but they do not exhaust it. Moreover, different stakeholders, civil society organizations, NGOs, and communities often engage in mutual and internal wars with each other, following their own values. These wars, like all wars, also represent hardened and entrenched monologues within their own groups and with basic results: strengthening internal and external borders and blocking any opportunities for dialogue. From this perspective, such an approach to public capacity is narrow and insufficiently analytically justified. Therefore, we sought a broader conceptual approach.

At the same time, it is not difficult to prove that society is a neglected actor, despite the fact that democracy is a system of supposed majority rule. Over a long period, a set of conceptual paradigms, mainstream social sciences, powerful political players (e.g., M. Thatcher), generally speaking, the neoliberal agenda managed to establish an approach towards individualization, fragmentation and neglect of society. Recently, and due to new developments, various concepts and studies⁴ have attempted to return a

² European Environmental Bureau (2025). The network brings together environmental citizen groups and organizations, headquartered in Brussels, , The State of Delulu. <https://eeb.org/?s=The+State+of+Delulu>

³ Erika Weinthal and Yael Parag, "Two Steps Forward, One Step Backward: Societal Capacity and Israel's Implementation of the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Action Plan." *Global Environmental Politics*, Vol. 3, № 1 (2003), 51–71; Sandra Kröger, *Nothing but Consultation: The Place of Organised Civil Society in EU Policy-Making across Policies*. European Governance Papers (EUROGOV) No. C-08-03, 2008 <http://www.connex-network.org/eurogov/pdf/egp-connex-C-08-03.pdf>; Grace Pollard, Jessica Studdert and Luca Tiratelli, *Community Power: The Evidence. New Local*, 2021, <https://www.newlocal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Community-Power-The-Evidence.pdf>

⁴ Roberto S. Foa, "Why Strongmen Win in Weak States", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 32, № 1 (2021), 52–65; Paul Lichterman, "Social Capacity and the Styles of Group Life: Some Inconvenient Wellsprings of Democracy", *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 52, № 6 (2009), 846–866.

more adequate centering of focus, filling a serious and deep gap, at least in social analyzes.

We view public, societal capacity as the ability of society to achieve, facilitate, or block the achievement of certain, declared as significant, societal goals. It is known that the transformation of individuals into a community and society requires the so-called "glue"⁵, which is based on similar assessments of social realities based on shared moral values and an identity formed on their basis; opportunities to formulate common demands based on this value rationality; support, challenge or condemnation of actions (including policies) that do not correspond to shared values. There is little doubt that social upsurge is much more likely when there are lines of synchronization between widely held societal judgments and values and policies and practical actions adapted to them.

Essentially, it is about evolutionarily established pro-social values, directing the behavior of individuals towards socially beneficial models, towards pro-developmental models of interactions in societies and groups. A clear example of such a group of fundamental values are those mentioned by Habermas⁶: justice, equality, fairness, reciprocity. In fact, these are evolutionarily embedded values that can be found far back in human history, for example in the wisdom of the five pro-social elements of the Ten Commandments.

Within the project we are trying to establish: what are the attitudes, values and beliefs regarding justice in Bulgarian society; what are the assessments of the current state along the justice - injustice axis; what are the expectations in this regard related to the green transition; what, according to popular attitudes, are the conditions for the green transition to be just.

Therefore, and based on a broad review of various analyzes, studies, data, indicators and research tools, we formulated empirical indicators, drawing lessons and preserving opportunities for comparisons with other available results.⁷

⁵ Nat Colletta, Teck Ghee Lim, and Anita Kelles-Viitanen, *Social Cohesion and Conflict Prevention in Asia: Managing Diversity through Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2001, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/457204?ln=en>.

⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms. Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996).

⁷ Nils Springhorn, "On the measurement of need-based justice. *Economics and Philosophy*", vol. 38, № 3 (2022), 466-500; Bernhard Kittel, "Need-Based Justice: A Sociological Perspective," in *Need-Based Distributive Justice*, ed. by Stefan Traub and Bernhard Kittel (Cham: Springer, 2020); Jeffrey R. Yumang, *Environmental awareness and attitude of senior high students: basis for environmental enrichment cur-*



The returning focus on justice

It is not difficult to notice that in all possible social areas and spheres, the number and intensity of research related to distributive justice is growing, as is attention to the growing gap between the moral and the legal. As Piketty⁸ points out, if the ongoing trend towards concentration of capital continues, it could reach a level that is potentially incompatible with the democratic values and principles of social justice that are fundamental to modern democratic societies. It can also be assumed that in periods and contexts of intense accumulation of injustices, attention intensifies. As A. Sen points out, “What moves us, quite sensibly, is not the realization that the world is not perfectly fair – which few of us expect – but that there are clearly remediable injustices around us that we want to eliminate.”⁹

There is also a growing search for empirical and conceptual connections between social justice on the one hand and social development, solidarity, social cohesion, social progress, social quality, the failures of nations, social fractures, etc. on the other.

