PALGRAVE STUDIES IN EUROPEAN UNION POLITICS
SERIES EDITORS:
MICHELLE EGAN · NEILL NUGENT · WILLIAM E. PATERSON

International Networks, Advocacy and EU Energy Policy-Making

Alexandra-Maria Bocse

palgrave
macmillan

Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics

Following on the sustained success of the acclaimed European Union Series, which essentially publishes research-based textbooks, Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics publishes cutting edge research-driven monographs. The remit of the series is broadly defined, both in terms of subject and academic discipline. All topics of significance concerning the nature and operation of the European Union potentially fall within the scope of the series. The series is multidisciplinary to reflect the growing importance of the EU as a political, economic and social phenomenon. To submit a proposal, please contact Senior Editor Ambra Finotello ambra.finotello@palgrave.com.

More information about this series at
http://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/14629

Alexandra-Maria Bocse

International Networks, Advocacy and EU Energy Policy-Making

palgrave
macmillan

Alexandra-Maria Bocse
International Relations Department
London School of Economics and Political Science
London, UK

ISSN 2662-5873 ISSN 2662-5881 (electronic)
Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics
ISBN 978-3-030-49504-6 ISBN 978-3-030-49505-3 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49505-3

Cover credit: Magic Lens / Shutterstock

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Mette Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Julie Smith for the support offered in the development of this research project. I owe gratitude to Joanna Depledge and Christoph Meyer for the great comments made on the manuscript. Special thanks go to Oliver Krentz for his availability to read my work and always provide a candid opinion.

I am grateful to Trinity College Cambridge and London School of Economics and Political Science for providing financial support for this research and its development into a book. I want to thank my colleagues at LSE for their advice and guidance in approaching the publishing world, particularly Karen Smith and Robert Falkner.

Above all, I thank my parents, Maria and Alexandru, for all their love and support. This book is dedicated to them.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Concerns related to the European energy supply security and climate change have moved energy policymaking to the centre of the European and international agenda in recent years. An impressive amount of academic literature has emerged around the EU-Russia energy relationship or the increasing role that EU institutions play in shaping European energy policy. However, the in-depth investigation of the EU policymaking environment that led to this book reveals that EU energy policy outcomes are most often the product of the interaction between the EU institutions, the EU Member States, and non-state actors based inside and outside the EU. These actors tend to form networks advocating for specific energy policy options. Consequently, this book proposes a policy network approach for investigating the expanding EU energy policy field. This volume focuses on advocacy coalitions, a type of policy networks (Eikeland 2011). The research that led to this book was triggered by two main research questions:

- *what shape does public-private interaction*[1] *take in the field of EU energy policy?*

[1] By public-private interaction this book understands the interaction between governmental and EU structures (on the one hand) and entities in the business (broadly defined) and civil society sectors (on the other hand).

A.-M. Bocse, *International Networks, Advocacy and EU Energy Policy-Making*, Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49505-3_1

- *what explains the success of advocacy coalitions operating in the field of EU energy policy?*

The impact of interest groups has been only marginally covered by the advocacy literature, mainly because it is considered very difficult to assess (see Mahoney 2008; Dür 2008). This research attempts to remedy this by studying coalition impact. It advances and tests hypotheses with the aim of developing a theoretical model that can help us understand what factors determine the success of an advocacy coalition, as well as the way in which these factors interact in generating impact. In developing this theoretical model, the research draws on an original combination of policy networks/advocacy coalitions' literature, studies of framing, and social network theory.

The study concludes that the interplay among: informational and material resources; a broad, timely, and dynamic frame; and social structure accounts for the success of advocacy coalitions. The findings of this book depart from the focus placed in the literature on material resources when explaining the success of advocacy or lobby coalitions. Not only material power but also relational power and the interactions between different types of power are important in explaining the coalitions' success.

The volume is focused on networks working on two issues that have been central to EU energy policy debates over the last decade: fracking for domestic shale gas[2] and developing the Southern Gas Corridor, a pipeline system linking Europe with the gas-rich region of the Caspian Sea and eventually with the Middle East. This makes the book very appealing to both scholars and policy practitioners. Increasing the security of energy supply has been a priority of EU energy policy in recent years, alongside promoting sustainable energy.

