

# VULNERABLE GROUPS IN EUROPEAN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

“When disasters hit, nature does not discriminate. Unfortunately, society does, and as a result climate impacts are not the same for all communities [...]

Sarika Tandon, WE ACT for Climate Justice Project

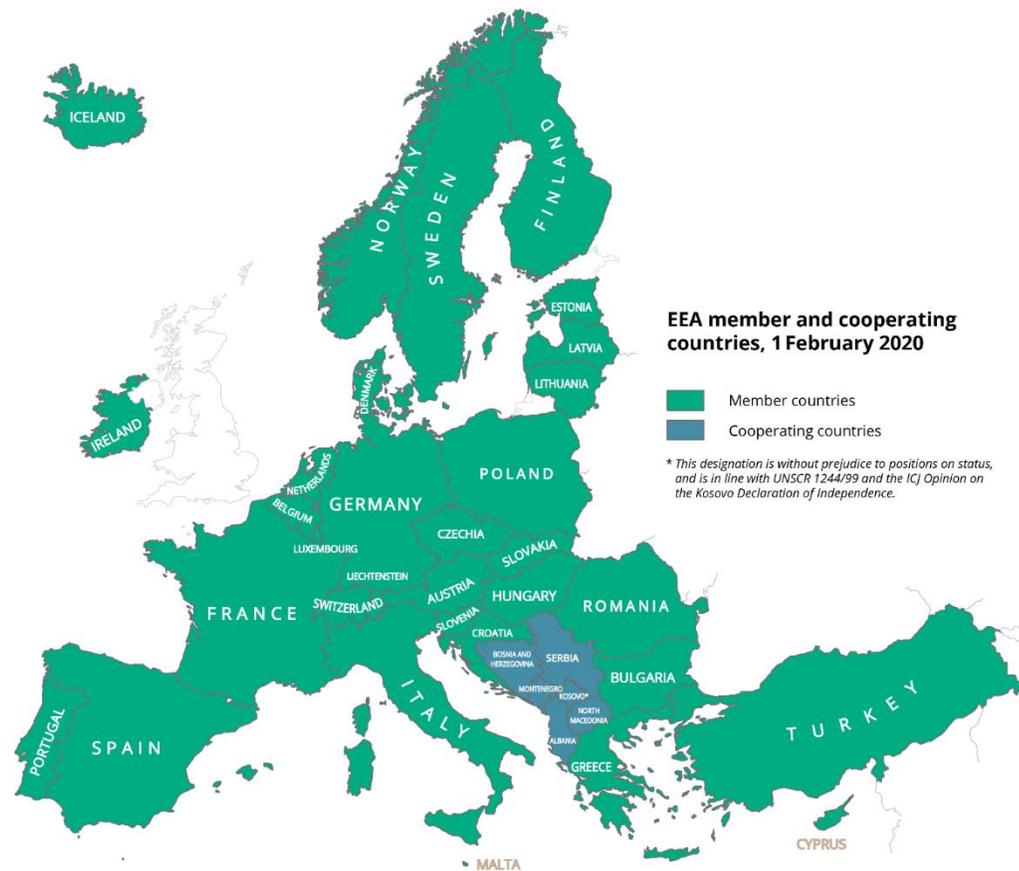
Race, Vulnerability and Differential Impacts: Prioritizing Social Justice in Climate Change Adaptation (2013)

# European Environment Agency

*“The EEA aims to support sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe’s environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy makers and the public”*



