Original Article

Multilevel 'venue shopping': The case of EU's Renewables Directive

Inga Margrete Ydersbond[a,b]
[a]Department of Political Science, University of Oslo, PB 1097 Blindern, 0317 Oslo, Norway.
inga.ydersbond@stv.uio.no
[b]The Fridtjof Nansen Institute, P.O. Box 326, 1326 Lysaker, Norway.

Abstract Lobbying has traditionally been an enterprise of national interest organizations, which chiefly seek to influence national actors, especially governments. However, studies find that national interest organizations increasingly also target the European Union (EU). As the EU agenda has increased in depth and scope, interest organizations at national and EU political levels might be expected to align in coalitions in order to influence EU legislation. Such strategies potentially increase interest organizations' political leverage significantly; despite that, lobbying coalitions consisting of organizations aligned to different political levels have been scantily studied in the literature on EU lobbying. Therefore, the first aim of the article is to illustrate a case where coalition lobbying is highly likely: the lobbying strategies employed by the interest organizations of Germany's energy industries in the process leading up to the EU's Renewable Energy Directive. These industries are represented by several organizations at both the national and the European level. The second aim of the article is an investigation into how the Renewables Directive came about, as the outcome has profound impact on power production and consumption, and future prospects for EUs mitigation of greenhouse gases. Large controversy was connected to the legal proscriptions of support mechanisms for enhancing renewable energy production in particular. Two of the organizations that would be the most severely affected by the Renewables Directive were the European utilities industry and renewables industry, together constituting all power producers and their affiliates in Europe. The utilities and renewables industries disagreed deeply on core issues, such as legislation on support mechanisms for expanding production of renewable energy in the EU. The utilities industry favored an EU-wide green certificate scheme, whereas the renewables industry pressed for national choice of support mechanisms. Because the stakes were high, both had large incentives to invest substantial resources into lobbying on this legislation. The third aim of the article is to discuss what such multilevel lobbying reveals about perceptions of where real decision-making power is located in the EU. Energy policy is traditionally a strong national domain, which makes the governance theory of liberal intergovernmentalism (LI) relevant to use. However, as the EU is increasingly expanding its legislation on energy issues, the multilevel governance theory (MLG) also might describe how interest organizations perceive power to be located when EU legislation is formulated. The results indicate that despite all lobbying that organizations targeted toward the German

 Interest Groups & Advocacy Vol. 3, 1, 30–58
www.palgrave-journals.com/iga/

government, which played a key role in the negotiations, the observations of the lobbying behavior is still better described by MLG than LI; the limited leverage of LI is illustrated by three points. First, all the German interest organizations lobbied institutions at *both* the national and at the EU levels. Second, national and European interest organizations participated in informal multilevel political coalitions consisting of a broad church of actors, as regards the renewables industry in particular. By coordinating political positions, pooling resources and developing common strategies, the interest organizations probably increased their leverage substantially, not the least because these coalitions also were backed by governments in key member states and members of the European Parliament. Third, all the EU-level interest organizations lobbied both the core EU institutions and central national governments. Summing up, these findings suggest that multilevel strategies should be considered for inclusion in analyses of national and European-level interest organizations' lobbying of EU legislation. The interest organizations themselves seem to see power as distributed across multiple levels of governance, and lobby accordingly. In order to grasp momentum of the lobbying process, it is moreover often probably relevant to assess coordination of strategies between interest organizations at different levels in complex multilevel advocacy coalitions. By demonstrating that all organizations covered, regardless of sizes and resources, lobbied at multiple governance levels, this study also nuances the picture of which actors participate in EU policymaking. When legislation on crucial issues is created, small national interest organizations might also target EU institutions. Finally, at least one national interest organization cooperated with private companies to share tasks and enhance lobbying strength. Such cooperation between an interest organization and its private members is a relevant topic of research in future studies on interest organizations.
Interest Groups & Advocacy (2014) **3,** 30–58. doi:10.1057/iga.2013.12

Keywords: coalition lobbying; interest organizations; political strategies; European Union; EU governance; EU energy and climate policy

The literature on EU lobbying in general, and connected to specific fields of EU legislation, is growing rapidly. As the EU expands the depth and scope of responsibilities, multilevel lobbying becomes increasingly relevant for interest organizations as a strategy for achieving their political aims. By joining coalitions in order to enhance lobbying strength, interest organizations might significantly enhance their capacity for influence. Nevertheless, relatively few in-depth studies encompass lobbying by interest organizations in complex multilevel advocacy coalitions within the EU, particularly with regard to the EU's energy policy. Understanding more about this phenomenon is important for several reasons, including attaining a fuller understanding of the political decision making in the EU and of interest organization strategies.

The EU's Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (Directive 2009/28/EC, Renewables Directive) is well suited to illustrating interest

organizations' influence and coalition behavior across political levels, not the least because of the controversy and the high stakes for the involved organizations. After a prolonged and heated conflict involving actors from states, Directorates-General, the European Parliament, the European Council, EU agencies, interest organizations and companies, the Commission significantly altered the final draft proposal regarding its most controversial part: support mechanisms for boosting the production of renewable energy in the EU. Under the final Directive, member states can continue to choose support mechanisms themselves and trade the so-called 'green certificates' only under certain conditions. Toke (2008, p. 3003) and Nilsson *et al.* (2009) argue that one important reason for this change was efficient lobbying and large-scale political mobilization by a broad coalition of 'green' organizations, especially the interest organizations representing the European renewables industry.[1]

For understanding more about the nature of multilevel lobbying, the role of the interest organizations representing the German energy industries in the negotiations leading to the Renewables Directive is particularly relevant. First, such lobbying normally requires substantial resources and is not a feasible option for all interest organizations, small businesses in particular (Eising, 2007a). National interest organizations logically place their main emphasis on the national level, but some studies show that many also lobby at the EU level, provided that they are well endowed with resources (for example, Bouwen, 2004; Klüver, 2010; Dür and Mateo, 2012). The German renewables industry and the utilities industry are Europe's largest within their sectors and can probably afford to pursue such lobbying strategies (Dagger, 2009; BMU, 2011). Second, Germany is regarded as a key country in the negotiations (for example, Toke, 2008; Boasson and Wettestad, 2013). Third, German interest organizations are particularly likely to engage at multilevel lobbying, because, according to Eising (2007c, p. 351), they tend to be more specialized in their interest representation, be better endowed with resources, control more policy information and also prioritize EU institutions more than interest organizations from other countries. Fourth, inclusion of the German energy industries' European-level interest organizations is relevant to explore the cooperation and coordination of strategies across political levels. As founding members of their European umbrella organizations, German interest organizations were likely to have good contacts with their Brussels-based representatives.

There is reason to believe that the Commission also was dependent on input from interest organizations. As complexity generally increases interest organizations' influence (for example, Klüver, 2013, p. 182), adequate and high-quality policy information was probably paramount in the creation of the Renewables Directive. Summing up, if multilevel cooperation and coordination has taken place as regards the Renewables Directive, German interest organizations were probably involved.

Lobbying is probably best viewed as a 'complex collective process' (Klüver, 2013, p. 53), but in contradiction to Klüver, this study will mainly focus on alliances that

are *intentionally created*, not just organizations that push in the same direction because of similar policy goals.

The dynamics underlying the Renewables Directive are complex in terms of numbers of political actors, issues and levels involved (for example, Nilsson *et al*, 2009). Dealt with as highly sensitive information, the interest organizations' strategies are largely 'invisible' to the public. Therefore, analysis of the process in relation to the directive requires an extensive descriptive account and analysis, in order to answer the following research questions as precisely and completely as possible:

(1) What lobbying strategies have the interest organizations of Germany's energy industries used to influence the formulation of the EU Renewables Directive?
(2) What do these strategies tell about their perceptions of where the real decision-making power in the EU is situated? Is it located at the national, or at the national and the EU levels?

