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EXPERTS IN RUSSIAN ENERGY POLICY –  
TOWARDS AN EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY?

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International Relations' research has been particularly active in the past two decades when it comes to Russian energy policy. Although vast amounts of academic literature on energy issues associated with Russia have enriched the discipline, diversity on the level of theory is yet to blossom. Energy studies about Russia are still mainly characterized by realist, neorealist and geopolitical theories and that of the liberal tradition. This study aims at exploring new ways to examine Russian energy policy by employing a constructivist approach.

Traditional theories in IR utilized within this thematic area place value on structure as the main driver for state interest formation expressed for example in the energy policy of a certain country. Structures and consequently state interests are seen as constant and independent from human action. In contrast, this research will view international relations from a different perspective and emphasize the role of agency in the production of different objects observable in world politics, such as Russian energy policy or an elementary ingredient of it, the Russian energy strategy.

In the construction of the social reality of international relations, agency is performed by different kinds of actors. The current research will analyse the influence of *an epistemic community* in the formation of Russian energy policy. The main objective of the study is to see whether the epistemic communities approach by Peter Haas (1990/1992) and others will increase our understanding of energy policy-making. Epistemic community and its influence will be identified by examining the policy project of *the Energy Strategy of Russia up to the period 2030*. The research will also contemplate the usability of the theoretical tool in examining energy issues in general.

The research phenomenon will be approached from a qualitative perspective by analysing the research material with (qualitative) content analysis. The empirical material of this study consists of expert interviews. Additionally, online sources and Russian academic writing on the subject were used.

The results of the thesis indicate that the energy epistemic community significantly influences policy processes related to energy in Russia. Its action takes place on two levels. At the cognitive level, the community produces the scientific rationale of the energy policy and future projections on where it is going. In practise the epistemic community mainly influences the development of policy tools, such as legal acts, federal programmes and economic incentives.

The results highlight the importance of epistemic communities in energy policy-making. In Russia, the community serves an instrumental purpose in validating different policy options and in producing the institutional substance of the country's energy policy. In conclusion, the epistemic communities approach offers fruitful insights to research concentrating on the dynamics of energy policy formation both in national and international contexts.

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Laura Salmela

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Outline of the Expert Interviews (Autumn 2010)

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. The mobile and constant Russia energy environment

Energy and different energy production solutions provide means for a country to achieve desirable objectives and take evasive action to unacceptable future societal developments.<sup>1</sup> For Russia, energy has not only become the leading article for the development of society but increasingly defines the position of the country in its relations with other states. Jeromin Perovic (2009a) has written that

“Tsar Alexander III was famous for his saying that Russia had only two true allies – her army and her navy. During the presidency of Vladimir Putin, Russia’s true allies appeared to be oil and gas.”<sup>2</sup>

Under the current president Dmitry Medvedev the situation has hardly changed.

Energy related issues have received a growing interest within International Relations research that concentrates on Russia. Turbulent occurrences in real-life settings have all but accelerated this trend. In a decade’s time, trade liberalisation and the wild privatization campaigns of the 1990s were replaced by increased protectionism and state monopoly, especially in the sphere of energy. In parallel with a wider global trend of energy sector re-nationalization, in 2007 40 per cent of Russian companies in oil production were owned by the state, while only three years before their share was 13 %. Furthermore, in the natural gas sector, the figures are significantly higher.<sup>3</sup>

In this development trend, the Yukos affair of the early 2000s forms a significant milestone. The liquidation of the private oil company and the personal fate of its head Mikhail Khodorkovsky have therefore attracted both wide scholarly and media interest in the West.<sup>4</sup> However, misfortune has not been met only by domestic energy companies. International corporations, such as the Royal Dutch Shell, Mitsui and Mitsubishi have faced a number of difficulties in Russia, mainly due to state interference in business. Shell along with Japanese associates was engaged in a dispute over large scale oil deposits on the Sakhalin Island in the east coast of Russia. The apparent lucrative opportunities of the project eventually also drew the attention of the Russian state, and in order to

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<sup>1</sup> Ruostetsaari 1989, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Perovic 2009a, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Pleines 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Kuorsalo et al. 2007, p. 209.

benefit from the profit potential, foreign companies were pressured to sign a production sharing agreement for a discounted price with the state-dominated company Gazprom. Through the agreement, Gazprom gained the majority of the shares and power of decision.<sup>5</sup>

Russia is not only an interesting research subject in international energy studies because of politically slanted energy economics. The geographical landscape posits the country high in the global energy system. To begin with, 15.0 % of all global energy reserves are located in Russia<sup>6</sup>. According to International Energy Agency's statistics, in 2009 Russia was the largest producer of world's crude oil with a 12.9 per cent share of the total production. In natural gas, the corresponding figure was 19.0 per cent. Russia's position is significant, because on a global scale, over 50 per cent of all used fuel is derived from oil and gas.<sup>7</sup> In addition to vast reserves on oil and gas, Russia occupies third place in world's coal exports.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Russia is the main supplier of energy to many countries and regions. For example, Europe buys more energy from Russia than from any other producer country<sup>9</sup>.

Although consumer dependency for Russian energy is high, the importance of the energy sector in the whole Russian economy is likewise significant. Six per cent of the country's gross domestic product comes from "capital investments in the domestic energy sector". Globally, the numbers are four times lower, namely 1.5 %.<sup>10</sup> Energy is a vital export product for Russia, as it brings the largest inflow of foreign capital to the country<sup>11</sup>. Nevertheless, energy is not only sold to serve international needs. Russia has one of the highest domestic energy consumption rates in the world, and an upward trend in those figures is expected in the coming years<sup>12</sup>.

