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# From a ‘Liberal’ to a ‘Social democratic’ welfare state: the translation of the English Compact into a Swedish context

Håkan Johansson and Mairon Johansson

## Abstract

England was one of the first countries to install a Compact to regulate the relationship between state and civil society and since then several other countries have followed and initiated national Agreements, Charters or Concordats. Despite a growing academic interest into such national Compact models we have insufficient knowledge of how such ideas ‘from abroad’ are adapted and molded to fit with ‘domestic’ legacies, institutions and power disparities. The purpose of this article is to analyze the translation of the English Compact into a Swedish context and above all how domestic Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) acted to adjust such an international model to a national context. The article draws upon studies of written documents and interviews with key actors (politicians and CSO representatives) and two main conclusions are being presented. First, the article demonstrates that CSOs played an important role as translation agents as they identified the Compact idea long before key decision makers did, yet that the complete translation of the Compact model into a Swedish context was dependent upon the political will and ownership of central decision-makers. Second, the article demonstrates that the translation process was not as ordered as sometimes depicted within the translation literature and instead chains of translation processes was detected. These findings address a need to open up the translation perspective for the analysis of multiple types of translation agents and to understand translation as a nested process, in which one translation process might very well be interrelated with other parallel translation processes.

**KEYWORDS:** civil society organizations, political participation, policy translation, compacts

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## Introduction

Supranational, national and local public institutions are currently seeking new ideas for how citizens can become more active in discussion and decision-making, as ways of revitalizing democracy and policy development. The United Nations (UN) has increased its efforts to stimulate civil society engagement, for instance to get development programs attuned to citizens' concerns and enlist popular support. The European Union (EU) has decided to promote ideas about participatory democracy as part of the new Lisbon Treaty, e.g. through the Citizens' Initiative and the Dialogue with Civil Society Organizations (EC 2001). Also, national governments have paid greater attention to their relationship to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). This is sometimes done in an *ad hoc* manner, but we can also find a trend of more formalized 'agreements of cooperation' or institutionalized civil dialogues between the government and CSOs, i.e. with regard to each partner's role, mutual obligations and the expected forms of dialogue and consultation.

One of the first countries to enact such an agreement was England, which in the late 1990s decided to install a *Compact* between the state and the voluntary sector (Osborne & McClaughlin 2003; Plowden 2003; Zimmek et al. 2011). Several countries have since then initiated so-called *Agreements*, *Charters* or *Concordats*: e.g. Ireland (2000), Denmark (2001), France (2001), Estonia (2002), Latvia (2005), Lithuania (2007), and Slovenia (2007) (Casey et al. 2010; Bullain & Toftisova 2005; Obradovic 2005). This list of national Compacts could be read as a sign of extensive exchanges of ideas between different national contexts and in October 2008 also the Swedish Government decided to enact an Agreement with civil society organizations working with social and welfare issues (Johansson, H. *et al.* 2011). Like in many other European countries, the English Compact served as a role-model for the development of the Swedish agreement in the area of social welfare policies.

The purpose of this article is to analyse the translation of the English Compact into a Swedish context and above all the role Swedish CSOs played during this translation process. Despite a growing academic interest into different national Compact models, we have insufficient knowledge of how such ideas 'from abroad' are adapted and molded to fit with 'domestic' legacies, institutions and power disparities and how different actors, and above all how domestic CSOs act to adjust such an international model to a national context. The article draws on a series of interviews with key actors (politicians and CSOs' representatives) as well as written documents (government reports and CSO documents) (Johansson, M. 2011). The article demonstrates that the translation processes stretched over a significant number of years; that CSOs played a significant role

during the initial phase of this process, but that the government was the key actor in completing the translation of the English Compact into a Swedish context.

### **Theories on policy transfer – policy translation**

Academic debates on how ideas and models travel across borders and over time often use notions such as *policy transfer* (e.g. Evans & Davies 2003; Dolowitz & Marsh 2000) or *policy translation* (e.g. Czarniawska & Joerges 1996 & 1998). This article draws on the translation perspective to analyse how the idea of a Compact traveled from England to Sweden and whether it changed during this process. To fully grasp the translation perspective, we will shortly discuss the key elements of the transfer perspective to illustrate differences between the two.