Eising (2004) has tested on a large-N sample the 'grand governance theories' about how EU functions on interest organizations' observed lobbying behavior. However, few researchers have tested expectations derived from these different theories on the empirical observations of interest organizations' lobbying on a single EU directive. Arguably, theory testing is the most ambitious use of case studies. This article therefore investigates the lobbying behavior of several interest organizations representing German energy industries assessing observations against expectations deriving from Moravcsik's (1993) liberal intergovernmentalism (LI) and Hooghe and Marks' (2001) multilevel governance (MLG) theories. Comparing observations with predictions, observations are used for testing and evaluation of the theoretical approaches.

Why use these theories in such a design? First, LI is indicated because energy policy has traditionally been a strong national domain (see, for example, Nilsson *et al*, 2009). Second, the EU is increasingly developing more authority in the field of energy policy, and the renewables and utilities industries possess enough resources to conduct multilevel lobbying. The conditions for lobbying behavior in line with MLG theory are therefore also met. Third, both LI and MLG are regarded as two of the most influential and relevant theories on EU integration today both in research and in the public debate. Finally, Franchino (2005) and others have called for more theory testing studies of the EU's governance structures. This article is a part of the ongoing research project – The EU Energy and Climate Package: Causes, Content and Consequences (ECPack).

Theory testing case studies usually take the form of either a most-likely case or a least-likely case format to give maximum leverage to the conclusions (Eckstein, 1975). However, a given case may also be analyzed against two rival theories, which is the approach employed here. The present study might be

particularly fruitful for confronting the two theories by offering what amounts to a most-likely case for both LI and MLG. In other words, where one of the two theories fails to account for the process, it should be seen as considerably weakened in explaining interest organization perception of power relations in the EU energy policy.

Some studies have analyzed different aspects connected to the Renewables Directive. Toke (2008), Nilsson *et al.* (2009) and Boasson and Wettestad (2010 and 2013) have addressed the political processes at the EU level, explaining the end results by means of various theoretical approaches in causal analyses. Toke (2008) focuses on the organizations that were for and against trading of green certificates and analyzes the support mechanisms. An advocacy coalition framework (ACF) is used by Nilsson *et al.* (2009) to explore why the trading of green certificates was rejected as an EU-wide system. Boasson and Wettestad (2010 and 2013) explain the outcomes regarding governance of the EU climate and energy package by different theories. However, relatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to investigating in detail the lobbying processes focusing on interest organizations' strategies across levels. This study thus also nuances the picture of how exactly the directive was created.

This article is organized as follows. The second section outlines LI and MLG as theory frameworks and formulates hypotheses based on them. The third section presents the research methods used and the cases, and the fourth section lays out the empirical observations of actual lobbying behavior. The fifth section discusses whether the observations match the hypotheses and how this relates to the literature on EU lobbying. Last, the sixth section offers a summary and conclusions.

Theoretical Background: Lobbying in Intergovernmental and MLG Systems

How does interest organizations' lobbying behavior change as the EU expands in depth and scope? As utility-maximizing actors, interest organizations should lobby where the power is located. Thus, lobbying patterns should reveal where the interest organizations perceive power in the EU system to be located.

LI emphasizes that national governments act as the predominant decision makers in international negotiations. Implicitly, interest organizations are then less important for political outcomes than are politicians in government. Governments may delegate some authority to supranational institutions, but *only* in order to achieve specific goals such as economic growth and prosperity. Moravcsik (1993) created a theory that many view as aimed at explaining the large intergovernmental conferences (IGCs), but here it is argued that the theory also 1) by extension and 2) encompasses negotiations on secondary legislation on issues where member states have kept a high degree of

self-determination, such as energy policy. Moreover, Moravcsik and Schimmelpfennig (2009, p. 74) emphasize that:

> […] recent empirical research suggests that LI theory applies far more broadly than commonly suggested, including much everyday EU decision-making. The reason is that many decisions within the EU are taken by *de facto* consensus or unanimity, even when the formal rules seem to dictate otherwise.

As a part of the Climate and Energy Package, the Renewables Directive was subject to the co-decision procedure, requiring final consensus in the European Council and the European Parliament. Therefore, LI is applicable to this case. During negotiations requiring *de facto* consensus, policymaking in the EU is thus only to a very limited extent determined by the EU institutions themselves, in this theory. It should instead be understood as the result of intergovernmental negotiations by sovereign national governments (Moravcsik, 1993, pp. 474–480; Moravcsik, 1998, pp. 7–9; Hooghe and Marks, 2001, p. 2). In particular, the key member states are essential for understanding the outcomes of the negotiations (Sverdrup, 1999). In such situations, lobbying EU institutions will have limited effect because they exert little independent impact on decisions made there. If the interest organizations perceive EU negotiations this way, they can thus be expected to focus on lobbying member state governments.

Research expectation

> The industries' national and European interest organizations lobbied the German government, but paid little attention to influencing policymakers in the EU, such as members of the European Parliament or the Commission.

MLG asserts that the EU's collective decision-making processes make national governments lose control over important decisions that influence them. The political levels of governance are mutually interdependent. MLG therefore implies that political actors like interest organizations will lobby on several political levels to exert influence, working across regional, national and supranational arenas. On this assumption, interest organizations will target EU institutions because these are influential lobbying targets in their own right. MLG does not claim that the nation-state has lost its role as the most important unit in international negotiations, but rather that the EU level is also crucial (Hooghe and Marks, 2001, p. 4). This is supported by an increasing amount of empirical observations, for example Coen and Richardson's (2009, p. 7) account on how interest organizations lobby in the EU:

> As a result, we no longer see EU interest politics in terms of 'bottom-up' national interests feeding into the EU, or 'top-down' coordination of EU lobbying, rather we see a managed multilevel process with numerous feedback

loops and entry points constrained by the size of the interest organization, lobbying budgets, origin and the policy area.

Several developments make the EU institutions attractive lobbying targets. In recent years, the Commission, the EU's multipurpose executive body, has become steadily more independent of the member states, increasingly constituting a higher level of governance than the national governments (see, for example, Egeberg, 2006, pp. 1–3). The Lisbon Treaty and several other EU reforms have given the European Parliament increased powers. More and more issues are, for example, treated under the co-decision procedure (today called the ordinary legislative procedure). These legal reforms therefore also locate power to the EU institutions at the expense of national sovereignty. Consequently, the EU institutions have become increasingly attractive and important as lobbying targets. According to MLG, the interest organizations therefore should lobby *both* the EU's institutions and the German government intensively.

Research expectation

The industries' national and European interest organizations lobbied the Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council and the German government intensively.

Method and Data

In line with prominent case study methodologists such as George and Bennett (2005, p. 214), we argue that the case study method is useful for testing theories on data that describe micro-level phenomena. Theory-testing case studies usually take the form of either a *most-likely case* or a *least-likely case* study to give maximum leverage to the conclusions (Eckstein, 1975). However, as noted above, a given case may also be analyzed against two rival theories. To test the theories, this study employs the congruence method (pattern matching), which proceeds by formulating observable expectations from each theory and then testing the degree of compliance between these and observable outcomes (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 181; Gerring, 2007, p. 45). In addition, process tracing has been used to obtain an indication of the effect of the coalition building on the impact that the interest organizations had on the Renewables Directive. Case studies can be used to make *analytical* rather than *statistical* generalizations (Yin, 2009). Conclusions from this study can therefore be drawn to help understand the causes and pathways of lobbying in the EU, but also to strengthen, exemplify, weaken or nuance claims made in recent studies of EU lobbying, such as Klüver (2013, p. 152): 'Lobbying in the European [Union] is instead a truly multilevel endeavour in which both national and European interest organizations are equally active'.

The organizations interviewed represent the German energy industries at the national and at the EU level. These can roughly be divided into two sectors/industries: the utilities industry[2] and the renewables industry.[3] A large number of organizations representing the industries in one way or another exist. The organizations studied were selected on the basis of the size of the technologies they represent in terms of the quantity of energy production they contribute.[4] The utilities industries' national-level interest organizations are: German Association of Energy and Water Industries (*Bundesverband der Energie und Wasserwirtschaft*, BDEW) and Federation of German Industry (*Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie*, BDI). At the European level, the Union of the Electricity Industry (EURELECTRIC) has this role. The renewables industry is here represented by the umbrella organization German Renewable Energy Federation (*Bundesverband Erneuerbare Energie*, BEE), the more specialized German Bioenergy Association (*Bundesverband BioEnergie*, BBE) and German Wind Energy Association (*Bundesverband WindEnergie*, BWE). At the European level, the renewables industry's interest organizations include the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), the European Photovoltaic Industry Association (EPIA) and the European Renewable Energies Federation (EREF). The European umbrella organization of the renewables sector is the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC).

