

PROGRAMME

GOVERNING SUSTAINABILITY IN EUROPE: Perspectives from Central and Eastern Europe and the Asia Pacific



14-15 December 2023

ESSCA School of Management & Andrassy University Budapest

Governing Sustainability in Europe:

Perspectives from Central and Eastern Europe and the Asia Pacific

Date: 14-15 December 2023 (Thursday-Friday)

Convenors: EU*Asia Institute at ESSCA School of Management, Angers (Dr Sonia Chikh M'hamed) & Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, Brussels (Dr Peter Hefele) & Andrassy University Budapest (Dr Kristina Kurze)

Venue: ESSCA School of Management, Budapest (Hungary) & Online via Teams

Workshop Day 1: Thursday 14 December 2023

Meeting link: [Click here to join the meeting via Teams](#)

Venue: ESSCA Budapest – Room 1

9:00-9:30 CET

Welcome by the organisers

Dr Zsuzsa DELI-GRAY, ESSCA Budapest

Dr Sonia Chikh M'hamed, ESSCA, EU*Asia Institute

Dr Peter Hefele, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

Keynote speech & discussion

H.E. Mr. Masato Ohtaka, Ambassador of Japan to Hungary

9:30 – 12:30 CET

Session 1

Perspectives on Sustainable Development and Global Relations

Chair: Dr Kristina Kurze, University of Göttingen & Andrassy University Budapest

- **Gábor Kecskés**, Széchenyi István University, *Interpreting SDGs in the CEE and the Pacific Islands Region*
- **Dr Peter Hefele**, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, *Co-Creating a Framework of Resilience: The Role of CEEC-Asia relations in the Future Foreign Policy of the European Union*

10:30-11:00 CET

Coffee Break

- **Online Sarah Herman**, Graduate School of Public Policy, The University of Tokyo, *The EUJEPA, Expectations and Realities of a “New-Generation FTA” Implications for EU-Japan relations on sustainable trade and development*
- **Dr Anastas Vangeli**, School of Economics and Business, University of Ljubljana, *Navigating Greenwashing: Critical Perspectives on Sustainability in Global Business and Politics*
- **Questions and Answers**

12:30-14:00 CET

Lunch Break @ ESSCA

14:00-16:30 CET

Session 2

European Green Deal: Achievements and Impacts

*Chair: Prof Thomas Hoerber, ESSCA EU*Asia Institute*

- **Artë Kastrati**, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”, *CEE Countries’ Achievements in Implementing the European Green Deal and the Effects on Europe’s Sustainable Transformation*
- **Online Dr Robert Dygas**, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, *The evaluation of ESG Doctrine’s impact on the chosen economies of Poland and India from the perspective of sustainable development - The Agenda 2030*

15:00-15:30 CET

Coffee Break

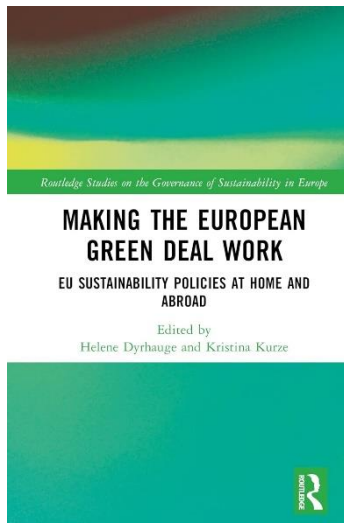
- **Dr Sonia Chikh M’hamed**, ESSCA EU*Asia Institute, *What does the European Green Deal mean for Asia-Pacific?*
- **Questions and Answers**

- End of the workshop sessions -

17:30-19:00 CET

Book launch at Andrassy University, Österreich Bibliothek

(Pollack Mihály tér 3., H-1088 Budapest)



**Making the European Green Deal Work:
EU Sustainability Policies at Home and Abroad**

Book presentation and discussion with editors & authors:

