

**Silvia Garrido López, ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS IN THE EU. COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO MEMBER STATES: GERMANY & SPAIN**

IEPS Master Thesis  
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Supervisor: Prof. Rovná

Reviewer: doc. Běla Plechanová

The thesis is picking up an extremely interesting topic of the global warming and the reaction of the European Union member states in terms of meeting the Kyoto Protocol criteria of reducing the amount of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The author aims to find out what are the reasons why Spain lags behind in implementing the EU policy goals in this area. She chooses to reach her aims by comparing the development of the attitudes of the political actors of the two large EU countries, Spain and Germany, in the long-term perspective through the period, basically, from the WWII. The author takes the post-materialist thesis as a benchmark for assessing the chances for the support of the civil society for the environmentally friendly policies.

In general, the thesis follows the project as was submitted, with minor shift of the focus in the direction to the Spanish case in policy analysis.

The text of the thesis is well structured, presents the topic well, i.e. describes the development of the approaches of the Spanish and German governments towards the environmental issues, including the legislative output. Next, NGOs and media coverage of these issues are dealt with. Based on the presented empirics the author tries to compare the situation in Spain and Germany, related to the concept of post-materialism. She concludes that Spain is lagging behind in meeting the Kyoto Protocol goals, mainly due to the deteriorating economic situation, which inflicts on the way how the Spanish society reflects the environmental issues as one of the post-materialist values.

I have several critical remarks to the text as was submitted, both on the theoretical and methodological level. First, it may be disputed that the environmental questions fall into the category of post-materialist values. Considering that these issues represent the state of the material world the society inhabits, I would not buy this assumption easily. Therefore, I would expect that the author explains why she thinks that it is so and would offer some kind of empirical proof or explanation (e.g. following the macroeconomic indicators in the two countries and the legislative output related to the environmental issues or public opinion polls). As it is, the conclusions of the thesis are resulting from the general assessment of the information about development of the environmental policies of the two countries and therefore are not entirely compelling.

Second, even the section 1.1 is titled Hypothesis, there is no identifiable part of the text that would constitute a hypothesis, i.e. a statement the value of which can be tested in the following sections of the thesis. Neither the sections on methodology and resources come back to the question, i.e. defining how the author is going to proceed – considering the assumptions, theoretical framework and resources available, to support or contest the “hypothesis”.

Third, the author uses a style of references – listing only the internet address without name of the author, title of the work, year and place of publication, which is unacceptable. This can be considered a major violation of the rules of academic writing.

The language of the thesis is acceptable; even there are a number of mistakes, both in spelling and style.

The text meets the criteria for the Master thesis; I recommend it to be defended as such. Suggested grade: good – very good, depending on the performance during the defence of the thesis.

12/01/26