The reasons for choosing interest organizations at both the national and the EU political levels were: (i) to identify coordination and cooperation across the political levels; (ii) some of them (EWEA, EPIA and EREF) have German companies and associations as individual members and thus represent their interests directly in Brussels; and (iii) all these have German interest organizations as founding members and therefore probably constitute important indirect lobbying routes for their national members. Therefore, the study follows the advice of Dür (2008, p. 1223): 'In future research on interest organization influence in the EU it will be essential to consider the existence of distinct pathways to influence'.

The data were primarily collected through one semi-structured interview with each organization in March 2011, supplemented by one conversation and one correspondence with two of them in June 2011. All interviews were taped and transcribed. Afterwards, the respondents gave feedback on the presentations of their respective organizations. As the topic could be perceived as sensitive, the respondents were granted anonymity. Triangulation was used in order to ensure that the quality of the data was as valid and reliable as possible. For example, interview data were checked against written material such as press releases and other data gathered in document studies. Interest organizations' representatives were asked how they had lobbied concerning the Renewables Directive, about their cooperation partners within and outside the industry, and political positions on the salient issues. In addition, they were questioned about the kind of information they provided to decision makers, and the role of resources such as finances and number of personnel.

What Was the Debate about and How Did the Organizations Lobby?[5]

The Renewables Directive is a part of the EU's climate and energy package, which is a coordinated legislative strategy aimed at achieving several different major EU goals. These include fulfilling commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, being an international leader in the development and innovation of renewable energy sources, and ensuring security of energy supply (European Commission, 2009). The development of renewable energy has become a core EU strategic priority in recent years (see European Commission, 2010). Twenty per cent of energy consumed is to stem from renewable energy by 2020, the climate and energy package states as a major target.[6] Consequentially, if properly implemented, the Renewables Directive will contribute to large-scale expansion in renewable power production and innovation across EU.

Several systems of support mechanisms to achieve the 20 per cent target were possible. The two main options discussed were either national choice of support mechanisms or EU-wide trading of 'green certificates' (also called green electricity certificates, GECs and certificates of guaranteed origin). Most EU member states had chosen feed-in systems (for example, systems with feed-in tariffs, FiTs) before the Renewables Directive negotiations. Although being a continuously controversial issue, also in the research literature, evidence seems to indicate that FiTs are the most efficient in stimulating production of and investment in renewable energy in Europe (see, for example, Mez, 2007; Verbruggen and Lauber, 2012).

The outcome of the negotiations leading to the Renewables Directive had profound impact in particular on how and where energy would be produced. This in particular affected the industries affiliated with the different types of energy production. For parts of the renewables industry, this was an almost existential fight about opportunities for survival and future prospects. Several issues were controversial in the negotiations, for example the question of having binding targets for domestic renewables consumption in 2020. The question of what kind of support mechanisms the countries should be allowed to have for increasing renewable energy production was (and is) still the far most salient issue.

Here, there were mainly two different coalitions of interest organizations and their affiliates. The utilities industry, here headed by BDEW in Germany and EURELECTRIC in the EU, were very engaged. They felt that letting countries decide support mechanisms themselves would have several negative effects such as: lead to continuation of feed-in systems, which they view as distorting the electricity markets, stimulate renewables expansion at suboptimal places, be detrimental for conventional electricity producers and generally uneconomic for governments. The renewables industry were headed by BEE in Germany and EREC in the EU. The renewables industry and their affiliates, in contrast, argued that the main alternative, a Europe-wide certificate based system, would lead to lesser renewables expansion because the safety of investments would decline for the investors, that a certificate-based marked would be bureaucratic and that it

would lead to expansion of only the most mature renewable technologies. These opposite 'world views' still mark the debate.[7]

German utilities' interest organizations[8]

First and foremost, the utility industries' German interest organizations in the sample, German Association of Energy and Water Industries (BDEW) and Federation of German Industry (BDI), lobbied the German government. BDEW and BDI lobbied the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie*, BMWi) in particular (interviews BDEW, 2011; BDI, 2011). Generally, the Liberals (*Freie Demokratische Partei*, FDP) supported their views on energy issues. BDI did not address the German Parliament, as that institution had little to do with the Directive directly. Through committee meetings, the organizations collaborated on how an EU marked-based system might be made, but they never declared common political positions. In Germany, they have participated in all formal hearings alike: BDEW on behalf of the utilities industry and BDI on behalf of both businesses connected to utilities and the manufacturing industry (the large energy-intensive industries in particular).

To a considerable extent, these organizations shared views; apart from that, BDEW was keen on promoting green certificates. BDI was not as positive toward tradable green certificates because some members, for example the German chemical industry, did not want another trade-based system having had negative experiences with the EU Emission Trading System. Rather than allying with BDEW, BDI cooperated informally with the large labor union Mining, Chemical and Energy Industrial Union (*Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau, Chemie, Energie,* IG BCE), which organizes employees in the utilities and the energy-intensive chemical industry. BDI and IG BCE prepared a common position paper to show that the industrial employers, as well as the employees in the utilities and energy-intensive industries, were affected and shared views (IG BCE, 2008; interview BDI, 2011).

As the German government supported FiTs, bypassing the German government by focusing lobbying efforts on the EU level could potentially be an advantageous strategy for the utilities industry (for example, Baumgarter and Jones, 1991). However, representatives of both BDEW (interview, 2011) and BDI (interview, 2011) denied that this was the case. Their Brussels offices were important in lobbying EU decision makers and Commission bureaucrats together with staff from the mother organizations. At the EU level, BDEW and BDI first and foremost lobbied the unit in charge in DG Transport and Energy (DG TREN) in the Commission, the ITRE Committee in the European Parliament and members of the European Parliament (MEPs) known to be sympathetic to their views (interviews BDEW, 2011; BDI, 2011). BDEW had one person in Berlin and one in Brussels working on the

Renewables Directive, although not full time. In addition, people in different committees worked on the Directive (interview BDEW, 2011). As a large member of EURELECTRIC, BDEW is important in formulating their policies (interview EURELECTRIC, 2011), whereas BDI is a member of Confederation of European Business (BUSINESSEUROPE). BUSINESSEUROPE and BDI largely shared points of view in this case (BDI, 2008; BUSINESSEUROPE, 2008; interview BDI, 2011). Owing to constraints of time and personnel resources, BDEW and BDI concentrated on lobbying friendly minded German politicians in the European Parliament and ITRE, and the most central individuals, like the rapporteur Claude Turmes (interviews BDI, 2011; BDEW, 2011). According to BDI, Germany made a major impact on the final outcome of the Renewables Directive:

> It is first and foremost due to Germany's influence that we have quite different support mechanisms in Europe … and we argue that the support mechanisms should be harmonized, or at least enable trade with renewable energy. (interview BDI, 2011)

German renewables interest organizations[9]

The German renewables interest organizations shared views on all major issues and lobbied through several different routes. The German government was their main target, but they also worked to promote the industry's interests directly to EU institutions. They coordinated their activities and political positions in the committee *Arbeitsgruppe Europa* (AG Europa) of the umbrella organization German Renewable Energies Federation (interview BEE, 2011). There they produced joint information such as political positions and press statements. These organizations have good contacts in the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (*Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit*, BMU) in particular, which is the ministry in charge of renewable energy. The organizations also drew on contacts within all the political parties, liaising with party staff specializing in renewable energy issues (interviews BEE, 2011; BWE, 2011).