European Environment Agency, Copenhagen, Denmark



# What is social vulnerability to climate change?

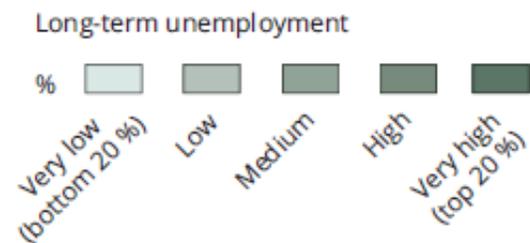
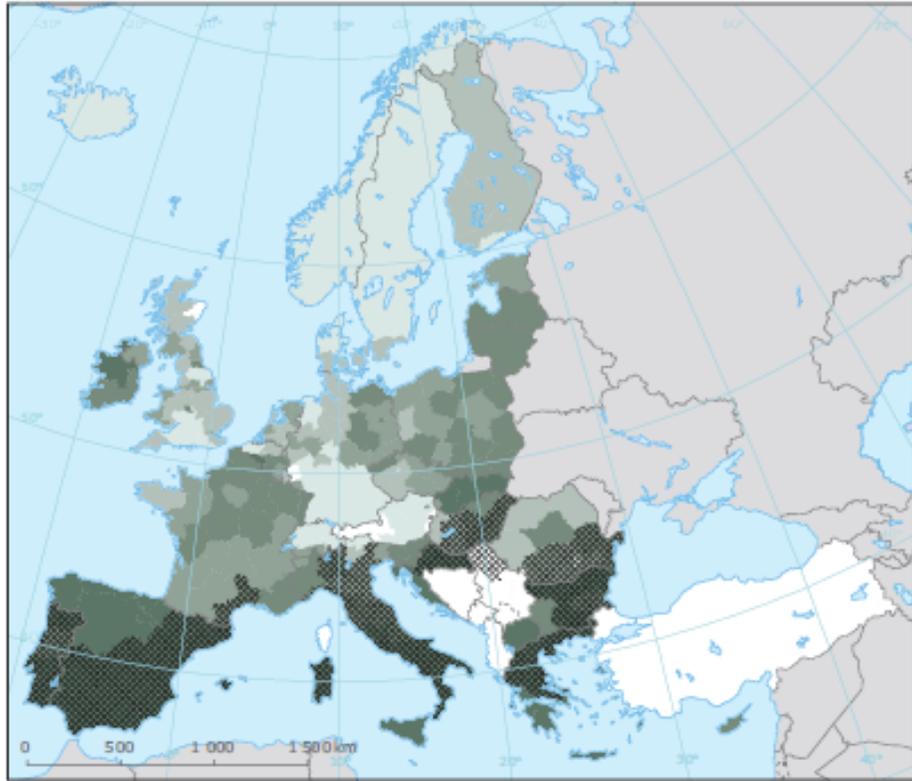
Those socioeconomic factors affecting an individual's or population group's "sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt" (Glossary, Agard et al., 2014)