The book covers an area and a range of actors that are due to play an important role in international energy policy and governance. In the EU and globally, energy policymaking is gaining importance relative to other policy fields. In addition, states alone cannot support the energy transition. Consequently, coalitions of intergovernmental organizations, states, NGOs, and corporations have emerged at regional and global levels. This

[2] Shale gas is natural gas found in natural underground rock fissures and rocks need to be broken open ('fractured' or 'fracked') to release the gas through a process known scientifically as 'hydraulic fracturing' and referred to in the policy circles in Brussels by using the more colloquial term 'fracking'.

book provides valuable theoretical and methodological tools for studying not only the international coalitions of today but also those of the future.

The Relevance of the Field of European Energy Policy

Energy policy experts based in Brussels indicate that, from the late 2000s, there was an increased interest in energy policymaking at the EU level. The 2009 Treaty of Lisbon places energy policy and specifically energy security policy formally in the EU area of competence (European Union Member States 2009a). The transfer of competences from the state to the European level in a particular policy field usually leads to the proliferation of interest group activity at the supranational, EU, level (Tenbücken 2002; Mazey and Richardson 2006). Consequently, the EU has become in recent years an attractive venue for corporations and industry associations, as well as for NGOs pursuing various energy policy interests. As an insider in Brussels energy policy circles explains, energy is an issue of interest for the EU institutions, Member States, and other Brussels-based stakeholders:

> the evolution of energy policy over the last five years has been very rapid. … When I first started here a decade ago energy policy was so minor and, you know, even when the new commissions came in, people were not really fighting to have the energy dossier and now it's a big one, it's an important one. (interview with representative of industry association 2014)

My own observation of the European institutions in 2012–2014 suggested that energy benefited from a lot of attention, despite being an area in which the EU did not have exclusive competence.

European energy policy is a particularly fruitful area for studying the impact of advocacy coalitions on policymaking. Several features of the European Union indicate that it is more open to the interaction with policy networks than a state government. European institutions often engage in stakeholder consultations that create opportunities for networks to approach the EU. The European Union institutional system is rather flat and based very much on a network model, which should make it very responsive to similar network-like structures (Rose 2000, p. 7). EU policy generally, and especially EU energy policy, appears to be prone to accommodating network-like structures of social interaction. EU and governmental officials rely upon the energy corporate and NGO sectors for

technical information, energy policy implementation, investment in energy infrastructure, and so forth. Some of these private and NGO actors form policy networks and coalitions in the process of promoting a certain policy position.

Particularly, the book tackles policy relationships that are established between supranational institutions, national governments, and interest groups in the EU context in an area that is increasingly associated with that of high politics, that is, energy security policy (Eikeland 2011; Maltby 2013). In the EU context 'energy security' tends to be considered the equivalent of 'security of energy supply' (Escribano and Gracía-Verdugo 2012, p. 26). In addition to the availability of energy, the affordability of energy and using energy in a sustainable and environmental-friendly way have been growing dimensions of EU energy security over the last years (Goldthau and Sitter 2015, p. 7). Security of supply can be generated by increasing domestic production or by tapping into various external energy sources (European Commission 2013).

Case Study Selection

This research discusses the work of advocacy coalitions on two dimensions of European energy security policy, that is diversifying EU energy resources by increasing internal gas production through fracking for shale gas and facilitating EU access to the gas reserves of the Caspian region through the Southern Gas Corridor. Working on these two cases enabled me to study the work of contemporary social structures and to collect detailed and accurate information from advocacy coalition participants, especially on the social connections that they establish.[3] The two cases share the same temporal and broad legal and political contexts.

The research conducted on these two case studies is systematic and highlights processes of policy interaction in an area that benefits from increasing EU interest. The cases were selected given their centrality to the energy security policy debates taking place in Brussels in the last decade. Developing the Southern Gas Corridor benefited from increasing attention from policymakers after Russia limited gas delivery to Europe in 2009. Shale gas dominated the energy debates and energy events in

[3] In a few years' time, it is debatable if interviewees would be able to provide equally accurate information, as they might forget whom they interacted with, the details of the cases, and so forth.

Brussels as the shale gas revolution in the US made a massive contribution to the US domestic energy supply in the last decade. As one EU official noted, there are more conferences on fracking for shale gas in Brussels than exploratory drilling projects in Europe (interview with European Commission official, DG Energy 2013). This study will investigate particularly the coalitions emerging around the 'European Parliament resolution of 21 November 2012 on industrial, energy and other aspects of shale gas and oil' (European Parliament 2012a) initiated by the Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE).