In addition to directly lobbying the Ministry for the Environment and the BMWi, they also used two indirect lobbying channels to exert pressure on the German Government: first, through finding 'friendly' politicians particularly within the two ruling parties, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) and Christian Democratic Union of Germany and Christian Democratic Union of Bavaria (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands, Christlich-Soziale Union Bayern*, CDU/CSU), but also the other parties. The Greens (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*) and the Left (*Die Linke*) generally support expansion of renewable energies. Second, they created an informal alliance with environmental organizations, Greenpeace Germany in particular, but also others like Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND). These in turn actively lobbied the government on renewables

policy because of the technologies' contribution to mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions (interviews BEE, 2011; BBE, 2011; BWE, 2011). Some types of bioenergy were harshly criticized by the environmental organizations (see, for example, WWF Germany *et al*, 2007). In order to get the support of the environmental organizations and create a better policy, the renewables industry's interest organizations agreed to include sustainability criteria in their proposals (interviews BBE, 2011; BEE, 2011).

Through collaborating with other renewables interest organizations, each organization gained new political contacts and better access to existing ones. BEE sought to build as broad a base of support as possible, also among the general public, so that the politicians would know that whenever they made laws that would worsen conditions for the renewables industry, they would also be going against the public opinion (interview BEE, 2011). A majority in the German Parliament, the *Bundestag*, shares and shared their views. Therefore, it adopted a resolution stating that the member-states should determine support mechanisms themselves, and that there should be no Europe-wide trade in certificates (Dagger, 2009, p. 99).

At the EU level, the organizations in particular focused on lobbying friendly-minded MEPs and the unit in charge in DG TREN. Germany's renewables interest organizations are founding members of the EREF and the EPIA. They also participated in meetings, exchanged information and coordinated positions and strategies with them to ensure that the whole European renewables industry would speak with one voice. These European associations constituted important indirect lobbying routes. In addition, they closely cooperated with EREC and created a network of national associations (BEE, 2011; interview BEE, 2011). Some of the staff members held positions in interest organizations at both the national and the EU levels, such as in BWE and in EWEA, which facilitated coordination of viewpoints and actions targeted at politicians at both political levels. Moreover, some renewables interest organizations increased their leverage by cooperating with private companies.

> BWE also coordinated with wind energy companies (manufacturers, project operators etc.) and these also took the opportunity to approach politicians/ MEPs/ Commission etc. so that we were able to do task sharing and multiply our actions. (interview BWE, 2011)

On most issues concerning the drafting process, the renewables industry's interest organizations argued in a low key and technical way with Commission experts. However, when it came to the debate about national support schemes versus harmonized European mechanisms, they were quite sharp and outspoken toward the Commission. If it proposed a harmonized certificate trading system instead of leaving the decision about support mechanisms to the member states, the Commission was bluntly criticized (interview BEE, 2011).

> Confrontation was sought only when it was absolutely necessary, and that was the question about a harmonized certificate trade, which would have destroyed

> all successful support systems for renewables in Europe. At this point, we did seek confrontation, we found it and we won. Differences about all other points could be seriously discussed and solutions found in general agreement. (interview BEE, 2011)

The heated debates in the negotiations leading to the Renewables Directive were to some extent a continuation of the long conflicts that had taken place in Germany on many of the same issues a couple of decades, with marked coalitions on the issue of how to support renewable energy in Germany, as demonstrated in Table 1. These informal coalitions in Germany include actors ranging from ministries, political parties, business organizations and civic organizations to individual companies. Renewable energy enjoyed and enjoys broad popular legitimacy, and the informal 'ecologic coalition' also includes members such as major labor unions such as the German Engineering Federation (*Verband Deutscher Maschinen und Anlagenbau e.V.*, VDMA), German Farmer's Association (*Deutscher Bauernverband e.V.,* DBV) and German Metalworkers' Union (*Industriegewerkschaft Metall*, IG Metall), as well as a broad group of different civic organizations. As several of the organizations below are umbrella organizations for other organizations, Table 1 also indicates that the coalitions had support from organizations operating at the other governmental levels within Germany: the states (*Länder*) and the municipalities.

The European utility umbrella organization: EURELECTRIC[10]

The umbrella organization the EURELECTRIC participated in all formal occasions during the negotiations leading to the Renewables Directive, and viewed it as a top priority. Therefore, EURELECTRIC had 2–3 people working on it full time at the critical stages. The Working Group Energy Policy and Working Group Renewables and Distributing Generation were in charge of formulating EURELECTRIC's political positions. Their efforts were mainly targeted at the EU institutions such as different parts of the Commission, DG TREN, DG Environment, DG Climate and DG Enterprise, as well as the rapporteurs and party leaders in the European Parliament. In addition, the organization arranged personal meetings with parliamentarians and others regarded as influential, and individuals expected to be positive to their views (interview EURELECTRIC, 2011). As a large and well-organized organization representing a large sector, EURELECTRIC might have been expected to achieve their aims, but in the end no certificate trade system was formulated in the Directive.

> We didn't have a lot of support in the Parliament because they were voting along country lines. The clear message that came to all of them was: 'we will have national support schemes'. (interview EURELECTRIC, 2011)

Table 1: The different coalitions on renewable energy in Germany

	The 'economic coalition': Supports market-based system	*The 'ecologic coalition': Supports FiTs*
Ministries	The Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi)	The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (*Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz*, BMELV)
Political parties	The Liberals (FDP)	The Greens The Social Democrats (SDP) The Left A large fraction of CDU/CSU
Business organizations	German Association of Energy and Water Industries (BDEW) The Federation of German Industries (BDI) Association of the Industrial Energy and Power Industry (*Verband der Industriellen Energie und Kraftwirtschaft*, VIK) Mining, Chemical and Energy Industrial Union (IG BCE)	The German Renewable Energy Federation (BEE) BEEs members, such as The German Windenergy Association (BWE) The VDMA German Metalworkers' Federation (IG Metall) The German Farmer's Association (DBV)
Other organizations		Environmental organizations, Greenpeace in particular, civic interest organizations for renewable energy, municipalities
Companies	The four utilities giants: RWE, E.ON, EnBW and Vattenfall	Different manufacturers of renewable technologies, affiliated businesses

Source: Lauber and Mez (2004), Jacobsson and Lauber (2006), Dagger (2009), interviews BDEW (2011), interviews BEE (2011), BBE (2011) and BWE (2011).

EURELECTRIC left it to their members to lobby their national governments. Their only close ally when lobbying the issue about support mechanisms at the EU level was the Renewable Energy Certificate System (RECS). The two collaborated intensely according to EURELECTRIC's activity report (2008a). In 2007, EURELECTRIC issued a joint press release with RECS and the European Forum for Electricity Traders (EFET), which indicates common interests (EURELECTRIC, 2007; interview EURELECTRIC, 2011).

European renewables interest organizations[11]

At the EU level, renewables interest organizations cooperated and coordinated their political strategies and positions through the EREC, the umbrella organization to which they all subscribe. For example, EREC as a coalition leader made common press releases for the whole European renewables industry. The Renewables Directive was their top priority, and represented a historic opportunity to improve investment conditions in many EU countries.

> I think our engagement in this directive was total, was a hundred per cent. It is one of the most far reaching pieces of legislation about renewable energy in the world, with all its defects and limits and nonetheless, you won't find this anywhere else in the world. (interview EWEA, 2011)

They lobbied the relevant bodies within the Commission, the committee in charge in the European Parliament, the Committee on Industry, Transport and Energy, ITRE and the Council, meeting with key governments and their permanent representations in particular (interviews EWEA, 2011; EPIA, 2011; EREF, 2011). The interest organizations followed the political processes closely and arranged meetings with people at various political levels, ranging from Commission President José Manuel Barroso to the officials who drafted the proposals for the Directive (interviews BEE, 2011; EREF, 2011; EPIA, 2011; EWEA, 2011). In addition, the European Forum for Renewable Energy Sources (EURFORES) supported them staunchly. This is a cross-party organization consisting of MEPs and of national parliamentarians, led by a president and two vice-presidents. EUFORES was located in the Renewable Energy House in Brussels, as were most of the renewables interest organizations, which probably further facilitated cooperation and communication. Both the first rapporteur, Mechtild Rothe (Germany), and the second rapporteur on the directive, Claude Turmes (Luxembourg), were very active members there. Otherwise, these EU-level organizations depended on their national members to lobby their respective governments.