Investigations of how ideas transfer tend to put emphasis on large scale processes such as globalization and Europeanization, which have spurred a growing interest and awareness among policy makers about the interrelatedness of economic, social and environmental problems around the world (Dolowitz 2003). Large international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Trade Organization are generally portrayed as key actors in transfer processes as they promote ideas and policies and put pressure on countries to adjust and conform (e.g. Dobbin et al. 2007). Their promotion of a certain solution or reference to how *country x* handled a problem are seen as central in a transfer processes, as experiences in other countries and/or by supranational organizations can be read as a laboratory of ‘natural experiments’. Given that the available information about these experiences is sufficiently precise, accurate and relevant, the main research question concerns how domestic policy makers use them as sources of inspirations or models for new policies in the domestic context (Rose 1991 & 1993; Bennett 1991; Dolowitz & Marsh 1996).

This interest into international ‘models’ has encouraged policy transfer scholars to analyse the degree to which external factors ‘force’ countries (and national governments) to adjust and comply with ongoing changes. Here it is, however, possible to divide the policy transfer literature into two different camps. One understand these processes as *coercive forms of policy diffusion*, i.e. mainly addressing structural pressures such as the use of conditions in international politics and structures of ideological hegemony and how national governments adjust to these pressures (e.g. Newmark 2002; Dobbin et al. 2007). Here we find strong similarities with Rogers’ (2003) classic conception of policy diffusion. The other camp is more concerned with *voluntary forms of lesson drawing*, i.e. seeing policy makers as rational actors and making informed choices. Scholars such as Stone (1999) and Rose (1991 & 1993) emphasize that policy transfer embeds a voluntary activity. Key decision makers hence import innovative policies from a certain context under the belief that they will have the same effect in a different

context. However, some scholars have argued that it is analytically misleading to construct too rigid boundaries between the two camps, and that it is more appropriate to approach policy transfer as a continuum between coercive *and* voluntary forms of policy transfer (e.g. Dolowitz & Marsh 2000).

A promising attempt to overcome the divide between coercive and voluntary accounts of transfer has been labeled the *translation perspective*. It started when Latour criticized the notion of policy diffusion for being mechanical, and argued that 'transfer' ought to be contrasted to a model of 'translation'. By policy translation he meant that ...

'... the spread in time and space of anything – claims, orders, artefacts, goods – is in the hand of the people; each of this people may act in many different ways, letting the token drop, or modifying it, or deflecting it or betraying it, or adding to it, or appropriating it' (Latour 1986:267).

This idea of studying the travel of ideas and models as a complex process, involving actors who actively *interpret* and *act upon* the 'original idea' hence marked a clear diversion from previous accounts on policy transfer which had paid little interest into what happened with the policy idea/model as such. This analytical interest into the translation of ideas and models has been explored further within organizational research (e.g. Czarniawska & Joerges 1996; Sahlin-Anderson & Wedling 2008). Czarniawska-Joerges & Sevón (2005:8) have for instance argued that '... a thing moved from one place to another cannot emerge unchanged: to set something into a new place is to construct it anew'. Within the translation literature we also find attempts to analytically identify different phases of a translation process. Czarniawska & Joerges (1996 & 1998) as well as Erlingsdottir & Lindberg (2005) have presented the following analytical model.

The translation process starts with separation of an idea from its institutional surroundings, which is referred to as the *disembedding stage*. After the idea has been fully separated it, however, has to change character and be turned into an object, such as a text, a picture or a prototype. These scholars refer to this stage as a form of *packaging*. Such an object then could travel through the relevant field of organizations to another time and place, where it is translated to fit the new context, which Erlingsdottir & Lindberg (2005:48) frames as a process of *unpacking* the object. In the next and final stage, the incoming idea becomes part of the domestic institutional surrounding. This suffices a process of *re-embedding*, which makes the idea a 'natural' part of the institutional order, i.e. taken for granted. As this final stage is completed, a new translation process can take on and the embedded idea can become disembedded in order to travel through time and space again (ibid, p. 48).

In contrast to the transfer perspective, the main benefit of the translation perspective ought to be that it highlights different stages of a translation process; that actors actively interpret original ideas, and that ideas inevitably change as they are retrieved and inserted into another context. It is hence a sophisticated analytical framework for the analysis of ideas coming from highly disparate institutional contexts (Johnson 2003), which is the object of study in this article. The remaining empirical sections of this article will hence use notions such as *disembedding*, *packaging*, *unpackaging* and *re-embedding* to analyse the translation of the Compact into a Swedish context.

