

CHARLES UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
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Department of European Studies

Master's Thesis

2022

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Goal Setting in Climate Policy of the EU

Master's Thesis

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Year of the defence: 2022

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on May 3, 2022

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References

Vinařská, Lucie. "Goal Setting in the Climate Policy of the EU". Master's Thesis. Charles University, 2022.

Length of the thesis: 94 082 characters

Annotation

This master's thesis deals with goal setting in the climate policy of the European Union. Over the recent years, the European Union has been at the forefront of the fight against climate change, mainly due to its ambitious approach to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. In order to lower the emissions that are discharged by its member states, the Union has been using a strategy of setting reduction goals for a bounded time frame. Therefore, it is crucial to question the effectivity of this strategy and focus on ways how to improve the goal-setting process. Because in order to attain these goals, it is necessary not only to successfully implement the goals but, first and foremost, to successfully set the them. This thesis, therefore, focuses on successful goal setting as a governance strategy of the European Union. It elaborates on the academic debate about goal setting in the context of global and European governance. It introduces three streams of existing literature on goal setting. Moreover, the thesis presents an enhanced set of conditions for successful goal setting, which are later used as criteria to analyse three case studies of climate-related headline targets of the European Union. The selected targets cover three distinct decades; therefore, it is also possible to examine whether there has been any progress in goal setting of the abovementioned climate-related goals.

Anotace

Tato magisterská práce se zabývá stanovováním cílů v oblasti klimatické politiky Evropské unie. V posledních letech se Evropská unie postavila do čela boje proti změně klimatu, a to především díky ambicióznímu přístupu ke snižování globálních emisí skleníkových plynů. Za účelem snížení emisí, které vypouštějí její členské státy, používá Unie strategii stanovování redukčních cílů pro určitý ohraničený časový rámec. Proto je nezbytné se zabývat účinností této strategie a zaměřit se na způsoby, jak proces stanovování cílů zlepšit. K dosažení těchto cílů je třeba nejen úspěšně realizovat cíle, ale také tyto cíle úspěšně nastavit. Tato práce se zaměřuje na úspěšné nastavování cílů jako strategii vládnutí Evropské unie. Práce nejprve zpracovává akademickou debatu pokrývající problematiku nastavování cílů v kontextu globálního a evropského vládnutí. V práci jsou následně představeny tři proudy existující literatury o stanovování cílů. Práce dále představuje rozšířený soubor podmínek pro úspěšné nastavování cílů, které jsou později použity jako kritéria pro analýzu tří případových studií pokrývajících hlavní cíle Evropské unie v oblasti klimatu. Tyto cíle pokrývají tři různá desetiletí, a proto také lze zkoumat, zda dochází i k nějakému pokroku v nastavování zmíněných klimatických cílů.

Keywords

Goals, Goal Setting, Governance, Climate Policy, European Union

Klíčová slova

Cíle, nastavování cílů, vládnutí, klimatická politika, Evropská unie

Název práce

Nastavování cílů v klimatické politice EU

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to Mitchell Young, M.A., PhD. for his valuable advice and numerous Zoom calls. I would also like to thank my family for the long-term support during my studies and my partner Adam for the endless enriching conceptual discussions.

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Introduction

The European Union has been dealing with a number of challenges ranging from societal issues across economic and security issues to those issues of enormous proportions such as climate change. It is only natural that the member states of the European Union (EU) have transferred part of their sovereignty to the Union to coordinate their responses to these issues better since they often require collective solutions. In order to make progress towards dealing with those challenges as well as to achieve the desired outcome, the EU sets itself various goals.

On the one hand, setting goals is undoubtedly a necessary precursor to achieving something; on the other, it is necessary to question how effective such goals are and to what extent they are an effective policy tool that can help reach the desired state. The lack of practical implementation is caused by the differing approaches of the individual EU member states as well as differing levels of determination to fulfil the goals set by the EU.¹ It is precisely the implementation stage which is commonly believed to be the leading cause of the inability of the EU to fulfil the goals that were once set effectively. However, what if the problem arises somewhere else and the improper implementation is just a consequence of an incorrectly set goal? Whilst the majority of the existing research concludes that the main obstacle in fulfilling the different goals lies only within an improper implementation, this research is based on the premise that it is crucial to analyse the initial goal-setting phase as well because if the goal is not set correctly, the whole outcome might be jeopardised.

Therefore, this thesis aims to define factors that contribute to successful goal setting, which ensures that the goals can be used as an efficient governance strategy and later test them on several cases of goal setting in the EU climate policy. The thesis also looks at the issue of how the idea of successful goal setting evolves over time, particularly in the field of climate policy of the EU. By focusing on these issues, this thesis attempts to contribute to the overall debate on goals and the currently emerging academic debate on governing by goals, which is precisely what the EU increasingly does. Moreover, this thesis also tries to contribute to the more practical debate, which attempts to define what successful goal setting means and how to set goals correctly.

In order to fulfil its mission, the thesis looks at the process of goal setting in one of the EU's policy fields. As goal setting seems to be the "signature strategy" of the EU's

¹ Ludwig Krämer, *Environmental Law* (London: Thompson Reuters, 2016): viii-ix.

climate policymaking, it was precisely this field of EU action that was chosen for this research. In addition, the EU has placed itself at the forefront of the global fight against climate change, mainly by coming up with ambitious GHG reduction goals. These ambitious headline goals of the climate policy covering three decades are analysed based on the criteria set in the theoretical part of this thesis.

The theoretical part of this thesis begins with the chapter presenting goal setting as a governance strategy in general terms as well as the interconnection of goal setting with the policy process. The second chapter explaining governance theory and why goal setting is examined as a governance strategy is followed by a chapter that presents an approach to defining successful goal setting. This chapter is crucial as it entails the suggested factors contributing to successful goal setting. The following chapter summarises the academic debate on goal setting in the global as well as the EU context and includes a summary of the United Nations (UN) and the EU perspective on successful goal setting. Finally, in the empirical part of the thesis, three GHG reduction goals are compared based on the approach to successful goal setting mentioned above.

The approach of the thesis builds upon various academic publications. The primary publication for this analysis is a book called *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation*, edited by Norichika Kanie and Frank Biermann, mainly the chapter by Oran Young, which provides four sets of criteria for a successful goal setting. In the empirical part, mainly official documents of the EU institutions are analysed. As a support, the thesis uses the information from the official websites of the EU institutions as well. Due to the nature of the field of climate, pieces of scientific reports are also used in the research.

1 Goal Setting as a Governance Strategy

It goes without saying that when the EU sets a goal in any policy area, it intends to fulfil it. When we see that the EU is struggling to fulfil some of the goals it had set earlier, it brings up the question of where lies the problem. How is it possible that a particular goal, set based on a complex goal setting process including impact assessment analysis and involvement of many actors, is later not fulfilled?

The majority of academic literature and the common public agree that the main reason the goals once set are not fulfilled lies in the implementation phase. Especially within the climate policy of the EU, the delivery gap, i.e., the difference between the aims of the given goals and the actual outcomes of individual policies aiming at fulfilling these goals, remains relatively high. Hence, improving implementation and all the implementation-related processes, such as monitoring, might be one way to improve the results. On the other hand, it might also be the right time to go back to the policy-making process and analyse the goal setting phase. This thesis, therefore, suggests taking a closer look at the process of goal setting, as it is the initial phase of the whole policy process. The basic idea that fuels the research of this thesis is that a failure to meet a goal could be, as well, found in the initial goal setting phase.

There is a myriad of ways of approaching goal setting in public administration. One of them is viewing goal setting as part of the policy-making process. According to Harold Lasswell, a pioneer in policy research, policy-making or policy development process is series of steps in a decision-making process.² In fact, there are many conceptual models of policy-making in the academic literature, such as the (1) the institutional model, (2) the rational model, (3) the incremental model, (4) the group model, (5) the elite model, and (6) the process model.³ These models provide an understanding of the relationship between politics and policy and the different involvement of actors. The idea of referring to policy-making as a cycle expresses the continuity of the process, which lies in the constant repetition and interconnection of the stages.⁴

Probably the most commonly used model to analyse policymaking is the *process model*. In other words, this policy life cycle describes different stages that provide

² Michael Howlett and Sarah Giest, “The policy-making process”, in *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*, eds. Eduardo Araral, Scott Fritzen et al. (London: Routledge, 2012), 17.

³ Christoph Kniell and Jale Tosun, “Policy Making”, in *Comparative Politics*, ed. Daniele Caramani (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 495–496, <http://kops.uni-konstanz.de/handle/123456789/3885> (accessed March 20, 2022).

⁴ Howlett and Giest, “The policy-making process”, 17.

an understanding of the policy developing process. This process “involves both a technical and political process of articulating and matching actors’ goals and means”.⁵ Therefore, policies can be described as actions driven by a goal or a set of goals. Following this model, Howlett and Giest described a five-stage model of the policy process, which they define “as a set of interrelated stages (that) provides a general ‘framework’ for understanding the policy development process and points to several of the key temporal activities and relationships that should be examined in furthering the study of the issue”.⁶ The five stages that they identify in their model are (1) agenda setting, (2) policy formulation, (3) decision-making, (4) policy implementation, and (5) policy evaluation.⁷ Keeping in mind the policy cycle as a five-stage model of the policy process by Howlett and Giest, we could include goal setting in the policy formulation and decision-making stages and the agenda-setting stage, where a goal may be proposed as a possible solution.

Nevertheless, when stepping back and isolating goal setting from the policy cycle, it can also be perceived simply as an activity carried out by governments and other political actors. In other words, goal setting can be perceived as a *governance strategy to achieve the desired outcome* (such as eradicating poverty or eliminating greenhouse gasses).

1.1 The Theories of Governance

Perceiving goal setting as a governance strategy is actually an approach used by the majority of academics engaged in the analysis of goals and goal setting (for example, Kanie and Biermann, Fakuda-Parr, Bierman and Kanie and Kim). As stated above, most authors look at goals from a global governance perspective, mainly due to the goal-based approach of the United Nations (UN), which are designed to promote sustainable development.

The concept and theory of governance has a long and wide academic history. It has also been used in many fields; therefore, it is pretty challenging to present a single definition of the term *governance*. Most of the theoretical works on governance usually begin with the distinction between *governance*, *governing* and *government* because, in order to be able to think about the concept of governance in general or, more specifically, the theory of governance, one must be able to distinguish between these terms

⁵ Michael Howlett and Ben Cashore, “Conceptualising Public Policy”, in *Comparative Policy Studies*, ed. Isabelle Engeli and Christine Allison et al., (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 17. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137314154_2 (accessed March 20, 2022).

⁶ Howlett and Giest, “The policy-making process”, 17.

⁷ Ibid.

and avoid to use them interchangeably as it creates comprehension problems as well as the problem of the unclear scope of the thinking. Although the difference between governance and *government*, a formal institution of the state with a monopoly of legitimate and coercive power, is quite clear, the difference between governance and *governing* more blurred. Governing and governance had been used interchangeably at the beginning of the academic interest in governance theory. Later, the need to clarify the difference a bit more occurred. According to Mayntz, *governing* is the process aspect of government.⁸ Bevir defines governance in relation to governing and states that “governance refers to various new theories and practices of governing and the dilemmas to which they give rise”.⁹ The term governance is not a new one. Some even believe that it is as old as civilisation¹⁰ and others highlight the increased interest in the usage of this concept in the last 30 years.¹¹

The concept itself could be traced back to 1989 when it appeared in a World Bank report.¹² The views on the definition of governance vary, but it is important to note that they do not differ considerably. The unifying element is the understanding that the concept describes new modes of governance, which is different to the hierarchical control model; it is a more cooperative model where state and non-state actors meet to design and create policies. The state has become more dependent on non-state actors such as civil society. This shift encompasses the change in the number of actors involved in the process and the different levels of governance in the form of decentralisation. There are local, regional, national and international governance mechanisms. This shows more government openness to external influences, including those stemming from international cooperation and relations with other states and supranational entities. Most academic literature describes this shift in the meaning of governance in government studies. For example,

⁸ Renate Mayntz, “New Challenges to Governance Theory”, *Jean Monnet Chair Papers* 50 (1998): 7 https://scholar.google.cz/scholar_url?url=https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/23653/1998_EUI%2520WP_JeanMonnet_050.pdf%3Fsequence%3D1&hl=cs&sa=X&ei=6oBWYqeiLMLZmQHc1ovQAg&scisig=AAGBfm1tVapj2AgI1wilw4klt0_sulTF9Q&oi=scholar (accessed March 26, 2022).