Prof Thomas Hoerber, ESSCA, EU*Asia Institute

Dr Kristina Kurze, University of Göttingen & Andrassy University Budapest

Dr Chikh M’hamed, ESSCA, EU*Asia Institute

Rafal Fabianowicz, Andrassy University Budapest

Small reception

Workshop Day 2: Friday 15 December 2023

9:00 – 12:30 CET

Session 3

Innovations in Digitalisation

Chair: Dr Peter Hefele, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

- **Samira SAHITI**, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”, **Dr Adel BEN YOUSSEF**, University Côte d’Azur, **Dr Mjellma CARABREGU-VOKSHI**, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”, *Adoption of E-Services Innovation in Kosovo’s Administrations*
- **Adelina Zeqiri**, University Côte d’Azur, *Artificial Intelligence Enhancing Sustainable Governance: A Conceptual Framework*

10:30-11:00 CET

Coffee Break

- **Online** **Giorgio Caridi**, E-Campus University, Rome, **Mehdi El Azhari**, Hyper Crunch, Paris, *Italian and French contribution to next EU’s sustainable transformation phase: a compared perspective*
- **Dr Balázs Borsi**, ESSCA Budapest, **Zsófia Vida**, Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Department of Science Policy and Scientometrics, *Smart cities as future avenues for sustainability (title tbc)*
- **Questions and Answers**

12:00-13:30 CET

Lunch Break @ ESSCA

13:30-16:00 CET

Session 4

Shaping Governance and Local Policies

Chair: Dr Balázs Borsi, ESSCA Budapest

- **Rafal Fabianowicz**, Andrassy University Budapest, *Evolution of Right-Wing Populism in Poland: From Climate Skepticism to National Unity?*
- **Dr Botond Géza KÁLMÁN**, Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences, **Dr Arnold TÓTH**, Budapest Business School, *EU Sustainable Finance Framework*
- **Questions and Answers**

16:00-16:15

Closing words by the organisers

Dr Sonia Chikh M’hamed, ESSCA, EU*Asia Institute

Dr Peter Hefele, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

16:15-16:30

Announcement: Routledge Book Project

Prof Thomas Hoerber, ESSCA EU*Asia Institute

Dr Sonia Chikh M’hamed, ESSCA, EU*Asia Institute

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Abstract 1: Interpreting SDGs in the CEE and the Pacific Islands Region

Author: Gábor Kecskés, Széchenyi István University

The lecture and the manuscript focus on certain common Central and Eastern European (CEE) and Indo-Pacific aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite the huge societal and geographical difference of the two regions, each can learn from the other. The majority of CEE states have witnessed a long period of economic transition (after the 1989-90 thorough changes in the economic and political system), while the Pacific Islands reached a relevant economic development in the previous decades (for instance by the support of the blue economy). The Pacific Islands, however, are heavily and directly exposed to the negative effects climate change and environmental sustainability, while the CEE states face that danger but not as an imminent threat. Therefore, the common challenges in achieving the economic and environmental SDGs shall be taken into consideration, and economic best practices presented. The manuscript and lecture will focus on the legal interpretation of SDGs in the two regions.

Abstract 2: Co-Creating a Framework of Resilience: The Role of CEEC-Asia relations in the Future Foreign Policy of the European Union

Author: Dr Peter Hefele, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

The impact of the ongoing “polycrises” has dramatically reshaped how the European Union understands itself as a geopolitical and geo-economic power. This coming-of-age for the Union requires innovative policy concepts which bridge and synchronise internal transformation processes while repositioning Europe in an increasingly adverse global environment. The article selects the idea of “resilience” as a key concept for developing innovative policy fields and instruments in Europe’s foreign relations. Despite many debates on de-coupling and de-risking, the European Union continues to stand for an open, interconnected space, willing to strengthen its political, economic and social ties with other global regions. The success of Europe’s internal transitions is inseparably linked to forming new types of relations with like-minded countries. The Indo-Pacific as the currently most dynamic region is key for Europe’s efforts and future wellbeing. Surprisingly, little consideration has so far been made on the specific contributions and capacities of the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) for making Europe more resilient. The same observation applies to their role in becoming increasingly important actors in EU-Asia relations.

