



Dissertation

The Nord Stream 2 Pipeline Project in the EU institutional debate.
A case study of energy politicization.

Regina Garsia (18064841)

ES3 – 3A

Supervisor: Tibor Hargitai

19/04/2021

The Hague University of Applied Sciences

European Studies

Faculty of Management & Organisation

Word count: 11.054

Executive Summary

This study aims to investigate the level of attention and politicization that has been granted in the institutional debate on the Pipeline Project Nord Stream 2. To do so the author has operated to assess whether the level of attention reserved to the controversial pipeline has contributed to obtaining policy change and if the intervention of the EU in the project through a stronger legislative framework has rendered the NS2 less politicized. To address these aspects of the institutional debate the paper has relied on the agenda-setting framework delineated by Engeli and Princen, further merged by Tosun. To drive more general assumptions on the politicization of energy projects the research has operated a case study approach in which it was given a legal contextualization of the project, which serves to understand the context in which the various actors can act and with which competences. After that it portrayed the pattern of countries engaged in debating the Nord Stream 2, within it has been individuated the breadth of actors, the different stakes and stances but also the divisions internal to the Council of the EU. The case study has been concluded with a narrative on the institutional debate that has interested the pipeline and lastly, a focus on the European Parliament and the insights of five interviews with MEPs have been displayed. The study concludes that the reglementary action of the European Union has brought to softer tones in the EU arena and to a decrease in the salience with which the project is discussed. It has also been possible to affirm that the high level of attention and thus, politicization of the project during the policy process have led to a significant policy change, which without the intervention of the EP probably would have not been possible.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Introduction.....	1
Methodology & Methods	3
Literature review	4
European Energy Union REF	4
Concepts and framework	6
Politicization	6
Agenda-setting: an overview of relevant literature	6
Conclusion	9
Case study on Nord Stream 2	9
Legal context	9
International law	9
European and national law.....	10
Actors and stakes.....	11
EU Institutional debate.....	15
Interviews	19
Analysis.....	22
Conclusion	25
Bibliography.....	26
Appendices	33

Introduction

“I’ve never seen a project that was heralded as a purely commercial one so intensely politically debated” Maroš Šefčovič – Ex European Commissioner for Energy, 2016

One of the most investigated aspect of the European Union (EU) is its integration process. The latter is an ever evolving process that in the last decades has brought to enhanced cooperation and power share among the Member States and the EU. Despite this, the renowned sentence pronounced by the former Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens in 1991, in which the EU was portrayed as “an economic giant, a political dwarf, and a military worm” is still current. The political integration and the capacity to speak with one voice remains for the EU the highest stumbling block to overcome. The interests and stances of the single Member States are very much prevalent nowadays and this reflects not only in the political realm but also to other fields as the one of energy. As the majority of countries cannot sustain themselves with their own resources, the past century has witnessed the creation of a pattern of sustained dependencies among countries. Energy, therefore, has been loaded of strategic value and has been strictly associated to foreign policy and international politics.

While Art. 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of Europe (TFEU), which sets the legal basis for EU intervention in energy policy, was created through the Lisbon Treaty, the European Energy Union is rather young. It has firstly been introduced through the energy union strategy that was published in 2015, under the Juncker Commission, which explicitly states the willingness of creating an Energy Union which “speaks with one voice in global affairs” (European Commission , A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy, 2015). However, sectors such as the one of gas and oil are highly contentious and each Member State still preserve the right of choosing “between different energy sources and decide the general structure of its energy supply” (European Union , 2012). This leads to internal conflicts especially due to the disalignment of EU legislation and objectives with energy projects embarked by the Member States. Specifically referring to natural gas pipelines, both internal to the european market or coming from third countries, many of these have been subjected to intra-EU debate. The most striking case has probably been the South Stream pipeline, which was meant to connect Russia with the EU, and was cancelled in 2014 after the construction had already began (Korsunskaya, 2014). The reasons behind this were the discussions over non-compliance with EU legislation, but it has also been claimed that a determinant role has been played by the tug of war among the EU and Russia over Ukraine. As Lang and Westphal affirm, the project was interrupted for political reasons (Lang & Westphal, 2017, p. 15).

In the context of the deteriorating relationships among Russia and the EU, another project is a constant object of clashes in the European arena. The Nord Stream 2 (NS2) pipeline, which is meant to transport Russian natural gas from Vyborg (Russia) to Lubmin (Germany) through the Baltic Sea, is operated by the Swiss-based company Nord Stream 2 AG, whose sole shareholder is Gazprom, a Russian energy company and the largest supplier of gas to Europe (Nord Stream 2, 2021; About Gazprom, 2021). After the signature of the financing agreements in 2017 by Nord Stream 2 AG and five European companies, the pipelaying operations started in September 2018 and the project is still under construction (Construction, 2021; Nord Stream 2, 2021). The two strings of which the Nord Stream 2 will be composed will cover about 1200 kilometers and will have the capacity to transport up to 55 billion cubic meters of gas per year (Construction, 2021). This pipeline will run parallel to the existing Nord Stream 1 which became operational in 2011 and which has the same characteristics (The Pipeline, 2021).

Since its public disclosure the Nord Stream 2 has been criticized and defended by many different actors, within the EU but also outside of it. These discussions had an effect on the project which construction has been delayed by the combination of the Danish refusal to grant the permit to lay the pipeline and US sanctions, while its entry into operation has been made far more difficult by the revision of EU legislation for the internal market in natural gas.

In the tense climate of current international politics, the project has often been connected to foreign policy issues as the poisoning and arrest of Alexei Navalny and the Russia military mobilization towards Ukraine (Abnett & Emmott, 2021). Therefore, the paper aims to analyze the agenda shaping of the institutional debate undertaken by the European Union in the attempt of negotiating and regulating the Nord Stream 2.

The literature review of this paper will address the current status of the European Energy Union and its actors, and a framework based on politicization and agenda-setting theory, which sets the direction for the approach to the subsequent sections. Thus, the results chapter will be the development of the case study on the Nord Stream 2 in which the legal context of the project will be elucidated and that will comprehend a narrative of the policy process in question, with a focus on the European Parliament which will be enriched by the insights gained through five interviews conducted with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The discussion and conclusion will be dedicated to the analysis of the findings in light of politicization and agenda-setting with the goal of responding to the question: “How has the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline Project been politicized in the European institutional debate?”

Methodology & Methods

In order to carry out this dissertation a series of methods have been employed. To answer the central question of the thesis, it has been deemed appropriate to conduct a case study on energy politicization, namely the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. The case study approach indeed allows to draw generalizable knowledge in a certain field. Being the Nord Stream 2 a subject of ample study in the past five years, a review of the literature has highlighted the lack of a comprehensive studies on the nature of the institutional debate that has characterized the Nord Stream 2, through a framework of agenda-setting.

Besides the case study in which official documents (primary data) of the EU has been analyzed, four interviews have been conducted with Member of the European Parliaments. The Interviewee before the interview were asked to sign an Informed Consent Form which can be found in the appendix of this thesis. The MEPs interviewed have been MEP Marina Kaljurand, of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, MEP Michael Gahler of the EPP, MEP Jaak Madison of the Identity and democracy Group and a Belgian MEP of The Left Group which preferred to maintain his anonymity.

In conclusion, this thesis has potential limitations. For what concerns the policy and legislative processes in the EU, there are many informal talks among the actors as well as many documents and information restricted to the public. Therefore, this study has relied on the accessible materials through the Official Journals, Press Rooms and other websites and databases of the European Union. A further limitation has been put by the existence of a number of documents concerning the Nord Stream 2 in the original language of the relative Member State, without being accompanied by a translation. One other important remark is that the voting behavior of the EP is not made public, if not very rarely, and therefore it was not possible to get more information on the votes relatives to the documents treated in this study.

Literature review

Politicization in the energy sector has spread, more or less uniformly, throughout Europe in the last decade, in the context of worsening EU-Russia relations, and has brought to heightened discussion on specific natural gas import projects such as the Nord Stream 2 (Sarno & Munteanu, 2016, p. 67-70). In this regard, the political discourse on transboundary gas infrastructures has generally verted on the political influence and security consequences of the EU dependence on Russia that therefore have lead to a certain emphasis in the necessity of sources, routes and suppliers diversification (Tichý, 2019, p. 617).

Therefore, this literature review firstly aims at providing a brief general overview of the most relevant aspects of the European Energy Union and secondly, at delineating a framework through the concept of politicization and agenda-setting theory.

European Energy Union REF

Art. 4(2) TFEU establishes that energy policy is an area of shared competence among the EU and the Member States (TFEU, 2012). As Art. 4-5 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Art. 2 TFEU provide, the areas of shared competences are subjected to the principle of subsidiarity and proportionality, therefore, respectively, the EU is enabled to act only when the set objectives cannot be reached as effectively by the single Member States, thus coordination is required, and the EU shall adopt an instrument that does not exceed the minimum necessary form and content to reach the aims delineated in the Treaties . In the case of shared competences, Member States can legislate in absence of EU provisions or when the latter are ceased, however in the moment in which the EU decides to legislate, EU law assumes primacy.

The legal basis for EU action in energy policy, Art. 194 TFEU, together with the Energy Union strategy published in 2015 set out the objectives of the Union (TFEU, 2012) (Syriopoulos, 2021). These comprehend an integrated and functioning energy market, a secure and diversified energy supply based on solidarity and cooperation, the promotion of energy efficiency in function of increased independence and environmental benefits, the achievement of the decarbonization of the economy through innovation and research and the fostering of energy networks creation.

The current rules that regulate the natural gas market are contained in the Third Energy Package which entered into force in 2009 (Third energy package, 2021). However, in this context, in 2019 the Directive 2009/73/EC establishing the common rules for the internal market in natural gas, has been amended to make certain provisions, previously only related to intra-EU projects, applicable to third-county infrastructures entering a Member State national territory or waters (European Parliament & Council, 2019).

As Tichy reports, the main actors of the European political discourse are the European Commission, which detains the right of initiative together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, followed by the European Parliament that controls the legislative and executive powers and with the Council of the EU, which is the voice of the EU member governments, negotiates and adopts EU laws (Tichý, 2019, p. 606).