⁹ Mark Bevir, “Governance as Theory, Practice, and Dilemma”, in *The SAGE Handbook of Governance*, ed. Mark Bevir (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2011), 1, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446200964.n1> (accessed April 8, 2022).

¹⁰ Mohammed Asaduzzaman and Petri Virtanen, “Governance Theories and Models”, in *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance*, ed. Ali Farazmand (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 1, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_2612-1 (accessed April 5, 2022).

¹¹ Bevir, “Governance as Theory, Practice, and Dilemma”, 15.

¹² Mayntz, “New Challenges to Governance Theory”, 7.

Bevir concludes that “at the most general level, governance refers to theories and issues of social coordination and the nature of all patterns of rule”.¹³

The abovementioned change would not have happened without the processes of Europeanisation and globalisation. Especially the European integration process brought an entirely new perspective on governance and has established a completely novel transnational governance structure.¹⁴ Mayntz argues that European integration has two consequences for governance theory. On the one hand, it “raises new problems of governance for the nation state”, and on the other, “it requires the extension of governance theory to a supra-national level”.¹⁵ In addition to that, the EU governance as a concept started to evolve. Kochler-Koch and Rittberger call this phenomenon the *governance turn* in EU studies as the diverse EU policies and the EU system became the centre of analysis.¹⁶ Governments of the member states of the EU lost some control over their policies as the EU's powers are constantly increased and therefore influence more and more policy fields previously reserved for the national governments.

With the rise of academic interest in the concept and theory of governance, new theories have been emerging around the concept of governance. The aim of presenting some of the theories or modes of governance is to point out their similarity and link them to the “governing through goals” perspective. For example, to name just a few, the theory of *good governance* gained some significant attention in the international context. Another example is the concept of *collaborative governance*, which highlights the multiplicity of stakeholders who participate in open platforms and fora to produce consensus-oriented decision-making.¹⁷ The *global governance theory* is linked mainly to the governance of the UN as a supra-national actor producing non-legally binding norms. However, as presented by Sabel and Zeitlin, the concept of experimentalist governance claims the “recursive process of provisional goal setting and revision based on learning from the comparison of alternative approaches to advancing them in different contexts”.¹⁸ The term *experimentalist* is used here in the philosophical sense in line with the American

¹³ Bevir, “Governance as Theory, Practice, and Dilemma”, 1.

¹⁴ Mayntz, “New Challenges to Governance Theory”, 14.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Beate Kochler-Koch and Berthold Rittberger, “Review Article: The ‘Governance’ Turn in EU Studies”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44, Annual Review (2006): 27, https://ceses.cuni.cz/CESES-136-version1-4C_Governance_turn_EU_kohler_rittberger_2006.pdf (accessed April 1, 2022).

¹⁷ Chris Ansell and Alison Gash, “Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice”, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18, no. 4 (October 17 2007): 543, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032> (accessed April 1, 2022).

¹⁸ Charles F. Sabel and Jonathan Zeitlin, “Experimentalist Governance”, in *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, ed. David-Levi Faur (Oxford: The Oxford University Press, 2011): 23.

pragmatists who systematically doubt their own conclusions, treat their solutions as open-ended and produce adjustments to those conclusions. The same thought process should be, as the authors note, applied to the goals, which should, therefore, be constantly re-defined and adjusted.

The most prominent propositions of the general theory of governance were presented by Stocker in 1998. These propositions are:

- (1) Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that occupy government bodies and beyond the government (meaning a private sector as well).
- (2) Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues.
- (3) Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective actions.
- (4) Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks of actors.
- (5) Governance recognises the capacity to get things done, which does not rest within the power of the government to command or use its authority.¹⁹

Stocker sees the government capable of using new tools and techniques to “steer and guide”.²⁰ Goals might be viewed as one of these new tools and techniques as they have proven more effective. Kanie et al. emphasise that the theory of “governance through goals” (a term that has been established and will be further described in the following sections), in contrast to “governance through rules”, is capable of involving multiple actors who cooperate to identify common challenges and set goals to solve the issues of common interest.²¹ Therefore, governments are shifting from the rule-based approach to tackling issues involving public goods to the usage of goals, i.e., goal-based governance.

The theory of “governance through goals” is further elaborated on in a book called *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation*, edited by Norichika Kanie and Frank Biermann. This book is the first comprehensive analysis of global governing through goals.²² The publication, of course, provides a definition of goal setting. According to the chapter written by Young, goal setting “seeks to steer behaviour by (i) establishing priorities to be used in allocating both attention

¹⁹ Gerry Stoker, “Governance as Theory: Five Propositions”, *International Social Science Journal* 68, no. 227–228 (March 2018): 16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12189> (accessed March 25, 2022).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Norichika Kanie et al., “Rules to Goals: Emergence of New Governance Strategies for Sustainable Development”, *Sustainability Science* 14, no. 6 (November 2019): 1745, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00729-1> (accessed February 5, 2022).

²² Norichika Kanie and Frank Biermann eds., *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation* (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2017), 315.

and scarce resources among competing objectives, (ii) galvanising the efforts of those assigned to work toward attaining the goals, (iii) identifying targets and providing yardsticks or benchmarks to be used in tracking progress toward achieving goals, and (iv) combating the tendency for short-term desires and impulses to distract the attention or resources of those assigned to the work of goal attainment.”²³ However, when defining goal setting as a governance strategy, Young uses rulemaking as a term with a different meaning to point out slight nuances between these two. In opposition to goal setting, he states that rulemaking “seeks to guide the behaviour of key actors by articulating rules (and associated regulations) and devising compliance mechanisms whose purpose is to introduce actors to adjust behaviour accordingly.”²⁴

It is believed the best definition of a rule can still be found in the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946, according to which a “[r]ule means the whole or part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe rule or policy.”²⁵ In their book called *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policies*, Kerwin and Furlong highlight the definition of Colin Diver and Oliver Wendell Holmes: “Rule is the skin of a living policy [...] it hardens an inchoate normative judgement into the frozen form of words. [...] Its issuance marks the transformation of policy from the private wish to public expectation. [...] The framing of a rule is the climactic act of the policymaking process”.²⁶ According to Young, rulemaking is more prescriptive, whereas goal setting articulates aspirations and directs attention to procedures generating enthusiasm and dedication.²⁷ Young also highlights an essential feature of goal setting as a governance strategy: the capacity to set well-defined priorities and formulate them into explicit goals.²⁸ The idea of goal setting is to prioritise in order to allocate scarce resources to eliminate a particular concern.

1.2 Defining “Successful” Goal Setting

Setting a goal can be an effective tool for achieving the desired outcome. However, there is a need to set the goal in a way that serves the purpose. Therefore, it is essential to distinguish between a successful goal and successful goal setting. A successful goal

²³ Oran R. Young, "Conceptualisation: Goal Setting as a Strategy for Earth System Governance" in *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation*, Norichika Kanie and Frank Biermann eds., (Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2017), 52.

²⁴ Kanie and Biermann, *Governing through Goals*, 52–53.

²⁵ *Administrative Procedure Act*, 5 U.S.C. §551 (1946).

²⁶ Cornelius M. Kerwin and Scott R. Furlong, *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy* (California: CQ Press, 2018): 4.

²⁷ Young, "Conceptualisation: Goal Setting as a Strategy for Earth System Governance", 54.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 53.

is a goal which was implemented and attained—successful goal setting is that the goal is set. Then the question is how to ensure successful goal setting. The abovementioned idea that rather than blaming the implementation right away, it might be beneficial to look at the goal setting phase contributed to formulating the research question. Bearing this in mind, this thesis aims to answer the following research question: *Which factors contribute to successful goal setting?* This research question was formulated following the increasing interest of the academic sphere in the phenomenon of governing by goals which can be observed not only in the case of the EU but also in the international arena, as demonstrated in the literature in the upcoming chapters. Being aware that the term “successful” is hard to define objectively, this thesis believes that a successful goal setting is simply that the goal is set. In order to formulate the criteria, which contribute to successful goal setting, the thesis attempts to do so by reviewing the literature available on goal setting as a governance strategy. After defining the criteria of successful goal setting based on the literature, three different cases of climate goals are analysed. Moreover, the following analysis attempts to answer the following question: *How does the idea of a successful goal setting differs from the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, in particular in climate policy, and does these ideas evolve over time?*

The term “successful” is always tricky because its meaning is relative and, therefore, it needs to be further explained. Nevertheless, Young tried to define a successful goal setting in one of the first chapters of the abovementioned book called *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation*, edited by Norichika Kanie and Frank Biermann, which has proven of utmost importance for the approach of this thesis. This subchapter called *Determinants of the Success of Goal Setting* includes four important sets of conditions for a successful goal setting: (a) nature of the problem, (b) character of the actors, (c) the principal features of the setting and (d) mobilisation of support in specific cases.²⁹ With a few alterations and additions by the author, these criteria are used as a basis for the analysis of goal setting. Furthermore, four additional sets of conditions, which are (e) funding, (f) scientific knowledge, (g) origin of the goal, (h) translation of goals, were added by the author of this thesis to adapt the original framework to the goal setting in the EU’s environment as the original criteria were set for the process of goal setting on the international level.

²⁹ Young, “Conceptualisation: Goal Setting as a Strategy for Earth System Governance”, 57–60.

This thesis, therefore, works with an adapted version of the original sets of conditions as designed by Young in the abovementioned chapter as four additional criteria were included to better reflect the goal setting procedures within the EU. The complete set of criteria used for the research in this thesis are as follows:

(a) *Nature of the problem* – Since all the issues or concerns are different, it is essential to reflect on whether a particular issue or concern should or should not be addressed by setting a goal. It depends on the nature of the problem. Young uses time as a determinant. If the problem is finite, setting a goal may solve the problem once and for all. If the problem is continuous, setting a goal may be less effective because it might be challenging to assess the results correctly. This is also related to the complexity of a problem. If the problem is multifaceted with linkages to other problems, it requires meticulous synergies with other problems and/or other goals.

(b) *The character of the actors* – According to Young, “achieving success is likely to be determined by the extent to which the behaviour of the actors reflects the logic of consequences versus the logic of appropriateness”.³⁰ He claims that where the logic of consequences prevails, in order to be successful, there is a need to appeal to actors based on calculations of costs and benefits. On the contrary, where the logic of appropriateness prevails, tying goals to norms and principles can be effective. In the sense of international goal setting, Young also mentions the problem of the two-level game, where an international goal may be set, but then there is a whole different world of domestic politics. In addition, there is a problem with administration change that can prevent the goal from fulfilling. However, this can easily be transferred to the EU level as well. Goal setting may also work better when an objective is integrated into a social narrative “so that it becomes part of how actors perceive their identity and organise their thinking about governance”.³¹

(c) *Features of the setting* – This set of conditions encompasses features of the social setting, including the number of actors involved and their relationships and the prospect of technological innovation. Having a large number of actors involved in anything always brings many different approaches, which in the end makes it harder to reach a unanimous and unambiguous solution. Moreover, the relationship between actors is vital to attaining a common goal. When there is a history of trust between the actors, it is always a more promising ground for agreeing on a common goal rather than any antipathy. Technological

³⁰ Young, “Conceptualisation: Goal Setting as a Strategy for Earth System Governance”, 57–60.

³¹ Ibid.

innovations are, to some extent, linked to the (f) scientific knowledge. Technological innovations largely contribute towards goal attainment, especially in the field of climate, as it requires technological solutions and knowledge and data.

(d) *Mobilisation of support* – Mobilisation of support may prove helpful when support from other actors is necessary to attain a goal. In order to get the necessary support, it is crucial to build coalitions, emphasise the benefits of joining a particular coalition, and encourage others to join. Of course, some kind of leadership within these activities is needed. Ideally, an actor who can attract a broader audience and clearly and comprehensibly explain the abovementioned benefits of supporting a particular goal. Nevertheless, one has to bear in mind that gathering support for a specific option is a process that might need concentrated effort over time.

(e) *Funding* – Due to the specific character of the EU in contrast with international organisations such as the UN, it is always necessary to have financial support for each proposal. Having a specific budget prepared exclusively for attaining a goal is better than not having a specific budget allocation. Specific money dedicated to a goal not only facilitates a higher chance of fulfilment of the goal but also represents a firmer commitment that can be used for the mobilisation of support and for influencing other actors to work towards the fulfilment of the given goal.