### **The institutional context: part of a Social Democratic welfare state regime**

The translation perspective highlights the importance of understanding the social, political and cultural context into which ideas and models are being translated. Sweden is generally portrayed as part of a ‘Social democratic welfare state regime’, in contrast to England which is seen as a Liberal welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990). In England – as well as in many other liberal welfare states – CSOs (third sector organizations, voluntary organizations etcetera) have played a significant role in producing welfare service for citizens. This has rarely been the case in Sweden, in which the state has been the main producer of welfare for citizens (Svedberg & Olsson 2010). Of course much more could be said on this matter, but as a historical legacy it constitutes an important background to understand the stance and actions taken by both government and CSOs’ representatives with regard to translating the English Compact into a Swedish context.

Another important element of the Swedish institutional context concerns its long history of ‘social corporativism’, i.e. institutionalized contacts, negotiations and joint decision making between the state and organized social interests (Lewin 1992; Rothstein 1992). This model of interest intermediation implies that citizens could try to influence public policies in two ways: through voting at general elections (the ‘electoral channel’) and through membership in interest groups (the ‘corporate channel’, Rokkan 1999). This corporate channel, however, rarely included organizations representing groups outside the economic sphere, except for organizations of the old age pensioners and of persons with disabilities (e.g. Feltenius 2004). This model of corporatism started to change at the beginning of the 1990s when the Swedish employer federation opted out of partner discussions and arrangements. This constituted a major setback for the labor movement yet was also an indication to CSOs (voluntary organizations, service providers, user groups etcetera) that they could start to play a role they had not previously been allowed to have (Hermansson et al. 1999). The possible

'fall' of the corporatist tradition constitutes another important element of the institutional surroundings to fully grasp CSOs interest into the English Compact.

### **A Swedish CSO searches for ideas**

The idea of having a Swedish Compact was initially explored by a Swedish umbrella organization called the National Forum for Voluntary Social Work (hereafter 'the Forum'). The organization brings together approx. 30 to 40 national (and local) voluntary organizations, such as the Salvation Army, IOGT-NTO (the leading Swedish temperance organization), Save the Children, Lions Club International, the Swedish Red Cross etcetera. One of Forum's members had come in contact with the Compact model during a visit to England already in the late 1990s, that is, just after it had been enacted. However, it took a few years before Forum more directly started to promote the idea of a formalized agreement between the state and CSOs working in the social welfare sector (Interview Cesam 2008). Several factors seem to coincide for why it took some years until the idea was picked up by the organization.

Some of Forum's member organizations had started to raise concern over the growing service provider role they had to shoulder on the local level. Local governments provided them with less financial support through general subsidies and public funding was increasingly based upon short term contracts often directly related to a specific project. Members expressed that these changing circumstances could jeopardize their activities at local levels and asked for more transparent working conditions. These concerns coincided with organizational changes in Forum. The organization changed leadership and the newly appointed leader had the ambition to develop the organization into a much more purposive advocacy organization, with extensive lobbying strategies and contacts with key decision-makers, something he also got support for by the organizations members (Johansson, M. 2011). Arguably, the idea of a national Compact fitted well with both the concerns raised by some of Forum's members as well as changed organizational priorities.

### **Attempts to translate the Compact into a Swedish context**

Forum conducted study visits to both Denmark and England to learn more about their national models. Although Denmark and Sweden are closely related concerning welfare state configurations (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990), Forum dismissed the Danish model because the central government had been too much involved in developing the Danish Charter (Johansson, M. 2011). The organization found the English Compact much more promising and was especially intrigued by the role the National Council for Voluntary Organizations

(the largest umbrella body for the voluntary and community sector in the England, hereafter NCVO) had played in preparing the Compact (see Compact 1998 & 2008; Craig et al. 2005; CPPP 2000; NCVO 1996; Zimmek et al. 2011). Forum got the impression that NCVO not only had taken the initiative to form a Compact, but also been recognized as a partner by the government in developing the Compact (Interview Forum September 2005).

There was actually a transfer option for Forum at this time. The English Compact had been running for a number of years and was a well-documented and accessible model, i.e. packed and ready to be transferred, yet here we find that Forum was equally critical to the Compact. The organization argued that the English welfare state was too liberal and market oriented and reacted against elements in the Compact that promoted CSOs' role as service providers (Interview Forum 2005). Instead of directly transferring the model into a Swedish context, the English Compact became Forum's main object of reference and Forum started to promote the idea of *a formalized agreement*, which took place at national and local conferences, in policy papers and information letters (Forum 2007). However, it was not until spring 2005 that Forum had turned the English-inspired idea into a proposal on its own. By then, the English Compact had been adjusted and amended to Forum's own ambitions and organizational profile.