## 1.2. Existing explanations on the determinants of state energy policy

Desirable futures are difficult to attain without a road map. Short-term and long-term objectives of a country's energy management are planned out in state energy policy, in which both the internal and external energy environments are considered. International Relations theories do not only offer

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<sup>5</sup> Goldman 2008, pp. 128-130. Pleines 2009, p. 74.

<sup>6</sup> Makarov 2009, p. 105.

<sup>7</sup> IEA 2010, pp. 6-13.

<sup>8</sup> Monaghan 2007, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Perovic 2009a, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Makarov 2009, p. 105.

<sup>11</sup> Perovic 2009a, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Perovic 2009a, p. 6.

implications how that future will portray itself but explain the origins and determinants of state interests, which are vested in the wider state policies. Although interest towards Russian energy policy has been abundant in the field of International Relations in recent years, there has been little variety in research on the theoretical level. Often the attachment to a certain theoretical strand is not even clearly explicated. However, research on this thematic field can be typified by the usage of mainly two comprehensive theoretical categories: **realism, neorealism and geopolitics**; and **the liberal tradition**.

As a result, energy policy and interest formation have been explained more by underlining exogenous factors than by those more closely related with the internal dynamics of the state or the interaction of the state and the international. The energy policy of a given country is counterbalanced with its material base and the international system of states. Furthermore, the possibility of a profound change in state interests is not possible, as interests themselves are treated statically and are universal to all actors. The energy policy has been harnessed to serve the larger political needs of a continuous power struggle between states or it is seen as a seemingly politically detached field of economic activity that should operate according to the principles of the liberal economic order.

The main effort of this thesis is to see, whether the epistemic communities approach discussed below will broaden our understanding of the energy policy of Russia. Additionally, it hopes to provide a sufficient supplement to the current body of knowledge by offering alternative explanations to state policy formation and interest creation. With a constructivist background, it will contest the view of structure or unit-level factors defining state behaviour and interests. Moreover, it will offer new insights as to why international policy coordination or cooperation on energy issues appear the way they are.

### 1.3. Epistemic communities approach

Despite the immense reserve base, which has granted Russia a beneficial position in the global energy system, navigating the country's energy policy has become more and more complex, as the political examples indicate. Furthermore, the combination of declining reserves of traditional sources of energy and increased concerns over climate change creates new challenges that need immediate attention from policy-makers. However, as the consequences and impacts of these

problematic issues have started to move beyond the boundaries of decision-makers' understanding of time and space, a demand for producers of relevant scientific knowledge in the policy formulation has risen<sup>13</sup>.

One approach to provide the means to examine the importance of a new group of actors in international relations is the epistemic community framework, whose foremost developer is International Relations scholar Peter M. Haas (1990/1992). The main effort of the approach is “to study the role and impact of ideas in international relations and in international policy coordination”<sup>14</sup>. An epistemic community has been defined as “a group of professionals with a legitimate claim to highly specified policy-relevant knowledge on scientifically complex issues”<sup>15</sup>. State energy policy formation is a complicated policy enterprise, where the demand for accurate scientific information about raw materials' extraction, production, transportation and trade are evident. The objectives of this study are to apply the conceptual tool of epistemic communities and to examine what role the epistemic community has in creating the energy policy of Russia.

The role of the community is approached by examining, how the community perceives its influence over Russian national energy policy. In order to map the Russian energy epistemic community, different Russian energy experts were interviewed. In addition to interviews, the primary material was supported with energy policy documents, online material from research institutes and articles related to energy strategy and the Russian energy sector as a whole.

#### 1.4. The national energy strategy as a platform for epistemic community(ies) formation

One of the cornerstone documents in extended energy policy planning has been state energy strategy. *The Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2030* (further ES-2030) is an over 100-page-long document, which delineates the central aspirations of the Russian energy policy, or in other words, state interests in relation to its internal and external energy environment. It specifies “the objectives and work of the long-term growth of the energy sector of the country; priorities and orientation, and also the mechanisms to realize the state energy policy in different stages that secure the completion of outlined goals”<sup>16</sup>. The current strategy was approved by Decree N° 1715-r of the

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<sup>13</sup> Litfin 1994, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Kutchesfahani 2010, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Dunlop 2010, p. 207.

<sup>16</sup> Website of the Institute of Energy Strategy. Translation by author.

Russian government on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November, 2009<sup>17</sup>. Since the breakdown of the Soviet Union, it is the latest document in a series of five that have outlined the long-term energy policies of the new Russia<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, similar documentary tradition related to state energy policies was present already in Soviet Russia. The first long-term energy document (up until 1990s) was drafted in early 1970s.<sup>19</sup>

The ES-2030 provides a fruitful example in examining the possibility of the existence of an epistemic community in Russian energy policy and whether such community can be thought to have a significant influence. The strategy was put together by a large group of experts that consisted of 13 interdepartmental working groups. The working groups were assigned to refine the former energy strategy from 2003 by the Ministry of Industry and Energy (now the Ministry of Energy) in 2006. The participants in the working groups were according to the editorial of the ES-2030 “leading Russian scientists and specialists” offering expertise in areas of energy sector and energy balance forecasting; the development of the usage of different sources of energy; and the development of state regulative instruments towards the energy sector. The refinement was completed in three years and included several discussion rounds with government officials and the public.<sup>20</sup>

It needs to be noted that identifying these 13 interdepartmental groups as an epistemic community is beyond the scope of this study. The interviews reached only a fraction of the participants in the policy preparation. Furthermore, the interviewees also consisted of experts who had no role in the policy-process. However, the main aim of the study is to open a path to see if the epistemic communities approach would be a useful way to examine energy policy-making. The initial hypothesis of the research is that there is activity and communication within the context of Russian energy policy-making which corresponds to the epistemic communities’ framework.