(f) *Scientific knowledge* – Due to the fact that climate, as well as environmental policies, are based on science and scientific knowledge, it is also important to take the scientific knowledge into account when setting a goal as part of a governing strategy. The EU, especially the European Commission, always ensures the preparation of an impact assessment with relevant data. Regarding climate, it is of utmost importance to base the policy on sound scientific knowledge as assessing the causes and consequences of climate change is very technical. Science is able to make long-term projections of the impacts of human activities that may seem harmless now but which can prove to be harmful in the long run. Each EU proposal is usually accompanied by the scientific perception in the form of an impact assessment or a statement of the scientific community, be it inside or outside of the EU legislative process. The possible pitfall may be the fragmentation of opinions within the scientific community. It is, therefore, relevant to focus on the divergence of the (numerical) goal from the suggestion of scientists and to which extent the science enters into the process of goal setting.

(g) *Origin of the goal* – It should be specified where the goals come from and what was the impetus for their establishment. There might be goals that come from outside

the EU – the international level or other sources, or from the inside of the EU. From the motivational point of view, it is always better when the initiative comes from within than when it is prescribed by an external actor.

(h) *Translation of the goal* – The EU embeds the goals to its documents with a legally binding or non-legally binding nature. These might be legislative acts, strategies and other kinds of documents. Therefore, the more the goal is rooted in various documents, the more likely it serves the purpose. It is crucial to connect the goals to the existing ones and establish clear and specific ties with the relevant documents and legislation.

The research of this thesis is qualitative, mainly because of its complex nature. Since the thesis aims to provide an in-depth insight into the goal setting within the EU's climate policy, qualitative research seems to be a suitable match for this purpose. According to Bryman, qualitative research is “a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data”.³² The thesis does not present numerical outcomes but instead analyses the goal setting based on specific criteria. Qualitative research “seeks an understanding of behaviour, values, beliefs, and so on in terms of the context in which the research is conducted”.³³ On the other hand, qualitative analysis is sometimes criticised for being too subjective. The researcher has his own views regarding what is important and what is not.³⁴ In order to minimise the impact of the subjective perspective of the researcher, the research method will be designed in such a way that there will be a clear pattern of interpretation applied to the analysed data.

Qualitative analysis offers various research methods, including case study, interpretative case study, comparative case study, qualitative comparative analysis, discursive analysis or content analysis. In this thesis, the comparative case study approach is used to analyse the three different goals in terms of how they were set. Using a comparative case study enables the analysis of two or more cases and carrying out an across-case analysis. The comparative case study approach belongs among explanatory research methods and can, therefore, be combined with process-tracing case studies.³⁵ The added value of a comparative case study lies in the higher validity rate.

This comparative case study is conducted in the field of climate policy as it has been a prominent field of global as well as the EU's goal setting. Not only has climate policy

³² Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 380.

³³ *Ibid.*, 408.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 405.

³⁵ Vít Beneš and Petr Drulák eds., *Metodologie výzkumu politiky* (Prague: Nakladatelství Slon, 2019), 125.

become a well-established field within the global community, but the overall EU's engagement. Although it is still a relatively young policy, it has seen tremendous expansion over recent years. Climate policy is a cross-cutting policy that is usually classified as part of the environmental policy, but it interferes with most EU policies. One way of looking at climate policy development in the EU is through the headline climate goals. These climate goals, when set, pave the way for the policy for the upcoming period of time. In other words, such goals basically determine future policy actions, usually for a decade or even more.

In the case of the climate policy of the EU, it is primarily the need to achieve zero carbon emissions by the year 2050. Since the EU continues to produce further goals in this regard, such as numerical targets for emissions until 2030, the effectiveness of goal setting should be questioned. In order to answer the research question, the thesis uses numerical goals, which are believed to be the foundation of success in the area of the climate policy of the EU. These goals are very well-known goals which now constitute the backbone of EU climate policy evolution. These goals were also chosen to represent a development in EU climate policy in order to answer the main research question mentioned above.

2 Debating the Role of Goal Setting

There are multiple definitions of goal setting across various fields. Due to its multidimensional character, debate on goal setting can be found in different areas, from education and psychology to sports and business. However, no matter the field, any debate on goals builds upon the goal setting theory of Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham (1990). This theory was formulated based on empirical research and is now one of the most prominent theories in organisational psychology. Locke's and Latham's work defines a *goal* as “an object or aim that an individual strives to attain” and is set to increase performance.³⁶

However, there are a few references in other (older) literature on goal setting from different fields relevant to governance. For example, according to Thompson and McEwen, goal setting is related to the question of what the society (or its parts) desires or what it can be convinced to support.³⁷ In 2006, Locke and Latham extended their theory, emphasising four key moderators of goal setting. These are (1) *feedback* which is needed in order to track the progress, (2) *commitment* to the goal enhanced by self-efficacy and perceiving the goal as necessary, (3) *task complexity* to the extent that knowledge is harder to acquire on complex tasks, and (4) *situational constraints*.³⁸ This general debate on goal setting originally comes from the workplace environment. However, it soon spilt over to other areas such as governance. The development of the academic literature on goal setting has occurred mainly in connection with the publication of Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations.

It seems that there are three main streams of literature on goal setting. No surprise that the first and richest stream is the academic stream; there are two institutional streams – the EU stream and the UN stream. The following chapters include these three streams; however, from organisational reasons and following the governance literature, these streams are summarised in global governance and European governance subchapters.

³⁶ Gary P. Latham, Deshani B. Ganegoda, and Edwin A. Locke, “A State Theory, but Related to Traits”, in *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Individual Differences*, Thomas Chamorro-Premuzic, Sophie von Stumm and Adrian Furnham, eds. (Orlando: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 579.

³⁷ James D. Thompson and William J. McEwen, “Organizational Goals and Environment: Goal-Setting as an Interaction Process”, *American Sociological Review* 23, no. 1 (February 1958): 24, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2088620> (accessed May 10, 2021).

³⁸ Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Latham, “New Directions in Goal-Setting Theory”, *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 15, no. 5 (October 2006): 267, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.2006.00449.x> (accessed May 12, 2021).

2.1 Goal Setting in Global Governance

There is virtually no agreement on how old the concept of goal setting in global governance is. In 2017, two articles with different views were published. While Piselli and Pavoni state that it is not a new concept³⁹, Biermann, Kanie and Kim, on the other hand, see goal setting as a novel global governance strategy.⁴⁰ Their claim is supported by Fukuda-Parr, who notes that little is known about goals as a policy tool, especially their potential, limitations and implications.⁴¹ Nevertheless, it seems that the increased interest in goal setting as a governance strategy has been a matter of debate in the last 20 years.

The goal-based approach in global governance was first popularised by the United Nations (UN) through its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and now constitutes a core of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁴² Therefore, it is no surprise that the majority of academic work on goal setting as a governance or policy tool focuses on global goals set by the UN. These goals serve as an excellent example of an ambitious worldwide effort to promote sustainable development and, among others, reduce greenhouse gas emissions.⁴³

Even though global goals might seem to be a good tool of global governance policy, there is a widespread debate trying to assess the actual effectiveness of the UN goals. Since 2015, when the new SDGs were launched, they have generated controversy over their formulation (i.e., goal setting) and their implementation (including the monitoring and evaluation processes).⁴⁴ Many experts felt inspired to compare and evaluate both sets of the abovementioned UN goals and attempted to predict the future success or failure of the current SDGs. Based on this comparison, coordination is among the most accented features when setting a goal. Biddle and Koontz tried to link goal setting to collaborative governance, stating that setting specific goals “can lead to effective solutions through increasing partnerships’ capacity” to reach the desired outcomes. They also confirmed that collaborative processes have a measurable, beneficial effect on environmental outcomes,

³⁹ Dario Piselli and Riccardo Pavoni, Review of *Governing through Goals: Sustainable Development Goals as Governance Innovation*, Norichika Kanie, and Frank Biermann, eds., *Transnational Environmental Law* 6, no. 3 (November 2017): 551, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2047102517000310> (accessed May 9, 2021).

⁴⁰ Frank Biermann, Norichika Kanie, and Rakhyun E. Kim, “Global Governance by Goal-Setting: The Novel Approach of the UN Sustainable Development Goals”, *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 26–27 (June 2017): 27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2017.01.010> (accessed May 10, 2021).

⁴¹ Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, “From the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: Shifts in Purpose, Concept, and Politics of Global Goal Setting for Development”, *Gender & Development* 24, no. 1 (January 2 2016): 29, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2016.1145895> (accessed May 11, 2021).

⁴² Piselli and Pavoni, Review of *Governing through Goals*, 551.

⁴³ Biermann, Kanie, and Kim, “Global Governance by Goal-Setting”, 26.

⁴⁴ Fukuda-Parr, “From the MDGs to the SDGs”, 28.

specifically.⁴⁵ Piselli and Pavoni stress “the importance of coordination [...] and other institutional linkages in reducing fragmentation and promoting synergies between existing multilateral agreements”.⁴⁶

When comparing the MDGs and the SDGs, Fukuda-Parr highlights the difference between MDGs drafted by the office apparatus of the UN and SDGs built on the consensus of states, leading to increased coordination.⁴⁷ The new SDGs were agreed upon by around 70 governments and members of civil society.⁴⁸ Better coordination between actors in goal setting should also lead to better coherence of policies, programmes and actions.⁴⁹ On the other hand, according to Biermann, Kanie and Kim, weak global institutional arrangements that are not based on coordination between states do not necessarily imply a low likelihood of successfully implementing the goals. Moreover, they highlight the leadership of individual actors in some cases.⁵⁰

While Biermann, Kanie and Kim predict that success will depend on institutionalised review mechanisms and clear, quantifiable benchmarks,⁵¹ Fukuda-Parr is more in favour of a qualitative and complex approach. She claims that the numbers in the UN goals produced multiple indirect and often unintended consequences, adding that quantitative targets are helpful but must serve broader development objectives.⁵² At the centre of these criticisms, there is also the simplicity of MDGs. Fukuda-Parr notes that simplification of targets leads to misinterpretation.⁵³

While it is clear that MDGs were a success because of the recurrence of goal setting through SDGs, a few controversies occurred in the academic discussion mentioned above. For example, Fukuda-Parr, the most engaged author, on the one hand, positively evaluates the existence of SDGs. However, on the other hand, goal setting for her is a flawed methodology for elaborating an international agenda. Fukuda-Parr further adds that

⁴⁵ Jennifer C. Biddle and Tomas M. Koontz, “Goal Specificity: A Proxy Measure for Improvements in Environmental Outcomes in Collaborative Governance”, *Journal of Environmental Management* 145 (December 2014): 268, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2014.06.029> (accessed May 10, 2021).

⁴⁶ Piselli and Pavoni, Review of *Governing through Goals*, 553.

⁴⁷ Fukuda-Parr, “From the MDGs to the SDGs”, 29.

⁴⁸ Frank Biermann, Norichika Kanie, and Rakhyun E Kim, “Global Governance by Goal-Setting: The Novel Approach of the UN Sustainable Development Goals”, *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 26–27 (June 2017): 27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2017.01.010> (accessed April 3, 2022).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Biermann, Kanie, and Kim, “Global Governance by Goal-Setting”, 28.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Alicia Ely Yamin, and Joshua Greenstein, “The Power of Numbers: A Critical Review of Millennium Development Goal Targets for Human Development and Human Rights”, *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 15, no. 2–3 (July 3 2014): 116, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2013.864622> (accessed May 10, 2021).

⁵³ Fukuda-Parr, “From the MDGs to the SDGs”, 28.

“a simple list of numerical targets cannot articulate an agenda for a complex process, such as sustainable [...] development”.⁵⁴

The academic stream here, therefore, suggests that coordination leads to better coherence. It seems very important to set the goals systematically in the context of and in connection with the other goals. This leads to another essential feature of goals, which is their interconnectivity. When the goals are set with regard to other goals, they become able to cover the complex issues in their width.

The UN has a long history of setting goals. However, its elaboration on why goals oppose other governing strategies is almost non-existent. According to the UN, the goals and targets stimulate action in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet.⁵⁵ In September 2000, world leaders adopted a United Nations Millennium Development Declaration mainly to reduce extreme poverty. According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, this declaration included goals, which were set because they could be effectively measured, and therefore better monitored. He followed: “The goals are ambitious but feasible and, together with the comprehensive United Nations development agenda, set the course for the world’s efforts to alleviate extreme poverty by 2015.”⁵⁶ A concrete action plan was developed five years later, in 2005.

Following the MDGs, the UN adopted a set of 17 SDGs defined by 169 targets and 232 indicators, which should be achieved by 2030. The UN openly speaks about the ambitiousness of the goals, which is also one of the most criticised features of the global goals, as mentioned above. However, the UN's reasoning is hidden in the slogan: “The global goals are ambitious, but with great ambition, we can achieve great things!”⁵⁷ The UN also frames the SDGs as a World’s To-do List as the world has some big problems.⁵⁸ The SDGs are at the centre of the Agenda 2030, a UN plan for sustainable development until 2030. According to the preamble, the goals result from intensive public consultations, intensive engagement with civil society and other stakeholders, who pay particular attention to the poorest and the most vulnerable. However, these goals were drafted by the General Assembly Open Working Group

⁵⁴ Fukuda-Parr, Yamin, and Greenstein, “The Power of Numbers”, 116.