*'Leaving no one behind'*

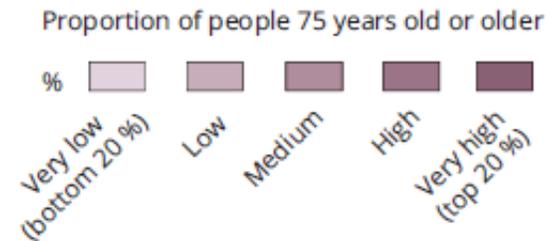
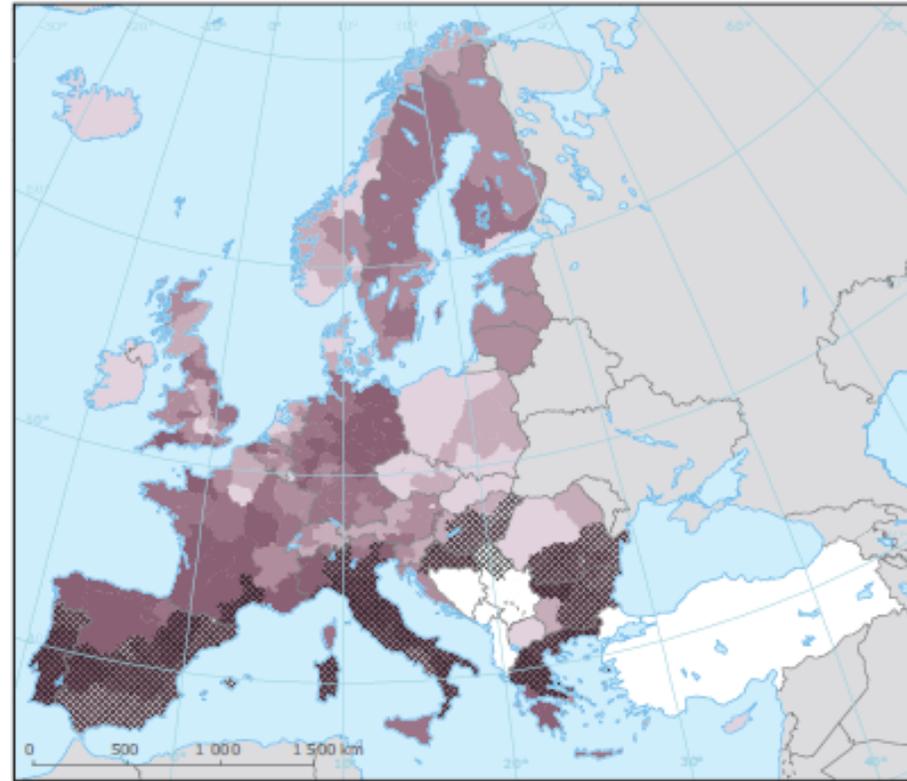
*'Just resilience'*