Australian scientists (Scanlon Institute¹⁰) have been monitoring annually, since 2007, according to the Scanlon-Monash Index, the state of social cohesion in their country through five main areas and the relationships between them: sense of belonging, shared values and trust; life satisfaction, happiness and expectations; social justice and social inclusion; civic participation and acceptance and rejection of others. The 2023 report¹¹ tracks trends and the general conclusion is that social cohesion is under pressure and declining. Although social cohesion decreased in each of the five domains examined, the researchers recorded the largest decrease and the greatest significance for the overall decrease in social cohesion in justice ratings. Their findings depict that demographic and socioeconomic char-

riculum, 2018, <https://www.scribd.com/document/665761164/environmentalAwarenessAttitude-J-Yu-mang>.

⁸ Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge MA.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 34.

⁹ Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), VII.

¹⁰ Scanlon Institute, <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/research/scanlon-monash-index>

¹¹ James O'Donnell, *Mapping Social Cohesion 2023* (Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, 2023), <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/publications/mapping-social-cohesion-report/2023-mapping-social-cohesion-report>.

acteristics such as age, education, financial situation, immigration status, housing and living situations cannot explain the results, that there is an overall feeling that justice is under threat. In addition, the authors note that young people have lower trust and are more pessimistic.

In his book “The Fair Society: The Science of Human Nature and the Pursuit of Social Justice” Corning¹², views the sense of justice as a distinctively evolved human and societal characteristic and as based on three biologically based principles: equality, equity and reciprocity.

By *equality*, Corning understands the necessity of satisfying basic needs for survival and reproduction as an equal social right, which he calls the “fundamental directive”. These are basic needs that are similar for all people. And the need to guarantee them, according to him, represents a basis, a lower limit, at which everyone is approximately equal or equally deprived if any of their basic needs is not met. Equality in meeting basic needs, according to Corning, is directly related to the right to life, which otherwise loses meaning.

The second principle discussed by Corning is that of *equity* - a fair distribution of economic surpluses (beyond what is necessary to provide for basic needs) and is directly related to merit, talent, hard work, achievements, etc. meritocratic principles. “Distributive justice” takes into account proportionality between rewards and contributions embedded in cultural norms and practices – such as socially acceptable unequal distribution and inequality.

The third principle is that of *reciprocity*, which refers to cooperation, collaboration and trust, fair exchange of goods and services, rights and obligations, etc. The norm of reciprocity, like that of equality, must be socially acceptable, recognized and consistently enforced.

According to Corning, a society that does not achieve an adequate balance between the three indispensable principles of justice is a “society in danger”.

12 Peter Corning, *The Fair Society: The Science of Human Nature and the Pursuit of Social Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).



The idea of justice in Bulgarian society and assessments of the current state

Within the framework of the project, we tried to establish what is understood by justice in Bulgaria, whether there are widely shared assessments, both in terms of essential, substantive justice and procedural justice. How do these views relate to possible developments and different scenarios related to the green transition – positive, neutral, related to concerns and threats, etc.

Therefore, the search for empirical results is oriented towards the idea of justice and the extent to which there are common, widely shared judgments about the progress of the green transition in Bulgaria; how these judgments are embedded in various declared goals and outline different options for action; to what extent political practices are sensitive to the value models in Bulgarian society and provide space for favorable impacts on policies by society; what are the value orientations in Bulgarian society in a comparative perspective in relation to other European countries.

The representative sociological survey conducted in 2023, as well as the citizen panels in 2025, revealed the existence of widely shared ideas in our country about what justice means and what its different dimensions are. These ideas are in line with the consideration of justice through the prism of equality, equity, fairness, and reciprocity, mentioned earlier.

The specific results of the study show a clear clustering of mass value attitudes in certain positions, more precisely:

Value views: What does a fair society mean?	Share (%) – completely agree and somewhat agree
It is fair if those who work more earn more.	97.8
A society is fair if it takes care of the poor and the needy.	96.8

A society is fair if all people have enough food, shelter, clothing, and access to education and medical care.	96.6
It is fair if each person receives only what he has acquired through his own efforts.	84.0
A society is fair if it does not allow excessive income disparities.	75.2
It is fair if income and wealth are relatively evenly distributed among the members of our society.	73.3

Source: National representative survey carried out within the framework of project KP-06-H55/13

Thus, the common, shared by large majorities, notion of justice among Bulgarian citizens includes simultaneously demands for recognition of merit and efforts, care for those in need, provision of basic needs for all, and control over inequalities.