⁵⁵ “Agenda 2030”, United Nations <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁵⁶ “Millennium Development Goals”, United Nations <https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁵⁷ “The Global Goals”, The Global Goals by the United Nations <https://www.globalgoals.org> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁵⁸ “World's To-Do List”, United Nations, <https://worldstodolist.org> (accessed April 2, 2022).

on Sustainable Development Goals, which was established in 2013.⁵⁹ The Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, in his synthesis report on the work of the Working Group, highlighted that the “The goals should be ‘focused and concise’ to boost global awareness and country-level implementation, communicating clearly Member States’ ambition and vision”.⁶⁰ Furthermore, since the goals are expressed numerically, it is possible to track them and hold people accountable (for example, governments of countries).⁶¹ Overall, the UN emphasises the involvement of multiple different actors and the interconnection of the goals.

2.2 Goal Setting in European Governance

Since the 1980s, the EU has become a world leader “in developing ambitious targets and policies”.⁶² Especially in the field of climate policy, one might assess that goal setting is what creates the central part of this specific policy field. However, although the EU seems to be very keen on governing by goals, there is a rather fragmented debate about goal setting.⁶³ at the EU level.

The typical approach has always been that the EU's goals are too ambitious and, therefore, ineffective.⁶⁴ This scepticism may stem from the very nature of climate policy, which is, on the one hand, climate-friendly (i.e., tries to fight against climate change), but at the same time, does not address the primary causes of the problem.⁶⁵ Kulesa explains two significant arguments: (1) reducing emissions is cheaper in developing countries than in the EU, and (2) the EU emits less than 12% of global greenhouse

⁵⁹ “Open Working Group on Sustainable Development”, Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform by the United Nations, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/owg.html> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁶⁰ “Synthesis Report”, United Nations <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/synthesis-report.html> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁶¹ “SDG Tracker”, United Nations <https://sdg-tracker.org> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁶² Andrew Jordan et al., “Environmental Policy: Governing by Multiple Policy Instruments?”, in *Constructing a Policy State? Policy Dynamics in the EU*, Jeremy Richardson, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 109, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199604104.003.0006> (accessed June 10, 2021).

⁶³ *Goal setting and target setting are both of the same meaning and are used according to usage by the authors of the texts.*

⁶⁴ *See for example:* Joyette Gupta and Lasse Ringius, „The EU's Climate Leadership: Reconciling Ambition and Reality“, *International Environmental Agreements* 1 (2001): 281, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1010185407521> (accessed April 2, 2022).

⁶⁵ Hårvard Haarstad, “Do Climate Targets Matter? The Accountability of Target-setting in Urban Climate and Energy Policy”, in *Enabling Sustainable Energy Transitions*, Siddharth Sareen, ed. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020): 66.

gas emissions.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Jordan emphasises that the EU has adopted ambitious goals but uses constrained policy instruments.⁶⁷

In order to understand and govern nature, we are using scientific knowledge, for which the metrics play a central role. According to Haarstad, metrics are used to “make the unknown *knowable* and, thereby, *governable*”.⁶⁸ Veum and Bauknecht stress the distinction between policy instruments and goals as both can be placed at the EU’s or member state’s level but lead to different governance frameworks.⁶⁹ Using Howlett’s definition, Jordan claims that “policy goals without the enabling policy instruments remain somewhat of a dead letter”⁷⁰, bearing in mind that “policy instruments are normally thought of as the myriad techniques at the disposal of governments to implement their policy objectives”.⁷¹ Jordan then presents a typology of policy instruments, highlighting regulatory instruments as those most commonly used in the field of environmental policy. He also states that these regulatory instruments “constitute a prescriptive form of governing, through which targets are established and then implemented by public and private actors”.⁷²

The *open method of coordination* (OMC) is one of these regulatory instruments. A widely discussed EU policy-making process, OMC is still considered a relatively new tool of EU governance.⁷³ It is due to features such as the approach to problem solving, participation and the ways in which knowledge and learning are created and diffused across countries.⁷⁴ OMC is usually described as a soft law measure. Regent, however, argues that it differs from traditional soft law measures as “it is a process flexible enough

⁶⁶ Margareta Elisabeth Kulesa et al., “Setting efficient EU climate policy targets: mission possible?”, *Intereconomics* 42, no. 2 (2007): 67, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10272-007-0211-1> (accessed May 20, 2021).

⁶⁷ Andrew Jordan et al., “Understanding the Paradoxes of Multi-level Governing: Climate Change Policy in the European Union”, *Global Environmental Politics* 12, no. 2 (May 2012): 109, https://doi.org/10.1162/GLEP_a_00108 (accessed June 10, 2021).

⁶⁸ Haarstad, “Do Climate Targets Matter?”, 66.

⁶⁹ Karina Veum and Dierk Bauknecht, “How to reach the EU renewables target by 2030? An analysis of the governance framework”, *Energy Policy* 127 (2019): 300, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2018.12.013> (accessed May 20, 2021).

⁷⁰ Andrew Jordan et al., “Environmental Policy: Governing by Multiple Policy Instruments?” in: *Constructing a Policy State? Policy Dynamics in the EU*, Jeremy Richardson, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 115.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Alvydas Baležentis, Tomas Baležentis, and Willem K. M. Brauers, “Implementation of the Strategy Europe 2020 by the Multi-objective Evaluation Method Multimoora”, *Ekonomie*, no. 2 (2011): 9, <http://www.ekonomie-management.cz/en/archiv/search/detail/739-implementation-of-the-strategy-europe-2020-by-the-multi-objective-evaluation-method-multimoora/> (accessed May 20, 2021).; Claudio M. Radaelli, *The Open Method of Coordination a New Governance Architecture for the European Union?* (Stockholm: SIEPS, 2003), 9.

⁷⁴ Radaelli, *The Open Method of Coordination*, 9.

to be adapted to a complex reality, whilst at the same time providing a follow-up system that prevents it from being a fully-open means of intervention”.⁷⁵ The academic debate about OMC usually revolves around its usefulness and how it can be improved. It is often criticised that the OMC lacks sanction potential.⁷⁶ Radaelli, on the other hand, notes that the lack of sanction potential “is not a problem in governance architecture based on incentives for learning”.⁷⁷ When analysing the usefulness of the OMC, Dehousse emphasises “developing common interpretations of situations, common values and techniques through an iterative learning process”.⁷⁸ She claims that this process is usually hidden by the adoption of common rules, which are a result of an agreement of national experts.⁷⁹

The general EU targets have to be broken down into national targets as the EU has limited legislative and enforcement authority.⁸⁰ OMC aims at achieving greater convergence of member states’ individual efforts to ensure the fulfilment of the overall EU goals.⁸¹ De la Porte believes this method is attractive because the EU is increasingly differentiated.⁸² Instead of a common framework, the member states can pledge their contributions towards the common EU goals, a process called effort-sharing. Furthermore, these targets are broken into sector-specific targets, which, as Kulesa claims, are more tangible than overall targets and more precise and, therefore, can be better monitored.⁸³

Although this method has been in place since the 1990s, it was officially introduced during the Lisbon Summit in 2000, where the European Council adopted the Lisbon Strategy. According to de la Porte, this strategy represents the “key milestone, where the Union set itself an ambitious goal to enhance its economic performance and social cohesion” through various instruments, including the abovementioned OMC.⁸⁴ Baležentis,

⁷⁵ Sabrina Regent, “The Open Method of Coordination: A New Supranational Form of Governance?”, *European Law Journal* 9, no. 2 (April 2003): 214, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0386.00175> (accessed May 20, 2021).

⁷⁶ Veum and Bauknecht, “How to reach the EU renewables target by 2030?”, 300.;

Regent, “The Open Method of Coordination”, 214.; Radaelli, *The Open Method of Coordination*, 15.

⁷⁷ Radaelli, *The Open Method of Coordination*, 9.

⁷⁸ Renaud Dehousse, “The Open Method of Coordination: A New Policy Paradigm?”, *Les cahiers européens de Sciences Po* n°03/2003 (2003): 12–13, https://www.sciencespo.fr/centre-etudes-europeennes/sites/sciencespo.fr/centre-etudes-europeennes/files/n3_2003_final.pdf (accessed May 25, 2021).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Kulesa et al., “Setting efficient EU climate policy targets: mission possible?”, 68.

⁸¹ Radaelli, *The Open Method of Coordination*, 15.

⁸² Caroline de la Porte, “Is the Open Method of Coordination Appropriate for Organising Activities at European Level in Sensitive Policy Areas?”, *European Law Journal* 8, no. 1 (March 2002): 39, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0386.00141> (accessed May 26, 2021).

⁸³ Kulesa et al., “Setting efficient EU climate policy targets: mission possible?”, 68.

⁸⁴ Porte, “Is the Open Method of Coordination Appropriate for Organising Activities at European Level in Sensitive Policy Areas?”, 39.

along with many others, believes that this strategy was not successful as it was “based on rather wishful thinking and the unexpected 2007–2009 severe depression”.⁸⁵ And therefore, a new strategy for the upcoming decade was launched. Europe 2020 is a strategy aiming at enhancing economic growth, which brought the “20/20/20” targets, “namely reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (by 20%), the increase of renewable energy sources (RES) share (to 20%) and the increase of energy efficiency, thus, saving up to 20% in the energy consumption”⁸⁶. The literature is quite optimistic. Liobkiené and Butkus, in their article from 2017, claim that the EU is on the right track to achieving the goals.⁸⁷

The EU sets the goals as well as the boundaries between which the goals can be set. In other words, the EU sets the rule of the game, which the EU itself also plays. As one of the leading institutional bodies of the EU, the European Commission is the first to propose the legislation. Every Commission sets its priorities for the duration of its mandate, but there are long-term aims and core values of the EU set in the primary documents of the EU, such as the Lisbon Treaty or the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Commission, along with other bodies, then sets the goals within these long-term aims and values. This ensures that the goals are tied to a specific objective and are part of the strive to fulfil this objective. Moreover, the goals of the Commission are also derived from Council's strategic agenda and from discussions with the political groups of the European Parliament.

It might come as no surprise that the idea of successful goal setting has been evolving not only in the academic literature but also in the institutional documents issued by the diverse institutions of the EU, mainly the European Commission. So, naturally, the references to goal setting are more common in the more recent documents, but even Wim Kok's report mentions that long-term targets should be set without technical specifications in the field of climate, which would be resolved later.⁸⁸ Somewhat more extensive mention of goals, in general, can be found in a Commission's Green Paper from 2013, which states that when considering long-term targets, it is beneficial to set interim targets in order to be able to focus on something closer and more easily

⁸⁵ Baležentis, Baležentis, Brauers, “Implementation of the Strategy Europe 2020”, 15.

⁸⁶ Genovaitė Liobkiené, and Mindaugas Butkus, “The European Union possibilities to achieve targets of Europe 2020 and Paris agreement climate policy”, *Renewable Energy* 106 (2017): 298–299, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.renene.2017.01.036> (accessed May 28, 2021).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 307–308.

⁸⁸ Report from the High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok of November 2004 on Facing the Challenge <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/88b6bc81-e3ad-4156-960f-f549369aa9d4> (accessed April 3, 2022).

attainable. The abovementioned paper also highlights that there is a need to assess which targets can best, simply and cost-effectively drive the policies and streamline the existing ones. Apart from the issue of appropriateness, the document states that when there are multiple targets, they need to interact with each other. Furthermore, the Green Paper advises taking evidence-based knowledge on sustainability, costs, state of maturity of technologies and innovation potential into account. Last but not least is mobilising financing, which could be a challenge.⁸⁹ Europe 2020 in many ways follows these recommendations. First, it highlights the interrelation of targets. Meeting them should mobilise collective action. These targets represent an “overall view of where Commission would like to see the EU on key parameters by 2020”.⁹⁰

Furthermore, to improve goal setting when proposing new legislation, the European Commission developed a “better regulation guidelines”, which are meant to help those involved in the preparation of new initiatives and proposals and those who manage and evaluate the current legislation. According to Better Regulation Guidelines Document, “better regulation is about creating legislation that achieves its objectives while being targeted, effective, easy to comply with and with the least burden possible.”⁹¹ For that, the Commission has various instruments such as evaluations and fitness checks, impact assessments, involvement of stakeholders throughout the policy cycle and compliance promotion tools for the Member States.⁹² By issuing this Better Regulation Communication, the Commission wants its policy-making to be more evidence-based, to ensure a stronger approach to stakeholder consultation, to reduce the burden in the policy-making process, to analyse the impacts better, and integrate a more strategic foresight into the policies produced. These internal instructions include a guide to set objectives or goals. This document presents goals as the linkage of analysis of the problem and its drivers to the options for the policy response. It also distinguishes general objectives, specific objectives and operational objectives. The general objectives are Treaty-based goals to which the policy wants to contribute. Specific goals set out concretely what the policy intervention should achieve. They should be broad to allow consideration of all relevant policy alternatives. And lastly, the operational

⁸⁹ Green Paper of the European Commission of March 27, 2013 on A 2030 framework for climate and energy policy (COM(2013) 169 final), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0169:FIN:en:PDF> (accessed April 3, 2022).