This article will therefore investigate various dimension of resilience, such as green transformation, defence and democracy. It will examine recent developments and future prospects in the CEEC and among Indo-Pacific countries and propose new fields and modes of cooperation between both regions. Overall, the proposed concept of “resilience” is also seen as a pragmatic contribution to the ongoing debate of an “open strategic autonomy” of the European Union.

Abstract 3: THE EUJEPA, Expectations and Realities of a “New-Generation FTA” Implications for EU-Japan relations on sustainable trade and development

Author: Sarah Herman, Graduate School of Public Policy, The University of Tokyo

The European Union and Japan share a mutual motivation to collaborate on sustainable development issues. Associated with limited capacities in political and security matters, cooperation on environmental and social issues allow them to transcend their reputation as "middle powers" in international forums. By strategically selecting specific topics and assertively exercising their value-oriented power in international forums, they are empowered to exert influence on the global stage. This policy approach relies on leveraging the economic statecraft of Brussels and Tokyo in areas such as finance, investment, and trade to advance environmental and social agendas. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement serves as a prominent illustration of this approach, combining economic and legal elements with comprehensive provisions on climate change, biodiversity protection, and labor rights. It establishes an interconnected framework aligned with Sustainable Development Goals and other multilateral environmental agreements and fosters collaboration between policymakers, businesses, and civil society. The agreement represents a significant milestone and paradigm shift in EU-Japan relations, paving the way for dedicated forums on climate, green technologies, investment, and more.

This thesis examines the EUJEPA's progress as a promoted "new-generation FTA" and explores the enforcement of economic and legal provisions for sustainable development. It analyzes the implications and outcomes of the agreement while offering policy recommendations for enhancing EU-Japan collaboration on sustainability. Through interviews with professionals and academics working on sustainable trade, this research delves into interrelated topics across economics, politics, legal regulations, and public-private cooperation, involving businesses, governments, and civil society. Undoubtedly, the agreement represents a significant milestone and paradigm shift in EU-Japan relations, particularly in the context of sustainable development. In particular, I argue in this research that it has paved the way for the establishment of dedicated forums encompassing climate issues, green technologies, digitalization, investment, green financing, and public-private partnerships. This agreement has fostered extensive collaboration between Brussels and Tokyo across a diverse range of topics, solidifying its status as a strong frontrunner in promoting sustainable development. Its implementation, four years after its drafting, coincides with a critical juncture in EU-Japan relations. As an extension of their “value-nexus” diplomacy, they are striving to assert their influence on the international stage, particularly in the face of major emerging and ever-changing players such as China and Russia. Serving as advocates of democracy, peace, and human rights across the Eurasian continent, Japan and the EU are now compelled to elevate their efforts and demonstrate their power, despite perceived weaknesses resulting from their limited military capabilities. Collaborating on environmental issues, in particular, can enable them to take the lead in spearheading a "Just Transition" and new energy technologies, charting the course towards sustainable societies.

In my recommendations, in order to enhance cooperation on sustainable development between the EU and Japan, I propose two avenues for reflection. The first is to reinforce the role of the existing trade agreement, which can be achieved through regular dialogue, monitoring and adding legally binding provisions to the sustainable trade chapter, while seeking collaboration in areas like environmental protection and climate change mitigation. The second avenue is to reinforce the overall trade policy of the EU towards Japan, focusing on coherence among sustainable trade policies. This involves aligning sectors, stakeholders, and fostering sustainable practices, while maintaining openness and avoiding defensiveness among Asian partners, especially Japan. Striking the right balance between bilateral policies like the EUJEPA and

multilateral initiatives like the European Green Deal is crucial for enhancing cooperation. Effective communication and understanding between the EU and Japan, especially regarding initiatives like the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, is essential for long-term collaboration. By pursuing these pathways, the EU can establish a stronger foundation for collaboration with Japan, fostering shared goals and advancing sustainable development objectives. The EUJEP, has not yet been fully utilized and has faced challenges. However, it has the potential to serve as a model for future EU trade with Asia if comprehensively implemented and utilized.