As it has been mentioned, one of the objective of the Energy Union is the diversification of sources and as a recent study by Eurostat illustrates, the main supplier of natural gas in the time-frame 2016-2020 has been Russia (EU imports of energy products - recent developments, 2020). Thus, when referring to energy security the problem of energy dependency is often met as the European stability of energy supply is affected by the fact that the import capacity is concentrated among few external actors (From where do we import energy and how dependent are we?, 2020).

The European Union, besides engaging in the creation of a common energy strategy, has also raised the issue in the public arena, seeking public opinion. In fact, several Eurobarometer (EB) have been carried out, among which one launched in 2016 on the 'perceptions and expectations' of EU citizens on European intervention, that also addressed energy supply and security (European Parliament , Energy supply and energy security, 2016). Another relevant EB has been the 2019 Special 492 on 'European attitudes on EU energy policy' carried out by the Commission, the very first EB solely dedicated to investigating citizens impressions of energy policy (Eurobarometer on energy, 2019). This aspect is quite relevant because, as Harveland et al. point out, it might be indicative of a gradual shift of the Commission agenda-setting from its usual technocratic and depoliticized approach (Haverland, de Ruiter, & Van de Walle, 2018, p. 329-342).

Other authors such as Fischer and Siddi & Kustova take a critical side on the alleged shift of attitude of the EU in energy governance. In fact, Fischer argues that the Commission has constructed legal claims and inconsistencies to expand its power, in particular with the aim of negotiating on Nord Stream 2, and in more general terms he claims that energy market rules have been arbitrarily politicized for motives of foreign policy (Fischer, 2017, p. 4). Siddi & Kustova, on a similar stance, argue that the EU has moved from its typical liberal approach to a strategic one, thus, using legislative tools to reach strategic objectives. Furthermore, Siddi & Kustova address on the EU changed attitude the fault of the increased geopolitical tensions and internal division (Siddi & Kustova, 2021, p. 14-15)

On the other side, Westphal, in light of the 2009 Gas Directive that was amended in 2019, affirms that an transferal of power from the Member States to the European Union and the consequent formulation of additional EU rules, "transforms highly political issues into administrative actions" and makes the issues "less likely to be politicized" (Westphal, 2021, p. 2). This is precisely what this study

wants to investigate through the specific case on the Nord Stream 2 which will be introduced in the following chapter.

Concepts and framework

Politicization

In the Cambridge Dictionary to politicize is “to make something or someone political, or more involved in... political matters” (Politicize, s.d.). However among scholars politicization has been defined very variably from being the action of bringing something into the field of public choice (Zürn, 2019, p. 978), to the broadening of the ‘scope of conflict’¹ in the political realm (Hutter & Grande, 2014, p. 3-5) (Schattschneider, 1975), but also the increased polarization of views and the degree to which these are brought up in the policy definition process (De Wilde, 2011, p. 570-571).

De Wilde’s work on the conceptualization of politicization has been very relevant in scholarly investigation and what he has urged to define first are the subjects of politicization. He identifies them in institutions, decision making processes and issues (De Wilde, 2011, p. 560). Although he points out that the term can lead to ambiguities, due to the lack of precise definition, it is an encompassing and multifaceted process to which it is possible to give an operationalization (De Wilde, 2011, p. 560) (Kriesi & Hutter, 2019, p. 999) (Hutter & Grande, 2014, p. 4-5). Focusing on the category of issues, it has been possible to individuate three conceptual dimensions in issue salience, actor expansion and actor polarization respectively intended as visibility, scope, and intensity and direction (Hutter & Grande, 2014, p. 4) (Kriesi & Hutter, 2019, p. 999). In other words, to detect politicization the issue of our interest shall be firstly, frequently publicly debated, secondly, it shall be subject of discussion by a multitude of actors and thirdly, the actors shall be in disaccord among them, opposing different positions with a certain intensity (De Wilde, 2011, p. 566-569).

Agenda-setting: an overview of relevant literature

It is common practice among scholars to distinguish diverse types of agenda, from the media and the public to the political agenda (Mrogers & Wdearing, 1988). The one of interest for this research is the political agenda, sometimes also referred to as institutional agenda. As explained by Kingdon the institutional agenda in turn splits into two agendas: the governmental agenda, “a list of subjects that are getting attention” and the decision agenda, the subjects “that are up for an active decision” (Kingdon, 2010, p. 4). The focus of this study will be placed, rather than on the entrance of an issue in the governmental agenda, on the shaping of the policy process, intended as the process that leads to

¹ To be intended, according to Schattschneider, as “an aspect of the scale of political organization and the extent of political competition” (Schattschneider, 1975, p. 20).

discussion among the Institutions about the possibility of an active decision. Consequently, the subject of investigation will be the shaping of the agenda in the policy process that can potentially lead to a successful adoption of a policy or to its unsuccess.

For what concerns agenda-setting there are different schools of thought that take a different approach on the theory and use it for different aims. One of the most operated approaches is the Multiple Streams Framework (MSF) first introduced by Kingdon in 1984. The MSF as originally elaborated by Kingdon is constructed upon the system of the United States and rejects the idea that policymaking reflects a logical problem-solving reasoning (Ackrill, Kay, & Zahariadis, 2013, p. 871). It rather assumes that agenda shift is caused by a mix of pressing problems, the presence of valuable alternatives and the action of policy-entrepreneurs (Herweg, 2015a, p. 89). The aim of the application of the MSF is understanding why certain issues get attention as far as to be placed on the agenda. But as it was said, this is not a linear process and Kingdon individuates three streams to explain the United States policy. These are the problem, the political and the policy streams (Ackrill, Kay, & Zahariadis, 2013, p. 872). Moreover, there are three conditions that have to be met for the agenda change to happen: firstly, the streams have to be 'ripe', which means they are ready to be coupled, secondly, a change has to interest the problem or the policy stream, and lastly, a policy-entrepreneur has to succeed in pushing a relevant issue forward and coupling it with the other streams in the exact same moment an opportunity for agenda change, called policy window, opens (Herweg, Explaining European agenda-setting using the multiple streams framework: the case of European natural gas regulation, 2015b, p. 13-14).

Kingdon's MSF has been adapted to the European Union system, since it was not conceived for this purpose. These adaptations have been carried out mainly by Ackrill and Herweg, who have also operated an expansion of its scope from solely investigating the entrance of an issue into the governmental agenda² to also exploring the process that leads to the actual decision-making and the passing of an act, therefore also including the decision agenda (Ackrill, Kay, & Zahariadis, 2013) (Herweg, 2015a) (Herweg, 2015b). Although this framework has proved successful, it does not explicitly encompass the politicization process to which an issue can be subjected and how that potentially influences agenda-shaping.

What better suits the purpose of this research is looking at previous empirical application that combine politicization and agenda-setting. Indicative is the research conducted by Urso, who combines the two in her study on immigration (Urso, 2018). This necessity stems from the fact that the immigration issue is framed differently by several actors. Urso follows van der Brug argument in considering the framing

as part of the politicization process (Urso, 2018) (Van der Brug, D'Amato, Ruedin, & Berkhout, 2015). Therefore, together with the salience and the polarization of the actors involved, an issue can either be politicized or de-politicized. As Urso points out, this is strictly intertwined with agenda-setting which focuses on how policy entrepreneurs compete to place their issue of interest, presented from a certain perspective, on the political agenda (Urso, 2018). Framing becomes inextricably tied to agenda-setting processes. Therefore, politicization can lead to the framing of an issue as a relevant problem that thanks to the efforts of the political actors (policy entrepreneurs) can enter the agenda (Urso, 2018).

However, Urso focuses on the entrance of an issue on the governmental agenda and on political actors anchored to the left vs. right spectrum (Urso, 2018). This might not be the best approach for the scope of this research since, as Tosun argues, the positions on issues regarding energy policy are more influenced by national stances than party positioning (Tosun, 2015, p. 238). The highlighting of certain aspects in presenting the issue rather than being determined by the right/left cleavage is determined by the national attitude which can be more liberal and market-based or more geopolitically oriented in the energy field. Furthermore, Urso approach would only allow us to detect the achievement of agenda status of an energetical issue and not its policy process.

Tosun approaches agenda-setting with the willingness to determine agenda shaping in the policy process rather than the entering of the issue in the governmental agenda (Tosun, 2015, p. 228). The policy process can thus be investigated looking at attention, actors and images according to the model elaborated by Engeli (Engeli, 2012, p. 9-10). In this model, as Tosun notices, the political conflict becomes determining in shaping the policy process, thus the more an issue is politicized the more the policy process will be characterized by disagreement (Tosun, 2015, p. 228). In other words, the higher the level of attention paid to an issue, the more the policy process, that proceeds after initial agenda-setting, is going to be controversial. In an amplitude of actors engaging in the policy process there will be an amplitude of desired policy outcomes (Tosun, 2015, p. 229).

The last element is the image given to an issue, hence the perception of an issue that precludes alternative views, such perception is associated to the issue through the framing process (Tosun, 2015, p. 229). In here, the contribution of Princen is fundamental, as he connects the dots among the elements, claiming that to gain attention the actors might frame an issue in a certain way to direct it to the 'right' venue, in order to engage more actors and stimulate interest (Princen, 2011, p. 929-931) (Tosun, 2015, p. 229). As Tosun points out the emergence of new actors can lead to higher politicization, consequently to a more controversial policy process (Tosun, 2015, p. 229).

Conclusion

The most relevant theoretical approach for the scope of this research is therefore the one employed by Tosun which is based on the combination of the frameworks created by Eligne and Princen, thus it will lead the case study and the consequent discussion in the following chapters.

As a result, the attention dedicated to the issue will be assessed through the visibility and intensity with which it has been debated, the actors will be explored in their breadth and type as well as polarization. Through the investigation of these two first elements of the framework, namely actors and attention, it will be possible to detect the politicization that interests the specific issue treated in the case study, actually putting into practice the operationalization proposed by Hutter & Grande. After that, the issue images and the venues in which these are presented will be examined.