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ “Better Regulation Guidelines”, European Commission, November 2021 https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/swd2021_305_en.pdf (accessed April 5, 2022).

⁹² Ibid.

objectives are derived from the deliverables of specific policy actions. However, these are used just after identifying the preferred option.⁹³ The document also mentions S.M.A.R.T. objectives, usually used in a workplace environment. It says that the goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. In addition, if the objectives are interconnected, it is vital to highlight the links between them.⁹⁴ To sum it up, while the academic literature focuses on identifying specific problems in goal setting, the EU, respectively the European Commission, focuses on the improvement of clear, simple and focused guidelines.

⁹³ “16 How to set objectives”, European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/file_import/better-regulation-toolbox-16_en_0.pdf (accessed April 5, 2022).

⁹⁴ “16 How to set objectives”, European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/file_import/better-regulation-toolbox-16_en_0.pdf (accessed April 5, 2022).

3 Role of Climate Goals in EU Climate Policy Development

Climate policy has become one of the most prominent policies not only in the European Union but also on the global scale. Moreover, since the 1990s, the EU has increasingly established itself as a global environmental leader.⁹⁵ The Paris Conference in 2015, where 196 countries committed to limiting global warming, preferably below 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels, caused an increasing interest in policies that aim to fulfil this promise.

The EU has established itself as a global leader in fighting climate change. It has been active in discussing and making commitments toward adaptation and mitigation of climate change since the 1990s.⁹⁶ Since then, the EU climate policy has experienced five breakthrough climate goals, representing one of the EU's climate policy eras. The first goal was set in 1990 by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), stabilising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at 1990 GHG levels. Since it does not present a numerical target, it was not included in the further study. Next was the goal of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, and it was the 8% reduction of CO₂ emissions compared to 1990 GHG levels. Later in 2007, the EU set itself a goal to lower GHG emissions by 20% compared to 1990 as part of the Europe 2020 strategy. Last but not least, through the Paris Agreement, the first-ever multilateral binding climate agreement, signatories pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to pave the way for climate neutrality by mid-century. Specific goals set by the EU supported the decision of the individual member states to bind themselves to achieve carbon emissions neutrality. These goals represent the nationally determined contribution to lowering emissions required by the Paris Agreement. Until December 2020, the reduction was supposed to be 40 % by 2030; however, the new European Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen launched the European Green Deal, including the higher target of 55 % in the same time frame.⁹⁷

In fact, the goal of 40% GHG reduction was included in the research since it had been a first step towards the current and most likely final goal. Although the goal was set in both

⁹⁵ Sebastian Oberthür, and Claire Roche Kelly, “EU Leadership in International Climate Policy: Achievements and Challenges”, *The International Spectator* 43, no. 3 (September 2008): 35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932720802280594> (accessed May 12, 2021).

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council from March 4, 2020, establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulation (EU) 2008/1999 (European Climate Law), *Official Journal of the EU*, March 4, 2021 (accessed April 5, 2022).

cases of goal setting, both were meant for the same period of time. Therefore the 55% goal replaced the 40% one, which is the reasoning behind squeezing them into one sub-chapter below.

3.1 8% Goal by 2012

As mentioned above, the 8% goal is the first numerical goal of its kind. As part of the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol was an additional concrete commitment for 2008–2012. In fact, the Kyoto Protocol operationalises the UNFCCC as it binds industrialised countries to lower their GHG emissions. The Kyoto Protocol was the first legally binding treaty to reduce GHG emissions.⁹⁸ Although legally binding, the compliance mechanism of the treaty is a political agreement with no binding legal status. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted on December 11, 1997, but entered into force after the ratification process on February 16, 2005. Each of the 37 industrialised states and the EU were set a different target. In total, the targets made up a 5% reduction of overall GHG emissions compared to the emissions levels in 1990.

Though the first numerical target concerning the field of climate change was adopted in 1997, it is being widely agreed that the EU took the lead in fighting climate change a lot earlier. The term *climate change* was first officially used by the EU as soon as 1988.⁹⁹ Later, in October 1990, it was agreed by a joint ministerial Council of energy and environment that the CO₂ emissions need to be stabilised by the year 2000 at 1990 levels, which can be seen as the first climate goal of the EU. The EU member states even agreed to a concept called burden-sharing, when there would be an overall EU GHG emission reduction goal with each member state bearing a part of the burden. Since then, the EU had been active during the negotiations in Rio de Janeiro (1992), Berlin (1995) as well as Geneva (1996).

As the Kyoto Conference on Climate Change planned for December 1997 was approaching, the EU Environment Council adopted a negotiating position in March 1997. The EU member states agreed to the so-called "EU bubble concept", meaning that the EU will negotiate as one but with internal differences in the form of different goals for

⁹⁸ Hannah Cheng, "A "Legally Binding" Climate Agreement: What Does it Mean? Why Does it Matter", *General Earth Institute*, February 23, 2010, <https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2010/02/23/a-“legally-binding”-climate-agreement-what-does-it-mean-why-does-it-matter/> (accessed April 8, 2022).

⁹⁹ Jan Nolin, "Timing and Sponsorship: The Research to Policy Process and the European Union's Kyoto Proposal", *Minerva* 37, No. 2 (June 1999): 166, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41821140> (accessed April 7, 2022).

each member state.¹⁰⁰ The abovementioned position included the goal to reduce GHG emissions by 15% by 2010 compared to the emission levels in 1990. The EU planned to reduce three greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O). Among these three, carbon dioxide is the most dangerous one as it is responsible for most global warming. At the Environment Council in June 1997, the ministers agreed to set an intermediate goal of reducing the GHG emissions by 7.5% by 2005, and they decided that three additional gases, i.e. hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆)¹⁰¹, should also be included in the equation for the plans created for the period after 2010.¹⁰²

In October 1997, the European Commission, therefore, adopted a communication on climate change called “The Climate Change – The European Union approach for Kyoto”, a position of the EU for the upcoming negotiations. According to this Communication, the 15% target is “technically feasible and economically manageable”. The target of 15% is based on the calculation of possible reductions in the different sectors (transport, industry, energy industry, domestic, renewables and power generation).¹⁰³ In total, the Commission estimated that the EU is able to reduce the emissions by 800 million tons of CO₂, which matches the abovementioned 15% reduction.¹⁰⁴ However, after analysing costs and benefits, the communication admits in its conclusion that although the costs might look quite manageable at the aggregate level, the costs at the disaggregated level seem substantially higher.¹⁰⁵ In other words, the transition¹⁰⁶ will negatively impact some of the sectors in economic terms. In addition, if other industrialised countries do not make comparable commitments, these sectors could significantly impact their international competitiveness. Therefore, the need for joint international action is accentuated. Because when policy actions are coordinated, they can also be more cost-efficient. What is also accentuated by the Commission is the political and

¹⁰⁰ Nolin, “Timing and Sponsorship”, 166.

¹⁰¹ Communication of the European Commission of June 3, 1998 on Climate Change – Towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy (COM (1998) 353 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:51998DC0353&from=PT> (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹⁰² <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d0772bfd-51a4-4437-a5f2-752f46212a58/language-en>

¹⁰³ Communication of the European Commission of June 3, 1998 on Climate Change – Towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy (COM (1998) 353 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:51998DC0353&from=PT> (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ A term used today to express the change towards low emission or no emission economy.

social acceptability of this European policy that depends on society's willingness.¹⁰⁷ The involvement of all parts of society is needed for the ability of the EU to succeed in attaining this target. Furthermore, the Commission promised to develop the strategy further after the Kyoto Conference when the target is firmly set. According to the Communication, the targets were agreed upon because of their environmental necessity and because they are feasible due to the availability of technologies. During a conference on November 6, 1997, Commissioner Bjerregaard further defended the EU's position stating that: "These emission targets have not been dreamed up as suggested by our critics. They were agreed at the highest political level because of their environmental necessity and on the basis of studies showing that the targets are technically possible, economically manageable and politically feasible using existing technologies and practices."¹⁰⁸

However, the ten days long negotiations at the Kyoto Conference brought a surprising turn for the original EU plans. The EU delegation recorded certain setbacks as well as successes on the road to an acceptable compromise. The EU admits that the text includes several flexible mechanisms.¹⁰⁹ The apparent reduction in the EU goal from 15% to 8% was among the most discussed things. Although this might seem like a failure, the 8% goal included reducing six GHGs instead of just three. The additional gasses are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆).¹¹⁰ According to R. Bjerregaard, "a rough estimate indicates that 8% reduction in relation to the six gases equates to about 12.5% in relation to the three gases".¹¹¹ Furthermore, the concept of the intermediate goal appeared in the Protocol in the form of an obligation of demonstrable progress to be made by the year 2005.

The importance of the Kyoto commitments was translated even into the Lisbon Strategy of the EU. In March 2000, the European Commission published a set of multiple objectives for the period of 2000–2010 in order for the EU "to become the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010 capable of sustainable

¹⁰⁷ Communication of the European Commission of June 3, 1998 on Climate Change – Towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy (COM (1998) 353 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:51998DC0353&from=PT> (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹⁰⁸ "Looking ahead of Kyoto – EU Commissioners present their views", European Commission, <https://cordis.europa.eu/article/id/9367-looking-ahead-to-kyoto-eu-commissioners-present-their-views> (accessed April 6, 2022).

¹⁰⁹ Communication of the European Commission of June 3, 1998 on Climate Change – Towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy (COM (1998) 353 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:51998DC0353&from=PT> (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Peter Palinkas, "The Climate Change: The Position of the European Union", *Energy & Environment* 9, No. 4 (June 1998): 458, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44396912> (accessed April 7, 2022).

economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion and respect for the environment”.¹¹² At first, this strategy included only two pillars – economic and social, later joined by the environmental pillar. The environmental pillar was added after the Göteborg summit in 2001, highlighting the need to fulfil the Kyoto commitments.¹¹³ Although the Wim Kok’s report, a report of the High-Level Group chaired by Wim Kok, updated the Lisbon Strategy more in favour of the economic and social pillars, the report still endorses the need to fulfil the Kyoto commitments.¹¹⁴

Nevertheless, the EU recognised the Kyoto Protocol as an essential step toward emissions reduction.¹¹⁵ The science community shared the view that the Kyoto Conference will be a tipping point in the world's approach to climate change. In September 1997, 1 500 scientists from around the world gathered in Washington D.C. for a Science Summit on Climate Change. The outcome document of this summit, “World’s Scientists’ Call for Action at Kyoto”, included an urgent call for action as the "threat of global warming is very real".¹¹⁶ The scientists urged the world leaders to develop firm commitments to protect the global environment for future generations. The states started to be concerned even more after the release of the Second Assessment Report (SAR)¹¹⁷ in 1995 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which, however, did not propose any suggestion concerning the percentage of GHG emissions reduction. However, after analysing the involvement of science in the EU negotiations connected to Kyoto, Nolin concludes that if relevant knowledge is to be influencing the policy, the scientific research has to begin much earlier. Instead, the expert advice from within

¹¹² Commission Staff Working Document of February 2, 2010 – Lisbon Strategy evaluation document (SEC(2010) 114 final), https://ec.europa.eu/archives/growthandjobs_2009/pdf/lisbon_strategy_evaluation_en.pdf (accessed April 6, 2022).

¹¹³ “Gothenburg European Council 15–16 June 2001. Presidency conclusions and annexes”, University of Pittsburgh, http://aei.pitt.edu/43342/1/Goteborg_2001.pdf (accessed June 6, 2018).

¹¹⁴ Report from the High-Level Group chaired by Wim Kok of November 2004 on Facing the Challenge <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/88b6bc81-e3ad-4156-960f-f549369aa9d4> (accessed April 3, 2022).