The results demonstrate that widely internalized constellations of meaning complexes regarding justice and related values are prevalent among a very large portion of the population. They are shared by distinct majorities among all age groups, people with different incomes, education, and employment status, and are not differentiated by gender.

Various studies and researchers have recently highlighted the existence of generational changes. For example, the American political scientist, member of the World Values Survey team, Pippa Norris³³ argues that “age is the new divide in politics” and the values of the young and the elderly are very different.

That is why we examined in more detail the extent to which age differences affect the mental complexes regarding justice in our country. In this regard, it is important to first point out that our study does not register clear correlations between the age of respondents and preferred answers.

³³ Loek Halman, Tim Reeskens, Inge Sieben and Marga van Zundert, *Atlas of European Values: Change and Continuity in Turbulent Times*. European Values Series, Vol. 1 (Tilburg: Open Press TiU, Tilburg University, 2022), 178-179.



The most common assessments of the youngest in the study (18-29 years old) repeat the most common assessments among the entire population studied. Moreover, the inspection also shows that most often the most common ratings among the youngest (forming a clear majority among their ratings) are the same as the most common ratings among the oldest (forming a majority of their ratings).

Thus, our results do not support the idea of opposing values depending on age. Regarding the idea of justice, the research did not register a significant age aspect of value conflict or tensions.

There are some differences: e.g. adults are more categorical – more often choosing the answers 'strongly agree' or 'strongly disagree', while young people are more moderate choosing 'rather agree' or 'rather disagree'; in terms of self-perception of competence, there are differences in the understanding of personal competence – on some questions, more older people choose 'I can't decide', the questions in which young people choose this answer more often are different; the scale of high majorities is different – for the youngest they are over 70%, for the oldest and the entire group they are around and over 90%.

The general conclusion is that our results do not support the stated idea of opposing values depending on age and the emergence of a "new division in politics". Despite some nuances that could be further explored, there are clearly similar and shared notions regarding justice that constitute an important basis for societal capacity.

All of this also relates to the general assessment of Bulgarian society about the state of affairs along the justice - injustice axis. This assessment is too unfavorable. On a ten-point scale with extreme answers "there is no justice at all - there is a high degree of justice", the cluster is in the top five positions - 85.6%.

Positive responses reporting the presence of justice totaled 9.9%, with the answer "there is a high degree of justice" and the closest response each shared by 0.2% of respondents.

Regarding the issue of age discussed above, the situation is the same here. The correlation coefficient by age is low. The share of the youngest indicat-

ing the top five positions among all young people surveyed is 77.7%; the share of the oldest indicating the top five positions among all the oldest people surveyed is 88.3%;

Analyzing the results of our survey, we went back and compared them with the results for Bulgaria from the European Values Survey. Our results largely coincide with those published in the Atlas of European Values.¹⁴

According to the aforementioned publication, the European Values Survey finds that Bulgaria is characterized by the highest share of citizens focused on survival; the lowest share of people who indicate that they are happy; the lowest average score in terms of life satisfaction; the lowest share of people who believe they have control over their lives; a strong emphasis on work, pay, and basic needs at the expense of attention to leisure, personal development, and self-realization; very low trust in public institutions; and high dissatisfaction with the state of democracy in our country. Behind these opinions, albeit with varying clarity, judgments are visible through the prism of values - notions of justice, equality, fairness, reciprocity.

It is important to note that, according to many of the indicators considered, the registered unfavorable situation in our country is far from the situation in other EU member states, according to some of them, far from Europe at all, and according to some of them - even from the countries presented for comparison outside Europe. In some aspects, the direction over the years is also clearly different from that in other EU member states.

Thus, the general conclusions from both studies point to a conclusion about Bulgarian society as a society "on the border" and a "society in danger" (in Corning's understanding).

What are the conditions for a green transition to be just?

Related to this are the views of Bulgarians on what needs to be monitored, controlled and taken into account in order for a truly just green transition to take place. The results show that the green transition cannot be just by chance or by some inertia. There are a number of conditions that must be

¹⁴ Halman et al., "Atlas of European Values"



met so that the mention of a just green transition is not mere propaganda and manipulation.

