

Research project

Towards a common European energy policy? Energy security debates in Poland and Germany

conducted by the Research Centre of East European Studies at the University of Bremen,
Jacobs University Bremen, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the Environmental
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Documentation of Data Collection and Analysis

Mass Media Reporting on Energy Security in Poland and Germany

Interviews with Stakeholders and Experts

Official Documents

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Compiled by Andreas Heinrich and Heiko Pleines

Head of Project

Prof. Dr. Heiko Pleines

Head of the Department of Politics and Economics

Research Centre for East European Studies [Forschungsstelle Osteuropa]

University of Bremen

Klagenfurter Str. 3

28359 Bremen

Germany

Tel.: + 49 421 218 69602

Fax: +49 421 218 69607

Email: pleines@uni-bremen.de

www.forschungsstelle.uni-bremen.de

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Introduction

The research project ‘Towards a common European energy policy? Energy security debates in Poland and Germany’ was conducted from July 2014 until June 2016 with financial support from the German-Polish Science Foundation.

The project was coordinated by Andreas Heinrich and Heiko Pleines of the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen. Project partners were the Jacobs University Bremen, with a team headed by Karen Smith Stegen, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, where Aleksandra Lis was in charge, and the Environmental Studies and Policy Research Institute (ESPRi) in Wrocław, where Kacper Szulecki led the project team.

The project looked at energy security debates as the biggest challenge to the development of a common European energy policy. It examined how discrepancies between EU member states’ understanding and articulation of ‘energy security’ impede development of a common European energy policy. Germany and Poland, because of their prominence in the EU’s energy debates, served as ideal case studies. Moreover, as the two countries face similar energy security challenges on many occasions, but often opt for diverging interpretations and policy solutions, the project also provided an assessment of the potential for energy cooperation between the two countries and at the EU level in general.

The analysis has been based on a revised version of the securitization approach developed by the Copenhagen School, which brings together debates about security with actual decision-making processes and postulates that state perception of security threats – including energy security – is an intersubjective construction by key actors. By scrutinizing how energy security is debated and sometimes ‘securitized’ in Poland and Germany, we hope to have gained a better understanding of the challenges to achieving EU energy solidarity.

The project conducted case studies of selected current policy issues in the natural gas, nuclear, and electricity sectors, namely the construction (and operation) of the Nord Stream gas pipeline (executed by the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen), the exploration for shale gas (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań), the arrangements for electricity grid interconnectors (ESPRi, Wrocław), the future of nuclear power stations (jointly conducted by ESPRi and Jacobs University Bremen), and the promotion of renewable energy (Jacobs University Bremen).

Each case study was analysed with the same multi-method approach, namely a software-based manual quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the full reporting of selected mass media on the selected cases, semi-structured interviews with decision-makers and experts, which have been fully transcribed and coded,¹ as well as the analysis of official documents related to the cases. This documentation describes the data collection and data analysis which has been conducted within the project. It starts with the analysis of media reporting continues with the conduction of interviews and finally covers the systematic compilation of official documents related to the project topic.

¹ No interviews have been conducted for the case study on Russian gas supplies.

Part 1: Mass Media Reporting on Energy Security in Poland and Germany

1.1 Mass media included in the analysis

The aim of the analysis of mass media reporting has been to cover the national public debates about the selected cases. Accordingly, only mass media with nation-wide coverage that addresses a national audience in the respective country were included. Because of a regular and more substantiated coverage, the analysis has been restricted to quality print media. For both countries, the selection includes the most popular print media and the most important media for the major political orientations.

Table 1: List of mass media included in the analysis

Poland	Dziennik/ Dziennik Gazeta Prawna
	Gazeta Wyborcza
	Polityka
	Rzeczpospolita
Germany	
Germany	Der Spiegel
	Süddeutsche Zeitung
	Taz
	Die Welt
	Die Zeit

1.2 Compilation of the text corpus (mass media reporting)

The general text corpus (concrete corpus) of mass media reporting for the analysis was generated from all media listed in Table 1 for the period from 2005 to 2014.² All articles with any meaningful reference to the specific topic of any of the selected cases and with a reference to energy security were included. The reference to the topic or to energy security did not necessarily need to be in the headline; it may be only one paragraph of the article. If the reference was very marginal and did not relate to the debate on energy security, the respective article has not been included.

Most print media articles were retrieved using the online database Factiva. Missing publications or years were checked in the online archive of the respective publication. Texts were selected with the help of a search function for the specific publication. The relevant search terms were provided in Polish and German by each research team for their specific case study and covered a broad range of related words. As a result of this broad search strategy, 8799 hits were produced. After checks by the responsible coders a total of 1237 newspaper articles were included in the analysis (Tables 2 and 3 provide an overview). All

² For the case study on the Nord Stream pipeline the analysis started with the year 2003. For shale gas the first hits were recorded only for 2010.

relevant texts were saved as Word for Windows files and were then imported into a MAXQDA file for coding (see the following section).