Case study research is particularly useful for investigating causal pathways, tackling causal complexity, and exploring areas in which data is limited (Gerring 2007), as is the case with the domain of EU energy policy. The in-depth investigation on the two cases allowed to process-trace the factors behind the success of the coalitions studied, as well as the interaction between these factors and their importance relative to each other. Process tracing enables the researcher 'to assess causality by recording each element of the causal chain' (Zürn 1998, p. 640) and by building 'a logical chain of evidence' (Betsill and Corell 2001, p. 77). European energy policy and especially policy outcomes studied here satisfy the criteria according to which a research topic needs to be important to the researcher, those researched (interviewed), and the broader public (Rubin and Rubin 2005, p. 48). Both fracking and the Southern Gas Corridor had the potential to radically change the EU energy security landscape. They also demand investments of billions of euro and might affect the quality of life of millions of Europeans.

This book focuses on coalitions operating in the gas sector. This is motivated by the EU's dependence on imported gas, as well as by specifics of the gas sector that make it more vulnerable to political developments.[4] Political analysis is a good tool for making sense of developments in this field. Gas is likely to play an important role in the EU energy mix as a transition fuel to a renewables-based energy system. The discovery and exploitation of shale gas reserves in North America and in the Eastern Mediterranean might extend the gas lifetime. Gas also has a reduced

[4] Buchan argues that energy security is not of equal concern in all energy sectors and that some might be more prone to energy insecurity. According to him, the gas sector which depends on foreign gas and is linked to fixed supply networks is more likely to raise energy security concerns, while the electricity sector is more concerned with network reliability and the consistency of renewable energy sources (Buchan 2010, p. 370).

carbon footprint compared to coal and it can help the EU meet its climate change commitments.

The existing literature on EU policy developments on fracking for shale gas is limited. There is an emerging body of literature on the regulatory framework in which fracking takes place in the EU and the US (Boersma and Johnson 2012; Tawonezvi 2017). Certain literature discusses the outcome of the EU level policy debates (Stokes 2014) rather than the process and coalitions that led to a certain policy outcome. Coalitions that emerged around fracking are, in general, underexplored. Some literature discusses advocacy coalitions involved in policy developments and debates in the EU (Bomberg 2017) or EU Member States (the study of Ingold et al. 2017). Bomberg (2017) explores in a comparative way the coalitions working on fracking in the EU and those in the US. However, her study is reliant mainly on media output and websites in identifying the coalition actors. This makes it more difficult to capture informal ties or ties on which information is not available publicly.

This will not be the first study conducted on the Southern Gas Corridor. However, it is to the best of my knowledge the most extensive academic study on the competition between the Nabucco Pipeline and the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP), crucial to the opening of the Southern Gas Corridor. The competition ended in 2013 with the selection of TAP. Existing studies on the Southern Gas Corridor tend to focus on the preferences of governmental actors inside and outside the European Union and neglect non-state actors in explaining policy developments (such studies are the ones of Ahmadov 2010; Belova 2010; Sartori 2011, 2012; Mikhelidze 2013; Siddi 2019). This is the case despite the fact that previous studies of the involvement of energy corporations in energy developments show that energy corporations have economic leverage (decide on trade routes and pipelines, contract quantities of energy supplied, etc.), and are often able to lobby governments successfully (Jaffe et al. 2006). National and multinational companies play an important role in global and regional governance (Büthe and Mattli 2010; Ronit 2011). These would indicate that their preferences and actions should be included in any attempt to explain developments around the Southern Gas Corridor.

Theoretical Framework

This research draws on concepts such as 'advocacy coalitions', 'access goods', 'framing', and on social network theory. This subchapter will discuss these concepts, theories, and their connections, and use them to advance hypotheses that provide answers to the research questions. The first research question I advance is: *what shape does public-private interaction take in the field of EU energy policy?* The mushrooming presence of energy interest groups in Brussels, as well as their presence in the Transparency Register,[5] would suggest that formal and informal contacts between energy interest groups and decision-makers do take place. However, as indicated also by other researchers (Kreutler 2014), few studies go beyond simply claiming interaction between energy stakeholders and decision-makers. Little is known about the nature of these contacts and their outcomes. Energy groups and organizations participate in policymaking, but participation does not necessarily mean influence or the exercise of power over policymakers (Mazey and Richardson 2006; Eikeland 2011).