# Are vulnerable groups more exposed to climate-related hazards?

Long-term unemployment

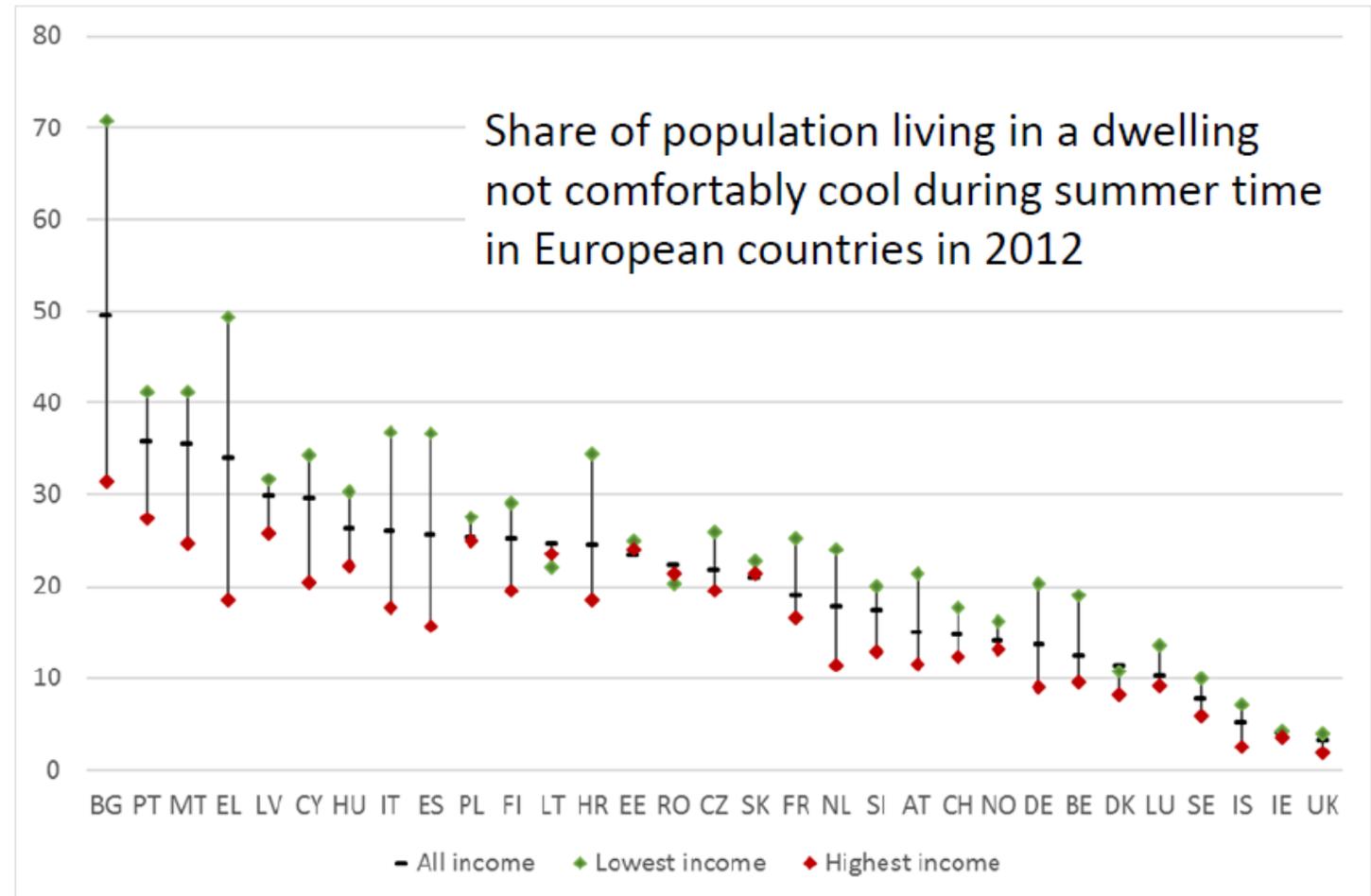


Proportion of people >75



# Are vulnerable groups more exposed to climate-related hazards?

Across Europe, those on lower incomes tend to be more exposed to high temperatures in their homes



Source: EU-SILC 2012 (Eurostat, 2016)