Case study on Nord Stream 2

The case study on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project constitutes the results of this research. This chapter will therefore start with a legal contextualization of the project which serves to understand the context in which the various actors can act and with which competences. After that it will be portrayed the pattern of countries engaged in debating the Nord Stream 2, within it will be individuated the breadth of actors, the different stakes and stances but also the divisions internal to the Council of the EU. This part will be followed by a narrative on the institutional debate that has interested the pipeline and lastly, a focus will be put on the European Parliament and the insights of five interviews with MEPs will be displayed.

Legal context

The Nord Stream 2 falls under international, national and EU legislation being a pipeline that crosses territorial waters and Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZ) and enters the European Union territory. In order to understand which actor detains which competences regarding the project, hence case by case what are the possibilities to intervene, it follows a brief analysis of the three contexts.

International law

As mentioned, the pipeline passes through the EEZ of Sweden, Denmark and Finland and through territorial waters of Germany and Russia (Permitting, s.d.). Consequently each country had to grant consensus for the project construction. What Jeutner importantly points out is that the basis for giving or rejecting consensus vary significantly in the two scenarios (Jeutner, 2019, p. 510). According to International law, in the case of territorial waters the country exerts sovereignty over its waters, whereas in the case of EEZ the State's rights are very much limited and it can impede projects only on the grounds of environmental considerations (Jeutner, 2019, p. 510). This allows to understand that

the permitting countries did not have the capacity of preventing the pipeline if not with the scope of tackling pollution (Jeutner, 2019, p. 510).

Nord Stream 2 AG submitted to the four Member States and to Russia the Environmental Impact Assessment required (Permitting, s.d.). Notwithstanding, the project had to undergo international consultation as provided by the Espoo Convention and in particular the procedure involved all the nine coastal States of the Baltic Sea, as all of them might be affected by the pipeline. The permitting countries which correspond to the 'parties of origin' consulted with the 'affected parties', namely Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia (International Consultation, s.d.). These submitted their comments to the 'parties of origin' which then elaborated their final response and all granted the construction permits among 2018 and 2019 (International Consultation, s.d.).



Fig. 1: Nord Stream 2 route through EEZ and territorial waters of countries bordering the Baltic Sea.

Source: *Route Map Baltics*. (2019). Retrieved from nord-stream2.com

European and national law

The Third Gas Directive, 2009/73/EC, contained in the Third Energy Package has been amended in 2019 by means of the Directive (EU) 2019/692 and has rendered the once internal rules, concerning transparency requirements, non-discriminatory tariffs, third-party access and unbundling of ownership and transit operations, applicable to the interconnectors between Member States and third countries (European Parliament & Council, 2019).

The Directive (EU) 2019/692 makes the measures of the internal energy market effective on the section of the NS2 pipeline lied in the German territory and territorial waters (European Parliament & Council, 2019). As Germany is the sole European country among the ones of the Baltic which territorial waters will be crossed by NS2, the German government has the role of ensuring that the transcribed Directive in national law applies to the pipeline in question and that Nord Stream 2 AG complies with it. The monitoring of such process is of responsibility of the national regulatory authority, the Bundesnetzagentur REF.

Nord Stream 2 AG after the entry into force of the amended Directive in May 2019 has presented a case before the General Court of the CJEU against the Council of the EU and Parliament claiming that the new regulatory framework discriminated against Nord Stream 2 and asking for its annulment (CJEU, 2020). The argument advanced was that the pipeline project at that time was the only project already under construction that would have been affected by the Directive 2019/692. The case was judged by the General Court as inadmissible as there were not the grounds for claiming direct concern.

Directive 2019/692 provides a derogation possibility for those pipelines which were completed before the 23rd of May 2019. Nord Stream 2 AG has also presented a request for derogation to the Bundesnetzagentur, on the base of the interpretation of completion of the project as the investment decision which was concluded among 2016/2017 (No derogation from regulation for Nord Stream 2, 2020). The German authority on the 15th May 2020 has rejected the request as for completion it is meant the finalization of the pipe-lying operations. As things stand today, NS2 will have to comply with the new legislation for the section of the pipelines placed in the German territory and waters in order to start the transit operations once it will be completed.

Actors and stakes

In order to understand the heightened debate around the Nord Stream 2 is fundamental to go through the different actors and stakes involved in the project. First of all, the actors that are engaged in the project are the private enterprises and shareholders of the pipeline, the Austrian OMV, the Dutch/English Shell, the French ENGIE, the German Uniper and Wintershall DEA and Nord Stream 2 AG (Shareholders & Financial Investors, s.d.). Russia and Germany are also directly concerned as the pipeline is constructed on their national territories. Following these, as previously mentioned, Denmark, Finland and Sweden classify as party of origin, while Poland and the Baltic States are countries affected by the project. The remaining 15 Member States do not have a direct correlation to the project (from a legal point of view).

Russia, besides being the country from which the Nord Stream departs, is also the administrator of over 50% of Gazprom's shares and Gazprom in turn is the sole shareholder of Nord Stream 2 AG

(Loskot-Strachota, 2016, p. 3) (Shares, s.d.) (Shareholders & Financial Investors, s.d.). The EU gas market is of relevant importance to the Russian company as it has been shown by its willingness, over the last few years, to adapt to the changing market and to satisfy agreements such as the one reached among Russia and Ukraine in 2019 on maintenance of transit through the Brotherhood pipeline, strongly advanced by the EU (European Commission, 2019) (Gazprom, 2019). What cannot be predicted is whether Gazprom will maintain this attitude on the implementation of the regulatory framework to Nord Stream 2 and if the contracts with Ukraine will be extended after 2024.

As Kustova & Siddi point out Germany and Austria have always been the most favorable states to the Nord Stream 2 in the EU. The two have claimed since the beginning the purely commercial nature of the project and the exclusive businesses competences in its addressing (Kustova & Siddi, 2021, p. 11) (Herranz-Surrallés, 2017, p. 196).

The German economic and liberal approach to Nord Stream 2, as argued by Westphal and Herranz-Surrallés, has been an attempt of the government to de-politicize the energy project which per se was ideated in a very complex geopolitical setting that already with the Nord Stream 1 had generated controversies (Herranz-Surrallés, 2017) (Westphal, 2021). However, Germany considers to need the new pipeline to face the increase gas demand it is going to result from the phasing out of coal and nuclear by 2022 (Westphal, 2021, p. 3). NS2 is considered a good solution from Germany, because the gas supply would be the most competitive one in terms of prices and because it would arrive directly into its territory. Moreover, it should not be neglected that the ex-chancellor Schröder which, during his term, advocated for the pipeline, has then become the Chairman of the Shareholders' Committee of Nord Stream. However, even among the most strenuous supporter of the projects there are internal divisions. Within Germany, the CDU/CSU, Angela Merkel's party, is polarized among those that support the Chancellor stance and those that oppose the project (Fischer, 2017).

France has not being as consistent and firm in affirming its stance as Germany and Austria. The former indeed, has moderately supported the project, even though the recent development regarding the Navalny case have led the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs to express France favor to the project abandonment, clarifying that the final decision rests with Germany (Goldthau & Sitter, 2020, p. 117) (Salamé, 2021). Another precedent pivotal moment has been in 2019, in occasion of the Council discussion of the Proposal for an amendment of the 2009 Third Gas Directive, when France supported the proposed amendment contrary to the Austrian and Germany expectations (Syriopoulos, 2021, p. 37).

Finland has adopted a neutral stance in regards to the project, basing its judgement on the compliance of the Nord Stream 2 with the EU legislative framework, international and national law (Gotkowska &

Szymański, 2016, p. 3-4) (Zhiznin & Timokhov , 2019, p. 34). The government back in 2016 expressed its clear intention to treat the project as a purely energetical commercial project (Eduskunta, 2016).

Sweden at the time of granting the consent, in 2018, has expressed its criticism towards the pipeline on the base of the potential conflict with the Energy Union objectives and it has underlined the joint pressure by the Swedish and Danish government in bringing the issue to the EU agenda (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, 2018). It was also specified with emphasis that the country could have not been able of blocking the pipeline since international law does not grant this authority to the States in their EEZ (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, 2018) (Jeutner, 2019, p. 510-511). Sweden, in fact, has always perceived Nord Stream 2 as a dangerous geopolitical project that increases EU dependence on Russia (Gotkowska & Szymański, 2016, p. 2-3) (Goldthau & Sitter, 2020, p. 117).

For what concerns Denmark, the plan of Nord Stream 2 AG initially was to make the Nord Stream 2 pass through its territorial waters (Permitting Process in Denmark, 2021). However this meant that the country had the authority of refusing permission on the base of national security grounds, indeed the third time Nord Stream 2 AG submitted the documentation for the approval it had planned a different route that would only touch Danish EEZ, giving the government very limited power to deny consensus (Jeutner, 2019, p. 511) (Goldthau & Sitter, 2020, p. 122). As Goldthau & Sitter reports, the Danish government delayed the approval terms in order to express itself on the grounds of reviewed EU law, in fact the consensus was granted only on 30 October 2019 (Goldthau & Sitter, 2020, p. 122).

In 2016 nine EU government signed a letter addressed to the European Commission in which they manifested serious concern upon the Nord Stream 2 (Sytas, 2016). The signatories States were the Baltic States, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Croatia and the Czech Republic (Sytas, 2016). Of these Poland has been the strongest opponent to the project, followed by the Baltic States. EU transit countries such as Poland, Slovakia and Czech Republic, besides opposing the new project on geopolitical premises, have concerns about the possibility of losing their status as such (Zhiznin & Timokhov , 2019, p. 28-33).

Italy has not took a defined position on the pipeline, however the government guided by Prime Minister Renzi (2014-2016) opposed it for market-related considerations, hence Italy desire of becoming a central hub for gas and the South Stream block of 2014 (Siddi, 2018, p. 8) (Spiegel & Politi, 2015). Great Britain has neither taken strong stances, even though the Johnson administration aligns with the US in condemning the project (Siddi, 2019, p. 556). In the meantime, The Netherlands, being generally depicted like the UK as a country with a liberal approach, has not fiercely opposed the pipeline, but remains critical of Ukrainian potential losses (Goldthau & Sitter, 2020, p. 118).