¹¹⁵ Communication of the European Commission of June 3, 1998 on Climate Change – Towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy (COM (1998) 353 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:51998DC0353&from=PT> (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹¹⁶ “World’s Nobel Laureates And Preeminent Scientists Call On Government Leaders To Halt Global Warming”, Science Daily, <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/1997/10/971002070106.htm> (accessed April 8, 2022).

¹¹⁷ Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of 1995 – IPCC Second Assessment, <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/05/2nd-assessment-en-1.pdf> (accessed April 7, 2022).

the bureaucracy started to be more critical as expert groups and workshops took place before the conference.¹¹⁸

After accepting the EU's Kyoto commitment of an 8% reduction of the GHG emissions compared to 1990 by the Council decision¹¹⁹, this goal had to be broken down into national targets according to the burden-sharing, which was included in a decision that approved the Kyoto Protocol.¹²⁰ According to the burden-sharing decision, the targets for each country were tailored to the relative wealth of each country at that exact time.¹²¹

There was no specific budget allocated to fight climate change in the EU or towards the member states. However, it is important to say that with the advent of the new millennium, all efforts were directed towards the successful accession of ten new member states. In total, the EU spent €40.7 billion on preparations and accession costs.¹²² Thus, in the programming period 2000–2006, the EU's environment was allocated €41.3 billion through European Regional Development Fund (€25.5 billion) and the Cohesion Fund (€15.8 billion).¹²³ The main area of the allocation was environmental infrastructure, such as water supply, solid wastewater management and wastewater treatment. In the programming period of 2007–2013, the amount of €46.5 billion was allocated towards environmental projects, again through European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF) in total.¹²⁴

To sum it up, this goal aimed to help reduce the EU's GHG emissions was set at the Kyoto conference while negotiating the Kyoto Protocol of GHG, which includes GHG reduction goals by countries. In order to see if the EU's goal is feasible, the EU conducted a cost-benefit analysis, which was being used to vindicate the goal in further deliberations. Multiple actors got involved in setting this goal, given the international

¹¹⁸ Nolin, "Timing and Sponsorship: The Research to Policy Process and the European Union's Kyoto Proposal", *Minerva* 37, No. 2 (June 1999): 180, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41821140> (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹¹⁹ Council Decision of April 25, 2002 concerning the approval, on behalf of the European Community, of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the joint fulfilment of commitments (2002/358/EC), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32002D0358> (accessed April 8, 2022).

¹²⁰ Commission Decision of December 14, 2006 determining the respective emission levels allocated to the Community and each of its Member States under the Kyoto Protocol pursuant to Council Decision 2002/358/EC (2006/944/EC) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02006D0944-20061216> (accessed April 8, 2022).

¹²¹ "Kyoto 1st Commitment Period (2008–2012)", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/climate-strategies-targets/progress-made-cutting-emissions/kyoto-1st-commitment-period-2008-12_en (accessed April 7, 2022).

¹²² "Evaluations of the 2007–2013 programming period", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/evaluations/ec/2007-2013/#7 (accessed April 8, 2022).

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

as well as inter-EU negotiations. This time, the EU's ambition was a bit higher than the final result of the conference. The EU has put particular emphasis on joint actions by other countries. Moving to the mobilisation of support, the EU definitely prove that it is ready for more substantial commitments, but a deeper analysis would be needed to analyse this thoroughly. As stated above, though there was no budget specifically allocated exclusively to attain this goal, there were numerous funds that could be used to this end. Furthermore, the scientific knowledge was used extensively in the form of Commission's analyses, IPCC reports, expert groups or climate conferences. This 8% goal is interesting regarding the circumstances of the origin. It is an outcome of international negotiations, which was later translated into the EU's Lisbon Strategy. To put it into more context, following the first commitment period from 2008 to 2012, a second Kyoto commitment period lasted from 2013 until 2020. During this period, the EU and other non-member states decided to reduce further GHG emissions, described in the next chapter in more detail.

3.2 20% Goal by 2020

As the first commitment period had been in sight, there was a need to begin the work on the following international agreement. The second Kyoto period from 2013 to 2020 was already mentioned in the previous chapter. In this period, as the name of this chapter suggests, the EU agreed to meet a 20% reduction target compared to 1990. The international basis for the second commitment period is the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, which was agreed upon at the United National Climate Conference in Doha, Qatar, in December 2012. This amendment is called the Doha Amendment.¹²⁵

However, the commitments of the EU had been set long before. These targets were embedded in the 2020 Climate and Energy Package, which is a package of laws ensuring the EU meets its climate and energy goals for the year 2020. This package set three main targets: (1) a 20% cut in GHG emissions (compared to 1990 levels), (2) a 20% cut in renewables, and (3) a 20% improvement in energy efficiency.¹²⁶ Although these goals were established in law by this package, which was introduced by the European Commission in January 2008 and adopted by the whole EU in December 2008, the goal of a 20% reduction in GHG emissions had been set long before that.

¹²⁵ "The Doha Climate Gateway", United Nations, <https://unfccc.int/process/conferences/the-big-picture/milestones/the-doha-climate-gateway> (accessed April 8, 2022).

¹²⁶ "2020 climate & energy package", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/climate-strategies-targets/2020-climate-energy-package_en (accessed April 8, 2022).

According to the cost and benefits analysis, the Commission's communication "Winning the Battle against Global Climate Change" from February 2005 states that the costs may be minimised when all sectors get included. The Commission, based on the statement of the Council from 1996 that the global average temperatures should not exceed 2 degrees Celsius above the level of 1990, elaborated on the possibility of further reduction targets with no suggested targets yet in this communication from 2005.¹²⁷ Therefore, the call for action from the EU's side is quite clear. Following the publication of the abovementioned document, the Commission released a communication on limiting the global climate change to 2 degrees Celsius called "The way ahead for 2020 and beyond" in January 2007, which proposes a 20% reduction of GHG emissions by 2020 compared to 1990. This should be done through the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) and burden-sharing among the member states. The ETS covers emissions from large-scale facilities, and the EU reduces emissions from these resources as a whole. On the other hand, under burden-sharing, there are so-called effort sharing sectors, for which there are national reduction targets. Furthermore, the Commission proposed a 30% reduction on the condition that the other countries would join in limiting the global climate change to 2 degrees Celsius. This communication was supported by the Environmental Council in February 2007 and later by the Council of the EU in March 2007.¹²⁸ The 30% reduction target came up again three years later, in March 2010, when the Commission released an analysis which aimed to raise the 20% target to 30%.¹²⁹ This initiative was meant to steer the discussion, but the 20% target for 2020 remained unchanged.

Building upon the Lisbon Strategy, which covered the period until 2010, the European Commission introduced another 10-year strategy called Europe 2020. This new strategy's objective was smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In order to serve this objective, five targets were set, including one covering climate change. Europe 2020 contained the 20% reduction target as well.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Communication of the Commission of February 2, 2005 on Winning the Battle Against Global Climate Change (COM(2005)35 final), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0035:FIN:EN:PDF> (accessed April 9, 2022).

¹²⁸ Press release on 2785th Council Meeting of February 20, 2007 on the EU objectives for the further development of the international climate regime beyond 2012, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_07_25 (accessed April 9, 2022).

¹²⁹ Communication from the Commission of May 26, 2010 on Analysis of options to move beyond 20% greenhouse gas emission reductions and assessing the risk of carbon leakage (COM(2010) 265 final), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0265> (accessed April 9, 2022).

¹³⁰ Communication from the Commission of March 3, 2010 on Europe 2020 – A strategy for smart, sustainable and growth (COM(2010)2020)

One piece of research stands out due to the fact it was mentioned by the Commission in its abovementioned communication, "Winning the Battle against Global Climate Change".¹³¹ The Stern review on the Economics of Climate Change is a 700-pages-long report initially prepared for the United Kingdom's government in 2006. The economist Nicholas Stern, the Chair of the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics and the chair of the Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy at Leeds University and the University of London, presents that there would be enormous costs of the failure to act. According to this study, the costs would be not only economical but also social and environmental, on developed as well as developing countries, as they would significantly affect the poor people. The final impact on the GDP, he believed, could be the reduction of global GDP by 5–20% each year. Moreover, if there were no measures taken, there would be a possibility that the temperature would increase 5 or 6 degrees Celsius.¹³²

As for the financing, there was no financing specifically designed and allocated to fulfil the goal included in the Climate and Energy package. Thus, the EU supported the development of low carbon technologies through Horizon 2020, which is focused on funding for research and innovation, and NER300, a programme for renewable energy technologies and carbon capture and storage.¹³³ In the period 2014–2020, the long-term budget of the EU included a target of allocation of at least 20% of EU expenditure to climate-related areas (€34.5 billion).

Regarding the criteria, this goal, like the previous one, aims to reduce the EU's GHG emissions. However, it resulted from inter-EU negotiations and coming from an own EU initiative. The Commission as a leading actor, but by far not the only one, conducted a more detailed cost-benefit analysis analysing the 20% and later 30% goal, which had never been set. The goal of 20% was translated into EU legislation as well as the next long-term Strategy Europe 2020. As in the previous case, there was no budget specifically allocated exclusively to attain this goal, but numerous funds that could be used to this end.

<https://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf> (accessed April 9, 2022).

¹³¹ Communication from the Commission of January 10, 2010 on Limiting Global Climate Change to 2 degrees Celsius The way ahead for 2020 and beyond (COM(2007) 2 final) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0002:FIN:EN:PDF> (accessed April 10, 2022).

¹³² Nicholas Stern, "Summary of Conclusions" in *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), xv – xx, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/economics-of-climate-change/summary-of-conclusions/24EE5904FA4F9BEE88B862E7FF123462> (accessed April 10, 2022).

¹³³ "2020 climate & energy package", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/eu-action/climate-strategies-targets/2020-climate-energy-package_en (accessed April 10, 2022).

However, a target of 20% of EU expenditure was allocated to climate-related areas. Furthermore, regarding scientific knowledge, the setting of the goal was influenced by the Stern report, which provided clear costs of inaction and thereby created significant momentum for goal setting.

This commitment period was not even in half, and yet was the time to start thinking about the post-2020 climate commitments of the EU. Moreover, another UNFCCC summit in Paris in 2015 was approaching. The Commission issued a Green Paper with propositions for the next 2030 Climate and Energy Framework ahead of this climate conference.

3.3 55% Goal by 2030

The abovementioned Green Paper called "A 2030 framework for climate and energy policies" from March 2013 included recommendations for the next climate and energy package ahead of the ground-breaking climate conference in Paris in 2015. In January 2014, the Commission introduced this new legislative proposal, including, among others, the 2030 European Commission's communication, which proposed a 40% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030 (compared to 1990 levels).¹³⁴ This goal was, however, based on the full implementation of the previous 20% goal. The accompanying impact assessment of the Commission assessed not only the 40% target but also the target of 35% and 45% reduction of GHG emissions. This impact assessment concluded that the costs would not differ as much, as there is a general need to reform the existing energy system and there will be rising fossil fuel prices.¹³⁵ This assessment also summarises the views of different stakeholders. As long as member states are concerned, whereas the 40% target was supported by France, Denmark, the United Kingdom and Spain, other countries were more restrained but not necessarily in opposition to this target. They built their position on the need for a thorough analysis, an international agreement or a less binding nature of the targets. On the other hand, NGOs support more ambitious targets of up to 60%, some even up to 80% by 2030. The European business organisations tend to lean towards the 40% with more precaution regarding the competitiveness of the EU's businesses. The utilities, power sector and energy-intensive, as well as non-energy intensive industries, generally agree on the 40% target. Along with the citizens, all stakeholders believe that it is a good idea to set new GHG targets.¹³⁶ In light of that, the Commission proposed

¹³⁴ Commission Staff Working Document, Impact Assessment of January 22, 2014 on A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 up to 2030 (SWD(2014) 15 final) https://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/impact/ia_carried_out/docs/ia_2014/swd_2014_0015_en.pdf (accessed April 11, 2022).

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

the 40% GHG emission reduction target, which would be shared between the ETS and non-ETS sectors, again with the burden-sharing of member states as the combination of European and national goals proved to be efficient. The Council of the European Union, as well as the European Parliament, adopted this target in the new Climate and Energy Package legislation.

The breakthrough UNFCCC summit in Paris contributed to a renewal of talks on setting a more ambitious target. The Paris Agreement, an outcome of this conference adopted in December 2015, bounded the state parties to try to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to 1990.¹³⁷ In order to be able to do that, the countries needed to pledge to reduce emissions as soon as possible to achieve climate neutrality in the mid-century. Accordingly, the Environment Council formally approved the contribution as the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) in March 2015.