The original languages of the media reports are German and Polish. Polish-language texts for the case study on the Nord Stream pipeline have been translated into English or German by the research team.

Table 2: Number of newspaper articles included in the analysis

Case	Poland	Germany
Nuclear energy	53	428
Renewable energy	51	118
Electricity interconnectors	70	109
Nord Stream	133	69
Shale gas	185	21
Total	492	745

Table 3: Number of articles per newspaper

Poland	Dziennik/ Dziennik Gazeta Prawna	88
	Gazeta Wyborcza	113
	Polityka	84
	Rzeczpospolita	207
	Total	492
Germany	Der Spiegel	64
	Süddeutsche Zeitung	238
	taz	79
	Die Welt	284
	Die Zeit	80
	Total	745

1.3 Thesaurus: Variables and codes for text analysis in MAXQDA

The full text corpus for each case study was imported into a separate MAXQDA file for coding. German media reports have been selected and coded at the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen (coder: Thomas Sattich, coordinator: Andreas Heinrich). Polish media reports have been selected and coded at the University of Poznan (coders: Agata Stasik and Aleksandra Lis, coordinator: Aleksandra Lis). Each article was coded by one member of the team; in the end, a random sample of coding for each case study was checked by one senior project researcher. Where necessary, intercoder reliability was improved through a second round of coding.

During the coding process, variables and codes were entered for each text. The four variables used in the project give basic information about the texts. The code structure was developed both deductively (based on the theoretical framework of securitization) and inductively (based on the specific requirement of the single case studies and the actual media reporting). As a result, seven code groups were created. The possible specifications of the codes were entered as sub-codes in a hierarchical structure. Table 4 provides an overview of the joint coding thesaurus.

All coded newspaper articles are archived in MAXQDA format as part of the data collection centre of the Department of Politics and Economics of the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen. Due to copyright restrictions the files cannot be published online. However, they are available to researchers upon request.

Table 4: Overview of joint coding thesaurus

VARIABLES
a. coder
b. source
c. date
d. author/s name/s
CODES
1 Source of threat (who or what)
2 Threat
3 Counter-measures
a) actual + attitude to counter-measures
b) proposed + attitude to counter-measures
4 De-securitization
a) actual de-securitizing move demanded/ initiated
b) neutral description of a de-securitizing move
c) de-securitization explicitly rejected
5 Quotes
a) politician
b) businessperson
c) journalist
d) expert
6 Meta-debate ³
7 Case study-specific codes

³ This code is assigned to all passages that contain the explicit evaluation of the media debate on the topic of the case study as well as problems journalists encounter when reporting on the topic. Journalists' commentary on their own past reporting or on specific reports published elsewhere is not coded here. The code is only assigned when the text passage includes a reflection on the character of the broader debate about the topic, not just isolated statements within that debate.

Part 2: Interviews with Decision-makers and Experts

2.1 Interview design

The aim of the interviews was to cover the views and assessments of key actors in the cases studied. The project team conducted interviews with three groups of respondents in relation to the case studies on shale gas, electricity grid interconnectors, nuclear energy, and the promotion of renewable energy:

- Politicians/ state officials, who are involved in political decision-making processes related to the cases under study – mostly as representatives of government ministries and agencies or members of parliamentary committees.
- Businesspeople with an interest in the cases under study – mostly as representatives of energy companies.
- Experts, i.e. members of epistemic and advocacy communities, like NGOs and think tanks, who engage with, but do not have a material interest in the cases under study.

Based on discussions at a project workshop, the project team agreed on a basic questionnaire for semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire comprised a total of 14 general, open questions plus two closed questions related to the core aspects of the project, namely energy security, securitisation and related debates. This set of joint core questions was checked by an expert on qualitative interviews of the Methods Centre of Jacobs University. The final version of the core questionnaire is documented in Part 2.3 below.

The set of 14 core questions has been covered in all interviews. Additionally case-study specific and respondent-specific questions were added to each interview. The complete list of questions asked in each individual interview can be derived from the interview transcripts.

The lead researcher for each case study compiled a list of types of respondents to be included in the interviews. Main criteria were affiliation with relevant institutions/ organisations, competence on the project topic and in the case of politicians, also party affiliation. The team for each case study then identified the most appropriate interview partners. Interviews were conducted by researchers of the respective team.

The interviewers received the following instructions:

The interviews are to be conducted exclusively with the agreed upon interview partners (respondents). Each interview will take around 30 to 60 minutes.

The research project should be briefly and neutrally presented to every respondent. To that end, the brief project description and an overview of the interview topics should be sent (preferably by email) to the respondent before the interview takes place. Our assumptions and hypotheses should not be disclosed. The interviewer will also bring a copy of the project description to the interview to provide it to the respondent if requested.