Abstract 4: Navigating Greenwashing: Critical Perspectives on Sustainability in Global Business and Politics

Author: Dr Anastas Vangeli, School of Economics and Business, University of Ljubljana

This paper argues that a sizeable proportion of the sustainability-focused initiatives in the corporate and geopolitical spheres approximate intentional, unintentional, direct, indirect, or vicarious greenwashing in the absence of a fundamental systemic shift. Engaging with the burgeoning corpus of research on corporate greenwashing, this paper argues that the dilemma of international business sustainability in failing to meet self-imposed sustainability benchmarks reflects comparable patterns in world politics (a less developed field of study for greenwashing), where considerations of security and power frequently supersede the pursuit of the collective welfare. Through the application of a reflexive sociological framework, this article examines the misuse and exploitation of the sustainability narrative in both sectors, frequently by devoting attention to trivial, superficial concerns rather than addressing fundamental issues. The paper argues in favour of a situational analysis approach, placing particular emphasis on the imperatives: 1) distinction between facade and structural greenwashing; 2) appraisal of the agencies of the “greenwasher” and its stakeholders; and 3) charting practical and scholarly agendas in this direction.

Abstract 5: CEE Countries’ Achievements in Implementing the European Green Deal and the Effects on Europe’s Sustainable Transformation

Author: Artë Kastrati, University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”

As a leading global partner for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the European Union has developed a set of policies covering several fields in order for EU member states to address their main challenges regarding sustainable transformation. These policies, among others, include the European Green Deal. This paper aims to analyze the main achievements of the Central and Eastern European Countries in implementing the European Green Deal, as one of the contributing factors towards Europe’s sustainable transformation. The paper represents a literature review on actions undertaken by CEE Countries, mostly focusing on the adaption of policies and legislation. The paper’s main findings suggest that countries such as Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Estonia have undertaken significant steps in achieving European Green Deal goals, while others have much more to do in this direction. The paper also focuses on the effects of these initiatives on fostering the regional development among European countries.

Abstract 6: The evaluation of ESG Doctrine's impact on the chosen economies of Poland and India from the perspective of sustainable development - The Agenda 2030.

Author: Dr Robert Dygas, SGH Warsaw School of Economics

The topic illustrates the impact of the ESG Doctrine on the economies of Poland and India from the perspective of sustainable development – The Agenda 2030. The article aims to show the different impacts of the ESG Doctrine on countries such as Poland and India, which have tightened economic cooperation as part of EU-India cooperation. The choice of countries stems from the author's interest in Asian countries, especially India, as well as his Polish nationality. The main research method is the analysis of available studies on the ESG Doctrine, its origins and the planned geoeconomic impact on the global economy, especially on Poland and India. The article uses qualitative research methods: the method of studying literature and legal acts, the method of analysis and synthesis, the descriptive method, and the deductive inference. The conclusion will be that ESG Doctrine is perceived by Polish investors as a concern and a doctrine resulting from restrictive environmental politics from the European Commission side rather than the business side, and they are not eager to sacrifice their profits to ESG. In the case of India, the recent regulations of SEBI regarding BRSR-ESG reporting may turn out to be unfeasible. An important finding is that the United Nations with BlackRock through open cooperation with the European Commission can influence the effects of implementing the ESG Doctrine worldwide. The value of the article is the analysis, synthesis and systematics of issues related to the effects of the ESG Doctrine on the economies of Poland and India from the perspective of sustainable development which is directed by the Agenda 2030.