The theoretical toolkit employed in this book expanded as empirical data collection progressed. The fieldwork for this research was informed by the literature on governance and especially governance exercised through networks (Rhodes 1997; Krahmann 2003b; Pollack 2010). 'Governance' in this book 'refers to self-organizing, interorganizational networks characterized by interdependence, resource exchange, rules of the game and significant autonomy from the state' (Rhodes 1997, p. 15). This book studies governance in relation to public policy and embraces a definition according to which governance: 'takes place through organized networks of public and private actors which "steer" public policy towards common ends' (Pollack 2010, p. 36).

Policy networks are defined as: 'sets of actors that share an interest in a specific issue area and are linked to each other through stable formal or informal relations' (Krahmann 2005, p. 25).[6] Lack of formalized hierarchy

[5] To increase the transparency of EU decision-making, the European Parliament and the European Commission introduced a Transparency Register. One can perform lobbying and advocacy functions without being registered. However, there are incentives for joining the Register, including physical access to the premises of the institutions. Acceding to the Register is a condition that needs to be fulfilled before requesting accreditation to the European Parliament (EP).

[6] Atkinson and Coleman (1992, pp. 157–159) provide a similar definition.

is supposed to define policy networks: 'a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests' (Börzel 1998, p. 254). Resource exchanges are central to the networks' existence and activity (Bomberg 1998, p. 167). Advocacy coalitions are regarded as subspecies of policy networks (Eikeland 2011).[7]

The literature on policy networks has been successful in researching the impact of private actors on energy policymaking (Nilsson et al. 2009; Buchan 2010). The literature on security governance has analysed the role of non-state actors in shaping the field of military security, investigating, for instance, the role of private military companies (Krahmann 2005, 2010; Kinsey et al. 2009). A more comprehensive security agenda has given a mandate to a wider variety of actors to shape the field of security: 'to long-established actors in the defence industry have been added an increased number of charities, environmental organisations, human rights watchdogs, medical organisations and think-tanks' (Webber et al. 2004, p. 6). However, the role of energy companies, NGOs, and consultancies in shaping energy policy at the intersection with security policy has been overlooked. Studies on the role of corporations as energy security players are limited or outdated (Youngs conducted such a study on data previous to 2006 and published it in 2009). There is a need to further explore the way in which private actors behave when they shape areas crucial to EU energy security.

Following the actual empirical investigation of case studies, adjustments or additions in the theoretical framework are often required. The empirical data is meant to confirm or not hypotheses, but also generate new, sometimes unexpected knowledge (Rubin and Rubin 2005, p. 40). In the case of this study, the empirical investigation of European energy policy

[7] Policy networks can take different forms, depending on their characteristics. In addition to advocacy coalitions, they can take the shape of policy communities characterized by 'high interdependence, stable relationships, restricted membership, insulated from other networks' (Eikeland 2011, p. 246), or issue networks defined by 'limited interdependence, open membership, less stable relationships, less insulated from other networks' (Eikeland 2011, pp. 246–247). They can also be epistemic communities (Haas 1992a, b) if their main function is the transfer of expertise and knowledge. An epistemic community is defined as: 'a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area' (Haas 1992a, p. 3). Keck and Sikkink (1998) discuss the role that 'transnational advocacy networks' of activists play in international politics. All these types draw on a network-like form of social organization.

networks revealed the polarization of different segments of the two networks. Each network included actors working on the same issue area, but their interests were opposed, and this led to the emergence of two coalitions advocating against each other. The 'advocacy coalition framework' (Sabatier 1988, 1998; Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994) accommodates well such opposition that takes place between two structures that share the same policy subsystem; 'a subsystem consists of actors from a variety of public and private organizations who are actively concerned with a policy problem or issue, such as agriculture, and who regularly seek to influence public policy in that domain' (Sabatier 1998, p. 99). The advocacy coalition framework (ACF) assumes that, if certain interest groups mobilize, other interests will decide to become organized in order to counteract them (Mazey and Richardson 2006, p. 254). As is the case with the fracking for shale gas study presented in this book, one faction tends to represent economic interests and the other faction represents environmental interests (Sabatier and Brasher 1993; Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994).[8] The ACF explains policy outcomes in complex multi-level subsystems and facilitates the understanding of policy changes in particular subsystems and domains, for instance, air pollution control, dangerous chemicals regulation, and so forth (Sabatier 1988, 1998; Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994).

