

# German-Polish Cooperation in Renewables: Towards Policy Convergence?

Andrzej Ancygier  
Kacper Szulecki

Hertie School  
of Governance



**ESPRi**

Environmental Studies and Policy  
Research Institute | Wrocław

UiO **University of Oslo**  
Department of Political Science

# Agenda

1. Towards harmonization of the renewable energy policy?
  - Explaining German-Polish non-convergence
2. Main concepts: convergence, diffusion and transfer
3. Poland and Germany – going in the opposite direction
4. Factors influencing policy convergence:
  1. Learning
  2. Competition
  3. Imitation
  4. Coercion
5. Tendering: towards a forced convergence?

# 1. EU policy - towards harmonization?

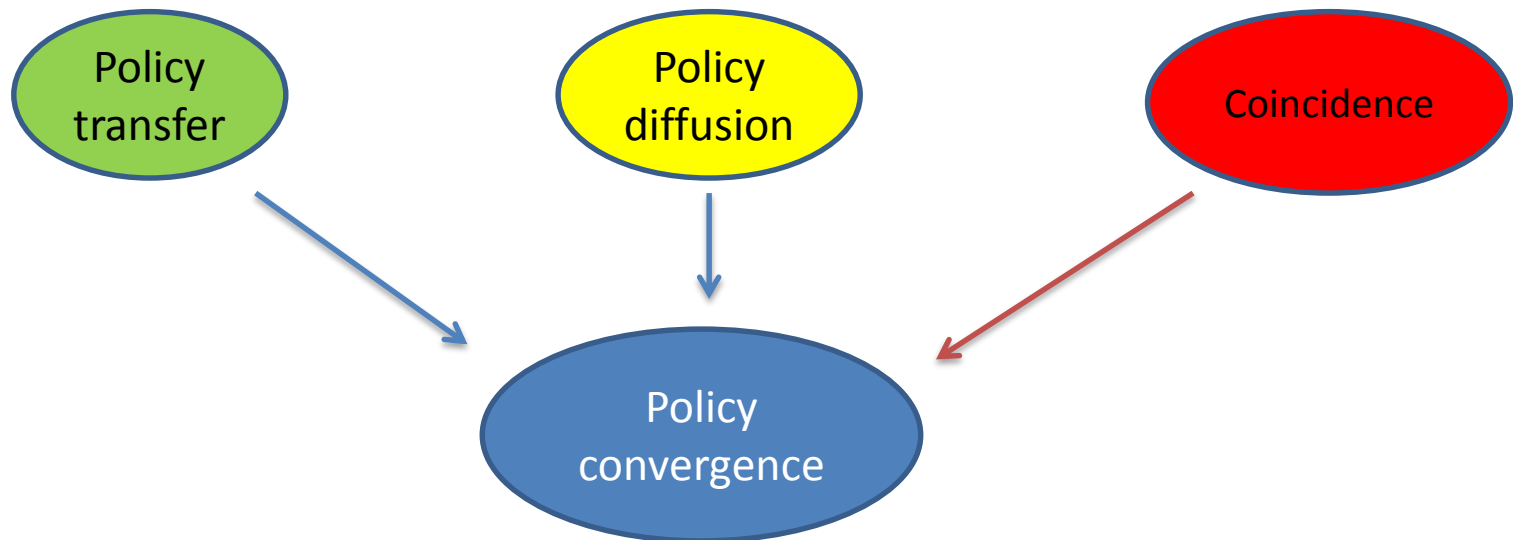
- Some scholars argue that we see convergence in RE policy
- Germany and Poland – a stark example of non-convergence
- **What explains German-Polish non-convergence?**
  - Looking at policy diffusion and transfer
  - Mechanisms of diffusion/transfer: important or blocked?
  - What could cause convergence in the near future?