The remaining EU Member States that have not been nominated have kept a rather low profile on the matter, which was not the subject of relevant debate in the national public discourse. Moreover, the

omitted States do not have a direct link to the pipeline and do not account for the most relevant countries in the EU Institutions in terms of numbers.

Besides contestation in the European continent, the Nord Stream 2 has been subjected to harsh critics, since its origins, by the United States. Always skeptical since the beginning of EU-Russian energy trade, as Kuznir and Ulatowski point out, the US nowadays sees its opposition reinforced by the controversial Russian foreign policy in Ukraine and Crimea and expresses the concern that the NS2 poses a threat to diversification and stabilization in the EU (Ulatowski, 2020, p.98 & Kuznir, 2019, p.10-11). Consequently, the US has imposed a series of sanctions on the parties involved in the realization of the project and has threatened to impose more of them, causing several companies withdrawal from the pipeline and its construction to be significantly delayed (Russia's Nord Stream 2 Pipeline: Continued Uncertainty, 2021). Although it is important to acknowledge the US opposition to the pipeline, this aspect will not be investigated further as details of US-EU relationship on Nord Stream 2 fall outside the scope of this research.

A fundamental role is also played by the European Union per se, however the roles and the positions played by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union are very different and shall not be regarded as one. Being the Council constituted by the MS national ministers, the dynamics within this Institution reflect the ones that have just been portrayed here, namely the interests of the Member States. The EP and Commission will be investigated successively.

Stances

As a result, we can distinguish two sides on the advancement of the project. Those that are in favor of the Nord Stream 2 pursue a market-based and laissez-faire approach, claiming the commercial nature of the project and the private competence in dealing with it, operating depoliticizing techniques as Herranz-Surrallés, Vihma & Wigell affirm (Herranz-Surrallés, 2017, p. 196) (Vihma & Wigell, 2016, p. 384). In this case, the Nord Stream 2 is depicted as a necessary infrastructure that will satisfy the foreseeable higher energy demand in the next decades (Westphal, 2021, p. 2-3) (Vihma & Wigell, 2016, p. 383). In general, the local production of energy within the EU will decline in the near future, and for what concerns Germany, with the phasing out of coal and nuclear by 2022, the country will have to fill a gap in its energy supply through imports (Jordans, 2020). The most convenient way to satisfy the absence of coal and nuclear is indeed the Nord Stream 2, in terms of costs but also in terms of logistical and operational convenience (Westphal, 2021, p. 2-3) (Vihma & Wigell, 2016, p. 378).

On the other side it is possible to distinguish two types of issues regarding the NS2 pipeline, which will be referred to as direct and indirect causes of NS2 controversy. The former is the fact that NS2 clashes

with some objectives of the Energy Union such as solidarity, security, energy efficiency and climate action.

The principle of solidarity among Member States has been strengthened by the introduction in 2016 of an Energy Security Package and it is concerned by the NS2 as European transit countries could be affected by a new pipeline (Syriopoulos, 2021). Additionally, the EU has committed to maintain the gas market in Ukraine, consequently the principle of solidarity extends also to this country. In fact, Ukraine has on its soil the Brotherhood pipeline, the biggest in terms of capacity and storage, which is at the same time the most threatened by the construction of the NS2 (Siddi, 2019). Russia and Gazprom in the past have expressed their desire to bypass the country in order to provide gas delivering it directly to a European Member State. As mentioned, the EU has taken action in order to guarantee the maintenance of the Ukrainian gas corridor and its consequent fruitful revenues for the country, yet the adoption of a protocol for the continuity of transit is deemed to last only until 2024 (Pirani, Sharples, Yafimava, & Yermakov, 2020, p. 14 & Lang & Westphal, 2017, p.20).

In regard to energy efficiency, security and climate action, the NS2 does not reflect the aims of the European Union such as the utmost diversification of the energy suppliers, the pursue of innovative systems to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels in line with the intention of becoming climate neutral by 2050. Moreover, the existing Russian gas infrastructures that supply the EU are not currently used at full capacity, therefore, despite the projected increase of the demand, the Nord Stream 2 will lead to an even bigger capacity surplus.

Whereas, the indirect cause is the identification of Russia as an unreliable partner because of its foreign policy conducts, in particular the annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, the intervention in eastern Ukraine but also violations of human rights and recent alleged involvement in the poisoning of Navalny and its detention condemned by the EU (Godzimirski & Nowak, 2018). From the climate of mistrust comes the fear that Russia could use the increased European dependence on Russia through the NS2 as a political lever.

EU Institutional debate

The first public addressing concerning the Nord Stream 2 by the European Union can be traced back to the 7th October 2015, when the then Commissioner Cañete (for energy and climate action), in occasion of the European Parliament Plenary. Initially clarifying the commercial character of the project, he then expressed the commitment of the Commission to closely control the compliance of the project with the TEP, stressing the already existing capacity surplus of gas routes from Russia and the support for the maintenance of Ukraine as a fundamental transit country. To conclude he remarked

the openness towards Russian gas and the perception of it as a trustful partner, at the same time he declared that the project could never become a Project of Common Interest, because of its clash with the diversification objective (European Commission , 7 October 2015). Later in the same year, the Commission in the State of the Energy Union used the same tone and arguments on the Nord Stream 2 and in the way forward indicated the necessity of act as a unite front vis-à-vis third countries (European Commission, 18 November 2015). One month after during the EU Summit, the then President of the Council President Tusk showed his opposition to the project together with the Visegrad group (Denková & Gotev, 2015). It is also relevant to highlight that in the conclusions of the European Council Meeting it was stressed the necessity of all new infrastructures to comply with the Energy Union principles (European Council , 18 December 2015).

Instead the first public intervention by the European Parliament has been the written declaration of the 7th of March 2016, signed by 12 MEPs coming from very different parties such as the Greens, ECR, S&D and EPP (European Parliament, 7 March 2016). In such declaration the members voiced their concerns on the effect of NS2 on Ukraine, the Energy Union, energy security and Russia's capacity of exploiting energy to exert political influence. They also underlined the threat the NS2 could have posed for the Baltic marine habitat and criticized the involvement of Gazprom, which at the time was accused of having abused of its dominant position. The scope of the declaration was the one of calling on the Commission and European Council to prevent the realization of the NS2. In this already contested scenario, the nine Member States previously mentioned, sent the letter to President Juncker. One month after the declaration and in the same days the Commissioner Cañete encountered Nord Stream 2 AG CEO Matthias Warning, the European Parliament announced a conference about the Nord Stream 2 on the 6th of May 2016 (European Commission, 6 April 2016) (The national and European politics behind Nord Stream II, 2016). The then Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič was invited to give an introductory speech on the matter. In this occasion, he recognized the huge interest shown on the project by the Member States and the EP. He briefly addressed the environmental aspect saying that the project would have to comply with EU rules. He broadly talked about most of the controversial aspects of the project from the importance of Ukraine, diversification and security of supply to the necessity of creating a legal framework that would avoid making the pipeline subjected to colliding rules. Probably the most important remark about his speech was his declaration of EU law applicability to off-shore constructions also in the EZZ of the concerned MS (European Commission, 6 April 2016). In the following months the Vice-President informed about the progress of negotiating talks about NS2, while the MEPs referred their concerns also to Commissioner Cañete (Gotev , 2016) (European Parliament , 10 May 2016).

On the 27th February 2017 the Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council held a meeting in which the on-going negotiations about further regulation to ensure security of gas-supply were discussed. During the meeting the Nord Stream 2 was also addressed in light of a letter sent by the EP's ITRE Committee to the Council chair in which the Commission for called upon qualifying its position on the project. The latter answered re-enforcing its previous declarations (Council of the EU , Outcome of the Council Meeting. Transport, Telecommunications and Energy, 27 February 2017). In the June of the same year, the Commission requested to the Council a mandate to negotiate directly with the Russian Federation on the regulatory framework applying to Nord Stream 2, thus, through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The request was motivated by the fact that the pipeline should have not been operated in a legal void. In the relative press release was clearly pointed out that the EU had already a more than a sufficient number of supply routes able of satisfying natural gas demand and that the NS2 construction would endanger other infrastructures, especially the Ukrainian gas corridor (European Commission, 9 June 2017). On the 26th of June 2017, the Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council reunited again and as reported in the outcome of meeting, the many Member States were satisfied with the request of the Commission (Council of the EU, 26 June 2017). For this reason the Council's legal service was asked to deliver its opinion, which resulted to be negative, specifically affirming that the need advanced by the Commission was not of a legal nature and that the Directive 2009/73 did not apply to the case of Nord Stream 2, contrarily to what was declared by the Commission until that moment. Furthermore, the application of proportionality to a negotiating mandate of the Council was stressed, according to which the it could have not permitted to use "any instrument which would have the effect of preventing or hindering the construction of the pipeline" (Council of the EU, 27 September 2017). Given the negative outcome of thus attempt, the Commission proceeded acting upon the existing rules governing the European gas internal market, hence Directive 2009/73/EC.

On November 2017 the Commission submitted to the EP and Council a proposal for an amendment of the Third Gas Directive (2009/73/EC) which would have permitted the application of internal rules to onshore and offshore pipelines coming from third-countries up to the border of EU jurisdiction, which was intended as comprehending both territorial waters and EEZ (European Commission, 8 November 2017). In the relative Q&A the Commission urged to clarify that the Directive was not set out to prevent the project rather to provide legal clarity (Questions and Answers on the Commission proposal to amend the Gas Directive (2009/73/EC), 2017).

Among the few documents of the Member States available, the observations on the Proposal of the French Senate stand out for their strong opposition to the amendment (Council of the EU, 12 January 2018). The documents in fact reports that despite being the amendment in line with the idea of the

European Union, due to the shared nature of competences regarding energy policy, the intervention of the EU should remain limited, as the proposed intervention would extend the EU power outside what is legitimated. It is added that if the application of the amendment would block the Nord Stream 2, this would constitute a violation of a MS sovereignty and right to decide its energy sources. Finally, it stresses that a pipeline such as the Nord Stream 2 is already subjected to international regulation and that the Proposal does not respect the principle of subsidiarity (Council of the EU, 12 January 2018).