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<sup>17</sup> Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030, p. 3. Former documents: Energy Policy Concept of Russia in the New Economic Conditions (1992); Major provisions of the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2010 (October 1995); Major provisions of the Energy Strategy of Russia up to 2020 (2000); Energy Strategy of Russia for period up to 2020 (2003).

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Russian energy expert IN2 2010.

<sup>20</sup> Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030, pp. 3-5.

## 1.5. Research structure

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows. As background, the second chapter will briefly introduce the basic structure of Russian governance and relevant actors in relation to the energy policy and the energy sector. The aim of this part is to present the context in which the epistemic community acts in Russia. In the second chapter, existing literature on Russian energy policy and energy sector will also be discussed and its main findings will be presented. The effort is to define a research niche for the present study. The second chapter will be followed by a presentation of the theoretical approach applied in the study. Subsequently, the third chapter will examine the wider theoretical framework of the epistemic communities approach, namely constructivism. The theory part of the thesis will then be concluded with a short critique of the approach. The fourth chapter describes the methods and material used for this study. The thesis will then turn to the analysis of the primary material, and finally, provides a conclusion of the found results.

The theoretical framework and the methods applied in this research will be discussed at length in the third and fourth chapter of the thesis. Firstly, this is necessary because the epistemic communities approach and qualitative content analysis were not fully familiar to the author beforehand. Secondly, during the research process it was noticed that in Master's level works in International Relations in Finland, the approach and the method have been employed very rarely. Therefore, a wide introduction was offered to encourage interested readers to apply the framework in their own studies.

## 2. Russian Energy in Practice and Theory

### 2.1. A brief outlook on the structure of the energy sector

#### 2.1.1. Policy environment

Russia is often characterized among scholars as an impossible policy implementation environment, where policy-making itself is paralyzed by incommensurable interests, which form a tacit web of interrelations even to the parties involved and especially to an outside observer. In addition, “[e]ar-marking the money does not mean that it will be spent either in the right places or at all”.<sup>21</sup> The energy sector seems to make no exception to the rule. Some authors have even claimed, that “[c]larity is not a feature of Russian energy sector” and continue to describe the sector as “a dynamism characterized by inefficiency, power struggle and a degree of chaos and error”.<sup>22</sup> Obtaining up to date and correct information about the sector is a difficult task, because many statistics and data sets are treated as state secrets<sup>23</sup>.

Although the energy trade bolsters national financial reserves enormously each year, a large proportion of the profits is claimed to flow away from the state and into the hands of “bureaucrats, middlemen, and others interested in personal gain”<sup>24</sup>. However, vast energy resources should not be considered a direct cause of corruption and increased authoritarianism within the country. In contrast, energy fulfils more a role of “a facilitator for tendencies that were already present in the system”. Wealth and fortune brought by energy profits have nevertheless provided more successful conditions for authoritarianism and corruption to nourish.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the opaque picture frequently painted of the Russian energy sector and its internal politics, it is possible to draw some general trends where the sector lies today and how it reached its current state. An examination of the existing structures of policy-making allows us to delineate an environment in which an energy epistemic community is suspected to operate. In the past twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian energy sector has fluctuated between public and private ownership. In the beginning of the 1990s, energy industries were under full state domination. The state was the only relevant actor in national energy strategy formulation and

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<sup>21</sup> Monaghan 2007, pp. 4, 15.

<sup>22</sup> Monaghan 2007, pp. 4, 18.

<sup>23</sup> Monaghan 2007, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Orttung 2009, p. 52.

<sup>25</sup> Orttung 2009, p. 52.

development planning. In addition, the state was the sole investor in the energy sector and the allocation of resources and necessary investments were calculated and decided within state structures.<sup>26</sup>

The privatization campaigns that concerned the energy sector did not reach their original objectives when the state began to re-nationalize its energy assets at the end of the decade. Now the largest companies in Russian hydrocarbon industries, Gazprom and Rosneft are mainly state owned. The state owns around half of Gazprom<sup>27</sup> and holds over 75 % of the shares of Rosneft<sup>28</sup>. The re-nationalization of the energy sector is not specific to Russia only but reflects overall global trends of the business. According to Jeromin Perovic (2009b), the global energy system, resembling a system of states, has undergone significant changes since 2003. The period up to 2003 starting from the 1973 oil crisis was characterized by a market structure heavily dominated by consumer countries. Although there were several efforts to use energy as a political weapon, in the long run it failed to produce the desired effects. After 2003, the balance of the global energy system came to favour producer countries over those on the demand side. International oil companies (IOCs) are increasingly replaced by national oil companies (NOCs), which according to Perovic, have a higher tendency to promote state interests along with corporate interests. The importance of NOCs is essential, because 77 per cent of the reserve base in oil is under their control at present.<sup>29</sup> Even higher figures have been proposed. Heiko Pleines (2009) for example presents that 85 per cent of global production is done by state-owned companies and over 95 per cent of global reserves belong to public enterprises<sup>30</sup>.