Similar to the German interest organizations' good contacts to the German government, the European interest organizations gave the impression of having

long-time ties to decision makers and officials in the EU. Also when lobbying the EU, they formed an informal alliance with environmental organizations, above all Greenpeace EU. For some years Greenpeace EU has promoted renewable energy, *inter alia*, by commissioning and publishing scientific reports with future scenarios for renewable energy (see, for example, Greenpeace European Union, 2007, 2008). The renewables industry's organizations at the EU level and at national levels made a joint effort to make particular governments and MEPs oppose an EU-wide green certificate scheme as a harmonized support mechanism (interview EREF, 2011). At the EU level, the renewables interest organizations also managed to create a broad informal coalition that included major member state governments:

> We also managed to get the German and Spanish government to write a letter to the Commission that the Commission was not allowed, or should not come up with a harmonized green certificate scheme, but that it should be up to the member states. (interview EREF, 2011)

Although the renewables industry is far smaller than the utilities industry in Europe, the data indicate that they together with partners in the environmental movement and key member states such as Germany and Spain in the Council managed to make the Commission amend the directive proposal of December 2007. The directive was subject to the co-decision procedure. After various amendments in 2008, the member states were allowed to decide support mechanisms themselves. The amendments were finally accepted by the European Parliament and the Council, and became law Spring 2009.

The key actors in the debates on each side are summarized in Table 2, which demonstrates how contentious the issue was, where even subunits of major companies and environmental organizations disagreed with their leaderships' opinions. Some member states changed stance during the negotiations.

The arguments in the debates showed quite different 'world views' in terms of what would be the best type of support mechanisms and how a more sustainable Europe should be built, as demonstrated in Table 3. These arguments were frequently used by the different coalitions such as in their press releases, position papers, annual reports and elsewhere, and their phrasings were adjusted to suit the constituency that would receive them. The renewables organizations and the rest of the environmental coalition were aided by the EU energy policy framing, as pointed out by Nilsson *et al.* (2009). In particular, unstable Russian energy policies contributed to making security of supply a central political issue in many member states. The EU had stated that innovation was a key to reach targets such as future economic growth. Increased national generation of renewable energy would enhance domestic energy security by reducing the need of imported fossil fuels, and also lead to prospects of job creation and creating industries with bright future prospects.

Table 2: The different coalitions and their affiliates at the European level

	Pro a European certificate trading system	*Pro national choice of support mechanisms*
Commission Directorates General (DGs)	DG Enterprise DG Environment Heads of DG Transport and Energy	Other sections of DG Transport and Energy, DG Environment and DG Climate
Countries	The UK, Finland and Belgium (initially), Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg and Sweden	The UK, Finland and Belgium (in the end), Germany, Spain, Slovenia, Latvia, Poland, France
European Parliament	European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR), parts of European People's Party (EPP)	The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), members of EUFORES, Socialist Group (today: Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, S&D)
Business organizations	EURELECTRIC EFET RECS Association of Issuing Bodies (AIB) Confederation of European Business (BUSINESSEUROPE)	EREC EWEA EPIA EREF European Biomass Association (AEBIOM) The other industry associations that are EREC members Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)
Other organizations	Subunits of some of the environmental organizations	Environmental organizations like Greenpeace EU, Friends of the Earth Europe (FoE Europe), Climate Action Network (CAN), World Future Council (WFC), World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF EU), and European Environment Bureau (EEB)
Companies	German utilities companies, including RWE, E.ON, EnBW and Vattenfall, most other utilities in Europe, companies that produce equipment for conventional power production	The largest Spanish utility Iberdrola, the big manufacturers of equipment for production of renewable energy, subunits of the large utilities companies that advocated GECs

Sources: Greenpeace European Union (2007), BUSINESSEUROPE (2008), EURELECTRIC (2008b), Toke (2008), WWF EU (2008), Nilsson *et al.* (2009), Boasson and Wettestad (2010), interviews EURELECTRIC (2011), EREF (2011), EWEA (2011), EPIA (2011), BEE (2011) and BWE (2011).

Table 3: The different main arguments in the German and European debates on FiTs versus green certificates

Category	*The utilities industry and the rest of the 'economic coalition's' arguments for green certificates*	*The renewables industry and the rest of the 'environmental coalition's' arguments for FiTs*
Costs	GECs are more cost-efficient for society: green certificates gives the desired amount of electricity at the lowest price	FiTs are the most efficient and least costly way of developing renewable energy production. Conventional energy production suffers from market failure; the real costs of non-renewable energy production are not included in the price, such as the price of pollution
Allocation	GECs will lead to allocation where the potential for renewable energy production is the largest in Europe, rather than where the subsidies are the highest	GECs will often lead to energy production located far away from people and from where the demand for energy is
Fairness	It is unfair for renewable energy to have preferential grid access, and for it to receive so much in indirect subsidies that are based on taxing the grid owners[a]	The utilities have good access to the grid because there used to be monopolies where the power producers also owned the grids. Historically, the utilities have received enormous amounts in subsidies. Renewable technologies are developing rapidly and should continue to be supported until they are mature
The future and innovation	Conventional energy production is important for Germany's/EUs energy security, should not be overlooked and cannot be phased out easily without major negative consequences	In the future, Germany and Europe should run 100 per cent on renewable energy. Continuation of the feed-in systems will lead higher renewables market shares because the support systems foster investments production capacity, which stimulates investments in innovation. This leads to declining prices of the different renewables technologies and enhanced investment in capacity
Employment	Higher production of renewable energy will mean increased costs for industrial consumers, which will threaten the competitiveness of German/European industries	The renewables industry is expected to expand massively, employing more and more people directly and indirectly, giving Europe a competitive advantage
Security of supply	Germany/Europe needs continuity in its supply, which only the conventional energy sources can deliver, as the wind and sun as intermittent energy sources cannot produce electricity continually	Increased renewables production leads to increased energy security, as demand for import of fossil fuels declines. The government must invest in technologies and innovation for efficient storage of energy and expand the grid system
Investments	FiTs do not stimulate investments in new and improved equipment for generation because installation owners are ensured income for years, despite the fact that the technologies are improving	A European certificate system would threaten the national FiTs systems. Market actors would invest in certificates where the tariffs are the highest rather than where wind power is produced most cheaply, such as in Germany

[a]Feed-in systems are normally coupled with laws that ensure renewable energy producers the right to export their excess capacity to the grid regardless of how much other power is produced simultaneously.

Sources: BDEW (2008a) and (2008b), BEE (2008), BDI (2008), BWE (2008), EURELECTRIC (2008b), Greenpeace European Union (2008), IG BCE (2008), BEE (2011), interviews BDI (2011), BEE (2011), BBE (2011), EURELECTRIC (2011), EWEA (2011), EPIA (2011), EREF (2011), and interviews BDEW (2011).

Discussion

Here, we will discuss the extent to which the data match the competing propositions derived from the theories on LI and MLG.

> Research expectation (LI): The industries' national and European interest organizations lobbied the German government, but paid little attention to influencing policy-makers in the EU, such as members of the European Parliament or the Commission.
>
> Research expectation (MLG): The industries' national and European interest organizations lobbied the Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council and the German government intensively.

Some observations clearly support the LI theory. For example, the national-level interest organizations studied here focused their main lobbying efforts at political institutions in Germany, doing their utmost to influence the government's political position. This is only natural, as all interest organizations normally focus on the political level where they have their primary affiliation. There they also enjoy the largest legitimacy in representing the constituency to which decision makers must relate to (for example, Mahoney, 2007; Eising, 2007a). Germany's political positions and actions in the EU negotiations were very much in line with viewpoints of the renewable energy industry. Moreover, the German government knew that it was essentially backed by large parts of the population, including political parties, the environmental movement and a majority in the *Bundestag* (Parliament) (Dagger, 2009, p. 99). The approach to the Directive taken by the organizations, as well as the governments, are in line with Moravcsik's (1993, pp. 483–484) LI argumentation: To maintain their place in office, governments in democratic societies must have support from 'a coalition of domestic voters, parties, interest groups and bureaucracies'. Moreover, the outcome of the directive, national choice of support mechanisms, was in essence in line with LI in maintaining national sovereignty.