The interviews will be conducted face-to-face; the questionnaire is to be filled in *by the interviewer*. The interviewer reads the questions to the respondent. If appropriate, the entire questionnaire can be read.

At the beginning of the interview, the interviewer should thank the respondent for agreeing to participate and has to ensure the respondent's anonymity. The interviewer should briefly mention that there are no right or wrong answers; the purpose of the

interview is to obtain his or her opinion or organisation's position as indicated in the respective question. Additionally, it should be mentioned that – if requested - a summary of the research project's findings can be presented to the respondents after conclusion of the project.

An *audio file* (preferably in mp3 format) will be recorded of the full interview. Permission for these recordings should be obtained at the beginning of the interview. If the respondent consents, the recording apparatus should be turned on right at the beginning of the interview (and the respondent should be asked to repeat the permission so that it can be recorded). If the respondent does not consent, all remarks have to be documented in written form.

The names of the interviewees should not be used and anonymity should be guaranteed. However, the interviewer and interviewee should agree on how the interviewee can be anonymously referred to, for example, as a "policy maker" or "industry executive" and so forth.

The ethics guidelines of the home institution of the interviewer, of the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen and of the German National Research Council (DFG) apply in full.

2.2 The joint core questions of the questionnaire

[Introduction]

[PROJECT DESCRIPTION] Our research project examines the impact of differences in the understanding of energy security on public debates as well as on national and European energy policy. We want to understand how different people perceive particular energy issues and events related to energy.

In particular, we focus on the development of CASE STUDY TOPIC, including the role seen for CASE STUDY energy in national energy security debates in Poland and Germany and the attempts to come up with a pan-European energy security perspective.

[Casual, warm-up questions] How did you get into the energy field? OR What is your background in energy? OR What initiated your interest in energy?

[Energy security]

Q1. How do you think energy security should be defined?

Q2. What role, in your opinion, can CASE STUDY TOPIC play in attaining energy security?

[Debates]

Q3. Have there been situations when the issue of energy security was becoming more prominent in the debate about CASE STUDY TOPIC? What resulted from these debates in terms of the policy process?

Q4. What are the possible concerns or negative impacts on energy security linked to CASE STUDY TOPIC?

Q5. Who are the people or institutions emphasising those negative impacts?

Q6a. What are the measures proposed for countering these concerns?

Q6b: Who should make decisions about these measures? Which groups need to be convinced about them?

Q6c: Do any of these measures require special decision making procedures or special powers for some agencies?

Q7: Which view do you think is dominant in the debate – the one emphasizing CASE STUDY TOPIC benefits for energy security, or the one emphasizing security concerns?

[EU-level]

Q8. How would you evaluate the current EU legal framework on CASE STUDY TOPIC from the NATIONAL energy security perspective:

1 very good – 2 fairly good – 3 neither good nor poor – 4 fairly poor – 5 poor ?

What is your reason for this evaluation?

Q9. How has the new 2030 strategy influenced the debate on the problems of energy security at the national level?

Q10. Is the idea of an „Energy Union” and further European integration in the energy sector important for the country’s energy security?

Q11. How has the EU served as an arena for articulating Polish (German) concerns with regard to national energy security? Who are the main actors articulating their concerns at the EU level?

[Bilateral cooperation]

[only in Poland] Q12. Are you aware of the German Energy Transition (Energiewende), or not? (If yes) How would you evaluate the German achievements in implementing it so far from the energy security perspective?

[only in Germany] Q12. Are you aware of Polish concerns about German energy policy?

Q13. How would you assess the current bilateral cooperation between Poland and Germany in the CASE STUDY sector?

Q14. On what particular issues, in your opinion, do the Polish and German interests converge or diverge?

2.3 Conduction and analysis of interviews

As the project aimed at interviews with key decision-makers, interviews were often delayed or canceled. Most importantly, the interview topic was perceived as being much more sensitive than had been anticipated by the project team. As one of the interviewers reports: ‘I had two more interviews arranged in Warsaw (one with a representative of the Ministry of the Economy and another with a representative of the Polish energy company Orlen), but they asked me to send them the questionnaire in advance. After I sent it to them, I got a rejection with the explanation that the topics covered by the questions are not in their authority. The interviews were cancelled.’

As a result of similar problems, the conduction of interviews lasted for a full year from May 2015 until April 2016. However, as no major event related to the case studies took place during the interview period, we assume that the date of the interview does not have a relevant impact on the results. All interviews with politicians/ state officials in Poland were conducted before the change in government of November 2015.

Altogether 85 interviews were conducted within the project. Table 5 provides an overview of respondents by group and country.