When examining Russian energy policy, it is good to bear in mind, that Russia is not only an important producer state. Russia has a three-role character as a producer, transit and a consumer state. The acknowledgement of these three dimensions and their correlation is a necessary step in trying to comprehend the internal dynamics of Russia and its position in the global energy system. Current world consumption levels of energy guarantee Russia with a somewhat stable international clientele. Uncertainty is therefore often located on the supply-side, as a number of internal factors such as growing domestic consumption and underdeveloped transportation routes put pressure on

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<sup>26</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 164-170.

<sup>27</sup> Gazprom 2011b.

<sup>28</sup> Rosneft 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Perovic 2009b, pp. 26-58.

<sup>30</sup> Pleines 2009, p. 71.

the country's ability to provide markets with enough energy.<sup>31</sup> Domestic price levels have long remained far lower from those paid over national borders, thus discouraging efforts made on increasing energy efficiency.<sup>32</sup> For example in 2007, Russians were paying five times lower prices for natural gas than their European fellow consumers (50\$ vs. 250 \$ per thousand cubic meters)<sup>33</sup>.

Widening state control over the energy sector is said to weaken production capacity and to build barriers to necessary cooperation between international and Russian energy companies. Another challenge is caused by low investment rates on upstream production capacity that would allow the maintenance of present production levels and meet the future demand on oil and gas.<sup>34</sup> These challenges coincide with three major trends which steer the development of the country's energy policy: the global economic downturn and its repercussions on Russia, the importance of a growing amount of foreign investment and continued economic development, and Europe's role as the main partner in energy<sup>35</sup>. Nonetheless, attracting outside financing is becoming more and more difficult, because regulations for foreign investments have been tightened significantly. As the energy sector belongs to the group of national strategic sectors, "any foreign purchase of a controlling stake in a state-owned or private company [...] or a purchase of more than 10 % in larger oil and gas deposits are subject to government commission".<sup>36</sup>

### *2.1.2. Actors*

Ilkka Ruostetsaari (1989) has defined energy policy as "energy management directed political guidance that is done by decision-makers and administrative authorities".<sup>37</sup> Energy policy can also be regarded as a state of equilibrium, in which different factors (natural, institutional, economic, financial, technological and technical, infrastructural, informational, legislative, political, bureaucratic) are balanced by the government<sup>38</sup>. Nevertheless, relevant actors are not limited to the state. Energy companies and organisations among others pursue a role in energy policy formulation in order to "promote their own interests".<sup>39</sup> Energy policy-making can therefore be claimed to form

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<sup>31</sup> Monaghan 2007, pp. 3, 16. Perovic 2009a, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> Perovic&Orttung 2009, pp. 131-133.

<sup>33</sup> Orttung 2009, p. 62.

<sup>34</sup> Perovic&Orttung 2009, pp. 122-133.

<sup>35</sup> Perovic&Orttung 2009, pp. 143-147.

<sup>36</sup> Pleines 2009, p. 74.

<sup>37</sup> Shadrina 2010, pp. 19-20.

<sup>38</sup> Shadrina 2010, pp. 19-20.

<sup>39</sup> Ruostetsaari 1989, p. 23. Translation by author.

a specific sphere of action in which several different entities, including the hypothesized energy epistemic community, function in interactive relationships with each other. The most significant actors that the epistemic community is believed to have interaction with will be introduced below.

In Russia, three types of governmental bodies are presented to have an influence in decision-making and policy implementation related to the energy policy and the energy sector. Firstly, ministry level organs (Ministerstvo) are responsible for ideological policy-making.<sup>40</sup> One of the key ministries in this respect is the Ministry of Energy (Minenergo), which was recently separated from the former Ministry of Industry and Energy in 2008.<sup>41</sup> The Ministry of Energy oversees the operation of the energy sector. The ministry is also the leading institution, when it comes to regulating the national energy sector.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the Ministry of Energy is “responsible for drafting and implementing national policy and legal regulation in the oil and fuel sector”.<sup>43</sup> *The Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030* was among others prepared under the supervision of the Ministry of Energy<sup>44</sup>.

Secondly, another important ministry is the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (Minprirody), which is “a federal executive body that deals with the study, protection and administration of natural resources in Russia”. In addition, it “coordinates and controls several agencies”, such as the Federal Subsoil Use Agency that for example “organizes tenders and auctions for the right to use subsoil resources”.<sup>45</sup> In addition to Minprirody, the Ministry of Industry and Trade (Minpromtorg) is the executive power formulating state policies and legal regulations on energy saving and increasing energy efficiency in trade of goods.<sup>46</sup> The activities of the ministry in the field of energy are guided for example by *the Strategy for the Development of Energy Equipment Engineering for 2010-2020 and on for 2030*. Energy Equipment Engineering forms a significant segment in the national industrial base of Russia and plays an incremental role in maintaining the energy security of the country.<sup>47</sup> For example, further modernization of the refining capacity is an absolute necessity, because the domestic demand for processed petroleum products has accelerated significantly in the past ten years<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Larsson 2006, p. 124.

<sup>41</sup> Kommersant 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 172-173.

<sup>43</sup> Government of the Russian Federation 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Energy Strategy of Russia for the Period up to 2030, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> Larsson 2006, p. 129.

<sup>46</sup> Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation 2011.

<sup>47</sup> Ministry of Trade and Industry 2011, p. 1. Document title translated by author.

<sup>48</sup> Pleines 2009, pp. 79-80.

