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Energy Diplomacy in Federal Systems: A Comparative Study of Russia, Canada, and Germany

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ABSTRACT

Comparing Russia, Canada, and Germany as federal systems, this article shows how energy diplomacy is informed by federalism. Based on multi-level governance theory, it examines how institutional structures can affect the external energy policy between 2020 and 2025. The paper follows a qualitative comparative approach which relies on official reports, scholarly literature and policy papers. Results indicate that Russian centralized federalism facilitates consistent but forceful energy diplomacy, asymmetrical Canadian federalism creates innovation but fragmentation of policy, and German cooperative federalism allows genuine legitimacy, but responsiveness is impeded. The study shows that federal design is a critical determinant of the impact and the flexibility of energy diplomacy.

Keyword: Energy Diplomacy; Federal Systems; Russia; Canada; Germany; Multi-Level Governance

Introduction

Energy Diplomacy as a Means.

Energy has been a resource well as a tool of strategic influence in international relations since a long time. The idea of energy diplomacy has become more prevalent today, describing the role of energy resources, technologies, and networks as instruments of foreign policy and leverage on a global range (Quitow & Thielges, 2020). Energy diplomacy, unlike the normal diplomacy, is mostly focused on political treaties or military alliances, which lies on the borderline of economics, security, and environmental governance. Relating to bargaining over pipelines, liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals, to international collaboration in renewable technologies, and climate agreements. It is one of the most important areas of international relations at the time of a rapidly changing energy landscape and increasing geopolitical competition (Dröge & Westphal, 2021). In the meantime, federal composition of states introduces peculiarities into the



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politics of energy. Because of the way in which they are structured, federal systems partition power among central and local governments. This department influences the way energy policies are formulated, enforced and projected to overseas. In Canada, the provinces of Alberta and Quebec have a strong voice regarding energy resources and even have their own version of a paradiplomacy, that is, they seek international relationships on their own accord and beyond the Canadian state (Benz & Broschek, 2021). The federal structure of Germany that is characterized by the concept of cooperative federalism demands a strong coordination between both levels of government in making energy and climate strategies, but that usually slow down the decision-making process but increases the legitimacy (Watanabe, 2025). Through centralized federalism, which technically is a federation, Moscow has maintained a near-monopoly status over strategic energy assets which it uses as geopolitical leverage in both Europe, Asia and other regions (Kaczmarek, 2022). The comparative analysis of these three examples; Russia, Canada, and Germany provides an insight on an unusual vantage point. The three are key energy players: Russia as a fossil-fuel exporter to the globe, Canada as a supplier of fossil fuel and as an up-and-coming clean-energy collaborator, and Germany as a clean-energy consumer who has traversed the transition pathway. However, their federal systems do offer different institutional routes to how they might define energy diplomacy. The combination of these cases can lead the research to the better understanding of how federal systems predetermine international strategy in energy, and the domestic political structure interact with the global change and energy crisis.

Problem Statement

As much scholarly and policy literature on energy diplomacy exists, it is often focused on the geopolitical aspect of energy diplomacy which is great power politics or security of resources and pays little attention to the role of domestic federalism in the determination of external engagement (Quitow & Thielges, 2020; Drge & Westphal, 2021). The discrepancy is especially notable considering what happened recently: Russia has attacked Ukraine and Europe has abandoned its energy politics with Russia, and Germany has shifted toward diversifying its sources of gas quicker than ever, and Canada is also starting to make alliances with Europe and lean more toward green hydrogen (Reuters, 2024). Although there is a general sense of salience of these developments, comparative analysis of how federal systems limit or support energy diplomacy has not been undertaken as of yet. Without this analysis, scholars and policy makers are at risk of missing how the institutional factors structurally shape state behavior in energy transitions.