The unpackaged idea was titled 'Spelregelsavtalet' (i.e. contract regarding 'the rules of the game') and consisted of three broad principles: independence from the state; long-term financial public support and cooperation with public authorities on equal grounds, i.e. three highly visionary principles. In contrast to the liberal British welfare state, Forum acclaimed '... that voluntary organizations are not to act as service delivery partners for the state, but to be recognized as organizations with a democratic function and promoters of social solidarity and trust between citizens', and that '... voluntary organizations are to be autonomous of the state, in terms of deciding by themselves on their activities, whom to cooperate with and for what purposes – such aspects of the voluntary sector that should not be hampered by financial conditions' (Forum 2009).

To continue to promote the idea of a 'Spelregelavtal', Forum invited NCVO leaders and key researchers from England to national conferences and events. Such lobbying activities appear to have had some effect, as Forum managed to set up a meeting with the Social Democratic Prime Minister and two of his ministers (in charge of social welfare issues and democracy) in autumn 2005. This was hence the opportunity for Forum to embed its model into a national political context, yet despite some positive response from the Prime Minister, one of the Ministers was clearly against the idea of a Swedish Compact. Almost like Forum, he criticized the idea from an ideological point of view and argued that only public authorities should shoulder the responsibility for citizens' wellbeing, a responsibility that should not be left to either private companies or

CSOs. The Minister maintained that CSOs' involvement in welfare service delivery was a method by the New Labour government to try to avoid raising taxes and according to him, not a desirable solution in Sweden (Interview Minister of Social Affairs, 2007). Arguably, Forum had managed to disembed, pack and unpack the English Compact into a nationally adjusted model, yet without gaining any support for fully translating it and re-embedding it a Swedish context.

### **The government takes the lead**

The translation of the English Compact enters into a new stage as a result of a parliamentary election in autumn 2006. A Liberal-Conservative alliance comes into power and expresses a much more positive standpoint towards a redefined relationship between the state and the voluntary sector. In an article in one of Sweden's leading newspapers, two Liberal-Conservative Ministers argued that '... there had been an ideological blindness with regard to the voluntary sector's contribution and potential contribution to the society...' and in this same article they launched the idea of a broader dialogue with the voluntary sector about each partner's rights and responsibilities (Sabuni and Hägglund 2007). They made direct reference to the English Compact, as well as similar agreements in Denmark, Estonia, Canada and France' (ibid.).

The government mentioned several motives for establishing what they referred to as an *agreement*. One was to strengthen CSOs' independence from the state and promote their democratic potential. Another was to involve a greater number of actors involved in delivering and producing welfare services to citizens. The government's motives for an agreement were hence to engage them as being producers of welfare, working on contracts for the public sector and competing with both private and public service providers, *as well as* to encourage CSOs to fill a democratic function in society and express the voice of citizens (ibid.).

Government officials were clearly inspired by the English Compact and made visits to England, holding meetings with representatives of the NCVO and other organizations in charge of the Compact. They were also aware that Forum had made similar visits and had lobbied in favor of its 'Spelregelavtal', but Forum's packaging did not suit the government's agenda as it directly emphasized CSOs' role as providers of welfare services.

### **A new translation process begins**

Based on their view on the English Compact, the Centre-Conservative government decided to invite a wide range of CSOs to discuss *their* idea of a Swedish agreement and approx. 80 CSOs were invited to a series of *dialogue meetings*. These meetings took place in autumn 2007, yet it soon became clear that government officials could not ‘interact’ with such a large number of CSOs. Participants in these dialogue meetings were hence encouraged to elect representatives who could take a much more active role in developing a national agreement (Swedish government 2007 & 2009).

These election procedures resulted in the formation of a *proposal group* consisting of eight CSOs. In addition to Forum the proposal group consisted of one umbrella organization that represented service provider organizations, the Swedish Disability Federation, one large employer organization for service provider cooperatives, the main cooperation group for ethnic associations in Sweden, Save the Children, Christian Council of Sweden and one local CSO working with democratic development. Among these, two CSO representatives were elected to a so-called *editorial group*. As anticipated, Forum was one of them, but it also included the main organization of national non-profit service providers, an organization named Famna ([www.famna.se](http://www.famna.se)). Arguably, Forum had lost its position as *the* leading CSO working for a national agreement, yet remained at the center of the negotiations with the government.