The first revision of the General Secretariat of the Council reflects the critical positions of the French Senate to a certain extent. In fact, the most outstanding modification to the Proposal can be identified in the deletion of the extension of the Union jurisdiction until the EEZ (Council of the EU, 27 March 2018). Therefore the applicability of the Proposal is restricted to the national territory of the MS and their territorial sea.

The ITRE Committee, instead, when adopting its negotiation position in April 2018 made the proposal of the Commission even stricter, adding more clauses on the application of the rules to offshore pipelines in the EEZ in accordance with the UNCLOS and calling for concrete actions by the Member States on the fostering of a wider use of green hydrogen, synthetic methane, biogas and gas from biomass (European Parliament, 11 April 2018). Reflecting the strong willingness of the EP to oppose the project, its resolutions of December 2018 on the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine in clause 79 asks for the project to be cancelled (European Parliament, 12 December 2018).

As Syriopoulos reports, France during the negotiations period, maintained a general scrutiny reservation, without commenting its official position (Syriopoulos, 2021, p. 37). The 7th February 2019, the day before the set COREPER meeting in which a final decision had to be taken, it declared to be favorable to the Third Gas Directive amendment, out of German and Austrian expectations (Union européenne – Énergie - Q&R - Extrait du point de presse, 2019). However, Germany and France managed to reach an internal compromise that led to the definition of an amended Directive that will still impact the Nord Stream 2 but that will not impeded its realization (Posaner, Gurzu, & Tamma, 2019) (Council of the EU, 11 February 2019). The EP voted positively for the adoption of the Proposal in the plenary as a consequence of internal talk that were held among the Institutions to simplify the legislative procedure and adopt the Directive at the first reading (Council of the EU, 5 April 2019). Directive 2019/692 amending Directive 2009/73/EC was finally adopted and published in the Official Journal on the 17th April 2019. However, just one month after, in its resolution on EU-Russia political relations the EP has condemned the Russian practice of exploiting its resources for political aims and has called for a stop of the NS2 (European Parliament, 12 March 2019).

As mentioned in the legal contextualization, Nord Stream 2 AG reacted to the Directive adoption by presenting a case by the CJEU and requesting a derogation by the German national regulatory authority and both of them responded negatively. However, the discussion on the Nord Stream 2 has not terminated here, at least for what concerns the Member States and the European Parliament.

The latter in 2021 has so far adopted two resolutions in which it calls for the halt of the project. The first one dates back to the end of January, it condemns the imprisonment of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny and in clause 11 asks the immediate stop of the Nord Stream 2 through intervention of the EU (European Parliament, 21 January 2021). The second one concerns the implementation of the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine and was adopted in February 2021. The resolution has a stronger tone compared to the one of January and in clause 113 “calls on all stakeholders, and, in particular, those in the Member States and Europe, to make use of the available legal clauses to halt the project” (European Parliament, 11 February 2021).

The new Commission has renovated the positions of the precedent, in fact, the Energy Commissioner Simson in a speech given at the ITRE Committee has expressed the role that gas will play in the coming decade and not in the long-term. To reach the climate neutrality the decline in gas use will be unavoidable (Remarks by Commissioner Simson on the Commission's proposal for a revised TEN-E Regulation at the European Parliament's ITRE Committee meeting, 2020). The Energy Director General of the Commission Jorgensen has confirmed to the ITRE that NS2 does not benefit the European security of supply, but she has also admitted that the initiative to stop the project has to come from the national level (EU says it does not need Nord Stream 2, but only Germany can block it, 2021). The HR/VP Borrell in April has held a speech at the EP in which he has addressed the Nord Stream 2. Considering the impelling requests of the EP to block the pipeline also through European means, HR/VP Borrell has affirmed that it is very challenging to have a common policy among the MS and the EU Institutions, accordingly if the common policy is fragmented the EU lacks the tools to act. Therefore being the NS2 a private agreement it can be managed only at the private or national level. He continued underlining that the EU will ensure the full compliance of the project, once constructed (Russia: Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the EP debate, 2021).

Interviews

In order to get more direct insight into the European institutional debate on the Nord Stream 2 and the role of the Parliament in it, four MEPs were interviewed. The MEPs have expressed their personal evaluations on the Nord Stream 2 while also providing fruitful information about its discussion in the

EP and their country of origin. What has to be noted is that all interviewees accidentally are opponents of the Nord Stream 2.

Both MEP Madison and MEP Kaljurand, being originally from Estonia, were in agreement on depicting the Estonia always opposed to the Nord Stream 2, despite the changes in government. Having MEP Kaljurand covered the role of Foreign Minister she has stressed that in any occasion of encounter with the German counterpart the matter of the Nord Stream 2 would have been risen up. As affirmed by the two, the whole Estonian political landscape is in agreement in seeing the pipeline as a dangerous project. However, the pipeline project is not frequently debated as the positions of the different parties and the central government are renowned. MEP Madison further adds that in last years is not consistently addressed in the EP and it comes up on the agenda when something noteworthy happens as it has been the case of Navalny and Ukraine (Kaljurand, Personal interview, 2021) (Madison, Personal Interview, 2021).

MEP Kaljurand national party is a unite front in the opposition to NS2, whereas this is not the case for the S&D in the EP as the German delegation within it has always been rather in favor (Kaljurand, Personal interview, 2021) (Foreign Policy, 2021). As explained by MEP Madison also his parliamentary group, Identity & Democracy is divided in supporters and opponents, the latter especially represented by the German delegation and partly the French one. Instead the Finnish, Danish and the Estonian are the most critical (Madison, Personal Interview, 2021).

The German MEP Gahler, belongs to the EPP group in the EP and to the German CDU. The latter is probably the most interesting party to look at since it is the Chancellor Merkel's party and it is one of the most split party over the project. As MEP Gahler notices, high-level politicians oppose the project, among which the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Norbert Rottgen, but also Manfred Weber which is the EPP group leader. MEP Gahler claims that those that are in favor either cover a governmental functions and pursue industrial interests or because of influences exerted by personnel involved such as former chancellor Schröder and the ex-Stasi officer Matthias Warning (Gahler, Personal Interview, 2021). MEP Madison also intervenes on the internal division of the CDU, departing from Gahler he affirms that what denotes the opponents is a pragmatic approach to the phase-out of nuclear (Madison, Personal Interview, 2021). The Belgian MEP from The Left instead has expressed the neutrality of its country (MEP The Left, Personal Interview, 2021).

MEP Kaljurand, Madison and Gahler see the Nord Stream 2 as a political project, that will be used by the Russian Federation as a tool. For Madison the tool threatens the MS and possible future conflicts with Russia, while for Kaljurand and Gahler the first aim was the one of bypassing and weakening Ukraine (Gahler, Personal Interview, 2021) (Madison, Personal Interview, 2021) (Kaljurand, Personal

Interview, 2021). The Belgian MEP is in disagreement with the other MEPs, he is, in fact, very concerned by the fact that despite the climate emergency climate becomes secondary in the arguments against such projects as Nord Stream 2 on which the most discussed areas remain foreign policy and international relations (MEP The Left, Personal Interview, 2021).

For what concerns the Third gas Directive all MEPs expressed more or less positively on its outcome, recognizing the success of having applied in the EU territory to third countries the same rules that counted for the internal market.

In conclusion, regarding the influence the EP is able of applying, the MEPs expressed variously, letting still emerge a skeptical tendency. MEP Madison, who per se thinks that the power of the EP shall remain limited, has described the resolutions, which are the most commonly used instrument in condemning the Nord Stream 2, as being very weak. A more consistent influence could, in this specific case, be exerted by the CDU both on the Commission and the Council. MEP Kaljurand has affirmed the utmost importance of continuing raising the voice and putting pressure, however she also recognizes a scarce success of the EP impact on the other Eu bodies. The Belgian MEP thinks that the EP has a certain potential to exert influence, however being the political balances of this Institutions similar to the ones of the Council, it is very hard to bring substantial change (MEP The Left, Personal Interview, 2021). In contrast is MEP Gahler, who attributes to the EP the Commission choice to propose such an amendment as the one put forward in 2017. Something relevant that has been noticed is that both Madison, Gahler and Kaljurand said that in the event of renewed war among Russia and Ukraine, the requests of the EP would have a significant stronger impact (Gahler, Personal Interview, 2021) (Madison, Personal Interview, 2021) (Kaljurand, Personal Interview, 2021).

Analysis

The analysis chapter of this dissertation will consist in the analysis of the data collected through a case study. This paper aimed to explore the politicization to which the Nord Stream 2 has been subjected to in the intra-EU debate. To guarantee a structured analysis of the policy process it has been employed the hybrid agenda-setting framework created by Tosun. As a consequence, the results of the case study have been collected through a thorough revision of EU official documents mainly in the forms of press releases, speeches, legislative proposals and resolutions, to delineate the institutional debate that has interested the NS2. In addition, four interviews with MEPs were carried out to get more insights into the European Parliament role. Therefore, the analysis will be dedicated to the assessment of the attention, actors, images and venues regarding the NS2 to respond to the following sub-questions: 1) Has the level of attention contributed to obtaining major policy change? 2) What has been the effect of the EU intervention on the project?

A broad range of actors has participated off and on the institutional debate concerning the Nord Stream 2 ranging from MS national governments and relative parliaments to EU Institutions. There has been a great involvement of Member States, with a majority of opposing countries. These have predominantly been small-sized countries located in the Central-Eastern Europe that due to their geographical positions might suffer a bigger impact deriving from NS2, either because of transit or bordering of the Baltic Sea. Among these the two poles can still be individuated on one side, in Germany and Austria, as the loyal advocator of the pipeline, accompanied by a less loyal France, and on the other side, in Poland, the Baltic States, Denmark and Finland, as the stronger opponents.