These conditions are largely similar and duplicate the above-mentioned views of justice:

What are the conditions for a green transition to be just?	Share %/ of responses – completely agree and rather agree.
Poverty should not be allowed to increase.	98.8
The price of energy should not increase.	98.4
New job positions should be open.	96.8
It should be ensured that the workers from closing factories are retrained and provided with well-paid work.	95.6
All those affected by negative changes should be assisted	94.6
The energy poor should be supported	94.4
Financing for the green transition should be provided by European funds for countries with a lower than average standard of living.	91.6
There should be more socio-economic justice and lower inequalities.	91.3
The financing of the green transition should come from businesses that make profits from the green transition.	90.3

Fossil fuel companies should pay a carbon tax.	89.6
The green transition should be gradual and cautious.	88.6
Permits for renewable energy projects should be issued fast.	86.6
The green transition should be financed from the national budget.	76
Harmful industries that pollute the air should be quickly closed.	56.8

Source: National representative survey carried out within the framework of project KP-06- H55/13

The issues that gather majorities of dissenters (fully or rather) are:

- The price of energy for households should not be regulated – 78% disagree. Energy price liberalization is seen by the majority of respondents as a threat to welfare. Existing arguments that this will lead to fair pay fail to convince citizens. Among the likely reasons for this are the objective facts that liberalizations in many different sectors during the long transition not only did not strengthen justice, but significantly strengthened assessments of injustice;
- Everyone should participate in financing the green transition – 63.7% disagree. The preferred rules for financing this transition have to do with the idea of “pay according to merit.” It is based on the view that the cost should be borne primarily by those who profit and those who pollute; as well as by those who formulate the goals, without adequate regard to the problems of the well-being of Bulgarian citizens;
- While the question of whether the price of energy should be indexed to the consumption level of each household does not gather a majority in either direction: Agree – 41.5%; Disagree – 49.2%. It can be assumed that among the likely reasons for these preferences are the uncertainty regarding the adequate determination of the level of consumption of different households and the generators behind it.

Thus, in summary, the widely shared conditions for a green transition to be just include requirements for public engagement with welfare issues,



support for the affected and the energy poor, control over inequalities, and a fair determination of who pays.

At the same time, these conditions are the result of the way in which the main problems of Bulgarian society are considered and the assumptions about what would happen if a green transition were to take place without monitoring and controlling these conditions.

The results of the study show that the main problems of people in Bulgaria are identified as problems related to basic needs: low income, inflation, state of healthcare, access to cheap energy, state of education, unemployment. All of these problems were identified as major by over 90% of respondents.

Therefore, even if there are no clear rules for implementing a green transition with special commitments to justice, the expectations are that it will exacerbate already existing problems: the price of electricity and fuels, poverty and inequalities. The widespread favorable expectation - improving the cleanliness of nature and air - is not enough against the background of the dominant unfavorable expectations.

These survey results demonstrate the views of Bulgarian citizens regarding substantive justice, essential justice as a result of the ongoing political and socio-economic processes that distort the distribution of resources, opportunities, benefits and harms. Along with this, another type of justice is also important - procedural justice, related to rules and procedures in decision-making.

Procedural justice

The ways in which decisions are taken, the opportunities for participation of different stakeholders, and the transparent argumentation of positions are important characteristics of perceptions of justice. "Research on distributive justice has focused on the question of how people judge the fairness of the outcomes of social exchanges. In the 1970s, it became apparent to many social scientists that people were concerned not only with the outcomes of social exchanges but also with the fairness of the procedures by which distributional decisions were made. Thus, the concept of procedural

justice was born.”¹⁵ Procedural justice affects almost every distributional decision and is a pervasive and influential issue.¹⁶

Within the project, we also studied the requirements for decision-making processes related to the green transition. The answers to the questions related to procedural justice paint the following picture:

92.8% of respondents believe that society should be informed about decisions and be convinced that they are in everyone’s interest.

89.6% believe that decisions in the energy sector should be made by experts.

69.6% expect people to have real opportunities to participate in decision-making.

It is important to note that these views are not recommendations arranged side by side in logic, either by experts or by citizens. These requirements are a knot that requires both expertise, awareness and conviction that they are in the interest of everyone, as well as opportunities for participation.

The study found a very strong correlation between the requirement for expertise and public reasoning of decisions ($r = 0.83462$), as well as between the requirement for public reasoning of decisions and opportunities for participation ($r = 0.704695$).

The three together constitute a strategy that protects against the promotion of private interests against common interests. The high technocratic preferences in our country, also registered in the European Values Survey, on the one hand represent an attempt to protect against arbitrary and inadequate political actions, but, on the other hand, require responsible and publicly controlled experts who are both based on expert knowledge and, at the same time, able to argue for decisions in the common interest.