Members of the proposal and editorial groups met on a regular basis with government officials from January through March 2008. Meetings took place on a weekly basis, and members discussed drafts for a possible national agreement, i.e. a form of unpackaging the general idea of a formalized agreement. CSO representatives (and above all Forum and Famna) hence had an obvious opportunity to shape the idea of a formalized agreement together with state officials. This most likely also took place; however, the government was certainly the leading party as it set the agenda for the negotiations. It was the government, which decided on the timetable for the negotiations. It was also the government, which took the initiative to present a draft proposal for a future agreement, as a way to set the agenda for joint deliberations (Johansson, M. 2011).

### **The Compact is turned into a Swedish agreement**

These dialogue meetings resulted in a formal agreement between the state and CSOs working with social welfare issues. The agreement was formally approved by the government in October 2008 and presented to the parliament. The agreement as such is a lengthy document and has a similar structure as the English Compact (as it had been initially designed in the late 1990s). As noted in other

contributions to this volume, the Compact was based on five principles: funding and procurement code, consultation and policy appraisal code, volunteering code, black and minority code and community code and they have undergone several changes since then. Some of these principles were addressed in the debates within the proposal and editor groups and molded to fit national circumstances, while others were completely irrelevant (e.g. black and minority code, volunteering code and the like).

The result of the discussions and negotiations within the abovementioned working groups was a document consisting of six principles (Swedish government 2009). These are *autonomy and independence* (securing the voluntary sector's independence, democratic function and critical position vis-à-vis the state), *dialogue* (open and inclusive decision-making structures), *quality* (services provided by voluntary organizations should be evaluated, audited and proven accountable like public and private services), *continuity* (provide voluntary organizations with stable working conditions, e.g. regarding broad political support for the Agreement), *transparency* (mutual trust between the state and the sector requires exchange of information and data on planning, services and activities) and *diversity* (voluntary organizations need to have better conditions to develop services for citizens, which is considered good in itself as a way to address the variety of needs among citizens. Arguably, some of these appear to share resemblance with the English role-model.

Moreover, the Swedish agreement presupposed a distinguished logic in terms of linking general principles regarding rights and duties to mutual 'commitments' and 'measures' that would secure each partner's obligations to the agreement as such. These are more practical and include, for instance, sharing of information, preparing research activities, funding exercises etcetera. These were introduced by the government during the negotiations, with the intention to make the agreement more concrete and to establish a list of activities that partners had to commit themselves to when signing the agreement (ibid.). The English Compact had a similar design. That is, what appears to have been translated was not only some general ideas about CSOs as advocates as well as service providers, but also that these could be held accountable as they decide to sign the agreement.

### **The present status of the agreement**

The government's decision to install a national agreement bring forward question whether the idea now has been completely embedded into the national institutional context, i.e. the last stage of the translation process. We argue that there are different ways to answer this question.

The agreement seem to be an evident feature of the national institutional context, not only due to the government's decision but also considering that

several national umbrella CSOs have decided to sign up the agreement. Since no umbrella organization exists to represent all Swedish CSOs, it has been left open for individual organizations to decide whether they will sign up, or not. At present approx. 50 national CSOs (often large umbrella organizations) have decided to sign the agreement (see [www.overenskommelsen.se](http://www.overenskommelsen.se)). The agreement has also served as a role-model for similar processes within other policy fields. Nowadays we find a national agreement in the area of integration policies and also in the areas of human rights and cultural policies (Integrations- och jämställdhetsdepartementet 2010). These were prepared in a similar manner as the ‘original’ agreement, i.e. initial dialogue meetings with CSOs, formation of a partner to negotiate with, establishment of common principles, commitments and measures etcetera. The enactment of national agreements in other policy areas could hence be identified as subsequent translation of the original translation processes. That is, the idea has not only been embedded, it has also been disembedded and translated into other policy fields.

