



Ankara-Brussels Transfer Line: The Transfer of Brussels-born Renewable and Energy Efficiency Norms to Turkey

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Abstract

The chapter on energy in the European Union-Turkey accession negotiations is among those chapters that remains unopened. Nevertheless, it is one of the chapters whose compatibility level with EU norms is high. The literature on conditionality is seen as an inappropriate tool to explain the similarity between Turkish and European legislative documents governing electricity markets, renewables and energy efficiency, especially in the context of an unopened chapter. Examining an under-researched area of EU-Turkey energy relations (given that most studies focus on Turkey's role in EU energy security), this thesis, by engaging with the policy transfer studies conceptualized by Marsh and Sharman, seeks to identify the factors facilitating transfer in the Ankara-Brussels axis.

This analysis has two main parts. First, part one will prove the legislative similarity between Ankara-made laws and Brussels-born directives as well as strategies. Part two will explore the process in-between leading to this similarity. The process was facilitated by a variety of elements, which are conceptualised using Minkman et al.'s four building blocks.

The findings of the thesis suggest that the combination of normative fit, the conveying ability of the EU in Ankara's view, and the involvement of the Turkish decision-makers since the beginning enabled the policy transfer. As the literature suggests, policy transfer happens to a certain extent, rather than a copy-paste model. The thesis deals with the degree of policy transfer along the Ankara-Brussels axis. This degree, being the amalgam of facilitating factors in favour of transfer and Turkish derogations in the context of the country's peculiarities, is analysed through semi-structured interviews conducted with Turkish transfer agents. Having an expertise both in the EU policy context and Turkey's specificities in regulating its energy markets, the agents succeeded in carrying out the transfer process in the early 2000s, reflected by a combination of Turkey's embryonic liberalizing efforts and the heyday of EU-Turkey accession negotiations. Exploring the time dimension of the transfer as well, the thesis concludes that a second reinvigoration in the Ankara-Brussels energy axis can happen in the EU Green Deal context.