As Andrew Monaghan (2007) notes, developing energy engineering is crucial, because Russia lacks the ability and the experience in constructing modern energy production facilities. Although internationally such expertise is available it is less used in the country, because “Russia currently prefers the control of such projects to be held by Russian companies”.<sup>49</sup> On the whole, the energy sector is viewed as an effective engine for industrial and economic growth that will revive the regions and areas of the country with low socio-economic development. Moreover, the national energy complex is greatly divided across the country with different strategic centres and networks of extraction, production facilities and transportation routes.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to ministries, there are federal services (Federalnaya Sluzhba), which oversee the work of other governmental organs and set regulations.<sup>51</sup> The Federal Tariff Service for example administers energy markets through determining prices or price limits to electricity and heating<sup>52</sup>. The third level of governmental bodies consists of federal agencies (Federalnaya Agentura), which “control state property and provide state services to individuals and other entities”.<sup>53</sup> However, for example the Federal Energy Agency, a formerly independent federal agency, was absorbed by the Ministry of Energy when the ministerial reforms and task re-arrangements were concluded in 2008 by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin<sup>54</sup>.

For example Kommersant<sup>55</sup> saw the 2008 reorganisation of government ministries and other federal organs as a weakening of the separation of the legislative (ministries), supervisory (services) and executive (agencies) powers of the Russian state.<sup>56</sup> In addition to ministries, services and agencies, the State Duma as well as some directorates at the presidential administration still influence energy related issues.<sup>57</sup> In contrast, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, another national newspaper, welcomed the organizational reform and saw that it would increase the possibilities of the government to influence the energy sector.<sup>58</sup> In addition to ministries, the State Duma influences the formulation of the energy policy through a number of upper and lower house committees that are concerned with regulation, economy, industries, natural resources and transportation.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Monaghan 2007, p. 14.

<sup>50</sup> Shadrina 2010, p. 11.

<sup>51</sup> Larsson 2006, p. 124.

<sup>52</sup> Government of the Russian Federation 2004.

<sup>53</sup> Larsson 2006, p. 124.

<sup>54</sup> Kommersant 2008.

<sup>55</sup> Kommersant is a Russian newspaper with a wide readership.

<sup>56</sup> Kommersant 2008.

<sup>57</sup> Larsson 2006, p. 124.

<sup>58</sup> Rossiyskaya Gazeta 2008.

<sup>59</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 172-173.

Gaining a coherent picture of the actors and their influence in the policy-making process is not obscured only by the sheer number of those involved. Energy policy and energy sector are a fertile ground for fierce interdepartmental rivalry, which exacerbates the attainment of common national objectives. Departmental or ministry-related internal interests often direct, how attainable certain policy options are presented in public. In relation to the Eastern vector<sup>60</sup> in Russian energy policy, authorities gave heterogeneous figures on the amount of available extractable resources<sup>61</sup>. In addition, there are said to be roughly two camps, according to which state officials align on general development trends of the national energy policy. On the one hand, there is the hardliner, ‘siloviki’ faction that aims at stronger state control on strategic national resources. On the other hand, there are those that have a more liberal standpoint towards issues, such as private ownership of energy companies. The bureaucratic tug-of-war exhibited by these two clusters is diffused across different ministries and members of the presidential administration.<sup>62</sup>

As Ruostetsaari has pointed out, energy policy implementation captures all governance levels from communities and regions to the national level.<sup>63</sup> Accordingly, in examining different actors in the Russian energy policy, a noticeable role is also played by regions. The priorities of the regions and the apex of the power vertical<sup>64</sup> are often contradictory. Notwithstanding, the regions do not stand in competition only with the federal central government but also with each other. Disputes are frequently associated with tax revenues collected from energy companies, overall federal support to the regions and control over natural resources. The importance of the regions and their relevance for the national energy policy varies for different reasons. The regions are either the holders of vast oil and gas reserves (the Komi Republic) or located on important maritime areas (Murmansk Region) and inland transit routes (Bryansk Region). The significance of the regions might also increase due to newly opening transportation possibilities, such as the opening of the Barents Sea route (Arkhangelsk Region).<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> In reference with Russia’s (external) energy policy, the term ‘Eastern vector’ is used to describe the development plans of energy trade in the Asian and Pacific energy markets. These plans include for example different pipeline projects and the development of extraction areas in Eastern Siberia and the Far East. E.g. Gromov 2010.

<sup>61</sup> Poussenkova 2009, p. 135.

<sup>62</sup> Larsson 2006, pp. 60-65.

<sup>63</sup> Ruostetsaari 1989, p. 23.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Power vertical’ is a term associated with the federal level reforms that were undertaken under Vladimir Putin’s first presidency. The objective of these reforms was “to restore central power” and “to strengthen the vertical chain of command” in Russia. In other words, the autonomy of Russian regions was significantly reduced vis-à-vis the centralised power in Moscow. E.g. Hyde 2001, p. 719.

<sup>65</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 169, 175-183.

Finally, Russian energy companies need to be taken into account, while looking into different interest groups affecting the energy policy. However, it is not a question of one-way influence where energy companies merely dictate the policy formulation. As Stanislav Tkachenko (2008) states “only the support of the government or presidential administration will create conditions for success”. It was especially put forth in the former energy strategy that the leading roles in the Russian energy sector are played by the Russian Government and the Parliament of Russia. Energy companies need the support of the federal government to achieve their business objectives. For example in the development of the export infrastructure government cooperation is necessary. In addition, the government is responsible for enhancing the creation of a positive climate for domestic investments to the energy sector and accelerating the extraction rate of novel energy reserves. The cooperation is not only limited to governmental partners but also includes regional authorities.<sup>66</sup>