Table 5: Overview of respondents

Respondent group	Poland	Germany	EU-level (Brussels)	total
Politicians/ state officials	18	12	4	34
Businesspeople	4	12	0	16
Experts	17	12	5	34
Total	39	36	9	85

The interviews lasted from 20 to 120 minutes, with an average of about 50 minutes. Five interviews were conducted by telephone as the respective meetings had been cancelled by the respondents. All interviews have been recorded as audio files (with two exceptions, where the respondents did not agree) and have been fully transcribed. The original languages of the interviews are Polish, German and English. Some of the Polish interviews have been translated into English.

As anonymity has been guaranteed to all respondents, the interviews are accessible to members of the research team only. If the correct use of a quote from the interviews has to be confirmed, the guidelines of the responsible partner institution in the project apply.

Part 3: Official Documents

Desktop research has been used to compile background information on each case. This includes energy statistics, the relevant legal framework and the history of the issue under study. The background information has been integrated into the project publications.

Moreover, in order to identify the positions of important state actors and stakeholders the project team has systematically searched sources which contain original statements by relevant actors. Such sources include:

- Electronic archive with minutes of plenary debates of the German parliament (Bundestag), 2005-14
- Electronic archive with minutes of debates in the Energy commission of the German parliament (Bundestag), 2011-15
- Electronic archive with minutes of plenary debates of the Polish parliament (Sejm), 2004-14
- Electronic archive of Polish Sejm questions ("interpelacje") on energy related topics, 2011-15
- Electronic archive with minutes of debates in the Energy commission of the Polish parliament (Sejm), 2011-15
- Internet search for interviews with Polish and German (deputy) ministers of energy, economics, and finance as well as secretaries of state on energy topics, 2011-15

Part 4: Rules for the Joint Access to and Quotation of Project Data within the Project Team

The project team comprises the respective research teams at the four partner institutions, i.e. ESPRI, Jacobs University, Poznan University and the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen. At each partner institution the team leader, i.e. Kacper Szulecki, Karen Smith Stegen, Aleksandra Lis and Heiko Pleines respectively, decides who belongs to the project related research team.

For the research project the research teams at the partner institutions have collected media reports and conducted interviews, which both shall be made accessible to all members of the project team. At the project workshop which took place in Bremen on 25 September 2015 the project team has agreed to the following rules concerning access to and quotation of the respective data collections:

(1) The full collection of coded German and Polish media reports is available to the full project team in the form of MAXQDA files in the project's dropbox folder.

All project team members have the right to use the full media analysis for their research work

When using the respective data, a full reference to the project has to be included in the following form:

German media reports have been selected and coded at the Research Centre for East European Studies at the University of Bremen (coder: Thomas Sattich, coordinator: Andreas Heinrich). Polish media reports have been selected and coded at the University of Poznan (coders: Agata Stasik and Aleksandra Lis, coordinator: Aleksandra Lis). The media analysis has been conducted as part of the research project 'Towards a common European energy policy? Energy security debates in Poland and Germany', which has been financially supported by the German-Polish Science Foundation.

(2) The full transcripts of all interviews (and where available also the translations) are uploaded to a separate dropbox, to which access is only granted after the consent of all research team leaders. (Due to restricted memory space in the dropbox folder the audio files are not uploaded.)

As a result all project teams (though not necessarily all members of each team) have access to all interviews conducted within the project.

While working with the interviews the following rules of confidentiality apply:

- All interviews and all information related to them are treated confidentially and no information about them is ever passed to any third party in violation of any legal or internal rules.
- All interviews are exclusively used for tasks directly related to the research project.
- No changes to the original interview documentation (in the form of audio files) will be made. Changes to transcripts and translations will only be made if the changes correct mistakes, are in line with legal and internal regulations and if they are documented properly, with the documentation of changes being accessible to all relevant parties.

- When terminating work within the project team all files, documents and information related to the interviews, including those used for own research, have to be handed over to the respective research team leader. Any files or documents related to the interviews can only be kept if explicitly agreed with the responsible project team leader.
- In case of any violation of these rules the responsible research team leader and the Research Centre for East European Studies as project coordinator have the right to demand the immediate return of all files, documents and information related to the interview. The person found in violation of these rules bears full legal responsibility and liability for the violations and all resulting consequences.

Any reference to an interview conducted by another research team (e.g. in a publication, a conference presentation or a press interview) can only be made with the explicit consent of the research team which is responsible for the respective interview. The first contact point for such a request is always the respective research team leader.

Consent can, of course, be denied. If consent is granted, it should specify in which form the reference to the interview can be made. The respective specifications have to be in line with the agreement reached with the respondent. The research team leader giving consent to a reference bears full legal responsibility and liability for the use of the reference to the interview in the specified form.

In case a reference to an interview is made, the following information is included:

The interview has been conducted by [Name, Institution] as part of the research project 'Towards a common European energy policy? Energy security debates in Poland and Germany', which has been financially supported by the German-Polish Science Foundation.