In 2020, as part of the European Green Deal, the Commission proposed a new goal of a 55% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030 along with the climate neutrality (achieving net-zero emissions¹³⁸) in 2050. The European Green Deal is the strategy of the EU to achieve climate neutrality through the transition towards a sustainable, low-carbon economy. The Commission presented the European Green Deal in December 2019, just after the European Parliament declared a global "climate and environmental emergency".¹³⁹ Although it was mostly a symbolic gesture, there is no doubt that this action created a natural momentum. Besides, the adoption of the European Green Deal made it possible to fulfil not only Paris Agreement but also the United Nation's 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. However, concrete legislation had to be prepared because of the fact that the European Green Deal is just a framework. Therefore, in March 2020 European Commission introduced the proposal of European Climate Law with the goal of climate neutrality by 2050 and the obligation to review a new 2030 target of between 50 and 55% emission reduction compared to 1990.¹⁴⁰ However, the European Parliament

¹³⁷ "The Paris Agreement", United Nations, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement> (accessed April 11, 2022).

¹³⁸ *This means a balance between the emissions that are produced and those that are removed from the atmosphere.*

¹³⁹ Jennifer Ranking, "EU parliament declares climate emergency", *The Guardian*, 28.11.2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/28/eu-parliament-declares-climate-emergency> (accessed April 3, 2022).

¹⁴⁰ Proposal for a Regulation of March 4, 2020 on establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law) (COM (2020) 80 final), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1588581905912&uri=CELEX:52020PC0080> (accessed April 11, 2022).

aimed even higher, for 60%, as suggested in its final position from October 2020.¹⁴¹ Finally, the Parliament and the Council reached a consensus on 55%, as suggested by the Commission.¹⁴² The European Climate Law, along with the two goals, was published in the Official Journal and entered into force in July 2021.

After the Paris conference, the Commission conducted an extensive analysis and stakeholder consultation in preparation for renewed climate goals. In January 2021, a high-level public conference took place. The general stakeholder opinion was that the EU should achieve a balance between emissions and removals.¹⁴³ Moreover, the public also engaged in providing feedback on the roadmap of the legislative proposal with 1000 responses. Regarding the scientific community, the EU's Scientific Advice Mechanism, which includes the Chief Scientific Advisors to the European Commission and Scientific Advice for Policy by European Academies, published a report which admits that the 55% target and climate neutrality are in line with science, but on the other hand admits with concern that it will be challenging to attain these goals.¹⁴⁴ There were also voices like World Wildlife Fund that called for a 65% reduction target.¹⁴⁵ Since the 55% is a net target, the sinks, in other words, the carbon absorbed by trees, are going to be counted in the final results; therefore, the real impact would be around 50–53%. There are also other studies calling for a 65% target by CAN Europe, DIW Berlin, Climact and LUT University.¹⁴⁶ These studies advocate in favour of the higher target based on the UNEP Emissions Gap Report, which suggests reducing emissions by 7.6% annually. In order to do so, there is a need to reduce GHG emissions by 65% and more by 2030.

¹⁴¹ Amendments adopted by the European Parliament on October 2020 8 on the Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 (European Climate Law) 2020/0036(COD), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0253_EN.html (accessed April 11, 2022).

¹⁴² “European Climate Law”, Legislative Train, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-a-european-green-deal/file-european-climate-law> (accessed April 11, 2022).

¹⁴³ Report of the Commission of November 2018 on the Results of the Public Consultation, https://ec.europa.eu/clima/system/files/2019-02/report_en.pdf (accessed April 12, 2022).

¹⁴⁴ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, A systemic approach to the energy transition in Europe: scientific advice to strengthen the resilience of the European energy sector, Publications Office, 2021, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d01f956f-de07-11eb-895a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> (accessed April 12, 2022).

¹⁴⁵ “Fit for 55%’: what is it and what does WWF want?”, World Wide Fund for Nature, <https://www.wwf.eu/?2302316/Fit-for-55-what-is-it-and-what-does-WWF-want> (accessed April 13, 2022).

¹⁴⁶ Factsheet of CAN Europe of September 2020 on Science shows 65% emission reduction by 2030 is feasible and pays off https://caneurope.org/content/uploads/2020/09/CAN_Europe_65percent_is_feasible_sep20_short2.pdf (accessed April 13, 2022).

As to financing the transition, the Green Deal Investment Plan, introduced in January, requires the mobilisation of €1 trillion investment until 2030.¹⁴⁷ There are actions such as NextGenerationEU, Recovery and Resilience Facility, Just Transition Mechanism, Green Bonds, Sustainable Finance etc., that will provide funding for the whole European Green Deal, mobilising public as well as private investments. Moreover, 30% of the EU's multiannual budget 2021–2028 has been allocated for green investments. In addition to this Multiannual Financial Framework, the EU presented a NextGenerationEU, the EU's instrument to recover from Covid-19, as the Commission has long been stating that the recovery should go hand in hand with the investments.¹⁴⁸

Overall, this final goal and the other goals aim to the EU's GHG emissions. In the middle of the decade, a significant turning point came with the Paris conference, where the states bound themselves to increase their climate commitments. In reaction to that, the EU launched a European Green Deal with the goal of a 55% reduction of GHG emissions incorporated into various legislative acts, primarily in the European Climate Law. In addition, the Commission conducted an impact analysis. The European Parliament aimed higher, but the Council supported the Commission's proposal. As to the mobilisation of support, the EU explicitly calls itself a leader in the global fight against climate change and the active involvement of actors is known from available surveys. In addition, science was again extensively used during this particular goal setting process.

¹⁴⁷ “Finance and the Green Deal”, European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/finance-and-green-deal_en (accessed April 13, 2022).

¹⁴⁸ “European Semester Spring Package: Recommendations and coordinated response to the coronavirus pandemic”, European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_901 (accessed April 13, 2022).

4 Findings

For the most part, it might seem that the goals analysed above have a lot in common, but at the same time, they actually differ from each other in many aspects. When they are compared more closely, an inevitable evolution can be observed. This evolution is due to the substantial time span in which the goals are analysed. Over the period of almost 30 years, the EU has changed considerably, be it the enlargements of the EU and amendment of the founding Treaties, other changes that were caused by global developments such as financial crises or the coronavirus pandemic. Due to the development of science and technology, there has also been a development of knowledge, and therefore the attitude towards climate change has changed. People have also begun to feel the effects of climate change themselves. All these factors and many others have contributed to the development of further goal setting. In order to be able to elaborate on the evolution of successful goal setting, it is interesting to look at these goals through the modified framework based on the original one presented by Young, who sets out the criteria for successful goal setting, which are described in detail in the first chapter.

Obviously, setting a goal is a complex process influenced by multiple factors. As a proposed path towards achieving successful goal setting, Young came up with a set of criteria described in detail above. The modified criteria used for the research in this thesis include: a) nature of the problem, b) character of the actors, c) features of the setting, d) mobilisation of support, e) funding, f) scientific knowledge, g) origin of the goal, and h) translation of the goal.¹⁴⁹

In the first place, *the nature of the problem* is really complex. In fact, climate change is one of the most complex issues the world currently faces. Although the solution might be simple, the implementation of the path leading to such a solution is demanding. Lowering the emissions, preferably to a stage when the world stops emitting entirely, seems to solve most issues connected with climate change. The nature of the problem, which is reducing GHG emissions, is similar in all three cases presented, and it can definitely be classified as a continuous problem rather than a finite one. Even if a climate goal is fulfilled, there is a need to set another one to continue with the reduction until neutrality is reached. Currently, there is an existing goal for the EU to reach climate neutrality by 2050; however, the time frame is quite distant. Therefore, it might

¹⁴⁹ Note that these criteria are not addressed in the exact same order in the text below.

seem that reaching the neutrality target is a solution to a finite problem. However, it is difficult to imagine that climate change and climate-related issues will be solved once and for all. Even Young regards this issue, i.e., lowering GHG emissions, as a continuous problem for which goal setting might be less effective. On the other hand, the overall trend is that the GHG emissions of the EU are lowering, and the goals have proved to be generally effective so far. Besides, Young focuses on global governance, therefore global efforts, which are more challenging to manage.

When the *origin of the goal* is discussed, there is one goal that originates from international negotiations and the other two from the initiative of the EU itself. Whereas the goal of the 8% comes from the negotiations during the Kyoto conference in 1997, the other follow-up goals were formulated by the EU. The goal of 20%, for example, was set from the own initiative of the EU. A specific situation happened with the last goal. The EU initially set the goal of emission reduction at the 40% benchmark; however, the goal was increased to 55% reduction after the Paris Conference in order to serve better the commitments that were agreed upon internationally during this event. In addition, one can also observe that the EU ceased to call for commitments from other states and continues to set its own goals without conditioning its own goals on commitments from other states though it still urges other to act and feels that the EU goals might serve as an example for the international community. This can be observed, for example, in the fact that in its statements surrounding the negotiations about the first analysed goal, the EU emphasised joint efforts. Though the EU has been a lot more independent in setting its own climate-related goals, it seems that because all the three goals and the whole EU climate policy tied to them have been driven by the UNFCCC conferences, the international perspective still plays an important role.

What is typical of the EU's policy environment is the *translation of the goals* to the relevant legislation. All of the goals have been translated into legislative acts of the EU. The 8% goal was enshrined in the Lisbon Strategy, the 20% goal in Europe 2020, and the new legislative Climate and Energy Package, and the 55% goal is part of the European Green Deal. As time progresses, the number of climate goals-related legislative acts is growing and therefore, it is crucial to ensure the interconnectivity with other goals. In order to uncover to which extent have these goals been interconnected with other goals, further research would be needed. Given that the climate-related goals became a part of the broad strategies of the EU, it can be inferred that they were linked to other goals as well.

The difficulty surrounding successful goal setting, in general, stems from the *character of the actors*. According to the behaviour of the actors, which reflects more the logic of consequences than the logic of appropriateness, specific strategies might prove successful in achieving successful goal setting. Admittedly, this is difficult to assess, but based on the research, the EU leans more towards the behaviour reflecting the logic of consequences. The Commission's cost-benefit analysis in its Impact Assessments prove that the EU pays quite a lot of attention to the impacts of its actions. The impact assessments were conducted for all three analysed goals; however, the cost-benefit analysis seems to be a bit more thorough each time and, therefore, more extensive. When comparing the conclusions of the results of the cost-benefit analyses of all the cases, the recommendation was always the same, i.e. that it is worth setting a goal which was aiming to reach the desired state. At the end of each of the cost-benefit analyses that the EU had to face, the critical question was how this goal should be designed. Usually, there are two or three propositions, among which one is recognised as the best choice.

In the case of the 8% target, the EU's proposition was 15%, but after the Kyoto Conference took place, the 8% target was agreed upon during the negotiations. In the second case of the 20% goal, there was also an opposing proposition of a 30% reduction goal from the part of the EU. However, such an enhanced goal was conditioned by other countries joining the efforts. Finally, in the third case of the 55% goal, there were multiple propositions ranging from 40% to 65%. Therefore, it is clear that the number of considered goals is increasing with time. Apart from the fact that there are more and more actors involved in the international negotiations leading to goal setting, which can be observed in the increasing number of options, the problem with the EU is explicit, as many like to say, that it is an actor *sui generis*. Although the EU approaches the functioning of an international organisation with individual member states in many aspects, part of the sovereignty of the member states has been transferred to the EU as such, which creates an additional decision-making layer in the whole process. This situation creates the problem of two-level games where the EU and one or more of its member states do not necessarily have to be on the same page when deciding on a particular matter.

As to the *features of the settings*, setting climate-related goals encompasses the involvement of many stakeholders due to the complex nature of this field. Nevertheless, this research proves that one particular actor stands out, the European

Commission. Obviously, the cause of this is the way the policy process in the EU is designed. The process of setting a goal is, in many ways, similar to drafting legislation. To be more precise, many parts of the goal-setting process actually happen within the standard legislative process of the EU. In all the three analysed cases, the Commission is the one proposing the goal. However, that does not mean that it is only the Commission's job to create a goal; all of the common actors such as the Council of the EU, the European Council, the European Parliament, the European Social and Economic Committee and the Committee of Regions have a say in the goal-setting process. The European Parliament tends to be more ambitious than the Commission, which could be observed in particular in the last analysed case. The Council of the EU is usually less ambitious and tends to agree with the Commission, but its role was not particularly significant in these cases presented above. There are definitely common interests among these actors. However, at the same time, the individual actors follow their own interests, which is especially visible between the approaches of the Commission and the Council, where country representatives fight for their individual national interests. As to the cultural affinity, we can say that there is a common European culture that is shared by the actors to a certain extent which can be observed in the fact that most states support the goals the EU sets. This argument can be further supported by the comparison to the international environment, such as the UN, where it is a lot more challenging to find a common solution due to the broader diversity of involved actors. Apart from the abovementioned actors from the institutional architecture of the EU, the Commission involves many other actors such as other experts, scientists, NGOs and the general public through public consultations when proposing a goal.

