

# **The European dimension of Germany's “Energiewende”: Between adaptation and leadership**

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# Framework

- Conflicting competencies: National prerogative on energy mix vs. shared competency for energy in EU treaties
- Different priority structure
- Different speeds of transformation and different transformation perspectives
- Different rules for policy-making: formal and informal
- Increasing interdependency: harmonized sub-policy fields such as internal electricity and gas markets, EU ETS etc.

# The development of a German strategy for the European dimension of the Energiewende depends on:

- Implicit and explicit meaning of the national transformation strategy
- A differentiation between „politics“ and „policies“
- Ability to deal with the challenge of complexity in a multi-level system
- A differentiation between „upload“, „download“ and „governance by supranational hierarchy“ between EU and German energy and climate policy

# Three stereotypical forms of dealing with the European dimension

- Enforcing the European Energiewende
- Adjusting the German Energiewende to EU policies
- Minimizing EU interference

# Enforcing the European Energiewende

- Transferring the national Energiewende concept to the EU level („nuclear free low-carbon economy based on renewable energies“)
- Ambitious targets and instruments would need to be implemented on EU level
- Nearly no differences between the two levels allowed
- Aim: Greater impact of transformation project for global purposes and necessary framework for national implementation (internal market etc.)
- Problem 1: Target setting and policy-making in the EU follows different rules
- Problem 2: Negotiation process in the EU could delay national implementation

# Adjusting the German Energiewende to EU policies

- Justify corrections to national transformation plan
- Serves as an argument for a failure by implementing national targets
- Two strategic pathways:
  - Passive role in EU policy-making
  - Escalating conflicts with COM in areas around competition policy

# Minimizing EU interference

- Priority on national policy-making and on the implementation of a national transformation
- „Muddling through“ on EU level works as guiding principle
- Strategy of delay and non-decision on EU level keeps more options for national policy-making open
- Negotiating case-by-case solutions with COM and neighbouring states
- Problem: Increasing discursive isolation and dealing with no or even negative effects on other Member states via EU policies

# Conclusions and recommendations

- There is no optimal strategy towards the EU dimension of the German Energiewende project
- Differentiation between policy fields, sectors and instruments necessary to have an informed debate (ETS, Non-ETS, national climate targets etc.)
- Politically, it is always easier to communicate „problems“ or inconsistencies around EU policies than positive effects harmonization can have
- In the long run, a high degree of complexity will lead to more symbolic national energy politics and more functional EU energy policies at the same time