Aim of the Work

This paper aims to focus on the effects of federal political systems on both building and execution and outcomes of energy diplomacy. The study is aimed at discovering the institutional dynamics in which the federal settlements enable or constrain harmonious and sensible international energy policies, which, building on the examples of Russia, Canada, and Germany would be critical in light of energy crisis, geopolitical opportunism, and competitive climate undertakings in the 2020-2025 horizons.

Research Objectives

To trace the structure of energy governance institutions in Russia, Canada, and Germany. To examine the effects of federal division of power on each states ability to practice energy diplomacy.



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To determine the change in energy diplomacy approaches since 2020 and how they would respond to the changes in 2025, including global crises, and clean energy transition.

To find out comparative implications and lessons on how federal systems mediate international involvement in energy.

Research Questions

In Russia, Canada and Germany what is the devolution of energy policy powers between central and subnational levels?

What are the ways by which federal systems enhance and curtail the coherence of energy diplomacy?

What have been the domestic federal forces behind this reshaping of energy diplomacy in 2020-2025, and how have global shocks interacted with those domestic forces?

What can theory and practice learn? What lessons can be learned in a comparative manner out of the three cases?

The study is important because: 1. To know the sources of law.

The theoretical and practical importance of the research rests in it. Theoretically, it helps to bridge two areas of study federalism and energy diplomacy which are normally studied separately. The combination of them allows contributing to the body of literature on multi-level governance and international political economy and stresses the importance of institutional design in determining global agency capabilities of a state. In practice, the research provides policy-makers in federal and quasi-federal relationships with guidance on how to align domestic pluralism to external coherence in energy diplomacy. As states face the dilemma of maintaining energy security, and spearhead a global energy transformation, the need to comprehend the institutional factors that determine the success of effective diplomacy becomes imperative.

Literature Review

Energy Diplomacy as Instrument.

Recent research developed energy diplomacy as a bilateral negotiation, a game of energy resources, and multifaceted practice accompanied by the market, climate politics, and soft power. Quitzow and Thielges (2020) argue that the narrative of *Energiewende* has been positioned intentionally as an international story to further serve the purpose of the country as a leader in renewable transitions. In a similar vein, Dröge and Westphal (2021) observe that foreign policy is becoming more closely tied to climate ambition, especially in the case of crises response, specifically in Europe. The implication of this shift is that energy diplomacy ceased to be concentrated on hydro carbon activities but instead has been extended to incorporate clean energy, and technological cooperation. Yet, majority of these analyses assume states to be single actors, which do not do much justice in highlighting how internal institutional frameworks, including federal systems shape how states articulate the course of diplomatic strategies.

Department of Federal Systems and Energy Formulation

Federalism determines the production, implementation and representation of energy policies in abroad. Benz and Broschek (2021) contrast Canada and Germany, finding that the Canadian provinces tend to exercise more autonomy and may at times be independent actors in the international arena, as opposed to Germany whose consensus defined policy-making is mostly left to the Lander and the federal government. Watanabe (2025) goes further to state that the multi level governance in Germany comes with its own stability and inertia, and hence brings about difficulty in quick mobilizations to such external shocks. In Russia, however, according to scholars such as Kaczmarek (2022),



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although formally federal, energy is still strictly controlled by the central state in Moscow and so energy diplomacy is in fact a projection of the central state power. Although these works do provide insight into the ways in which federal dynamics influence domestic energy politics, they typically fail to stretch beyond the domestic to establish how such relationships influence international bargaining processes, which is the specific omission this project will fill.

Energy Diplomacy in crisis and transition

The energy crises caused by the invasion of Ukraine by Russia has further increased the intensity of diversification and climatology driven energy diplomacy. The redesign of efficient systems of diplomacy, like investment in renewables and ensuring alternative supply of LNG has not required too much time as well (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2024). In the case of Canada and Germany, a historic agreement on hydrogen was signed, which positions the distribution of this gas as an economic and geopolitical weapon to wean themselves off Russian gas. In the example of Russia, the energy science diplomacy became more oriented toward Asian markets, mostly Chinese and Indian as its European demand shrank (Kaczmarek, 2022). Yet scholarship has not yet linked how the federal design of these states was either centralized, cooperative, or asymmetrical, and how those designs facilitated or limited such quick adaptations, a development that this study will explicitly make.