# 1. EU policy - towards harmonization?

- Already in the 1980s there was pressure for „concerted action“ and „coordination at Community level“ when exploring the renewable sources of energy
- Negotiations over directive 2001/77/EC: everyone against the Commission
- Commission's preference for Quota Mechanism largely ignored
- Negotiations over directive 2009/28/EC: giving up harmonization not to risk the whole ECP

## 2. Convergence, Diffusion, Transfer

- Convergence: „development of similar or even identical policies across countries and over time” (Knill, 2005)



## 2. Convergence, Diffusion, Transfer

- Policy transfer – usually concerns single policy „travelling“ from one country to another with the traceable agency of some stakeholder groups and institutions
- Policy diffusion – policies are becoming similar in a number of areas due to the existence of similar initial conditions

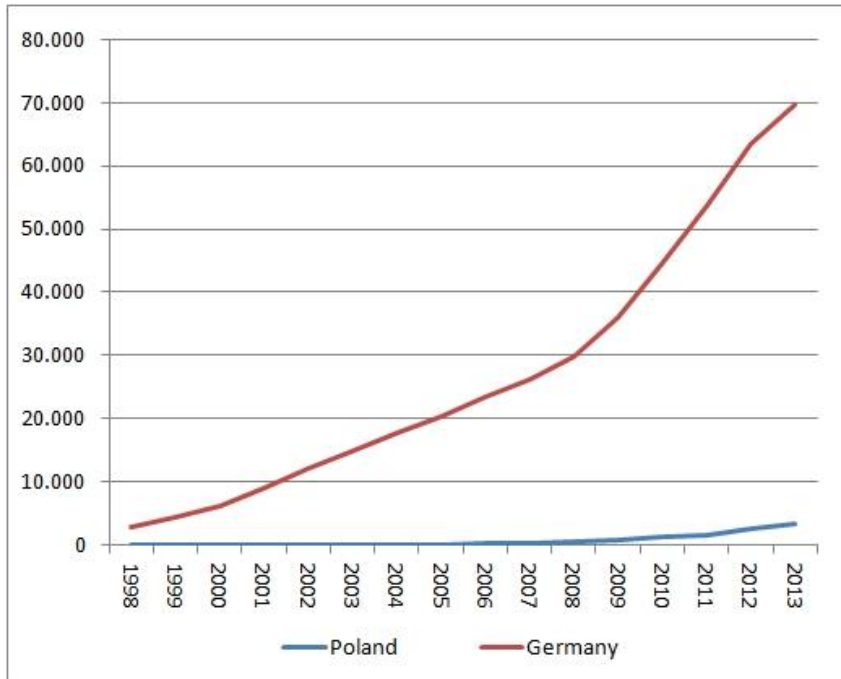
# 3. Poland and Germany

## – renewable energy policy

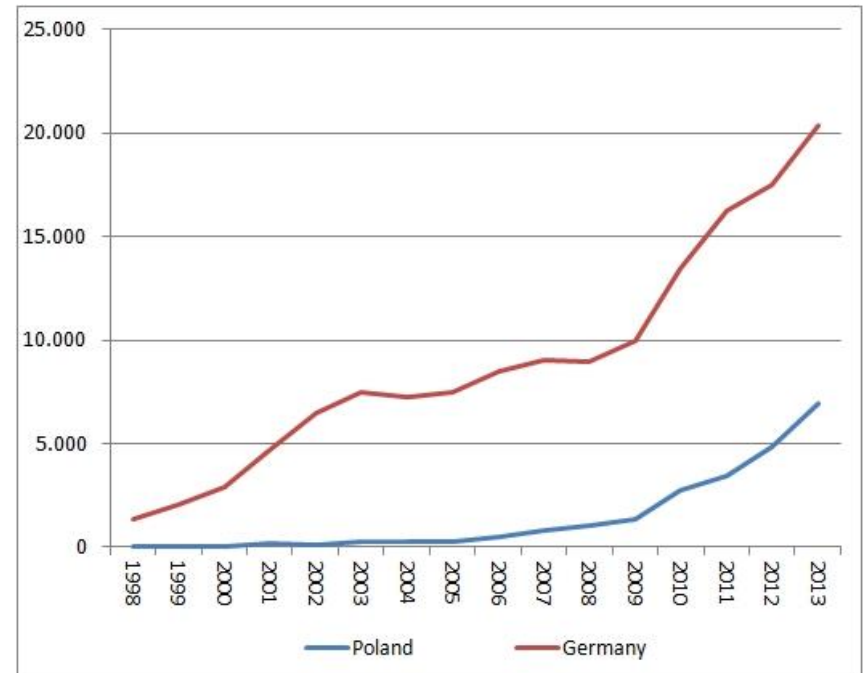
	Poland	Germany
Support mechanism	Green Certificates	Feed-in tariffs
Predictability for the investors	The price of the certificates and electricity difficult to predict	Guaranteed tariffs for up to 20 years
Legal predictability	Very unpredictable: change of quotas by an ordinance	Rather predictable: change of the tariffs require amendment of the Renewable Energy Act
Differentiated support?	The same support for all RES-E	Differentiated support depending on the current cost and future potential
Accessibility for smaller players (prosumers, cooperatives)	Difficult due to high investment risk	Very small: preferences for smaller installations

