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ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENT WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PATHS IN GERMANY AND HUNGARY

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ABSTRACT

Different renewable energy policies have existed in the EU for decades but the 2020-targets hold signifant challenges for the member states. It is necessary to draft appropriate renewable energy development strategies in each member state. The forerunner countries of the European Union have significant experience in the drafting and implementation of renewable energy policies. However, how far is this knowledge transferable to the latecomers? The aim of the paper is to compare the wind energy development paths in Germany and in Hungary and analyse their institutional and social development paths as well as the political paradigm changes.

The wind industry has become a serious player in Germany both in terms of energy generation capacity and economic momentum. According to the German Wind Energy Association, 40.4 TWh of wind power were generated in Germany in 2008. In 2007, the turnover of German manufacturers and suppliers amounted to nearly EUR 6.1 billion. The sector currently employs close to 100,000 people.

Many observers suggest new EU member states, such as Hungary, to learn from the German development path. However, there are crucial structural differences, which arose from the different historical development paths. Most of the German support policies focus on bottom-up structures, while the Hungarian renewable energy policy is driven mainly by top-down incentives and external factors.

The research is based on literature review and numerous expert interviews. The analysis follows the methodology of the Constellation Analysis [1] to describe the complex development paths in both countries. The paper highlights the institutional, social and political factors – besides the technical and economic ones that presently receive most attention. Furthermore, it offers a more comprehensive explanation of the development dynamics in each country.

Until now, relatively little attention was paid to the differences of socio-technical and institutional development in the old and new EU member states. The aim of this paper is bridge this gap.

The analysis of the different wind energy development dynamics of each country suggests that those who wish to encourage renewable energy development in Hungary need to take into account these institutional and social factors. The paper aims to increase the understanding of the institutional and social context in the evolvement of energy systems in the two countries. Furthermore, it draws a more differentiated picture of the possibilities and limitations of the transferability of renewable energy policies between different EU member states.

REFERENCE

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