Green Diplomacy Comestrue

Green energy has risen to be an international platform. According to the NATO Association of Canada (2024), the CanadaGermany Hydrogen Alliance is an example of what is termed as green diplomacy, in which energy transition objectives are used to promote diplomacy. Similarly, Watanabe (2025) sets out that Germany is now a leader in an alternative energy development and climate agenda that has enhanced the normative power in global energy policy. However, the situation within Canada is complicated by the fact that the decision-making of energy production and exports rests with its provinces, specifically Quebec and Alberta, most prominently, which makes unified diplomatic action on the part of the federal government very difficult (Benz & Broschek, 2021). This indicates that although there are promises and prospects to international prestige and cooperation through green diplomacy, the issue of federal fragmentation or centralization is determinant on how such promises and prospect are developed and reported in foreign countries.

Analytical Synthesis

Holistically, the literature makes meaningful contributions to the way that energy diplomacy has developed how crises have redefined partnerships, and the increased attention to green energy. But it also creates a blind spot: internal politics: most analyses ignore the internal political architectures through which external behavior is mediated. By making federalism the focal point of this study, this scholarship addresses that void. It points out that energy diplomacy cannot be comprehensively understood without taking a look at the institutional machineries that mediate how different authorities are allocated between the central and subnational units. This comparative outlook of Russia, Canada, Germany centralized federalism, asymmetrical centralism, and cooperative federalism, respectively, presents a new way of examining how international approaches are informed by structures at home during this volatile phase of energy transitions.



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Theoretical and Methodological Framework

Theoretical Framework

The existence of energy diplomacy in federal systems can be explained best in multi-level governance (MLG) theory. MLG was initially developed within European integration scholarship and it assumes that an authority in complex polities is decentralized between multiple layers of government, as well as policy arenas (Benz & Broschek, 2021). In energy diplomacy this implies that central governments, subnational units and even supranational actors all engage in the interaction with each other, which influences the policy outcome.

Along with MLG, there is also the structural lens that is done on a federalism theory basis. It differentiates between

Centralized Federalism (Russia) power is also constitutionally divided but in reality centralized in the hands of the center, which is able to make coherent yet inflexible foreign policy maneuvers.

In Canada, Asymmetrical Federalism provinces have unequal powers with oil-rich provinces having disproportionate control over national and international energy policies. Cooperative Federalism (Germany) policy is co-decided between the federal government and Lander and do so through shared institutions like the Bundesrat, which results in slower adaptability but legitimacy.

The external dimension is finally framed by the soft power theory and by the change in policy induced by the crisis. The narratives being communicated by energy diplomacy can range (e.g., Germany with Energiewende to global leadership in sustainability) or respond to an unexpected shock (e.g., Russia with its pivot toward Asia after 2022). In combination, these theories enable us to associate domestic federal building with outcomes events in foreign policy in comparative form.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that informs (guides) this study positions federalism as the determinant factor that influences the institutional scope of energy diplomacy. Dependent variables are energy diplomacy products (agreements, partnerships, diversification, green diplomacy). Mediating factors are dynamics of crisis (Ukraine war, world energy transition) and conditions in global market.

This framework presumes that the difference in federal design leads to different patterns of coherence, adaptability, and legitimacy in energy diplomacy:

Russia: centralized harmony, poor pluralism.

Canada: decentralized power, loose and disproportionate diplomacy.

In Germany: less responsiveness and ideology of consensus.

Research Paradigm

The paradigm of the study is a qualitative interpretivist one. Energy diplomacy is both material and discursive such that how states discourse their part, how legitimacy is constituted at levels of governance, and how international actors interpret these accounts. An interpretivist approach allows focusing on the meanings, institutional activities, and situational processes instead of focusing on material signs solely.