Nevertheless, LI seemingly cannot explain the full extent of lobbying behavior. Several findings indicate that the German interest organizations placed high priority on lobbying also at the EU level, reflecting the key importance and salience of the issues at stake. They conducted multilevel lobbying, regardless of size and resource base in terms of money and number of personnel, and whether or not they had their own EU office (interviews BEE, 2011; BDI, 2011; BBE, 2011; BWE, 2011; BDEW, 2011). This stands somewhat in contrast to earlier studies, which have argued that multilevel lobbying is normally feasible only for large and wealthy businesses and their interest organizations (see, for example, Eising, 2007c). These results support the picture of Beyers and Kerremans (2012, p. 279), who argue that issue characteristics such as potential cost and salience enhance the likelihood of national interest organizations to engage in multilevel lobbying, therefore departing from the LI expectations.

The main observations of the German interest organizations that support the MLG expectations can be summed up as following. First, the German interest organizations all lobbied the EU institutions directly and/or together with other national interest organizations. Using fellow nationals as 'door openers' to the EU system is a frequent finding in political research (see, for example, Michelmann, 1978), and is also seen here. Second, all German interest organizations lobbied EU institutions indirectly through their own EU-level interest organizations (interviews BEE, 2011; BBE, 2011; BWE, 2011; BDI, 2011; interview BDEW, 2011). This is how national interest organizations typically defend their political positions at the EU level (see, for example, Eising, 2007a). Third, the interest organizations coordinated their political positions at the national *and* at the EU levels. In addition, at both political levels, the renewables interest organizations also coordinated their political positions with informal long-time coalition partners, Greenpeace Germany and Greenpeace EU in particular (interviews BEE, 2011; BBE, 2011; BWE, 2011; EPIA, 2011; EWEA, 2011; EREF, 2011).

Such common positions signal to decision makers that some political positions have broad support, which increases their credibility. Cooperation is also a way of pooling resources for more efficient application (Mahoney, 2007). All interviewees expressed that they had limited resources. Therefore, this strategy of creating and sustaining complex multilevel advocacy coalitions increased their political leverage, akin to what Sabatier (1998) describes in his ACF. The renewables industry has gradually constructed an extensive network that included environmental organizations, other national renewables interest organizations and private renewables enterprises. In connection with the Renewables Directive, they also established new contacts and improved existing ones both at the EU and the national levels (interviews BEE, 2011; BWE, 2011). However, in contradiction to Coen's (2005, p. 205) descriptions of coalitions as 'short-life issue networks' as typical for public and business interest organizations, the findings here indicate that the coalitions were rather long term. Not all interest organizations were equally active. The data also demonstrate that the larger organizations, such as BDI, BDEW and BEE, were more frequently lobbying EU institutions than the small organization in the sample, BBE. German Renewable Energies Federation, BEE, functioned as a leader for the whole German renewables industry. BDEW and BDI had similar roles on behalf of the German utilities industry and the German energy-intensive industry.

The European-level interest organizations lobbied the EU institutions intensively, as expected. Unsurprisingly (see, for example, Coen, 2007), the Commission and the European Parliament were the institutions most frequently targeted by all interest organizations in the sample. Their relations to these institutions were far from new, as these organizations have become typical *insiders*, which have facilitated their access to the political processes. EUFORES' long-time support was probably in particular crucial in this context. In contrast to some earlier lobbying studies indicating that the Commission was the single major target (see, for example, Lehmann, 2009, p. 39), the interest organizations here also lobbied the European Parliament intensely,

which probably reflects the Parliament's increased authorities, and that it traditionally was regarded as the EU's 'greenest institution'. These multi-venue lobbying strategies and their implementation demonstrate good insight into EU's political processes, similar to what Coen and Richardson (2009) describe as typical for industrial lobbyists in the EU.

Also at the EU level, the organizations lobbied according to their resources. The largest renewables interest organization in terms of staff, EWEA, followed the political processes very closely and met with more people than did, for example, the smaller EPIA. Whereas EPIA concentrated on like-minded people within the European Parliament and elsewhere, EWEA lobbied both 'friends and foes'. In addition, EWEA was the only organization to conduct a political campaign aimed at decision makers (interviews EWEA, 2011; EPIA, 2011; EREF, 2011; EURELECTRIC, 2011). Thus, EWEA because of its large resources could function as a leader and broker on behalf of the whole European renewable energy industry together with EREC, the umbrella organization.

The observations of the EU-level interest organizations also support the hypothesis based on the MLG theory. MLG outlines not only possible 'uploading' of influence and targeted lobbying behavior at different political levels, but also 'downloading' to lower levels of governance (Hooghe and Marks, 2001). For example, the Commission may use national-level interest organizations to introduce and legitimize policies within the member states (see, for example, Eikeland, 2011). The observations indicate such 'downloading' in three cases. First, the European interest organizations lobbied at the national level by meeting governments and permanent representations they regarded as particularly important, like those of Germany, Spain and France (interviews EURELECTRIC, 2011; EPIA, 2011; EWEA, 2011; EREF, 2011). Second, the EWEA assisted the BWE through knowledge transfer (interview EWEA, 2011). Third, EURELECTRIC has depended on its members to disseminate the common political positions agreed upon within its committees (interview EURELECTRIC, 2011).

Therefore, expectations derived from Hooghe and Mark's version of MLG would seem to fit well with the lobbying behavior observed. That confirms the explanatory potential of this theory when applied on industrial lobbying in the EU's energy policy: interest organizations *do* 'shop' lobbying venues at multiple levels. The observations meet the expectations, both regarding the lobbying behavior of the national interest organizations and EU-level interest organizations as well. Clearly, these do perceive, and more importantly relate to, the EU as a genuine multilevel system.

In line with Eising's (2007b) and Beyers and Kerreman's (2012) arguments, we see that the national interest organizations lobbied EU institutions in cases where the EU legislation heavily affected them. Nevertheless, the findings do not give support to Klüver's (2013, p.152) claim that national and European interest organizations are equally active in lobbying the EU institutions. Rather, here national organizations focused their primary efforts on the national level, and European organizations at the EU level, as is common.

In this context, two observations can be offered concerning phenomena that have been little commented upon in the literature on EU lobbying. First, national interest organizations can create networks with each other to enhance political leverage and mutual trust; such networks should be further explored in future research. Second, at least one of the national interest organizations collaborated with private companies in order to share tasks and improve lobbying strength; this kind of cooperation is also likely to be a fruitful venue for further exploration, as recent findings indicate that companies lobby the EU system to a large extent, and that it might be the 'aggregated information supply, citizen support and economic power of coalitions' that matters for influence (Klüver 2013, pp.141, 200).

Summing up, we have seen that the interest organizations' lobbying efforts were genuinely multilevel because they perceived the EU's institutions as important for the outcome of the negotiations. LI fails to explain important parts of the lobbying behavior observed, rendering it less useful as a tool for understanding lobbying in EU's energy policy. Further studies should take into account the role of cooperation between organizations' lobbying at different levels of government. This kind of coordination and cooperation should also be investigated when studying causal processes such as explaining why legislation like the Renewables Directive ended up in its present form. Nevertheless, the fact that multilevel lobbying has taken place is in itself not enough to discredit LI as an analytical tool for understanding political processes in the EU.

Conclusions

Using two theories – LI and MLG – this study has addressed the following research questions:

(1) What lobbying strategies have the interest organizations of Germany's energy industries used to influence EU legislation as it became formulated in the Renewables Directive?
(2) What do these strategies tell about perceptions of where the real decision-making power in the EU is situated? Is it located at the national, or at the national and EU level?

The LI theory was supported by only some of the findings. Although the accumulation of interests on the national level can account for some of the lobbying behavior of interest organizations, it clearly does not explain the full extent of the lobbying (and accompanying coordination) that these organizations conduct in order to influence EU decisions. Altogether, LI seems inadequate for explaining interest organizations' actual lobbying behavior in the EU, as well as their understanding of decision-making processes there. Therefore, the findings indicate that they regard decision making in the EU as something significantly

different from (and more complex than) mere decisions based on negotiations by sovereign states in the Council of Ministers or the European Council. Instead, when EU decisions are very important for them, interest organizations conduct multilevel venue shopping (Baumgarter and Jones, 1991) within the EUs MLG system. Otherwise, only lobbying decision makers at the national level, or the intergovernmental EU bodies, would be rational. These findings are in line with earlier research such as that of Eising (2004, p. 212), who has argued that 'the concept of multi-level governance captures the essence of interest intermediation in EU best'. Further, similar to Dür and Mateo (2012) and Beyers and Kerremans (2012, p. 276), this study finds that the national business associations in the sample frequently lobby EU legislation on salient issues. This seems to be an increasing trend. However, this study has demonstrated that all organizations in the sample, also the smallest ones, participated in such lobbying, which is seemingly a rather uncommon finding.

