

From the Energy Union to the European Green Deal: Patterns of EU (energy) policy integration

Section: S18 EU Climate and Energy Policy in Turbulent Times

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Discussant: tbc

Abstract

Following the Energy Union initiative of the Juncker Commission, Ursula von der Leyen's European Green Deal (EGD) once again brings energy policy to the center of European integration. This supranational policy entrepreneurship is somewhat surprising. Various crises in the EU have vividly demonstrated the limits of supranational integration and heralded a resurgence of intergovernmental policy-making. It is possibly against this background that the Commission has sought to advance EU policies within its area of competence rather than expanding its policy-making capacities to new areas.

However, the EGD is destined to be more impactful than its predecessor for at least three reasons. First, it is much broader in scope. While the Energy Union mainly promoted the integration of two areas of supranational activity, energy and climate, whilst establishing links to related areas, including competitiveness, research and social policy, the new agenda stretches horizontally more widely. Beyond energy and climate, the EGD covers environmental, economic, agricultural, health, social, transport and industrial policy, establishes links to research, innovation, education and digitalization, and draws upon dedicated financial instruments. In combination with a Green Oath ("Don't do harm"), this will mainstream climate in almost all areas of EU activity. Second, the importance of the EGD has been enshrined in the institutional structure of the Commission. The portfolio rests with the First Executive Vice President, Frans Timmermans, enhancing its visibility and influence. Finally, the EGD embodies a response to the election results of the European Parliament election 2019, in which EU citizens called for a more sustainable Europe. The agenda arguably has a strong mandate from the voters and enjoys broad support across the main political parties.

Against this background and given the timeliness of the topic, the EGD agenda offers interesting insights into dynamics of European integration in the 21st century. This panel invites papers that review the evolution of the EGD, analyze the role of the European Commission and other institutional actors in this development, evaluate the EGD against recent theoretical debates on European integration, analyze the Commission initiative in light of multiple crises in the EU, and compare the EGD to similar initiatives in Europe and around the world. Other submissions with a focus on the EGD are also welcome.

If you are interested in contributing to this panel, please send a paper abstract of maximum 250 words to Philipp Thaler (philipp.thaler@unisg.ch) before December 15, 2019. Please indicate your name and affiliation.