Research Design

It uses a comparative case study methodology, using the cases of Russia, Canada, and Germany in 2020-2025. A focused approach called the most different systems represents a guiding viewpoint in selecting the cases; each state constitutes a federal polity with



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different forms of federalism and varied diplomacy approaches on energy matters. The variation helped in convincingness by displaying the interaction between institutional design and other external pressures.

The origins and type of data used

Secondary (Secondary Data): Government STATE policy papers, Treatise, Energy partnership memorandum (Canada/German Hydrogen Alliance lies, EU diversification reports.).

Secondary (Scholarly and Policy Analyses): Academic and policy analysis-oriented studies, reports by think-tanks, news agencies (e.g., Reuters, ECFR, and SWP).

Qualitative and textual, with descriptive statistics of energy flows in those cases where possible.

Timeframe: 2020 2025 to encompass the period of the COVID-19 recovery and the war in Ukraine, as well as the Global pivot to green energy acceleration.

Data Analytic Plan

We will compare data by using thematic comparative analysis Important themes that will be coded across up to three cases include federal structures, institutional coordination, crisis adaptation, and energy diplomacy instruments. Tables of comparisons will be given to provide differences and comparisons. The analysis focuses more on tracking that of causal pathways: how the federal institutional settings transform into external diplomatic actions.

Limitations

Depending on three cases empowers depth, but it has weak generalizability. Depending on the secondary data can also limit exposure to internal decision-making processes. Nevertheless, it is possible to mitigate the biasing effect and increase validity by a combination of academic and policy triangulation.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical risks are slight since the research is based on publicly accessible materials and it is the secondary analysis. However, efforts will be made to reflect source credibility and not be geopolitically biased by cross-referencing various opinions.

Chapter Synthesis

This framework combines federalism theory, MLG, soft power, and crisis-induced transformation with a qualitative comparative approach and is therefore capable of explaining how domestic political structures influence foreign energy politics in terms of nuance. Instead of including federal structures as background variables, it considers them as the fundamental determinant in the way states such as Russia, Canada and Germany negotiate their way through global energy politics between 2020 and 2025.

Conclusions and data interpretations

Russia Case One

Russia has a formally federal system of eighty-five constituent units, but the country is governed by the centralized federalism. In reality, Kremlin controls most of the strategic industries like energy with the state owned bodies like Gazprom and Rosneft as almost sole owners (Kaczmarek, 2022). Regional governments play a marginal role and their energy industries too are highly regulated and rely heavily on central redistribution. In 2020-2025, the main characteristic of Russian energy diplomacy was the radical adaptation under the crisis. The sanctions imposed after the 2022 invasion of Ukraine



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compelled Moscow to redirect its energy exports to areas traditionally less reliant on it, namely Asia, namely China and India. This change was supported by the fact that the central government could have made very quick decisions without the involvement of the subnational actors (ECFR, 2024). Yet, the excessive use of centralization has also created the weaknesses: the weakening European consumption stalled the fiscal inflows to economies of the region, whereas, over-reliance on a few markets of Asia created a lack of negotiative power.

The Consequences: Russian centralized federalism permitted ease and swiftness of diplomatic response, however, at the cost of flexibility and local contact. Energy diplomacy consequences were strictly subordinate to the center geopolitical strategy instead of varied interests at the subnational levels.