An advocacy coalition approach accommodates the presence of policy actors from different sectors, that is, companies, consultancies, NGOs, governmental officials, and so forth. The ACF regards governmental officials and legislators not only as entities that are the target of lobbying or advocacy, but also as actors in advocacy coalitions. This is also the case with the policy networks this research studies. Sabatier claims that actors in advocacy coalitions: '(a) share a set of normative and causal beliefs and (b) engage in a non-trivial degree of co-ordinated activity over time' (Sabatier 1998, p. 103). The main weakness of the frame identified by the literature is the emphasis that it places on beliefs (Rozbicka 2013). The

[8] Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier (1994) show that two different coalitions work on US automotive control: an environmental coalition (environmental and public health groups, officials in federal and state air pollution agencies, legislators, researchers and journalists) and an economic efficiency coalition (automobile manufacturers, petroleum companies, individuals in legislatures, research enterprises and media). Analysing the developments of the environmental policy concerning Lake Tahoe, Sabatier and Brasher (1993) showed that, over time, policy actors formed two major coalitions, that is an economic development/property rights coalition and an opposing environmental coalition.

framework needs to take into consideration the fact that actors build coalitions based not only on beliefs, but also on interests, interdependencies (Kenis and Schneider 1991; Börzel 1997; Rozbicka 2013) and regard for individual and organizational welfare (Schlager and Blomquist 1996). Sabatier responded to this criticism by defining beliefs broadly to include not only the aspirations of ideational groups, but also of material groups.[9] If beliefs are extended to include material goals, corporate actors operating in the energy field seeking to fulfil material objectives (for instance, maintain a certain level of profit or increase profit) can be considered members of advocacy coalitions. In addition, material interests of the energy industry are underpinned by ideological beliefs, for instance that economic growth can be fostered by competitiveness and limited state intervention. As will be shown later on, one of the arguments of the energy industry is that excessive regulation will prevent development of the shale gas sector in the EU and limit economic growth.

The advocacy coalition framework also assumes that there is a lack of trust between the coalitions opposing each other on the same policy issue. Members of different coalitions interpret pieces of information in different ways which leads to in-group cohesion and generates mistrust in relation to other coalitions that might draw different conclusions from the same data (Sabatier 1998). Sabatier argues that it is easy in high-conflict situations for one coalition to see an opposing coalition as more malign and powerful than it probably is (Sabatier 1987, 1998). This explains why it is difficult for coalitions to resolve their differences and why mobility between coalitions tends to be reduced (Sabatier 1998, pp. 105, 106). Consequently, their membership is more likely to remain stable. Of course, like many assumptions that Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier advance as part of the framework, the assumptions presented here need to be tested on empirical data. As the empirical chapters of this book will show, mistrust indeed characterizes the relations of advocacy coalitions opposing each other both on the issue of fracking and on the Southern Gas Corridor.

This book also aims to *explain the success of advocacy coalitions operating in the field of EU energy policy*. Similarly to Mahoney, I define advocacy success as: 'whether advocates achieve their goals or not at the conclusion

[9] Building on existing literature (Jenkins-Smith and St. Clair 1993; Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994), he claims that: 'the most fundamental (and probably least changing) beliefs of material groups are not very abstract. Instead, they tend to be quite concrete: material self-interest, operationalized as profit or market share' (Sabatier 1998, p. 110).

of a policy debate' (Mahoney 2008, p. 183). Unlike other studies that invite associations and NGOs operating in EU energy policy to self-assess their influence when acting as a coalition (Kreutler 2014), my research will evaluate coalition success by contrasting its position with policy outcomes. Current scholarship supports hypotheses according to which advocacy coalitions are more likely to be successful:

- *If they possess and make good use of material and informational resources;*
- *If they develop a broad, timely, and dynamic frame;*
- *If they are well interconnected and include members who are central to the social structure (policy subsystem) working on a particular issue.*

Resources: Access and Influence

Resources are identified in the literature as contributing to the success of advocacy and lobby groups (Cress and Snow 1998; Bouwen 2002; Mahoney 2008). Access to material resources is considered to influence group success in shaping policy (Kohler-Koch 1994; Gerber 1999; Crombez 2002; Hall and Deardorff 2006). Possessing expertise and information is thought to be another important factor (Rozbicka 2013) and these constitute 'access goods' (Immergut 1992; Bouwen 2002). According to Mahoney (2008, p. 171), the benefit of pooling resources determines interest groups to form coalitions, especially on salient topics that are the object of a lot of public attention. However, several scholars pointed to the fact that existing advocacy coalition literature fails to explain how coalitions use resources and venues to shape policy (Weible and Sabatier 2007, p. 133; Kreutler 2014, p. 28). Building on existing literature on the role of resources in policymaking (Beyers 2004; Eising 2007), this research aims to analyse the use of material and especially informational resources in the work and successful advocacy of coalitions operating in the newer and underexplored area of EU energy policy.