Abstract 7: What does the European Green Deal mean for Asia-Pacific?

Author: Dr Sonia Chikh M'hamed, ESSCA, EU*Asia Institute

The European Green Deal announced in December 2019 marks a milestone on the EU's path to becoming the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. Whilst focusing on internal rules and arrangements along with economic incentives for the EU Member States, its impact on relations with the rest of the world is still to be analysed. Despite the EU still being the largest single market, the ambitious goal of the European Green Deal can only be achieved by redefining patterns of economic exchange with other major economies. The present paper explores sustainability approaches and initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region, perception of the EU Green Deal, and potential areas for cooperation with the EU. It is to this end that the study features multi-country case studies, with four countries having been chosen – China, India, Japan, and Singapore. These countries are at different stages of the green transition process and represent more than 50 per cent of the region's population, geographic area, and are the leading economies in the region in terms of growth and many other aspects. The study provides insight into how these countries perceive the EU Green Deal and seeks to map fields of cooperation between these countries and the entire region within the framework of the EU Green Deal. At the same time, it elaborates recommendations on how to drive forces while discussing constraints on implementation of the EU Green Deal and the ability of the EU to sustain its position as a global leader in the green transformation.

Keywords: The European Green Deal (EGD), EU-Asia Relations, Sustainability, International affairs.

Abstract 8: Introduction – Making the European Green Deal work

Dr Kristina Kurze, University of Göttingen & Andrassy University Budapest

The European Green Deal aims to facilitate the transition towards sustainability in the European Union and third countries as well as other world regions. The introduction outlines the importance of understanding actors' action or lack of action towards transition towards sustainability both at home and abroad concerning the implementation of the European Green Deal, thereby analysing drivers and barriers for change. The introduction sets out the analytical framework, defining the logics that actors follow, specifically the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness. This section explains how these logics relate to governance mechanisms and policy instruments. This enables the situation of the framework within the wider European Green Deal and transition towards sustainability before summarising each empirical chapter in the book.

Abstract 9: The keys to the EU's climate neutrality goal

Dr Sonia Chikh M'hamed, ESSCA, EU-Asia Institute

The EU and its member countries have been slow in utilising forest carbon to reduce EU emissions. The European Green Deal aims to change this. As part of its long-term emissions reductions, the EU aims to offset this by creating land-based carbon sinks, especially forest carbon sinks as well as carbon capture and storage. This chapter focuses on the role of forest carbon as part of the EU's climate policies towards achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. It furthermore examines the European Commission's proposed forest strategy and its proposal for a revised LULUCF Regulation. The chapter shows that the logic of appropriateness dominates the European Commission's forest policies. Finally, the chapter makes policy recommendations on how the EU could credibly use long-term carbon sinks to achieve climate neutrality.

Abstract 10: The role of conditionality in the relationship between the EU and the "Visegrád Four" countries

Rafal Fabianowicz, Andrassy University Budapest

Considering that EU-triggered transformation and transition can lead to socio-economic imbalance, it seems topical to analyse the social aspect of the EU's efforts to implement the European Green Deal (EGD) within the Visegrád Four (V4), a region haunted by its post-communist heritage and therefore being challenged by the EGD in its core. The region seems resistant to progress with EU climate policy. This chapter analyses how the EU is pursuing successful implementation of the EGD despite major obstacles arising from the path dependencies of the V4. The first section explains how the V4 countries are interesting cases of transformation-induced change by EU conditionality. The second section analyses the EU's conditionality approach to the V4 countries focusing on a specific policy mechanism: The Just Transition Mechanism. The third section discusses the EU's use of dialogue through the territorial just transition plans and aims to induce change. The fourth section shows how these policy mechanisms represent a logic of consequentialism and/or a logic of appropriateness. Finally, the chapter concludes to what extent the EU has been able to induce a green transformation and how the war in Ukraine highlights existing problems between the EU and the V4.