Case 2 : Canada

Canada is an example of asymmetrical federalism, wherein provinces have given use over the natural resources under the Constitution Act, 1867. The oil and gas industry, the hydropower industry in such countries as Alberta and Quebec, that is, is a vital constituent of macro-energy picture within Canada. Ottawa reserves the right to negotiate international treaties, although provincial autonomy is associated with a divided message to the outside world (Benz & Broschek, 2021). The energy diplomacy of Canada between 2020 and 2025 is developing in two directions. On the one hand, the federal government emphasized climate diplomacy and promised to achieve net-zero by 2050 and coordinated its green energy transitions with Europe. Provincial governments meanwhile had their own priorities: Alberta still had its hands full abroad selling fossil fuel, and Quebec led the way on selling hydropower to neighbouring American states. Perhaps the most dramatic example of this multi-level dynamic is the 2024 Canada-Germany Hydrogen Alliance, a signing at the federal level but that necessarily needs provincial participation to implement (Reuters, 2024).

Finding: The asymmetrical federalism of Canada brings opportunities and challenges. Provincial autonomy adds to diplomatic toolkit access to various types of energy collaboration, but it also makes coordination more difficult in certain cases, giving incompatible signals to partners. Canadian energy diplomacy, thus, implies a multi-layered outward orientation.

Germany

In Germany, cooperative federalism means that the Lander have a major share in policy implementation but rely on federal coordination of international treaties. This is institutionalized by Bundesrat which, according to Lander, is the representative path of energy policy at the federal level (Watanabe, 2025). The Ukraine war had remodeled Germany energy diplomacy by highlighting weaknesses associated with Russian gas reliance between the period of 2020 and 2025. Meanwhile, the government launched the RePowerEU programme that also involved the instant diversification to LNG imports and investing more into green energy (ECFR, 2024). At the same time, Germany was promoting its Energiewende to the rest of the world, which has new partners to cooperate with, such as Canada to import hydrogen (NATO Association of Canada, 2024). Interaction between Lander and the federal government was very vital: agreeing on contracts was one thing as it was federal government and implementation was another as the Lander had to participate in infrastructure, regulatory, industrial fitting.

Learning: Germany, federal, political process in the diplomacy of energy was inclusive and gave legitimacy to the German system of energy diplomacy; however, consensus slowed down decision-making, which was a problem sometimes. Its foreign policy led to



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a successful incorporation of leadership within renewables but was less responsive during impending emergencies.

Comparative Findings

The three cases reveal how different federal structures shape distinct patterns of energy diplomacy:

Dimension	Russia (Centralized Federalism)	Canada (Asymmetrical Federalism)	Germany (Cooperative Federalism)
Authority Distribution	Highly centralized under Moscow	Provinces retain strong autonomy	Shared authority through federal-Länder mechanisms
Diplomatic Coherence	Strong, top-down, centralized	Fragmented, pluralist	Moderately coherent, consensus-based
Adaptability	Rapid in crises but rigid in scope	Flexible but inconsistent	Legitimate and stable, but slower
Key Outcome (2020–2025)	Pivot to Asia post-Ukraine war	Hydrogen diplomacy with Germany, paradiplomacy	Diversification & soft provincial power through Energiewende

Overall Finding: Federal design is a critical determinant of energy diplomacy. Centralized federalism enhances coherence but reduces pluralism, asymmetrical federalism enables diversity but risks fragmentation, and cooperative federalism ensures legitimacy but slows adaptability. These findings confirm that federal systems are not merely domestic arrangements; they directly shape how states act and react in international energy politics.

Discussion

Federal Systems and the Structuring of Energy Diplomacy

The comparative analysis indicates that federal systems significantly precondition the manner in which states approach the area of energy diplomacy. The strong points of centralized federalism in Russia, including coherence and speed of reaction in critical situations, are combined with the disadvantages of the lack of adaptability when the voices of regions are not included. In Canada, asymmetrical federalism bestows on the provinces the capacity of being semi-autonomous actors on the international stage regarding energy cooperation, presenting both positive diplomatic diversity and disunity. Germany has cooperative federalism which takes a middle ground, as it makes the proceedings legitimate based on consensus, but at times this makes the diplomacy too slow. These results support the arguments of multi-level governance (MLG) theory which underlines the fact that power in present-day states is divided among several levels of government (Marks, Hooghe, & Schakel, 2021). However, there are also significant differences that the cases show: in Russia, the subnational powers are mere figurehead in energy matters, whereas in Canada and Germany, they contribute materially to external



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interactions. Therefore, the research paper highlights a need to explain MLG in subdivisions into the regime type and political culture in federal systems.