Therefore, while the Council of the EU was torn internally by the polarization of its MS, the European Parliament and the Commission have been all the time very much in favor of firstly, acting upon NS2 and after that, on enhancing regulation on the gas market. Despite having diverse MEPs being supportive of the project, as it was understandable by the interviews, the Parliament has a far greater majority of opponents that have indeed permitted the adoption of several resolutions calling upon the stop of NS2.

The Nord Stream 2 project has initially gained the attention of the European Commission which has swiftly started to discuss about it with the European Parliament. The political attention on the project was immediate. The shareholders agreement was, indeed, disclosed in the context of the recent Ukrainian crisis and tense relationship among the EU and Russia. Only in 2015 the Commission pronounced two times on it, making understand that it had the intention to negotiate and regulate the project. In the first months of 2016, however, with the publication of the first public addressing of the project by the EP, several MEPs did not only condemned the clash of the project with the Energy

Union but underlined the risk that the Russian Federation would use the pipeline to exercise political influence. Almost all the times that the Nord Stream 2 was included in a declaration or resolution the European Parliament did not limit itself to highlighting the threats it posed to the European legal framework and objectives, but it has taken a rather more geopolitical stance referring to those causes of indirect controversy explained in the case study (foreign policy). Exemplary is the 2018 resolution REF on the implementation of the EU Association Agreement with Russia, such resolution was indeed prepared by the AFET Committee, being the one of relevance for Foreign affairs. However, this denotes that the venues in which the NS2 has been brought reflect its re-definition as an issue of Russia's reliability as partner. This stance and re-definition of the Parliament has been confirmed by the interviews carried out with the MEPs which almost all affirmed to consider the project as one of political nature, intentionally advanced by Russia to detain a new political tool directly in the EU.

Even without the intervention of the European Parliament, the European Commission would have continued its evaluation process, but the involvement of the EP has been determinant in rendering the policy process more controversial, especially in the context of the Commission Proposal for an amendment of Directive 2009/73/EC, when through its negotiating position proposed a stricter version of the regulations. Despite this, at the end the EP adapted to the Council lighter version which still constituted a significant policy change, that has regulated the NS2. Such outcome was in opposition to what was foreseeable in the early stages of the discussion among the Commission and the Council about the willingness to regulate the NS2 (legal service). Despite the claims of the Commission involvement in "legal inconsistencies" and construction of a legal void REF Fischer, the Nord Stream 2 has been evaluated by the Commission as a project that is in contrast with several objectives enshrined in the Energy Union and it has been regulated through the legitimate means that the EU could have adopted being energy an area of shared competences. moreover, the NS2 distinguished itself from the previous projects because it is a commercial project that does not satisfy any demand, since there were already many pipelines capable of meeting the natural gas inputs the EU needs and that already are not used at full capacity. Therefore, the project constituted and still constitute a unique case, which is not justifiable on diversification, solidarity, energy efficiency or environmental grounds.

What can instead be noted is that at the beginning through the research of a Council's IGA mandate, the EU has addressed the project in a more strategic way which led to a higher level of attention and disagreement among the Member States. But the successive pursue of the reglementary path has proved to be successful in softening the tones. In fact, after the adoption of the Amended Third Gas Directive, the project is not anymore discussed with the same frequency in the European Parliament, that together with some Member States has been one of the strongest advocator of its halt. On the one hand the interviews have shown how the NS2 is still perceived as a dangerous political project by

the majority of the opponents within the EP, on the other hand the project is less debated and the EP opposition is reiterated only in occasion of noteworthy events of foreign policy such as the recent preoccupation over the Russian mobilization towards Ukraine or the arrest of Alexei Navalny.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to discover the level of attention and politicization that has been granted to the institutional debate on the Pipeline Project Nord Stream 2. To do so the author has operated in order to assess whether the level of attention reserved to the controversial pipeline has contributed to obtaining policy change and if the intervention of the EU in the project through a stronger legislative framework has rendered the NS2 less politicized. To address these aspects of the institutional debate the paper has relied on the agenda-setting framework delineated by Engeli and Princen, further merged by Tosun.

Through the lens of the concepts of attention, actors and images the study has been able of understanding how the NS2 has been addressed in the EU policy process and debate, especially through the detailed case study carried out on the NS2 it has been possible to evaluate the softer tones to which the reglementary action of the European Union has brought to in the EU arena and the decrease in the salience with which the project is discussed. It has also been possible to affirm that the high level of attention and thus, politicization of the project during the policy process have led to a significant policy change, which without the intervention of the EP probably would have not been possible.

What remains to assess is whether there will be a revival of the institutional debate and politicization in the moment the NS2 will be completed and has to enter into force, both because of the potential attempts to prevent the gas transit through the pipeline, but mostly to the necessity of the project to comply with EU legislation.

Bibliography

- Godzimirski, J. M., & Nowak, Z. (2018). EU Gas Supply Security: The Power of the Importer. In K. Szulecki, *Energy Security in Europe*. Cham : Palgrave Macmillan . doi:DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-64964-1_9
- Abnett, K., & Emmott, R. (2021, January 21). *EU lawmakers call for halt to Nord Stream 2 after Navalny arrest*. Retrieved from Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-politics-navalny-eu-idUSKBN29Q1F9>
- About Gazprom*. (2021). Retrieved from Gazprom: <https://www.gazprom.com/about/>
- Ackrill, R., Kay, A., & Zahariadis, N. (2013). Ambiguity, multiple streams, and EU policy. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 20(6), 871-887.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2013.781824>
- CJEU . (2020). *CJEU*. Retrieved from <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2020-05/cp200062en.pdf>
- Construction*. (2021). Retrieved from Nord Stream 2: <https://www.nord-stream2.com/construction/overview/>
- Council of the EU . (27 February 2017). *Outcome of the Council Meeting. Transport, Telecommunications and Energy*. Retrieved from <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6719-2017-INIT/en/pdf>
- Council of the EU . (27 March 2018). *Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas*. Retrieved from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CONSIL:ST_6851_2018_INIT&from=EN
- Council of the EU. (11 February 2019). *Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas - Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament*. Retrieved from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CONSIL:ST_5874_2019_REV_1&from=EN
- Council of the EU. (12 January 2018). *Reasoned Opinion on the Proposal for a Directive amending Directive 2009/73/EC - French Senate* . Retrieved from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CONSIL:ST_5276_2018_INIT&from=EN
- Council of the EU. (26 June 2017). *Outcome of the Council Meeting. Transport, Telecommunications and Energy*. Retrieved from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/22223/st10642en17.pdf>
- Council of the EU. (27 September 2017). *Opinion of the Legal Service*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/SPOLITICO-17092812480.pdf>
- Council of the EU. (5 April 2019). *Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas - Outcome of the European Parliament's first reading* . Retrieved from <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8040-2019-INIT/en/pdf>

- De Wilde, P. (2011). No Polity for Old Politics? A Framework for Analyzing the Politicization of European Integration. *Journal of European Integration*, 33(5), 559-575.
doi:10.1080/07036337.2010.546849
- Denková, A., & Gotev, G. (2015, December 18). *Tusk joins 'Visegrad Four' in attack on Nord Stream 2*. Retrieved from Euractiv: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/tusk-joins-visegrad-four-in-attack-on-nord-stream-2/>
- Eduskunta. (2016, September 28). *Vastaus kirjalliseen kysymykseen Nord Stream 2 -hankkeen turvallisuuspoliittisen ulottuvuuden huomioimisesta*. Helsinki, Finland. Retrieved from https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/Kysymys/Documents/KKV_426+2016.pdf#search=Nord%20Stream%202
- Engeli, I. (2012). Theoretical perspectives on morality politics. In C. Green-Pedersen, I. Engeli, & L. T. Larsen, *Morality politics in Western Europe* (pp. 5-26). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- EU imports of energy products - recent developments*. (2020, October). Retrieved from Eurostat: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_imports_of_energy_products_-_recent_developments
- EU says it does not need Nord Stream 2, but only Germany can block it*. (2021, February 24). Retrieved from Euractiv : <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/eu-says-it-does-not-need-nord-stream-2-but-only-germany-can-block-it/>
- Eurobarometer on energy*. (2019). Retrieved from European Commission : https://ec.europa.eu/energy/data-analysis/eurobarometer-energy_en?redir=1
- European Commission . (2015). *A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy*. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2015:80:FIN>
- European Commission . (7 October 2015). *Commissioner Arias Cañete at the European Parliament Plenary: opening and concluding remarks*. Strasbourg: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_15_5797.
- European Commission. (18 November 2015). *State of the Energy Union 2015*. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1449767367230&uri=CELEX:52015DC0572>
- European Commission. (2019, December 31). *Statement by Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič on the long-term transit of Russian gas to Europe via Ukraine*. Retrieved from European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_19_6869
- European Commission. (6 April 2016, April 6). *Speech by Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič on "Nord Stream II – Energy Union at the crossroads"*. Retrieved from European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_16_1283
- European Commission. (8 November 2017). *Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas*. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017PC0660&from=EN>

- European Commission. (9 June 2017). *Commission seeks a mandate from Member States to negotiate with Russia an agreement on Nord Stream 2*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_17_1571
- European Council . (18 December 2015). *European Council Meeting (17 and 18 December 2015) - Conclusions*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21669/201512-euco-conclusions.pdf>.
- European Parliament . (10 May 2016). *MEPs voice grave concerns about Nord Stream 2 project*. Retrieved from <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20160509IPR26345/meps-voice-grave-concerns-about-nord-stream-2-project>
- European Parliament . (2016). *Energy supply and energy security*. Retrieved from https://www.eesc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/files/briefing_energy_supply_security.pdf
- European Parliament & Council. (2019). *Directive (EU) 2019/692 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas*. Official Journal of the European Union. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/692/oj>
- European Parliament. (11 April 2018). *REPORT on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2009/73/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas*. Retrieved from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/seance_pleniere/textes_deposes/rapports/2018/0143/P8_A\(2018\)0143_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/seance_pleniere/textes_deposes/rapports/2018/0143/P8_A(2018)0143_EN.pdf)
- European Parliament. (11 February 2021). *EU Association Agreement with Ukraine*. Retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0050_EN.pdf
- European Parliament. (12 December 2018). *EU Association Agreement with Ukraine*. Retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0518_EN.html
- European Parliament. (12 March 2019). *State of EU-Russia political relations*. Retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0157_EN.html
- European Parliament. (21 January 2021). *The arrest of Aleksei Navalny*. Retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0018_EN.html
- European Parliament. (7 March 2016). *Written Declaration*. Retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/DCL-8-2016-0023_EN.pdf?redirect
- European Union . (2012). *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*. Official Journal. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>
- Fischer, S. (2017). *Lost in Regulation: The EU and Nord Stream 2*. *CSS ETH Zurich*, 5(5).
- Foreign Policy*. (2021, February 18). Retrieved from VoteWatch : <https://www.votewatch.eu/blog/monthly-highlights-from-eu-decision-making-sustainable-finance-and-nord-stream-2-project/>
- From where do we import energy and how dependent are we?* (2020). Retrieved from Eurostat: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2c.html#:~:text=A%20similar%20analysis%20shows%20that,and%20Colombia%20\(13%20%205\).](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2c.html#:~:text=A%20similar%20analysis%20shows%20that,and%20Colombia%20(13%20%205).)