# Are vulnerable groups more exposed to climate-related hazards?

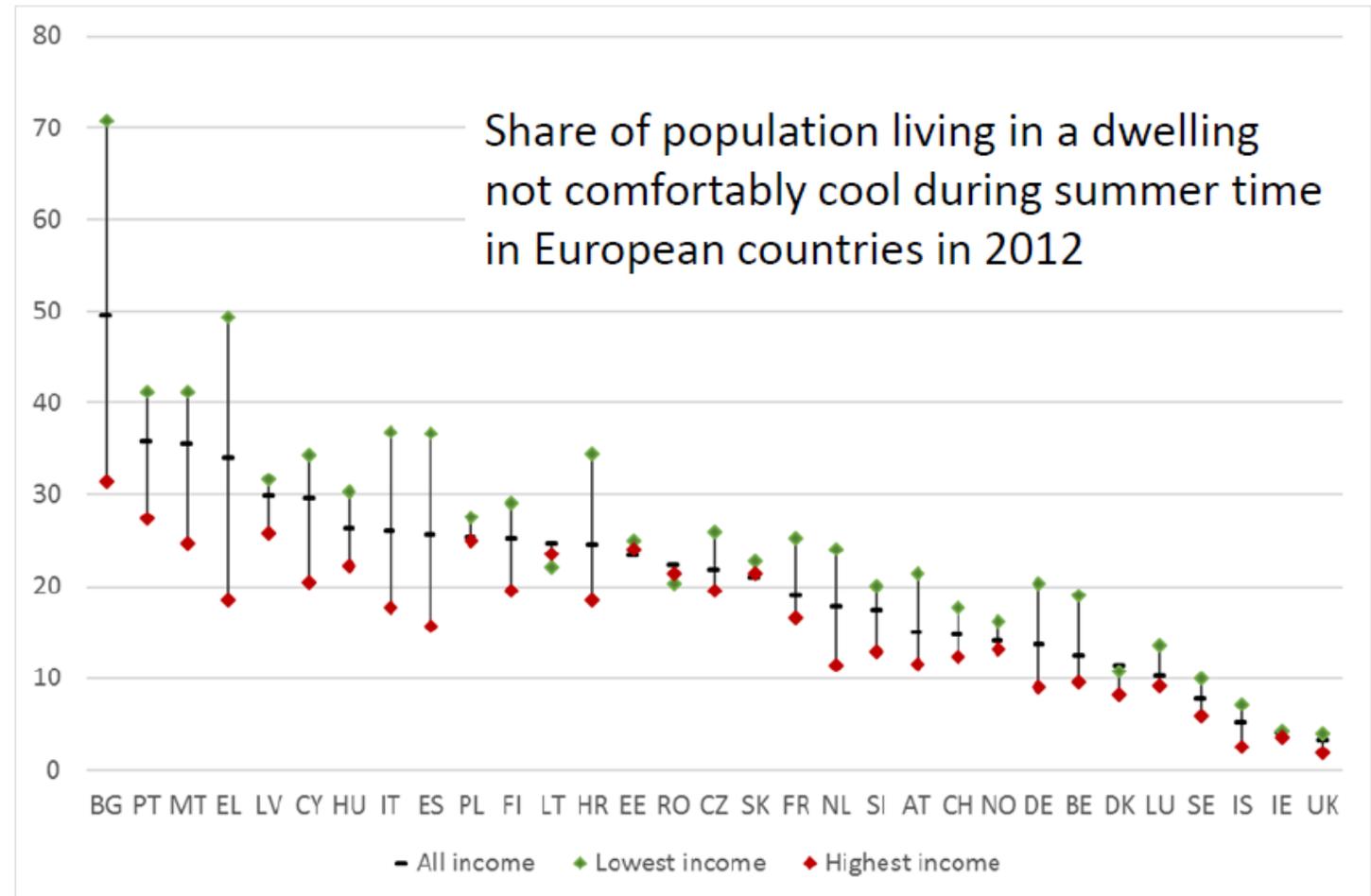
Across Europe, those on lower incomes tend to be more exposed to high temperatures in their homes

But:

Exposure of vulnerable groups is highly location specific:

–In many cities, socioeconomically disadvantaged people tend to be more exposed to heat stress

–But in other places affluent people choose to live in city centres or by the water (increased flood risk)



Source: EU-SILC 2012 (Eurostat, 2016)