Energy Diplomacy Foreign Policy instrument

Energy diplomacy is no longer a technical or economic practice, but strategic extension of foreign policy. In Russia, it was turned into a geopolitical weapon in 2022, and it shows how governmental control can very quickly redirect the energy streams to political endgames (Kaczmarek, 2022). Canada, on the other hand, applied the strategy of energy diplomacy in a less cohesive and more positive manner with provincial variety enabling it to discuss matters with several partners, including Alberta oil industry to Asia and Quebec hydroelectric collaboration with the American states. In reality, this course of action pitched Energiewende to the outside world, as energy diplomacy was reduced to a synonym with climate leadership and soft power marketing (Watanabe, 2025). Collectively, these trends show that federal systems not only influence the processes of decision-making, but also the content of energy diplomacy. Centralized federalism leans toward securitization, asymmetrical federalism to diversification and cooperative federalism to consensus-based sustainability.

Soft power, legitimacy and transnational alliances

The other major theme is that of federal systems that influence the soft power potential of energy diplomacy. Cooperative federalism in Germany allowed the country to present a convincing foreign policy with regards to climate change, owing to the fact that regional governments were part and parcel of the climate diplomacy. Canada capitalized on the provincialism (e.g. Quebec as a clean energy leader) to be able to cast a broad range of legitimacy bases. Conversely, centralizing Russia reduced its soft power since it excluded regional voices and civil society, a move that further lacked credibility in international markets that were doubtful of Moscow's intentions. This adds to the point that federal inclusivity upsurges diplomatic power, whereas centralization, though effective, is soon going to diminish international trustworthiness (Keating & Hepburn, 2022).

The overworked Federal Energy System and flexibility

A stress test was natural in the 2022 war in Ukraine. The centralized form of federalism in Russia enabled them to quickly shift towards Asia, but left little space to develop adaptive policy innovations on a regional basis. Slower in responding to the immediate crisis, yet in the medium term reorganized strategy in regions, cooperation and therefore federalism generated in Germany. Canada had created asymmetrical federalism, which brought flexibility yet the coherence risked as provincial interests and those of the business interests did not always go hand in hand in external bargaining. This corroborates the argument on IR that institutional flexibility in federations can strengthen or weaken crisis adaptability because of the ability of privileging subnational actors in the foreign policy realms (Benz & Broschek, 2021).

He is a contributor to the literature on International Relations and Federalism studies.

There are three primary contributions of this study to the field:

A bridging of federalism and IR: It reveals federal systems represented not only in terms of domestic settlements but also in terms of the style, contents and effectiveness of international energy diplomacy.

Expanding MLG theory: It demonstrates that MLG functions in different ways through regimes such as authoritarian federalism (Russia), asymmetrical federalism (Canada) and cooperative federalism (Germany) and as such complicates the issue of its universal applicability.

Recasting energy diplomacy: It also discursively conceives energy diplomacy as a place



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where the federal provisions inside a country directly overlap at the international level of bargaining power, legitimacy, and soft power.

Synthesis

To conclude, federalism is a domestic funnel in international action. The comparative analysis of Russia, Canada, and Germany evinces that no one federal model can be better than other because it yields both strengths and weaknesses in energy diplomacy. The problem in front of policymakers is how to reconcile coherence with inclusivity, and speed and legitimacy in a world where energy transitions and geopolitical crises are starting to overlap.

Arguments and prescriptions.