- Gazprom. (2019, Decemeber 30). *Package of documents signed for Russian gas transit across Ukraine to continue beyond 2019*. Retrieved from Gazprom: <https://www.gazprom.com/press/news/2019/december/article497259/>
- Goldthau, A., & Sitter, N. (2020). Power, authority and security: the EU's Russian gas dilemma. *Journal of European Integration*, 42(1), 111-127. doi:10.1080/07039337.2019.1708341
- Gotev, G. (2016, April 20). *Sefcovic sheds light on Nord Stream 2 negotiations*. Retrieved from Euractiv: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/sefcovic-sheds-light-on-nord-stream-2-negotiations/>
- Gotkowska, J., & Szymański, P. (2016). *The Nordic countries on Nord Stream 2: between scepticism and neutrality*. Warsaw: OWS Centre for Eastern Studies.
- Haverland, M., de Ruiter, M., & Van de Walle, S. (2018). Agenda-setting by the European Commission. Seeking public opinion? *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25(3), 327-345. doi:10.1080/13501763.2016.1249014
- Herranz-Surrallés, A. (2017). Energy diplomacy under scrutiny: parliamentary control of intergovernmental agreements with third-country suppliers. *West European Politics*, 40(1), 183-201.
- Herweg, N. (2015a). Against All Odds: The Liberalisation of the European Natural Gas Market - A Multiple Streams Perspective. In J. Tosun, S. Biesenbender, & K. Schulze, *Energy Policy Making in the EU. Building the Agenda*. (pp. 87-105). London: Springer.
- Herweg, N. (2015b, September 22). Explaining European agenda-setting using the multiple streams framework: the case of European natural gas regulation. *Policy Sciences*, 49, 13-33. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11077-015-9231-z>
- Hutter, S., & Grande, E. (2014). Politicizing Europe in the national electoral arena: a comparative analysis of five West European countries, 1970-2010. *JCMS Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1-30. doi:10.1111/jcms.12133
- International Consultation*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Nord Stream 2: <https://www.nord-stream2.com/environment/international-consultation/>
- Jeutner, V. (2019). Amendments, annexations, alternatives: Nord Stream 2's contemporary status under EU and international law. *Journal of World Energy Law and Business*, 12, 502-512. doi:10.1093/jwelb/jwz031
- Jordans, F. (2020, July 3). *Germany is first major economy to phase out coal and nuclear*. Retrieved from ABC news: <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/germany-finalizing-plan-phase-coal-energy-71591216>
- Kingdon, J. W. (2010). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. White Plains: Pearson.
- Korsunskaya, D. (2014, Decemeber 1). *Putin drops South Stream gas pipeline to EU, courts Turkey*. Retrieved from Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-gas-gazprom-pipeline-idUSKCN0JF30A20141201>
- Kriesi, H., & Hutter, S. (2019). Politicizing Europe in times of crisis. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(7), 996-1017.

- Kustova, I., & Siddi, M. (2021). From a liberal to a strategic actor: the evolution of the EU's approach to international energy governance. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 1-19. doi:10.1080/13501763.2021.1918219
- Lang, K.-O., & Westphal, K. (2017). *Nord Stream 2: a political and economic contextualisation*. German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Berlin: SWP.
- Loskot-Strachota, A. (2016). Nord Stream 2: policy dilemmas and the future of EU gas market. *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/11250/2378856>
- Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation. (2018, 7 June). *Decision on application from Nord Stream 2 AG*. Retrieved from Government Offices of Sweden: <https://www.government.se/press-releases/2018/06/decision-on-application-from-nord-stream-2-ag/>
- Mrogers, E., & Wdearing, J. (1988). Agenda-Setting Research: Where Has It Been, Where Is It Going? *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 11(1), 555-594. doi:10.1080/23808985.1988.11678708
- No derogation from regulation for Nord Stream 2*. (2020). Retrieved from https://www.bundesnetzagentur.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/EN/2020/20200515_NordStream2.html
- Nord Stream 2*. (2021). Retrieved from Gazprom: <https://www.gazprom.com/projects/nord-stream2/>
- Permitting*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Nord Stream 2: <https://www.nord-stream2.com/environment/national-permitting/>
- Permitting Process in Denmark*. (2021). Retrieved from Nord Stream 2 : <https://www.nord-stream2.com/permitting-denmark/danish-permitting-process/>
- Pirani, S., Sharples, J., Yafimava, K., & Yermakov, V. (2020). *Implications of the Russia-Ukraine gas transit deal for alternative pipeline routes and the Ukrainian and European markets*. University of Oxford. The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies.
- Politicize*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Cambridge Dictionary: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/it/dizionario/inglese/politicize>
- Posaner, J., Gurzu, A., & Tamma, P. (2019, February 8). *Franco-German alliance survives Nord Stream 2 scare*. Retrieved from Politico: <https://www.politico.eu/article/france-germany-alliance-survives-nord-stream-2-scare/>
- Princen, S. (2011, August 11). Agenda-setting strategies in EU policy processes. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 18(7), 927-943. doi:10.1080/13501763.2011.599960
- Questions and Answers on the Commission proposal to amend the Gas Directive (2009/73/EC)*. (2017 , November 8). Retrieved from European Commission : https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_17_4422
- Remarks by Commissioner Simson on the Commission's proposal for a revised TEN-E Regulation at the European Parliament's ITRE Committee meeting*. (2020, December 15). Retrieved from European Commission : https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_20_2438

- Route Map Baltics*. (2019). Retrieved from Nord Stream 2: https://www.nord-stream2.com/media/images/en/2019/10/191030-nsp2-2d-route-map-baltics-en-rgb-1920x1080.jpg.888x500_q90_box-0%2C0%2C1920%2C1080_crop_detail.jpg
- Russia: Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the EP debate*. (2021, April 28). Retrieved from EEAS: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/97446/russia-speech-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-ep-debate_en
- Russia's Nord Stream 2 Pipeline: Continued Uncertainty. (2021, February 8). *Congressional Reserach Service*. Retrieved from <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11138>
- Salamé, L. (2021, February 01). *Clément Beaune : "Sans cadre européen, chaque gouvernement serait en train d'appeler les laboratoires"*. Retrieved from France Inter: <https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/l-invite-de-7h50/l-invite-de-7h50-01-fevrier-2021>
- Sarno, C., & Munteanu, D. (2016). South Stream and Nord Stream 2 - Implications for the European Energy Security. *Associação Portuguesa de Estudos Europeus*, 60-96.
- Schattschneider, E. E. (1975). *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. Hinsdale: The Dryden Press.
- Shareholders & Financial Investors* . (n.d.). Retrieved from Nord Stream 2 : <https://www.nord-stream2.com/company/shareholder-and-financial-investors/>
- Shares* . (n.d.). Retrieved from Gazprom : <https://www.gazprom.com/investors/stock/>
- Siddi, M. (2018). Italy's 'Middle Power' Approach to Russia. *The International Spectator*, 1-16.
- Siddi, M. (2019, December 6). Theorising conflict and cooperation in EU-Russia energy relations: ideas, identities and material factors in the Nord Stream 2 debate. *East European Politics*, 36(4), 544-563. doi:10.1080/21599165.2019.1700955
- Siddi, M., & Kustova, I. (2021, April 23). From a liberal to a strategic actor: the evolution of the EU's approach to international energy governance. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 1-19. doi:10.1080/13501763.2021.1918219
- Spiegel, P., & Politi, J. (2015, December 15). *Italy's Renzi joins opposition to Nord Stream 2 pipeline deal*. Retrieved from Financial Times: <https://www.ft.com/content/cebd679c-a281-11e5-8d70-42b68cfae6e4>
- Syriopoulos, C. (2021). Has the Energy Union Strategy Delivered Concrete Solutions to Europe's Energy Security Question? In M. Mathioulakis, *Aspects of the Energy Union. Energy, Climate and the Environment* (pp. 17-46). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan . doi: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-55981-6_2
- Sytas, A. (2016, March 16). *EU leaders sign letter objecting to Nord Stream-2 gas link*. Retrieved from Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-eu-energy-nordstream-idUKKCNOWI1YV>
- TFEU*. (2012). Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>
- The national and European politics behind Nord Stream II*. (2016 , 26 April). Retrieved from VoteWatch : <https://www.votewatch.eu/blog/the-national-and-european-politics-behind-nord-stream-ii/>