The literature indicates that material resources positively impact the success of interest groups in the EU context. Eising (2007) shows that: 'a larger budget improves access to the EU institutions' (p. 339). EU associations that control large financial resources are more likely to come in weekly contact with the Commission than less-resourced associations (p. 353). A larger budget allows interest groups to employ permanent, specialized staff to conduct their campaigns (Knoke 1990, p. 76). Access

to funding also allows to pay staff and researchers to conduct studies and can lead to a greater access to knowledge that can be passed on to policy-makers. That being said, there are also substantial amounts of research conducted by publicly funded institutes and universities and that is available freely to advocates (businesses or NGOs) to use.

This research will concentrate particularly on information and information exchanges. Information: 'is the most important resource to study in order to understand the exchange between business interests and the EU institutions' (Bouwen 2002, p. 369). The informational lobby is acknowledged as being the predominant type of lobby in Brussels, more important than political patronage or campaign contributions (Broscheid and Coen 2007, p. 347). In Brussels, interest groups influence decision-makers through informational services (Chalmers 2012). The European Commission has limited internal capacity to generate policy knowledge and a need to receive information from across different economic sectors and across its Member States (Mazey and Richardson 2006, p. 248). In order to fulfil its informational needs, the Commission often takes an active role in the development of transnational networks of experts and stakeholders (Princen 2011, p. 935; Maltby 2013, p. 436).

Interest group participation in the making of EU legislation enhances the quality of decisions by enabling the transfer of expertise to decision-makers (Greenwood 2007; Dür and Mateo 2012). The institutionalization of consultation with interest groups reduces the risk of policy disaster (Mazey and Richardson 2001, p. 72, 2006, p. 249). In addition, by engaging stakeholders, bureaucrats reduce opposition to their proposals in other venues and at later implementation stages and avoid being blamed for policy failure (Henderson 1977). Furthermore, through the information they provide, advocacy coalitions play an important role in linking and helping establish consensus between the EU institutions on certain policy aspects (Mazey and Richardson 2001, pp. 85, 92). Lobbyists act as carriers of ideas and understandings across various institutional venues (Dudley and Richardson 1998). The two case studies included in the book illustrate very well the benefits that EU officials find in interacting with energy corporations and NGOs.

A survey of the literature seems to indicate that opportunities for interaction between EU institutions and interest groups increase when it comes to highly technical areas and areas characterized by uncertainty. Broscheid and Coen (2007, p. 361) show that there is a positive correlation between the information demand on an issue and the volume of lobbying. Interest

groups contribute information, especially on specific and technical issues, to the work of both the European Commission and the European Parliament (EP) (Mazey and Richardson 2006, pp. 256, 259, 261). In addition, Zito argues that the more complex and ambiguous the policy problems, the greater will be the role that experts play in EU policy (Zito 2001, p. 588). The extreme complexity of the energy policy field increases the dependence of EU institutions on private actors as information providers,[10] while the high economic stakes associated with energy policy constitute an important incentive for interest groups to supply information (Nilsson et al. 2009).

Under conditions of uncertainty, policymakers turn to experts for advice. The uncertainties faced by decision-makers are generated by the increasingly technical nature of issues entering the international agenda, for instance monetary, macro-economic, environmental, population, and health issues (Haas 1992a, p. 12). Energy exploitation, transport, and consumption can also be added to this list. Reducing uncertainty is an important goal for both policymakers and legislators. Similarly, the corporate sector is very interested in reducing uncertainty and engages in dialogue with governmental and supranational actors in order to address issues associated with potential public sector action that might have an impact on the business environment. Therefore, the information exchange on issues related to energy policy can be expected to be very intense.