It is widely believed that the Commission successfully involves diverse actors and parts of civil society in policy-making. In these cases, the *mobilisation of support* seems to be a vital factor in successful goal setting, as well. Because when there is no consensus on a particular goal, the risk is that the goal will not be set or later adequately implemented as the willingness of the actors to respect the goal would be lacking. Goal setting involves efforts to energise supporters to pursue the common goals, which the Commission is well aware of. However, there is a difference between the situation where efforts are mobilised to influence a goal and the one where the goal mobilises the following efforts. Those efforts might be networking, media coverage, seeking of supporters, NGOs etc. In fact, both should be achieved to set a goal successfully. In the case of the 8% goal, little was known about climate change and

its impacts on the planet, not only due to the lack of scientific discoveries and technologies to uncover them but also due to the slow transmission of information or complete unavailability of information. The interest of the general public was not that significant. Later, when the 20% goal was debated, the public's interest was growing.

As to the *scientific knowledge* and the opinion of the science on the goals, it could be seen that as time passes, greater involvement of science can be observed. The Commission bases its Communications on relevant scientific information in the form of reports, analyses, and studies, which it carries out, supports, or is conducted entirely independently.

Regarding the specific *funding*, it was proved that even though the first two goals had no specific funding but were funded from other resources, such as ERDF, CF, Horizon 2020, NextGeneration EU, the percentage from MFF etc., the goals were attained. Therefore, one can only further assume that the specific funding in the third goal supported the dedication and persuaded the stakeholders that it was time to serve the commitment.

All in all, there is visible progress in goal setting over the years which can be seen in the diverging conditions surrounding the three analysed goals. This progress lies in the fact that the goal setting process became more comprehensive in terms of length and quantity of work. The documents, including impact analysis and reports, consider more options to be analysed, and therefore they become more and more detailed and lengthy. We can also observe greater involvement of external actors. It is important to note that setting a goal to reduce the EU's GHG emissions is never a sole and detached initiative but that every headline climate-related goal comprises numerous partial propositions in the form of different documents that are issued over time. The process of goal setting, therefore, takes considerable time and effort from all the diverse actors and requires a common understanding of the problem as well as the best possible solution.

These eight criteria proved not to be of vital importance or precondition for successfully setting a goal but may serve as a roadmap to successfully setting a goal, which may later be, given a successful implementation, attained. These sets of conditions are not equally important. It could be seen that, for example, without specific funding, it is possible to successfully set a goal, as well as to fulfil it. Young is convinced that it is more effective to use goal setting for finite problems, but the previous achievement of the EU advocate for specific efficiency even in case of continuous problems. In addition, it is important to mention the scientific knowledge without which all measures taken would be futile. The same would be valid without the rising interest of different

stakeholders in climate issues. For the EU's environment, the most important occurs to be the translation of the goal to the relevant legislation and interconnectedness. As marginal may seem, the origin of the goal, but overall, all of these criteria, each one to a certain extent, contribute to a successful goal setting as part of the general strive to achieve a goal.

Conclusion

Goal setting is a governance strategy used to increase the probability of achieving a certain desired state. The literature can confirm the fact that this governance strategy works well. The literature on goal setting is divided into three main streams: the academic stream, the EU stream and the UN stream. The debate on how goals should be set is noticeably developing. This trend can be observed mainly in the growing interest of academia as well as governing institutions in exploring ways to improve goal setting. Successful goal setting is when the goal is set, which might seem like quite a simple task. It is, however, a complex issue which necessitates close attention. When attempting to identify the factors contributing to successful goal setting, Young presents four conditions: a) nature of the problem, b) character of the actors, c) features of the setting and d) mobilisation of support. In order to better suit the EU's institutional environment, these conditions were expanded by another four, i.e., e) funding, f) scientific knowledge, g) the origin of the goal, and h) translation of the goal.

Along with the actual need to decarbonise the planet and the growing public support for initiatives aiming to preserve the environment, the EU has placed itself at the head of the efforts to limit the effects of climate change. After analysing the three goals according to the eight factors, which all proved to be of importance and relevance for the analysis of the goal-setting processes, some general conclusions can be drawn. First of all, it seems that the EU has genuinely matured into the position of the global leader in the fight against climate change during both the international negotiations and the internal discussions on these particular goals. Because while the first goal was created based on the outcome of international negotiations, the subsequent goals were set by the EU based on its own initiative. However, the inobtrusive pressure of the international climate conferences is still present in the internal EU discussions on the issue and acts as a subtle push factor in terms of the ambitiousness of the climate goals. What can also be observed in the comparison of the three goals is that the goal-setting process has become more comprehensive in terms of its length and the quantity of work necessary for a goal to be set. Setting a goal is a lengthy and complicated process, but that is why it is especially important to make sure that all the relevant legislation and documents are interconnected and that each of the goals interacts well with the other goals across all the policy fields.

Though the fulfilment of all the criteria defined in this thesis is not necessarily a prerequisite for successful goal setting, without which the process could not be satisfactorily completed, the presented framework of eight criteria might serve as a roadmap for successful goal setting. Taking these factors into account when setting a goal might prove to be helpful in attaining the successful completion of the goal-setting process, which, in turn, is the fundamental precondition for the successful implementation and fulfilment of the given goal. In addition to this, the presented framework might be of use when analysing the process of goal setting not only within the field of climate policy but also in other policy areas in the institutional framework of the EU.

Shrnutí

Nastavování cílů je strategií vládnutí, která se používá ke zvýšení pravděpodobnosti dosažení určitého žádoucího stavu. Z literatury je možné vyvodit, že tato strategie dobře funguje. Literaturu o stanovování cílů lze rozdělit na tři hlavní proudy: akademický proud, proud EU a proud OSN. Debata o tom, jak by měly být cíle stanovovány, se zdatelně rozvíjí. Tento trend lze pozorovat především díky rostoucímu zájmu akademické obce i vládnoucích institucí o zkoumání způsobů, jak je možné stanovování cílů zefektivnit. Úspěšné nastavení cíle je docíleno tehdy, když je cíl stanoven, což se může zdát jako poměrně banální záležitost. Jedná se však o složitou problematiku, které je třeba věnovat patřičnou pozornost. Při pokusu o identifikaci faktorů přispívajících k úspěšnému stanovení cílů uvádí Young čtyři podmínky: a) povahu problému, b) charakter aktérů, c) vlastnosti prostředí a d) mobilizaci podpory. Aby tyto podmínky lépe vyhovovaly institucionálnímu prostředí EU, byly rozšířeny o další čtyři, tj. e) financování, f) vědecké poznatky, g) původ cíle a h) překlad cíle.

Po analýze tří cílů na základě výše zmíněných osmi faktorů, které se všechny ukázaly jako důležité a relevantní pro analýzu procesů stanovování cílů, lze vyvodit některé obecné závěry. Především se zdá, že EU během mezinárodních jednání i interních diskusí o těchto konkrétních cílech skutečně dozrála do pozice globálního lídra v boji proti změně klimatu. Protože zatímco první cíl byl vytvořen na základě výsledků mezinárodních jednání, další cíle stanovila EU na základě vlastní iniciativy. Nicméně nenápadný tlak mezinárodních konferencí o klimatu je stále přítomen v interních diskusích EU o této problematice a působí jako hnací síla. Při srovnání těchto tří cílů lze také pozorovat, že proces stanovování cílů se stal komplexnějším, pokud jde o jeho délku a množství práce potřebné pro stanovení cíle. Stanovení cíle je zdoluhavý a komplikovaný proces, ale právě proto je obzvláště důležité zajistit, aby všechny příslušné právní předpisy a dokumenty byly vzájemně propojeny a aby každý z cílů dobře spolupracoval s ostatními cíli ve všech oblastech politiky.

Přestože splnění všech kritérií definovaných v této práci není nutně předpokladem úspěšného stanovení cílů, bez něhož by proces nemohl být uspokojivě dokončen, předložený rámec osmi kritérií může sloužit jako návod pro úspěšné nastavování cílů. Zohlednění těchto faktorů při stanovování cíle by se mohlo ukázat jako užitečné pro dosažení úspěšného dokončení procesu stanovování cílů, což je ve svém důsledku základním předpokladem pro úspěšnou implementaci a naplnění daného cíle. Kromě toho

by předložený rámec mohl být užitečný při analýze procesu stanovování cílů nejen v oblasti politiky v oblasti klimatu, ale i v jiných oblastech politiky v institucionálním rámci EU.

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Master's Thesis Summary

ZÁVĚREČNÉ TEZE MAGISTERSKÉ PRÁCE NMTS
Závěrečné teze student odevzdává ke konci Diplomního semináře III jako součást magisterské práce a tyto teze jsou spolu s odevzdáním magisterské práce do SIS předpokladem udělení zápočtu za tento seminář
Jméno: Bc. Lucie Vinařská
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Specializace (uved'te zkratkou)*: ES
Semestr a školní rok zahájení práce: LS 2020/2021
Semestr a školní rok ukončení práce: LS 2021/2022
Vedoucí diplomového semináře: Prof. JUDr. PhDr. Ivo Šlosarčík, Ph.D., LL.M.
Vedoucí práce: Mitchell Young, M.A., PhD.
Název práce: Goal Setting in the Climate Policy of the EU
Charakteristika tématu práce (max. 10 řádek): This master's thesis deals with goal setting in the climate policy of the European Union. Over the recent years, the European Union (EU) has been at the forefront of the fight against climate change, mainly due to an ambitious approach to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. In order to lower the emissions that are discharged by member states, the Union has been using a strategy of setting reduction goals for a bounded time frame. To attain these goals, it is necessary not only to successfully implement the goals, but also to successfully set the goals. This thesis focuses on successful goal setting as a governance strategy of the EU.
Vývoj tématu od zadání projektu do odevzdání práce (max. 10 řádek): The Thesis underwent some major changes. According to the original project, the thesis was supposed to deal with climate policy integration, and therefore to work with Claire Dupont's concept of climate policy integration (CPI). The National Recovery Plans of the Czech Republic and Austria were chosen as case studies. However, the work took a new direction when it came to exploring the debate. The topic of goal setting seemed to be much less analysed and there was potential for interesting research.
Struktura práce (hlavní kapitoly obsahu): <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Goal Setting as a Governance Strategy2. Debating the Role of Goal Setting3. Role of Climate Goals in the EU Climate Policy Development4. Findings
Hlavní výsledky práce (max. 10 řádek): The first elaborates on the academic debate and presents an enhanced set of conditions for successful goal setting, which are later used as criteria to analyse three case studies of climate-related headline targets of the European Union. These conditions are: (a) nature of the problem, (b) character of the actors, (c) the principal features of the setting and (d) mobilisation of support in specific cases, (e) funding, (f) scientific knowledge, (g) origin

of the goal (h) translation of goals. Based on the research, over the years, the goal setting process became much more comprehensive in terms of its length and the quantity of work necessary for a goal to be set. Furthermore, the research has confirmed the evolution in both the perception of successful goal setting and the practice itself.

Prameny a literatura (výběr nejpodstatnějších):

- Fukuda-Parr, Sakiko. "From the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: Shifts in Purpose, Concept, and Politics of Global Goal Setting for Development". *Gender & Development* 24, no. 1 (January 2016): 43–52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2016.1145895> (accessed May 11, 2021).
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Etika výzkumu:**

Jazyk práce:

English language

Podpis studenta a datum

3. 5. 2022

Schváleno	Datum	Podpis
Vedoucí práce		
Vedoucí diplomového semináře		
Vedoucí specializace		
Garant oboru		

* BAS – Balkánská a středoevropská studia; ES – Evropská studia; NRS – Německá a rakouská studia; RES – Ruská a eurasijská studia; SAS – Severoamerická studia; ZES – Západoevropská studia.

** Pokud je to relevantní, tj. vyžaduje to charakter výzkumu (nebo jeho zadavatel), data, s nimiž pracujete, nebo osobní bezpečnost vaše či dalších účastníků výzkumu, vysvětlete, jak zajistíte dodržení, resp. splnění těchto etických aspektů výzkumu: 1) informovaný souhlas s účastí na výzkumu, 2) dobrovolná účast na výzkumu, 3) důvěrnost a anonymita zdrojů, 4) bezpečný výzkum (nikomu nevznikne újma).