¹⁵ D. Ramona Bobocel and Leanne Gosse, “Procedural justice: A historical review and critical analysis”, in *The Oxford handbook of justice in the workplace*, ed. by Russell S. Cropanzano and Maureen L. Ambrose, (Oxford University Press, 2015), 51–87.

¹⁶ E. Allan Lind and Tom R. Tyler, *The Social Psychology of Procedural Justice*, Critical Issues in Social Justice Series (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, 1988).



These requirements are against the backdrop of a high share of respondents who believe that lobbying interests now determine decisions in the energy sector – 74.9% and that the process is not open and transparent – 76%.

Similar to what was stated above regarding fairness, the assessment of transparency in energy decision-making is concentrated in the top five unfavorable positions – 69.9%, with a strong linear relationship with responses about the presence of injustice ($r = 0.681679$).

In terms of values, there is a synchrony between the assessments of the unfairness of the processes and the opacity of the decisions; the presence of simultaneous and serious problems with regard to justice and democracy in Bulgarian society has been registered.

Conclusion

Our research finds widespread negative assessments of both existing substantive and procedural justice. Negative assessments regarding the results (substantive justice) as well as negative assessments regarding the methods of decision-making (procedural justice) in Bulgarian society are in sync with each other.

The widely assessed negative consequences for society together with inadequate procedural rules mutually intensify their significance, significantly limiting the possibilities for improvements and reasonable social changes. Barriers to citizens influencing decisions and narrowing impact to certain closed groups increases the opportunities for them to strengthen rules and mechanisms in their own favor and against the common interest. The combination of high levels of substantive and procedural injustice leads to an alienated and paralyzed society.

At the same time, there is an important characteristic of public capacity – widely shared value views regarding justice and its basic aspects. This moral compass is in tune with universal and evolutionarily anchored basic pro-social human values. This moral compass is consistent and internally homogeneous, based on balances between equality, equity, and reciprocity. There are value models regarding identity, well-being, solidarity and de-

mocracy, shared by broad majorities of Bulgarian citizens and in this sense, they are established, consistent and stabilized.

This value model could act as a basis for homogenization and social cohesion in the Bulgarian society, which is highly fragmented in terms of objective indicators. In any case, the lack of differentiation by the usual socio-demographic characteristics (gender, generation, education, income, etc.) in the established moral compass is an important conclusion from the study. This conclusion confronts both the often-discussed partial value fragmentations and the often-stated claim that Bulgarian society has no common goal. The shared idea of justice and its empowerment could, in principle, play such a role.

But, instead and in connection with the green transition, established and ongoing policies and political actions continue to intensely fragment Bulgarian society, through:

- Fragmentation of well-being: While citizens holistically view their well-being and quality of life as simultaneously encompassing social, economic, and environmental characteristics, *social versus green* conflicts are growing, including through attempts to deliberately construct impossible choices for people between food, medicine, heat, and clean air.
- Fragmentation of ecological responses: *green against green* by placing fins and solar panels on fertile lands, while food quality and access to water become an increasing problem.
- Fragmentation of citizenship through attempts to turn citizens into *consumers and customers*. To reclaim the political terrain for citizens, as A. Sen says, thoughtful strategies are needed to strengthen participation in decision-making processes.
- Fragmentation of senses and meanings by directing *some goals against other goals*, without explanations and in the aforementioned delulu perspective. This reinforces the view that the green transition is not so much about a clean environment as about profits and further increasing inequalities.¹⁷

¹⁷ Lavinia Steinfors and James Angel, *Energy Transition Mythbusters*, Transnational Institute (TNI) & TradeUnions for Energy Democracy (TUED), 2023, <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/energy-transition-mythbusters>



Nevertheless, it can be argued that ideas of justice as a product of socializing influences, universal evolutionarily anchored basic pro-social values, changing socio-economic and political contexts, and quality of life can have a protective function for highly fragmented societies and outline community. The established connecting meaning components may also contain possibilities for collective action, at least as a latent possibility.

In any case, in terms of basic pro-social values, Bulgarian society is more homogenized, at least for now, than the various basic individual differentiations, socio-economic processes, and policies aimed at deliberate fragmentation of society suggest.

Acknowledgment:

This article was prepared as part of the research project “Public Capacity for a Just Green Transition” funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund at the Ministry of Education and Science (under contract КП-06-Н55/13) within competition for funding of fundamental scientific research – 2021, with the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences as the beneficiary.