Opposing advocacy coalitions cite scientific work in support of their arguments and the scientific evidence is sometimes contradictory. A more detailed discussion of this will take place in the chapters on the coalitions working on fracking. However, neither public servants nor researchers should be treated as neutral entities in the policymaking process. A wide range of literature indicates the lack of neutrality (Primack and von Hippel 1974; Knott and Miller 1987; Jenkins-Smith 1990; Barke and Jenkins-Smith 1993; Zafonte and Sabatier 1998).

The paragraphs above indicate that resources and especially information and knowledge exchanges play an important role in the work of advocacy coalitions operating in the EU context. Therefore, this section will advance the following hypotheses to be tested in relation to my two case studies.

Advocacy coalitions are more likely to be successful if they possess:

[10] A function scholarship associates to interest groups (Bouwen 2002, p. 369; Dür and Mateo 2012, p. 972) operating in the EU context.

- *informational resources of a technical nature*;
- *financial resources.*

Framing as a Source of Influence

The concept of framing will be used in this study to explain the process through which advocacy coalitions contributed to a change in understanding regarding the benefits of shale gas and of an alternative route for the Southern Gas Corridor, as well as a change in the broader understanding of what EU energy security entails. I argue that changing the understanding that decision-makers have on these issues shapes policy outcomes in these fields. Frames reshape the way policy actors consider policy problems and even 'bias' their response in tackling them (Dudley and Richardson 1999).

Framing entails: 'selecting, organising, interpreting, and making sense of a complex reality to provide guideposts for knowing, analysing, persuading, and acting' (Rein and Schön 1993, p. 146). The act of framing involves a narrative, one in which the accent falls on certain aspects of reality. This focus on certain aspects of reality is mentioned by Entman: 'to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation' (Entman 1993, p. 52). A frame goes beyond being a mere argument as it provides a certain understanding of the world (Hänggli and Kriesi 2012).[11] Frames enable individuals, groups, and organizations to interpret the world around them (Gahan and Pekarek 2013).

As Oliver and Johnston (1999), Marx Ferree and Merrill (2000), and Vliegenthart and van Zoonen (2011) show, in the literature the distinction between frame and framing is often poorly made as many fail to differentiate between the content features ('frames') and the process and contextual features of building and receiving the frame ('framing') (Vliegenthart and van Zoonen 2011, p. 102). Framing is defined as a process through which a frame is built by taking into account a particular context and audience. The literature acknowledges that frames are multiple and can be oppositional, as well as being: 'part of a struggle for

[11] Nowadays, the concept of 'frame' is used to provide explanations all across the social sciences (Benford and Snow 2000). It is present in cognitive psychology, linguistics, media studies, and political science (Rein and Schön 1993; Triandafyllidou and Fotiou 1998).

meaning between different actors that have unequal material and symbolic resources' (Vliegenthart and van Zoonen 2011, p. 105). As discussed in more detail later in the book, in the cases of fracking and the Southern Gas Corridor coalitions advance frames that are in many respects oppositional.

This book will mostly engage with processes such as frame amplification and frame extension to which different coalition actors studied by this research resort in order to attract more support for their point of view and achieve desired policy outcomes. The literature on social movement organizations (SMOs) and especially the work in this field undertaken by Snow and Benford provide a lot of insight, transferable to advocacy coalitions, into frame construction and change.

Frame alignment processes are defined as: 'the linkage of individual and SMO interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary' (Snow et al. 1986, p. 464). There are different types of alignment processes, frame amplification and frame extension being more relevant for this study. Frame amplification entails:

> the clarification and invigoration of an interpretive frame that bears on a particular issue, problem or set of events. Because the meaning of events and their connection to one's immediate life situation are often shrouded by indifference, deception or fabrication by others, and by ambiguity or uncertainty (Goffman 1974), support for and participation in movement activities is frequently contingent on the clarification and reinvigoration of an interpretive frame. (Snow et al. 1986, p. 469)[12]

Frame amplification can be used also to attract support for and participation in advocacy coalitions. Frame extension is a concept that helps us understand how lobbyists and advocates build a sufficiently broad frame. Through frame extension: 'an SMO may have to extend the boundaries of its primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objectives but of considerable salience to

[12] Snow et al. also advance the concept of frame transformation, but I do not find it very different from the concept of frame amplification. Frame transformation: 'redefines activities, events, and biographies, that are already meaningful from the standpoint of some primary framework, in terms of another framework' (Snow et al. 1986, p. 474 drawing on Goffman 1974, pp. 43–44).