However, there are reasons to question whether the agreement has been fully embedded into the national institutional context. Like most other national Compact models, it is not legally binding but rest on the goodwill of the actors involved (Johansson et al 2011). The national government has not forced local municipalities to implement local agreements despite that these run most of Sweden’s social and welfare services. Despite that the agreement gained extensive political recognition during the dialogue process and just after its completion, it also seems to have lost significance for key national policy-makers. It appears to be removed from the government’s political agenda it is left for CSOs to push for the ‘implementation’ of the agreement into national politics and institutional structures. At present, few local municipalities have developed a local agreement of their own. Only six out of 290 local municipalities have made a local version of the national agreement (Kansliet för Överenskommelsen 2012). In other words, the government might have taken a decision on an agreement and it might as well have been translated into other policy areas, but its contemporary significance for the actors involved appears to be limited.

### **Concluding discussion**

The purpose of this article was to study the translation of the English Compact into a Swedish context and above all to analyse the role Swedish CSOs played during this translation process. The article demonstrates that the translation process has taken almost ten years and that it is not as ordered as the theoretical models contend. Several translation processes rather take place at the same time and several translation agents are involved in the process. This could be summarized in table 1 (see below).

The initial translation process is characterized by the clear presence of a small number of CSOs and above all, Forum as the leading translation agent. Their role has not been explored within the translation literature, but this case study illustrates that they certainly acts as important actors in translation processes. Forum managed to disembed the idea of a formalized agreement from its institutional setting and pack and unpack it into a model that could attract attention in a different national context. The model of a national Spelregelavtal was adjusted to Sweden's political and ideological trajectory, as some aspects of the English Compact were directly disregarded. However, our case also illustrates that CSOs might experience extensive difficulties when trying to fully translate an idea into a different context. Despite that Forum managed to separate the idea of a formalized agreement between the state and CSOs from its institutional surroundings, there was not embedding of the idea into a Swedish context. The idea did not fit the political agenda of the Social Democratic party at that time.

**Table 1. Stages during the translation process**

	<i>First process of translation</i>	<i>Second process of translation</i>
<i>Disembedding</i>	Forum makes visit to England and are inspired by the Compact.	The Centre-Conservative government makes study visits to England and is inspired by the Compact.
<i>Packaging</i>	Forum turns the Compact model into an idea of a formalized relationship between state and CSOs	The government turns the Compact model into an idea of a formalized relationship between state and CSOs.
<i>Unpackaging</i>	The general idea is turned into the Spelregelavtal, aiming to safeguard CSOs independency and advocacy role	The general idea is turned into the agreement model, aiming to explore CSOs dual roles service providers and advocates.
<i>Embedding</i>	Forum meets with Social democratic government, yet gains no support for embedding the model and completing the translation process	The government takes a decision on a national agreement, yet the agreement remains weakly embedded.

Whereas CSOs played a key role during the initial translation process, the following process is much more dominated by government representatives. It is hard to fully separate these processes and to some extent they are inseparable and overlapping, but even though the model of inspiration is similar, the process and

the actors involved differ. The government made a similar journey as Forum's representatives and initially seemed to share the general idea of the need to establish a more formalized relationship between the state and CSOs working with social welfare issues; however these officials pick up slightly different elements from the English Compact. As noted, the main aim was to establish an agreement which formalizes CSOs' dual role, i.e. as service providers *as well as* independent advocates of citizens' rights. It would, however, be misleading to contend that the government was the exclusive translation agent, and above all as the actual development of the formal document was done in interactions and negotiations with a number of CSOs.

The table forms the basis for two final conclusions. First, this article demonstrates that CSOs can play an important role as translation agents as they identify ideas and models long before key decision makers do, and act as brokers of these ideas. However, our study demonstrates that a complete translation of an idea, e.g. how it is institutionalized and turned into a national model, is highly dependent upon political will and ownership by central official decision-makers. This has theoretical implications. Within the translation perspective there is *a need to open up for the analysis of multiple types of translation agents*, in which public as well as non-public actors play different roles in a translation process. Second, this article demonstrates that a translation process is rarely as ordered as sometimes depicted within the translation literature. On the contrary it seems more appropriate to analytically approach the translation of an idea or object over time and across borders in terms of a chain of translation processes, in which one translation process is interrelated with another and often followed by subsequent translation processes, which makes it hard to fully detect the complete embedding of an idea into a new institutional context. This calls for understanding *policy translation as a nested process*, in which one translation process might very well be interrelated with other parallel translation processes. Considering the installment of additional agreements in other policy fields, the table above could hence be complemented with other additional translation processes (horizontal in terms of spread to other policy areas as well as vertical in terms of spread to local level). To further explore the potential of these analytical suggestions demand additional empirical analyses, something that lies beyond the scope of this article.

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