Even in one of the most national of all policy domains – energy policy – LI therefore proved inadequate for explaining the perceptions and actual lobbying behavior of key interests. The limited leverage of LI is illustrated by three examples in point. First, all the German interest organizations lobbied institutions at both the national and at the EU levels. Second, national and European interest organizations participated in informal multilevel political coalitions, as regards the renewables industry in particular. There they coordinated their political positions, pooled resources, shared information and developed common strategies. Third, all the EU-level interest organizations lobbied both the core EU institutions and key national governments. This outcome shows that the interest organizations are able to exploit the multilevel dynamics of the EU, including allying with other interest organizations at different levels, in order to enhance their impact. Further, the Euro-associations for the energy industries have become relatively large, well-endowed with resources and having insider status. This means that their presence can contribute to better-informed EU policies in a political system increasingly characterized by MLG. By contrast, LI cannot account for these phenomena. Given the 'most likely' character of the policy field, this suggests serious shortcomings as regards the explanatory leverage of LI theory in relation to EU lobbying.

The study finds the MLG theory supported by the majority of the empirical findings. Future studies on industrial lobbying should take this into account and inquire about *multilevel lobbying strategies* where it is reasonable to expect interest organizations to lobby at multiple levels, rather than focusing solely on the national or the international level. With the EU steadily increasing in depth and scope, research attention should focus on coordinated lobbying, as interest organizations appear to lobby across political levels to an increasing extent. Finally, lobbying by complex multilevel advocacy coalitions may be decisive for political outcomes in the EU, testifying to the substantial importance of coordinated lobbying behavior and coalition formation across levels.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank several people, including my supervisor Morten Egeberg, as well as Øivind Bratberg, Per Ove Eikeland, Torbjørg Jevnaker, Amund Lie, Kadri Miard, Trond Ydersbond and two anonymous reviewers for insightful comments. Susan Høivik contributed with helpful language advice. Financial assistance from the Fridtjof Nansen Institute and the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund is gratefully acknowledged.

Notes

1 Industry is here understood as all the organizations, businesses and other enterprises connected to a particular form of energy production, such as the energy producers, equipment manufacturers, labor organizations and so on.
2 The utilities industry might be defined as the conventional power producers and their affiliates, including the large companies producing electricity and heat from nuclear power, coal, gas and hydropower and their equipment suppliers.
3 The renewables industry might be defined as the producers of energy from renewable energy sources and their affiliates, such as renewables equipment manufacturers. Many utilities companies also produce electricity from renewable energy sources. However, the distinction is appropriate because the companies that mainly produce conventional power and the companies that focus on producing power from the 'new' renewable energy technologies often have had very different political interests, both in Germany and in the EU.
4 The largest renewable energy technologies apart from hydro power in Germany at the time were bio power, wind power and solar power. Hydro power is not included because power produced from this source is already cost-competitive in comparison to power from coal and does therefore not need support.
5 The data in this article were gathered in relation to the master's level thesis of the author (Ydersbond, 2011).
6 The other main targets were reducing greenhouse gas emissions with 20 per cent from the 1990 levels and improve EUs energy efficiency with 20 per cent within 2020. The three targets are famously known as the 20–20–20 targets.
7 Table 3 describes the main arguments in the debates.
8 Table 1 gives an overview of the coalition of the German utilities' interest organizations and their fellows.
9 Table 1 gives an overview of the coalition of the renewables interest organizations and the other groups that shared their views.
10 EURELECTRIC and the rest of the coalition that was pro a European certificate trading system is described closer in Table 2.
11 The European renewables interest organizations and the rest of the coalition pro national choice of support mechanisms are described in Table 2.

References

Baumgarter, F.R. and Jones, B.D. (1991) Agenda dynamics and policy subsystems. *The Journal of Politics* 53(4): 1044–1074.

BDEW. (2008a) Stellungnahme des Bundesverbandes der Energie- und Wasserwirtschaft zum Klima- und Energiepaket der Europäischen Kommission ('Grünes Paket'). BDEW position paper, published 27 February, http://www.braunkohle-forum.de/files/stellungnahme_gruenes_paket.pdf.

BDEW. (2008b) Stellungnahme zum Richtlinienentwurf der Europäischen Kommission zur Förderung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Energiequellen. BDEW position paper, published 30 May.

BDEW. (2011) Energieerzeugung/Gasspesifische Fragen. Internet article, http://www.bdew.de/internet.nsf/id/8DGCCB-DE_Ueberblick, accessed 3 June 2011.

BDI. (2008) Stellungnahme. Richtlinienvorschlag der EU-Kommission zur Förderung der Nutzung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen – KOM(2008) 19. entg. vom 23. Januar 2008. BDI Position Paper, 13 March.

BEE. (2008) Zertifikate-Handel für Erneuerbare Energien ist bürokratisch, teuer und ineffizient. BEE position paper, published 10 January, http://www.bee-ev.de/_downloads/publikationen/stellungnahmen/2008/080110_BEE_Stellungnahme_Emissionshandel_fuer_EE.pdf.

BEE. (2011) Europa und Erneuerbaren Energien. Internet article, http://www.bee-ev.de/Energiepolitik/Europa/index.php, accessed 28 April 2011.

Beyers, J. and Kerremans, B. (2012) Domestic embeddedness and the dynamics of multilevel venue shopping in four EU member states. *Governance* 25(2): 263–290.

BMU. (2011) Kurzinfo Energiewende, http://www.bmu.de/themen/klima-energie/energiewende/kurzinfo/, accessed 15 May 2011.

Boasson, E.L. and Wettestad, J. (2010) Understanding the Differing Governance of EU Emissions Trading and Renewables. Lysaker, Norway: Fridtjof Nansen Institute. FNI Report 2/2010.

Boasson, E.L. and Wettestad, J. (2013) *EU Climate Policy – Industry, Policy Interaction and External Environment*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate.

Bouwen, P. (2004) Exchanging access goods for access: A comparative study of business lobbying in the European Union institutions. *European Journal of Political Research* 43(3): 337–369.

BUSINESSEUROPE. (2008) BUSINESSEUROPE voting recommendations for Directive 2008/0019 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources. BUSINESSEUROPE Position Paper, 9 September.

BWE. (2008) Stellungnahme des Bundesverbands WindEnergie (BWE) zum Entwurf der Richtlinie des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Förderung der Nutzung von Energie aus erneuerbaren Quellen. BWE position paper, published 23 May, 2011, http://www.wind-energie.de/fileadmin/dokumente/Positionspapiere/BWE_Position_EU-Richtlinie-EE_0805238.pdf.

Coen, D. (2005) Environmental and business lobbying alliances in Europe: Learning from Washington. In: D.L. Levy and P. Newell (eds.) *The Business of Global Environmental Governance*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Coen, D. (2007) Empirical and theoretical studies in EU lobbying. *Journal of European Public Policy* 14(3): 333–345.

Coen D. and Richardson J. (eds.) (2009) *Lobbying the European Union: Institutions, Actors and Issues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dagger, S.B. (2009) Energiepolitik & Lobbying. Die Novellierung des Erneubare-Energien-Gesetzes (EEG) 2009. PhD dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin: Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag.

Dür, A. (2008) Interest groups in the European Union: How powerful are they? *West European Politics* 31(6): 1212–1230.

Dür, A. and Mateo, G. (2012) Who lobbies the European Union? National interest groups in a multilevel polity. *Journal of European Public Policy* 19(7): 969–987.

Eckstein, H. (1975) Case study and theory in political science. In: F. Greenstein and N. Polsby (eds.) *Handbook of Political Science*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, pp. 99–137.