# 3. Poland and Germany – investment

Installed capacity wind+PV  
(absolute values in MW)



Installed capacity wind+PV  
(Watt/\$1.000.000 GDP)





# 3. Poland and Germany – results

- Job creation:
  - 368,400 in Germany
  - 33,835 in Poland
- „Democratization“ of the power sector
  - Dominance of the state-owned energy companies in Poland
  - Increasing impact of *prosumers* and cooperatives in Germany

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Learning

- Drawing conclusions from the experiences of other countries → positive and negative learning
- Conditions necessary:
  - Common definition of a problem
  - Perceived success of a policy
  - Availability of reliable information
  - Rationality of the policy-makers
  - Existence of „agents of transfer“

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Learning – Poland vs. Germany

- Different definition of problems:
  - PL: energy security, energy prices
  - DE: nuclear energy, climate change
- Perceived success of a policy
  - In Poland challenges of the energy transition are exaggerated and problems misused for the promotion of own interested
- Availability of reliable information
  - The complexity of the energy transition makes it difficult to fully understand all the mechanisms behind it.
  - „Mainstream“ media in Poland simplify the message and suggest failure of the energy transition
- Existence of the agents of transfer
  - Few channels of cooperation exist between Poland and Germany in the area of renewable energy.
  - Agents promoting mechanisms for the promotion of RES similar to those adopted in Germany are not able to influence government's policy

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – **Emulation**

- Results from the desire to fit into a „norm-based community“ which leads to „copying the actions of others to look like them“
- May take place for strategic reasons – i.e. willingness to join an organization
- May result from the pressure from civil society (NGOs, advocacy groups, respected individuals)
- May take the form of superficial adaptation → „talking the talk“ without following with action

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Emulation – Poland versus Germany

- Strong factor before it became clear that Poland will surely join the EU
- Since the negotiations of the Energy and Climate Package in 2008 stronger impact on the European policy
- Promotion of „Visegrad“ identity of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary
- In many cases „superficial“ adaptation – talking the talk, but with no action following

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Competition

- Modifying certain policy to avoid competitive disadvantage in comparison to other countries
- May take the form of
  - *race to the bottom* → reducing (environmental) barriers for investors
  - *race to the top* → increasing the standards for own industry to be more competitive in the long term
  - Adopting a policy in synergy with the trendsetting country.

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Competition – Poland versus Germany

- Very different understanding of competitiveness:
  - DE: developing new sectors of industry, even if initially expensive, will be beneficial in the long-run
  - PL: low energy prices decisive for increasing the industry competitiveness.
- „Race to the top“ in Germany and „race to the bottom“ in Poland

## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Coercion

- May come from powerful states or organizations that a country is in a way dependent on.
- A country implements a policy because otherwise it would either face a cost (i.e. in result of EU's infringement procedure) or lose a potential benefit (i.e. financial help)



## 4. Factors influencing policy diffusion – Coercion – Poland versus Germany

- Poland developed renewable energy policy mainly under the pressure from the EU
- European renewable energy and climate policy – especially the ECP – has been strongly influenced through Germany
- Limitations of coercion:
  - Since unanimous agreement is necessary for all decisions that affect energy mix of the member states, Poland can veto any future proposals – i.e. goals for 2030
  - In most cases member states are allowed to decide how they would like to achieve the EU goals (i.e. climate goals).

## 5. Tendering: towards a forced convergence?

- According to state aid rules for energy and environment national support mechanisms are to be replaced by „competitive bidding“ from 2017
- In the newest version of the EEG from August 2014 Germany decided to introduce pilot auctions as of 2015
- Tendering is also going to replace system of green certificates in Poland in the coming years.
- For the first time both countries will have the same support mechanisms which may allow for a better coordination and policy diffusion.

**Andrzej Ancygier**  
**Hertie School of Governance**  
[ancygier@hertie-school.org](mailto:ancygier@hertie-school.org)

**Kacper Szulecki**  
**University of Oslo**  
[kacper.szulecki@stv.uio.no](mailto:kacper.szulecki@stv.uio.no)

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