- The Pipeline*. (2021). Retrieved from Nord Stream: <https://www.nord-stream.com/the-project/pipeline/>
- Third energy package*. (2021, March 5). Retrieved from European Commission : https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/markets-and-consumers/market-legislation/third-energy-package_en
- Tichý, L. (2019, November 20). EU political discourse on the energy security relations with Russia . (603-621, Ed.) *European Political Science*, 19. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1057/S41304-019-00229-X>
- Tosun, J. (2015). In J. Tosun , S. Biesenbender, & K. Schulze , *Energy Policy Making in the EU. Building the Agenda*. (Vol. 28 , pp. 225-244). London: Springer.
- Union européenne – Énergie - Q&R - Extrait du point de presse*. (2019 , February 7). Retrieved from France Diplomatie : <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/diplomatie-economique-et-commerce-exterieur/actualites-liees-a-la-diplomatie-economique-et-au-commerce-exterieur/2019/article/union-europeenne-energie-q-r-extrait-du-point-de-presse-07-02->
- Urso, O. (2018, October 10). The politicization of immigration in Italy. Who frames the issue, when and how. *Italian Political Science Review*, 48 (3), 1-17 . doi:10.1017/ipo.2018.16
- Van der Brug, W., D'Amato, G., Ruedin, D., & Berkhout, J. (2015). *The Politicisation of Migration*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Vihma , A., & Wigell , M. (2016). Unclear and present danger: Russia's geoeconomics and the Nord Stream II pipeline. *Global Affairs*, 2(4), 377-388.
- Westphal, K. (2021, January 7). Strategic Sovereignty in Energy Affairs. Reflections on Germany and the EU's Ability to Act. *SWP*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.18449/2021C07>
- Zhiznin , S. Z., & Timokhov , V. M. (2019). Economic and geopolitical aspects of the Nord Stream 2 Gas Pipeline. *Baltic Region*, 11(3), 25-42. doi:10.5922/2079-8555-2019-3-2
- Zürn, M. (2019, May 30). Politicization compared: at national, European, and global levels. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(7), 997-995. doi:10.1080/13501763.2019.1619188

Appendices

Appendix 1. Informed Consent Form signed by Mr. Jaak Maddison

THE HAGUE
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

1) Research Project Title: The politicisation of the Nord Stream 2 in the EU Public discours

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

This reserach project aims at analysing the status of the European public debate regarding the pipeline Nord Stream 2 (NS2). The latter is planned to be one of the longest offshore gas pipelines that connect the Ust-Luga area of the Leningrad Region in Russia and the Greifswald area in Germany, through the Baltic Sea. The pipelaying operations started in September 2018 and the project is still in the construction process.

Once reviewed the literature available on the project the main areas of controversies have been individuated in:

- the compliance of NS2 with the European Energy Union objectives of solidarity (in terms of economic losses Ukraine and other Eastern countries could suffer from) and diversification of sources, importers and routes;
- the economic sense of the project and its necessity;
- the reliability of Russia as energy partner (fear of Russian exploitation of energy export as a political lever; controversial Russian foreign policy, i.e. Ukraine and Crimea)

The author now plans to obtain direct insights into the European Parliament position and action towards the Nord Stream 2 combining an analysis of official documents retrieved by the EU databases and interviews with MEPs.

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:


All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Name: *JAAK MADISON*

Signature: 

Date: *06 April 2021*

Appendix 3. Informed Consent Form signed by Ms. Marina Kaljurand**Informed Consent Form****Informed Consent Form**

1) Research Project Title: The politicisation of the Nord Stream 2 in the EU Public discours

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

This reserach project aims at analysing the status of the European public debate regarding the pipeline Nord Stream 2 (NS2). The latter is planned to be one of the longest offshore gas pipelines that connect the Ust-Luga area of the Leningrad Region in Russia and the Greifswald area in Germany, through the Baltic Sea. The pipelaying operations started in September 2018 and the project is still in the construction process.

Once reviewed the literature available on the project the main areas of controversies have been individuated in:

- the compliance of NS2 with the European Energy Union objectives of solidarity (in terms of economic losses Ukraine and other Eastern countries could suffer from) and diversification of sources, importers and routes;
- the economic sense of the project and its necessity;
- the reliability of Russia as energy partner (fear of Russian exploitation of energy export as a political lever; controversial Russian foreign policy, i.e. Ukraine and Crimea)

The author now plans to obtain direct insights into the European Parliament position and action towards the Nord Stream 2 combining an analysis of official documents retrieved by the EU databases and interviews with MEPs.

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Name: **MARINA KALJURAND**

Signature:

Date: **12.04.2021**

Appendix 4. Informed Consent Form signed by Mr. Michael Gahler**Informed Consent Form****Informed Consent Form**

1) Research Project Title: The politicisation of the Nord Stream 2 in the EU Public discourse

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

This research project aims at analysing the status of the European public debate regarding the pipeline Nord Stream 2 (NS2). The latter is planned to be one of the longest offshore gas pipelines that connect the Ust-Luga area of the Leningrad Region in Russia and the Greifswald area in Germany, through the Baltic Sea. The pipelaying operations started in September 2018 and the project is still in the construction process.

Once reviewed the literature available on the project the main areas of controversies have been individuated in:

- the compliance of NS2 with the European Energy Union objectives of solidarity (in terms of economic losses Ukraine and other Eastern countries could suffer from) and diversification of sources, importers and routes;
- the economic sense of the project and its necessity;
- the reliability of Russia as energy partner (fear of Russian exploitation of energy export as a political lever; controversial Russian foreign policy, i.e. Ukraine and Crimea)

The author now plans to obtain direct insights into the European Parliament position and action towards the Nord Stream 2 combining an analysis of official documents retrieved by the EU databases and

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Name: Michael Gahler

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Gahler', written over a horizontal line.

Date:

14/4/21

Appendix 5. Informed Consent Form signed by Belgian MEP of The Left GUE/NGL

THE HAGUE
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

Informed Consent Form
Informed Consent Form

1) Research Project Title: The politicisation of the Nord Stream 2 in the EU Public discours

2) Project Description (1 paragraph)

This reserach project aims at analysing the status of the European public debate regarding the pipeline Nord Stream 2 (NS2). The latter is planned to be one of the longest offshore gas pipelines that connect the Ust-Luga area of the Leningrad Region in Russia and the Greifswald area in Germany, through the Baltic Sea. The pipelaying operations started in September 2018 and the project is still in the construction process.

Once reviewed the literature available on the project the main areas of controversies have been individuated in:

- the compliance of NS2 with the European Energy Union objectives of solidarity (in terms of economic losses Ukraine and other Eastern countries could suffer from) and diversification of sources, importers and routes;
- the economic sense of the project and its necessity;
- the reliability of Russia as energy partner (fear of Russian exploitation of energy export as a political lever; controversial Russian foreign policy, i.e. Ukraine and Crimea)

The author now plans to obtain direct insights into the European Parliament position and action towards the Nord Stream 2 combining an analysis of official documents retrieved by the EU databases and interviews with MEPs.

If you agree to take part in this study please read the following statement and sign this form.

I am 16 years of age or older.

I can confirm that I have read and understood the description and aims of this research. The researcher has answered all the questions that I had to my satisfaction.

I agree to the audio recording of my interview with the researcher.


I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. My name will not be used in the study unless I give permission for it.

Recordings will be accessible only by the researcher. Unless otherwise agreed, anonymity will be ensured at all times. Pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions.

I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time and anything to be deleted from it.

I consent to take part in the research on the basis of the guarantees outlined above.

Name: 

Date:
12/4/2018

Appendix 6. A student ethics form signed by the supervisor**European Studies Student Ethics Form**

Your name: Regina Garsia

Supervisor: Tibor Hargitai

Instructions:

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects, you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- a. Read section 2 that your supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- b. Complete section 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- c. Ask your project supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and ask him/her to sign the form.
- d. Always append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation. This is a knock-out criterium; if not included the Final Project/Dissertation is awarded an NVD.

Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)

(i) Title of Project: Dissertation - Research on Nord Stream 2 in the EU public debate

(ii) Aims of project:

The aim of this project is to investigate the reasons behind the politicisation and polarization on the still under-construction pipeline Nord Stream 2, which will connect Russia to Germany. In the context of an heightened international discourse and stakes, the project focuses on the European public debate and the European Parliament in particular, from an agenda-setting theory perspective.

(iii) Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)

Yes



If yes: you should complete the section 2 of this form.

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects . I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature _____ Date _____

Section 2 Complete this section only if you answered YES to question (iii) above.

(i) What will the participants have to do? (v. brief outline of procedure):

The participants will take part to a semi-structured interview, therefore they will be called to answer a set of questions formulated and sent to them beforehand, with slight differences due to the roles the concerned MEPs cover in the European Parliament, their expertise, involvement in the matter and country of origin. Having chosen a semi-structure approach the author could deviate from the original set of questions if there is an opportunity to discover interesting insights, always remaining pertinent to the scope of the research. The interviews will be conducted through Skype or Zoom and will last among 30 and 45 minutes.

(ii) What sort of people will the participants be and how will they be recruited?

The participants are 5 Members of the European Parliament:

- Mr. Jaak Maddison, Estonian MEP Identity & Democracy Group, AFET Member, Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond
- Mr. Christophe Grudler, French MEP Renew Europe, ITRE Member, AFET Substitute Member, Mouvement Démocrate
- Ms. Marina Kaljurand, Estonian MEP S&D, ITRE Substitute Member, Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Erakond
- Mr. Michael Gahler, German MEP EPP, AFET Member, Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands
- Belgian MEP of GUE/NGL, Parti du Travail de Belgique

(iii) What sort of stimuli or materials will your participants be exposed to? Tick the appropriate boxes and then state what they are in the space below

- ☐ Questionnaires
- ☐ Pictures
- ☐ Sounds
- ☐ Words
- ☒ Other semi-structured interview

(iv) Consent: Informed consent must be obtained for all participants before they take part in your project. By means of an informed consent form you should state what participants will be doing, drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. You should also state how they can withdraw from the study at any time and the measures you are taking to ensure the confidentiality of data. A standard informed consent form is available in the Dissertation Manual. Appendix the Informed Consent Form to your Final Project/Dissertation as well.

(vi) What procedures will you follow in order to guarantee the confidentiality of participants' data?

The participants have chosen to communicate either through Zoom or Skype, both reliable verified company. These guarantee confidentiality of its calls. The participants' name and other details will not be used in the research unless a consent is given. The access to the recordings will be limited to only the researcher and supervisor in a case of necessity.

Student's signature: *Regina Garsia*

Date 17 May 2021

Supervisor's signature:

Date 7 may 2021

(if satisfied with the proposed procedures)