# Challenges and opportunities in the European Union

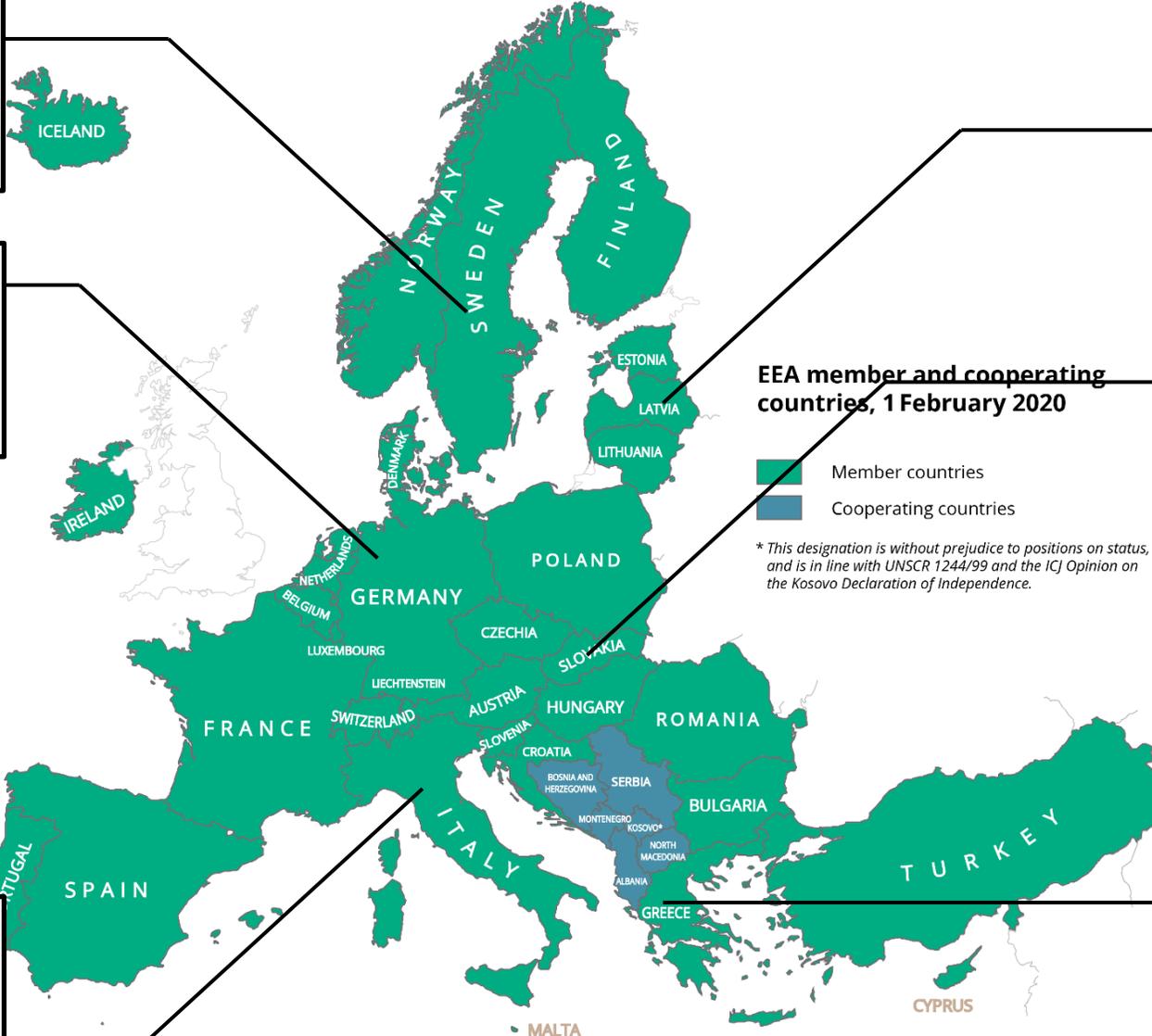
- Limited data
- Lack of integration of policy domains (climate change adaptation – social justice – public health)
- Increasingly a priority topic

# National Adaptation Strategies

- 2014: 6 out of 21 NAS explicitly addressed climate change as a social justice issue (Boeckmann and Zeeb, 2014)
- National climate change risk and vulnerability assessments:
  - 2015: few countries in Europe had assessed current social vulnerabilities (poverty/wealth, education, social capital); only four countries had developed future socio-economic projections (Downing 2017)
  - 2017: Human health covered in 20 out of 25 national climate change risk and vulnerability assessments (EEA, 2018)

# National Adaptation Strategies - examples

SE: focus on social capital and not disfavouing any social group



LV: adaptation measures for different vulnerable groups

DE: national vulnerability analysis considers age structure

SK: social inequalities in dense urban areas

IT: social conditions and quality of life in urban areas

EL: Mapping vulnerable groups; safe shelters



- European Topic Centre - Scoping paper on Just Resilience
- Study on sustainable cooling in buildings – adaptation, mitigation and health nexus

- Climate-ADAPT Platform
  - <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu>
  - Information on climate change vulnerability, case studies, adaptation plans, adaptation options
- EU Climate and Health Observatory
  - <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/observatory>
  - Access to tools, publications, websites and other resources on climate change and health
  - Launched March of this year

# Thank you

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