Abstract 11: Adoption of E-Services in Kosovo's Administrations

Authors: Samira Sahiti, University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", Dr Adel Ben Youssef, Université Côte d'Azur, Dr Mjellma Carabregu-Vokshi, University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina"

The digitalisation of public services has accelerated recently, and advancements in electronic administration, or "e-services", are already a basic feature of contemporary administrative systems. Kosovo, a young and dynamic state, has made strides in adopting e-services innovations to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of public services. While new technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), are emerging and transforming public services, the research has not been sufficiently developed in the case of Kosovo. To fill this research gap, this paper explores how Kosovo's administrative system has embraced e-services innovations, highlighting the opportunities and problems that have arisen along the way. Using a qualitative approach and by interviewing key actors in the digitalization of public services, this study provides an interesting result regarding the factors influencing Kosovo's administrations' acceptance of e-service innovations. Key findings from this study provided a spotlight on the different reasons Kosovo adopted innovations in e-services, such as the aim to enhance public service delivery, cut down on bureaucratic red tape, and promote economic growth. The results show that AI is key to the digitalization of public services. This research contributes to a better understanding of the state of e-services adoption in Kosovo and provides valuable insights for policymakers, government officials, citizens, and international organizations working towards the digitalization of public services. Key words: Kosovo, e-services, digitaliation, artificial intelligence, public sector, adoption.

Abstract 12: Artificial Intelligence Enhancing Sustainable Governance: A Conceptual Framework

Author: Adelina Zeqiri, University Côte d'Azur

The importance of governance grows as societies struggle with complicated issues like resource depletion, climate change, and socio-economic inequality. With its unparalleled powers, artificial intelligence (AI) presents revolutionary opportunities to improve the sustainability and efficacy of governance frameworks. By incorporating AI into governance procedures, public administration could enter a new era of sustainability, efficiency, and responsiveness that would help it meet the urgent challenges of the twenty-first century. This conceptual paper aims to identify potential synergies between the domains of artificial intelligence (AI) and sustainable governance in order to better understand the relationship between these two fields. The study covers four significant topics. First, the fundamental ideas of sustainable governance, with a focus on the necessity of flexible, inclusive, and progressive methods. Secondly, it explores the potential of AI technologies and how they can be applied to governance procedures, covering everything from machine learning to data analytics. Thirdly, the paper tackles possible obstacles and ethical dilemmas related to the integration of AI in governance, stressing the significance of responsible AI application. Fourth, it highlights the necessity of moral standards and legal frameworks while examining the fine line that must be drawn between the development of technology and the upholding of human values. The conceptual framework to be suggested contributes to the current debate about how AI is influencing paradigms for sustainable governance. To lay the groundwork for future empirical studies on the real impact of AI on sustainable governance, this paper attempts to spark additional research and discussion by combining theoretical insights and practical considerations.

Abstract 13: Italian and French contribution to next EU's sustainable transformation phase: a compared perspective

Authors: Giorgio Caridi, E-Campus University, Rome, Mehdi El Azhari, Hyper Crunch, Paris

The digital transformation in public governance marks a significant shift towards incorporating advanced technologies, notably artificial intelligence and e-government, to enhance service delivery and citizen engagement. That evolution is a response to the increasing complexity of governance challenges and the growing demand for more efficient, accessible, and sustainable public services. These advances, although primarily focused on digital transformation and e-governance, indirectly reflect the broader implications of AI in government and culture. In order to study this phenomenon, a compared analysis at a country level has been performed, trying to find out similarities and differences. Italy and France are specific examples to be considered when attempting to gain an understanding of all the developments and innovations currently experienced by those countries. Concerning France, we are witnessing the emergence of a new wave of startups that are leveraging AI to boost productivity of French organizations and increase competitiveness on a global scale. Regarding Italy, the case of a digital transformation in the Italian public services will be presented, showing how digital tools can significantly improve the accessibility and efficiency of public services. Through such a comparative analysis, the paper will shed the light on possible contributions to next EU's sustainable transformation phase.