The most prominent actor in national energy policy is Gazprom energy company.<sup>67</sup> Domestic gas markets and gas transports are monopolized by Gazprom<sup>68</sup>. The influence of the company in national politics has prevailed since the year of its establishment<sup>69</sup> as a private open stock company in 1993. The company itself was founded during the Soviet Union in 1989 under the name of Gazprom State Gas Concern.<sup>70</sup> Today 50.002 per cent of the company shares are owned by the Russian state.<sup>71</sup> In reference with the Yukos case of 2003-2005, Tkachenko argues that although the position of energy companies in Russian energy policy is strong, the energy companies are still incapable of overriding the state in energy sector decision-making. According to him, “[e]ven the richest and most successful Russian oil companies remain unable of converting their economic power into a corresponding political influence”.<sup>72</sup> The energy companies held before 2003 their own representatives in the State Duma as members of the parliament. However, this trend has died since then.<sup>73</sup> Although Gazprom has long advocated the omission of state regulation on price limits on gas, the government came to an agreement to lift the tariffs on industrial consumers only until 2011. However, the average consumer still continues to pay a regulated price.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 175-184.

<sup>67</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 175-184.

<sup>68</sup> Pleines 2009, pp. 78-79.

<sup>69</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 175-184.

<sup>70</sup> Gazprom 2011a.

<sup>71</sup> Gazprom 2011b.

<sup>72</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 187-188, 190.

<sup>73</sup> Tkachenko 2008, pp. 187-188, 190.

<sup>74</sup> Pleines 2009, p. 81.

### *2.1.3. The scientific community as a new-found constant variable*

Although the policy environment and role differentiation of actors have been extensively covered by different researchers focusing in the Russian energy policy, there can be found little reference to expert organisations and their participation in the policy-making. Furthermore, expert organisations or more specifically the scientific community has not been the primary object of research for any study that was scanned through for the purposes of this thesis. A scientific community(ies) has not been identified as an actor of relevance in energy policy-making. As this research will evidence, an epistemic community is different from interest groups and other influential factions that are in one way or the other connected with state institutions. Moreover, as depicted above, the institutional structures of the Russian energy policy are yet to be fully established. Within a rather short period of time, there have been significant changes in the roles and responsibilities of different governmental organs and private actors from the business community. In addition, policy orientations have shifted notably for example in whether to nationalize or privatize the energy sector and the industrial base that supports it. As opposed to this, this research will show, the scientific community forms a fairly constant variable in the contemporary national energy policy and that of the past.

## 2.2. International Relations and Russian energy as a research object

### *2.2.1. The dominance of two theoretical unities*

Although research in International Relations has been plentiful for years with regards to energy, “there has been limited direct application of IR theories to understanding energy- and mineral-related conflicts and modes of collaboration and competition” according to Ronald Dannreuther (2010).<sup>75</sup> Scholars are said to have mainly employed three wider theoretical categories, those of **Realism, neo-Realism and Geopolitics; the Liberalist Tradition; and the Marxist/Radical Approaches**<sup>76</sup>. Andrei Belyi (2003) on the other hand has suggested that IR research on energy is mainly characterized by the usage of an economic or a geopolitical perspective<sup>77</sup>, which suggest the application of the first two categories. With these observations in mind, recent literature on Russian energy policy and the energy sector was reviewed. Perhaps not surprisingly, it was encountered that

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<sup>75</sup> Dannreuther 2010, p. 1.

<sup>76</sup> Dannreuther 2010.

<sup>77</sup> Belyi 2003, p. 352.

research made in the context of Russian energy largely corresponds with Dannreuther's and Belyi's notions with the exception of the Marxist/Radical approaches.

While geographical resource-based, economic or security politics perspectives offer fruitful insights to Russian energy<sup>78</sup>, their underlying assumptions about state interest formation, a key concern of the current study, differ greatly from that of constructivism. This chapter will, therefore, first aim to present the basic characteristics of the two theoretical categories by using Dannreuther's typification. Existing literature on Russian energy will then be organized accordingly, and the main findings of those studies will be presented. The chapter's ending includes an effort to posit the current study in relation to mainstream IR research, and an illustration of what novel the use of constructivism might bring to international energy studies.

### *2.2.2. Realism and its successors*

Four subtext assumptions can be extracted from studies, in which **the realist/neorealist/geopolitical approaches** are applied. Firstly, the importance of natural resources is highlighted as a significant factor in maintaining and increasing a nation's power and promoting national interests. States that have access to and control over energy deposits are in stronger positions than countries dependent on energy imports. Secondly, there is a limited, decreasing amount of energy resources in the world and competition over those resources make their availability insecure. In this conjunction, authors often support the idea of future peak oil<sup>79</sup>. They also tend to attribute countries with a resource curse and see conflict as something that originates from resource scarcity. Thirdly, there is no visible end to competition over natural resources. The competition is only expected to intensify among states. Finally, the probability of conflict and even war is growing higher and higher, although its unavoidability might not be fully stated.<sup>80</sup>

In analyzing the gas relations of Russia and the European Union, Dominique Finon and Catherine Locatelli (2007) argue that Russia's and EU's behaviour towards each other is better explained by using different theoretical approaches to each entity. According to them, neorealist theory has more

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<sup>78</sup> Larsson 2006, p. 16.

<sup>79</sup> According to Ugo Bardi, 'peak oil' is "a term that summarizes the concept that the production of crude oil [...] grows, reaches a maximum (peak), and then gradually declines to zero". It is however a disputed concept among researchers engaged in Energy Studies. Bardi 2009, p. 323.