Egeberg M. (ed.) (2006) *Multilevel Union Administration: The Transformation of Executive Politics in Europe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Eikeland, P.O. (2011) The third internal energy market package: New power relations among member states, EU institutions and non-state actors? *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49(2): 243–263.

Eising, R. (2004) Multi-level governance and business interests in the European Union. *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 17(2): 211–245.

Eising, R. (2007a) Interest groups and the European Union. In: M. Cini (ed.) *European Union Politics*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eising, R. (2007b) The access of business interests to EU institutions: Towards élite pluralism? *Journal of European Public Policy* 14(3): 384–403.

Eising, R. (2007c) Institutional context, organizational resources and strategic choices: Explaining interest group access in the European Union. *European Union Politics* 8(3): 329–362.

EURELECTRIC. (2007) Incentives for renewable energy must fit within the European market framework, press release with RECS and EFET, 7 November 2007.

EURELECTRIC. (2008a) EURELECTRIC Activity Report 2008.

EURELECTRIC. (2008b) EURELECTRIC welcomes adoption of the energy-climate package but warns of potential for distortion of competition. Press release 23 December 2008.

European Commission. (2009) DIRECTIVE 2009/28/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0016:0062:EN:PDF.

European Commission. (2010) Energy 2020. A Strategy for Competitive, Sustainable and Secure Energy .COM (2010) 639. Brussels: European Commission, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0639:FIN:EN:PDF.

Franchino, F. (2005) The study of EU public policy: A survey. *European Union Politics* 6(2): 243–252.

George, A.L. and Bennett, A. (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gerring, J. (2007) *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Greenpeace European Union. (2007) Investor confidence in renewable energy at risk from EU-policy U-turn, press release 14 February 2007, http://www.greenpeace.org/eu-unit/en/News/2009-and-earlier/investor-confidence-in-renewab/.

Greenpeace European Union. (2008) Landmark agreement on EU law to boost renewable energy, press release 8 December 2008, http://www.greenpeace.org/eu-unit/en/News/2009-and-earlier/EU-law-to-boost-clean-energy/.

Hooghe, L. and Marks, G. (2001) *Multi-Level Governance and European Integration*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.

IG BCE. (2008) IG BCE und BDI zum Klima-Paket. IG BCE and BDI Position Paper, published 5 June 2008, http://www.igbce.de/presse/pressearchiv/560/xii-27-05-06-2008-ig-bce-bdi.

Jacobsson, S. and Lauber, V. (2006) The politics and policy of energy system transformation – explaining the German diffusion of renewable energy technology. *Energy Policy* 34(3): 256–276.

Klüver, H. (2010) Europeanization of lobbying activities: When national interest groups spill over to the European level. *Journal of European Integration* 32(2): 175–191.

Klüver, H. (2013) *Lobbying in the European Union: Interest Groups, Lobbying Coalitions, and Policy Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lauber, V. and Mez, L. (2004) Three decades of renewable electricity policies in Germany. *Energy & Environment* 15(4): 599–623.

Lehmann, W. (2009) The European Parliament. In: D. Coen and J. Richardson (eds.) *Lobbying the European Union: Institutions, Actors and Issues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 39–69.

Mahoney, C. (2007) Networking versus allying: The decision of interest groups to join coalitions in the US and the EU. *Journal of European Public Policy* 14(3): 366–383.

Mez, L. (2007) *Green Power Markets: Support Schemes, Case Studies and Perspectives*. Brentwood, UK: Multi-science Publishing.

Michelmann, H.J. (1978) Multinational staffing and organizational functioning in the Commission of the European Communities. *International Organization* 32(2): 477–496.

Moravcsik, A. (1993) Preferences and power in the European Community: A liberal intergovernmentalism approach. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31(4): 473–524.

Moravcsik, A. (1998) *The Choice for Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Moravcsik, A. and Schimmelpfennig, F. (2009) Liberal intergovernmentalism. In: A. Wiener and T. Diez (eds.) *European Integration Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 66–87.

Nilsson, M., Nilsson, L.J. and Ericsson, K. (2009) The rise and fall of GO trading in European renewable energy policy: The role of advocacy and policy framing. *Energy Policy* 37(11): 4454–4462.

Sabatier, P.A. (1998) The advocacy coalition framework: Revisions and relevance for Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy* 5(1): 98–130.

Sverdrup, U. (1999) Precedents and present events in the European Union: An institutional perspective on treaty reform. In K.H. Neunreither and A. Wiener (eds.) *European Integration: Institutional Dynamics and Prospects for Democracy after Amsterdam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 241–265.

Toke, D. (2008) The EU Renewables Directive – What is the fuss about trading? *Energy Policy* 36(8): 3001–3008.

Verbruggen, A. and Lauber, V. (2012) Assessing the performance of renewable electricity support instruments. *Energy Policy* 45(6): 635–644.

WWF EU. (2008) WWF summary position paper on the EU Climate & Energy Package proposals. Position paper, published April 2008, http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/summary_position.pdf.

WWF Germany, Deutsche Umwelthilfe, Öko-Institut and Arrhenius Institut für Energie- und Klimapolitik. (2007) Klimaschutz und Stromwirtschaft 2020/2030, Research Report, June 2007, http://www.wwf.de/fileadmin/fm-wwf/pdf_neu/Klimaschutz_und_Stromwirtschaft_2020-2030.pdf.

Ydersbond, I. (2011) Multi-level lobbying in the EU: The case of the Renewables Directive and the German energy industry. Master thesis, University of Oslo, Oslo.

Yin, R.K. (2009) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 4th edn. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Appendix

Respondents, by affiliation

Germany
BEE
BBE
BWE (2 interviewees)
BDI
BDEW (2 interviewees)

The EU level
EPIA
EREF
EWEA
EURELECTRIC

Table A1: Acronyms and abbreviations

AEBIOM	European Biomass Association
AIB	Association of Issuing Bodies
BBE	Bundesverband BioEnergie e. V. (German Bioenergy Association)
BDEW	Bundesverband der Energie- und Wasserwirtschaft e. V. (German Association of Energy and Water Industries)
BDI	Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie e. V. (Federation of German Industry)
BEE	Bundesverband Erneuerbare Energie e. V. (German Renewable Energy Federation)
BMU	Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety)
BMELV	Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Verbrauchershutz (Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection)
BMWi	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie (Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology)
BSW	Bundesverband Solarwirtschaft e. V. (German Solar Industry Association)
BUND	Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland e. V. (Friends of the Earth Germany)
BUSINESSEUROPE	The Confederation of European Business
BWE	Bundesverband WindEnergie e. V. (German Wind Energy Association)
CDU/CSU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands, Christlich-Soziale Union e. V. in Bayern (Christian Democratic Union of Germany and the Christian Democratic Union of Bavaria)
CEPI	Confederation of European Paper Industries
CAN	Climate Action Network
DBV	Deutscher Bauernverband e.V (German Farmer's Association)
DG TREN	Directorates General for Energy and Transport, today DG Energy
ECR	European Conservative and Reformist Group

Table A1: *continued*

EEB	European Environment Bureau
EFET	European Federation of Energy Traders
EPIA	European Photovoltaic Industry Association
EPP	European People's Party
EREC	European Renewable Energy Council
EREF	European Renewable Energies Federation asbl.
EU ETS	EU Emissions Trading System
EUFORES	European Forum for Renewable Energy Sources
EURELECTRIC	Union of the Electricity Industry
EWEA	European Wind Energy Association
FiT	Feed-in tariff
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FoE Europe	Friends of the Earth Europe
IG BCE	Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau, Chemie und Energie (Mining, Chemical and Energy Industrial Union)
GEC	Green electricity certificate
IG Metall	Industriegewerkschaft Metall (German Metalworkers' Federation)
ITRE	Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
LI	Liberal intergovernmentalism
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MLG	Multi-level Governance
RECS	Renewable Energy Certificate System
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
VDMA	Verband Deutscher Maschinen und Anlagenbau e.V. (German Engineering Federation)
VIK	Verband der Industriellen Energie und Kraftwirtschaft (Association of the Industrial Energy and Power Industry)
WFC	World Future Council
WWF EU	World Wildlife Fund for Nature Europe