The paper aimed to investigate the influence of federal systems on energy diplomacy by analyzing three cases that included Russia, Canada, and Germany in 2020-2025. By relying on the dual theoretical approach of federalism and multi-level governance (MLG) and energy diplomacy, the study is able to show that a federal system of government is inherently a meaningful determinant of how states utilize power, collaborate and solve crises in the global energy politics.

The key conclusions are the following:

Federalism as a Power-sharing Variant Intrastate

Federal systems do not passively constitute the domestic order but also devise the foreign policy action. Centralized federalism (Russia) is coherent, but not inclusive; asymmetrical federalism (Canada) is diversified but territorially fragmented; and cooperative federalism (Germany) is inclusive, but slow to reach conclusions.

Energy Diplomacy that is Not Economic

Energy diplomacy is shown as a projection of the foreign policy strategy. It can be used as a coercive weapon (Russia), diversify its platform (Canada), or act as a soft-power instrument of climate leadership (Germany). The organizational forms of the state within each federal structure places even more emphasis on which of these roles is decisive.

Crisis In Critical Testing

The Ukraine war has revealed the strong and the weak points of different federal systems. The response of Russia showed a certain speed of adjustment in central control, but the price was the loss of later credibility. Germany was focused on legitimacy and renewable leadership, but it had to take more time to reform its energy policy. Flexibility manifested itself in Canada at once as innovation and as incoherence.

Theoretical and IR Contribution:

The findings build upon MLG theory by demonstrating the mediation of applicability of the MLG in terms of regime type and political culture. They also define the federalism as a key variable in international relations; a home screen that sets the scale, validity, and flexibility of energy diplomacy.

Policy Recommendations

The recommendations based on the comparative insights include the following ones:

For Russia:

Decentralize in more than centralism: Involve regional players in international energy issues, and strengthen soft power and legitimacy.

Develop more long term resilience measures to prevent overdependence on coercive



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energy diplomacy.

For Canada:

Improve coordination among federal and provincial players to minimize lack of coordination during international negotiations.

Privatize the independence of foreign energy policies in intergovernmental forums, and institutionalize it to be subject to national consistency.

For Germany:

Simplify the decision making mechanisms of cooperative federalism to allow faster response by the authorities to crises.

Keep presenting the Energiewende as an international example, harmonizing national and state policy so that there are no internal inconsistencies.

To the Federal States in General:

Strike a balance between inclusivity and coherence: productive energy diplomacy can only be achieved with both bottom-up legitimacy and top-down coordination.

Understand that federal design inform international leverage; federal states ought to explicitly adopt subnational actors into their foreign policy.

Academic Recommendations

Bridging Federalism and IR: Scholars can also research more on how national federal systems may serve as variables in international relations, particularly in such areas of international relations as trade, climate change and security.

Future work: Future work needs to refine MLG by distinguishing authoritarian, asymmetrical and cooperative federal contexts.

Future Development of Comparative Research: Future comparative research would be interesting to investigate further in comparative studies in other countries like India, Brazil, and the United States that do not resemble the comparative countries Russia, Canada, and Germany, but perhaps seeing how federalism is applied in those countries would deepen the understanding of the importance of federalism in global energy politics.

Methodological Contribution: A mixed-methods research design would be more effective to identify the interplay between the domestic federal dynamics and international bargaining in the research.

Way Forward

As the world of energy passes through a period of dramatic change due to a plethora of factors (climate imperatives, technological revolutions, and geopolitical conflicts) the aspect of federalism in energy diplomacy will be even more prominent. This paper has highlighted that there is no universally superior federal system; each of the systems has its unique gains and weaknesses. The history points to the future of finding institutional solutions that unite centralized constraints and informality at the federal levels that allow states to engage in energy-related diplomacy that is both credible and adaptive. Energy diplomacy in federal systems is not simply a matter of getting resources or markets, but one of negotiating the trade-off between pluralism and coherence at the domestic level and at the international. To move forward, states need to understand that their federal structure is not one purely domestic to them. It is a policy indicator of their position in the world in the era of energy transition.



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