<sup>80</sup> Dannreuther 2010, p. 3.

explanatory power with reference to Russia's energy policy, whereas the European Union is seen to operate more on a neoliberal stance, for example in its efforts to encourage a multilateral approach with its energy suppliers. Finon and Locatelli use Aad Correljé's and Coby van der Linde's<sup>81</sup> (2006) formulation on neorealist "*Regions and Empires*" and neoliberal "*Markets and Institutions*" approaches. According to the "regions and empires" point of view, trade is not independent from the wider political framework, which is characterized by geopolitical competition over resources. The free flow of goods, services, people and capital within the European Union and across the borders with third countries is obstructed by "national and international security issues, bilateralism and excessive regionalism".<sup>82</sup>

Although after the collapse of the Soviet Union Russia's initial behaviour as an independent country was guided by neoliberal principles, after 2001 it turned towards neorealism. According to the geopolitics inspired view, the Russian energy policy works as an instrument to regain former super-power status. How it is achieved, depends heavily on energy and the state's access to and control over the whole value chain of energy extraction, production, transportation and sale. Hence, Russia does not seek participation in multilateral arrangements, because it does not serve its interests as a sovereign power. "Russia is not inclined to abandon part of its sovereignty in an area that is at the core of its power politics, and any control over the rent yielded by its natural resources for the public budget and its industrial policy." The proposed international agreements and treaties, such as the Energy Charter by the European Union would only restrict Russia's quest for power. "Geopolitics [is] a reality in the regional gas trade".<sup>83</sup>

Re- or quasi-nationalization of energy companies is a necessary step to gain an upper hand in the power game. Geopolitics and poor institutional structures are given as the only explanations to the re-nationalization process. Finon and Locatelli picture the Russian state as weak and with limited capacities. In order to bridge the gap between current capabilities and aspired political and economic power most effectively, exploitation is nationalized. Large Russian energy companies are not treated as independent actors which have credible influence, but as *supporting players* in the foreign policy game. According to Finon and Locatelli, "Gazprom is the best example of a major

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<sup>81</sup> See Aad Correljé and Coby van der Linde (2006) "Energy supply security and geopolitics: A European perspective". *Energy Policy*. 34:5, pp. 532-543.

<sup>82</sup> Finon&Locatelli 2008.

<sup>83</sup> Finon&Locatelli 2008.

corporation servicing the Russian state's objectives of political and economic power".<sup>84</sup> Underlining added.

Geopolitical approach to Russian energy is also taken by Robert Ebel (2009). According to Ebel, geopolitics defines "the circumstances under which a nation will always act to protect its national interests, whatever those interests may be". Because the full realization of those interests is incomplete, Russia will continue to act according to the geopolitical assumptions. Energy is an instrument to achieve national interests, and it will be used as such, if a situation requires. Russia's reliability as a supplier profoundly depends on, whether selling energy to foreign partners serves its objectives at a given moment. "If an interruption in exports would serve a particular Russian national interest, then the order to do so goes out." This implies that there is full state control over pipeline valves that are to be turned off on government order. Ebel argues that "only in Russia have pipelines become an integral means of advancing and protecting the national interests". Furthermore, "[i]nfluence comes with pipelines, and Russia is out to strengthen its influence, wherever and whenever the opportunity may present itself". In trying to influence or control prices on sold energy, Russia is using its economic power coming from energy to gain greater political influence.<sup>85</sup>

Ebel's standpoint follows Nikolas Gvosdev's formulation that "energy will increasingly define a state's foreign policy position".<sup>86</sup> Russia's position is seen closely connected with natural reserves. Without them, its power and position in international relations would be weak.<sup>87</sup> How Russia acts in foreign affairs is explained by its geographical features, namely its location on vast reserve deposits. Energy resources provide the only credible means to maintain and increase political power. Former strategic capacities related to military production do not constitute a believable option anymore. The only resort for Russia is energy.<sup>88</sup> Pavel Baev (2008) also sees a strong link between Russia's renewed quest for superpower status and its energy policy. The military might of the country is strengthened through rent collected from raw materials trading, which provides the capital to overcome the 1990s drastic degradation of the Russian armed forces.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Finon&Locatelli 2008.

<sup>85</sup> Ebel 2009.

<sup>86</sup> Gvosdev 2003, p. 4.

<sup>87</sup> Ebel 2009.

<sup>88</sup> Ebel 2009.

<sup>89</sup> Baev 2008, pp. 7-8, 155.

In addition to these authors, Robert Larsson (2006) has taken a geopolitical standpoint towards observing and explaining the present characteristics of Russian energy policy. Although too much emphasis on orthodox black box thinking is avoided, the state remains the most relevant actor for Larsson. “[T]he Kremlin has the ultimate responsibility and as seen here, it also has great influence over key firms.” The political leadership is the main designer of a nation’s strategic objectives and interests in reference to energy. Additionally, energy policy is treated as subordinate to national security interests, also towards neighbouring countries, where former influential position is sought to be restored. “[O]ne of the means is its energy policy”.<sup>90</sup>

Without state control over the energy sector, Russia cannot reinstate its former spheres of influence. The country’s dependence over transit nations is wanted to be kept at a minimum. This reflects the geopolitical notions of self-sufficiency, in which a state controls the entire value-chain of energy and other relevant natural resources. Dependency is seen as a risk, not as a mutual opportunity or a stabilizing factor. Energy is used as a “lever for strategic purposes by political and economic means”. Larsson does not see the market argument as a credible principle for guiding state energy company behaviour. Deliberate supply-interruptions are not a result of market disruptions, such as delivery failures. On the contrary, they are politically-motivated actions intended to pressure antagonist partners.<sup>91</sup>

### *2.2.3. The liberal tradition*

In contrast to the “realist-driven analyses of international energy politics”, authors of **the liberal tradition** emphasize the need to reveal the injustices and illiberal practices connected to the business of international energy industries. Geopolitics is wrong to portray international energy policy “as being fashioned by states that compete for resources and are thus locked into a competitive struggle with zero-sum outcomes”. Neorealist assumption of a continued power struggle between states is contested and market forces are named as the main driver for positive development in international energy politics.<sup>92</sup> Energy is merely a traded commodity and its political ties should be disregarded. Energy as a (geo)political weapon is eventually useless, even to

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<sup>90</sup> Larsson 2006, pp. 269-273.