Keywords — Innovation, Digitization, AI, E-Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability.

Abstract 14: Smart cities as future avenues for sustainability

Authors: Dr Balázs Borsi, ESSCA Budapest, Zsófia Vida, Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Department of Science Policy and Scientometrics

Cities are concentrated spaces of complex economic activities. With globalization, a network of world cities, which serve as influential economic hubs, has emerged. This landscape is expected to change as more people will be concentrated in urban centres in Asia and Africa and the digital transformation gives rise to 'smart city' agendas. In parallel, research suggests that academic knowledge will be at the core of building smart city ecosystems. Our work focuses on the intellectual structure of academic smart city knowledge and the collaboration of researchers. Large-scale science maps and the inter-city collaboration patterns show how cities specialize in smart city topics and how the EU-China relationship is evolving. European cities collaborate mostly within Europe. 69 cities are involved in 75% of the EU-Chinese smart city research collaborations and cities from the UK, the Netherlands and Finland are standing out as pillars of the EU-China collaboration. In the Central and Eastern European region, smart city research cooperation with China is rare. Within the region, Polish and Czech cities are more networked.

Keywords: Smart city, Science mapping, City networks, EU-China relationships

Abstract 15: Evolution of Right-Wing Populism in Poland: From Climate Skepticism to National Unity

Author: Rafal Fabianowicz, Andrassy University Budapest

This article explores the interplay between populism and climate or environmental policies in Poland. It begins by surveying existing research into populism, laying a comprehensive

foundation for the ensuing analysis. The focus then shifts to the evolution of right-wing populism in the context of climate change discourse. Initially, right-wing populists were known for opposing climate protection measures. However, a noticeable shift occurred as they started using climate change as a tool to unify the nation and protect the national "homeland." This transformation prompts a critical question: does it apply to Poland, the EU's largest coal producer, where 85% of electricity is coal-generated? The article scrutinizes the stance of Poland's conservative and far-right populist party, Law and Justice (PiS), which governed from 2015 to 2023. Initially, PiS opposed EU climate protection initiatives, framing the EU as an adversary to ordinary citizens. Given Poland's heavy reliance on coal, the EU's Green Deal, which includes phasing out coal, challenges the government's narrative of national identity and citizen welfare. The pressing question is whether the push for an energy transition forced the government to reevaluate its anti-EU and anti-climate protection rhetoric. Alternatively, did the energy crisis due to the Russian War in Ukraine contribute to a resurgence of the traditional narrative emphasizing energy security? To investigate this rhetorical shift, the article analyzes significant government statements from 2015 to 2023. It examines the evolution of key official pronouncements, shedding light on the complex dynamics in Polish politics and potential changes in climate and environmental policy influenced by populism and energy concerns.

Abstract 16: EU Sustainable Finance Framework

Authors: [Dr Arnold Tóth, Budapest Business School](#), [Dr Botond Géza Kálmán, Budapest Metropolitan University of Applied Sciences](#)

Our study focusses on the sustainable finance framework of the European Union. Given that the concept, target system and practical implementation of sustainability have become one of its top priorities, we consider it important to present in an understandable and simple form what activities and regulations have been created in this regard within the scope of the European Union's common policy. Starting from the concept of sustainability, we analyse its significance. We examine the economic, social, corporate governance and environmental pillars and the European Green Deal based on them as foundations, as well as some prominent elements of sustainable finance: the Taxonomy, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation and the Union's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. We review the relationships and interactions of the above elements. We describe the sustainability objectives of the European Green Deal and the resources related to them, as well as the Sustainable Finance package of the European Commission. We also provide an overview of the regulatory details of the above-mentioned elements of EU law, thereby making the complex and complicated process of regulation transparent.