<sup>91</sup> Larsson 2006, pp. 269-273.

<sup>92</sup> Golthau et al. 2009, pp. 373-374.

the nations which resort to it. Energy markets should be only observed through the notions of demand and supply.<sup>93</sup>

The exposition of the negative sides of energy industries therefore include literature on developing countries, which are said to enjoy a vast resource base, but fail to create a balanced economic structure with many industrial sectors. In addition, scholars within the liberal tradition often discuss the so-called “‘rentier state’ and the consolidation of neopatrimonial authoritarian regimes in resource-rich states”, which restrain democratic rights of their citizens. In addition to this, resource wars are seen as products of states’ vicious strife for natural resources and “the breakdown of neopatrimonial states into warring factions whose primary incentive is” to capture the client’s payments on the use of those resources.<sup>94</sup>

As a counterbalance to the ‘geopolitics of energy’, a reform on “the existing [institutional] architecture of global energy governance” is proposed.<sup>95</sup> In contrast to states, emphasis is put on institutions which are vital in order for international energy markets to operate. Institutions can be observed in the work of international organisations and treaties, such as the International Energy Agency, WTO and the Energy Charter Treaty. They are “composed of formal rules (laws and regulations), informal constraints (norms, conventions) and thus enforcement mechanisms”. Market forces drive positive development and they are the most efficient problem-solving mechanisms to global energy problems, which are mainly disruptions in consumer-supplier relations, not politically motivated inter-state conflicts.<sup>96</sup>

Those applying the liberal tradition frequently focus on presenting fundamental policy recommendations to avert escalation of the current situation and dismantle the illiberal practices. The necessary procedures would “generate a more open and cooperative set of arrangements in the international management of the international energy industry”. The policy guidelines are prescribed for instance by economists with a neo-classical background, international financial institutions, such as International Monetary Fund and non-governmental organisations. The liberal principles, which are said to be embedded in the policy guidelines include the encouragement to informational openness, the increase of international regulation and the promotion of regional and

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<sup>93</sup> Golthau et al. 2009.

<sup>94</sup> Dannreuther 2010, p. 6.

<sup>95</sup> Golthau&Witte 2009, p. 374.

<sup>96</sup> Golthau&Witte 2009.

international energy regimes, the support of corporate social responsibility and good corporate governance, and finally, fostering economic liberalisation.<sup>97</sup>

With regards to oil, ‘a liquid and competitive global market’ has already happened. In the case for gas trade, the geopolitical limitations should be abolished.<sup>98</sup> As opposed to this, Maxim Potapov (2007) among others has argued that in the East Asian context, an important market area for Russian coal, gas and oil, each realm of economic activity except energy is dominated by laws of market liberalization.<sup>99</sup> Energy is considered as a strategic asset that is used when political tensions intensify. Demand for energy in East Asia is constantly growing and any breaks in supply channels immediately have effects to economic development.<sup>100</sup>

State-centric energy policy and the strengthening role of National Oil Companies (NOCs) constitute a backlash to liberalization. NOCs are conducting business operations with low transparency, making more risk-prone investment decisions and avoiding open bidding processes. On the whole, state participation in energy markets is treated with scepticism and as an out-dated phenomenon of the past era. To sum up, neoliberal guidelines are seen as universal. The existence of conflicts is superficial, because “interests of all actors in the energy domain overlap”. There is a guaranteed profit possibility for all players, as long as the markets function according to efficient designed rules of the game (institutions).<sup>101</sup>

In their article on energy development strategy formation, Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal (2001) implement a liberal approach to Russian energy policy. Although not clearly explicated in the article, within the liberal school of thought they can be said to represent an actor-centred strand of rationalism<sup>102</sup>. According to Jones Luong and Weinthal, “state leaders choose energy development strategies based on domestic constraints they face, when they either discover or gain newfound authority over their energy reserves”.<sup>103</sup> Instead of international structures directing state behaviour, “commodity exporters can actually influence [...] markets, rather than merely the reverse”.<sup>104</sup> In addition, they view “all state leaders [to be rational] sovereignty maximizes [and] concerned primarily with staying in power”. Staying in power is dependent on whether or not state

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<sup>97</sup> Dannreuther 2010, pp. 6-9; Golthau et al. 2009.

<sup>98</sup> Golthau&Witte 2009.

<sup>99</sup> Potapov 2007, pp. 116-117.

<sup>100</sup> Len 2007, pp. 123-124, 127.

<sup>101</sup> Golthau&Witte 2009.

<sup>102</sup> For varieties of liberal approaches, see Panke&Risse 2007, p. 93.

<sup>103</sup> Jones Luong&Weinthal 2001, p. 370.

<sup>104</sup> Jones Luong&Weinthal 2001, p. 371.

leaders succeed in maintaining “the status quo set of political and economic expectations that the state is expected to fulfil”. Jones Luong and Weinthal further conclude that “[s]tate leaders in energy-rich states will therefore choose development strategies that enable them to achieve a maximum level of sovereignty over their natural resources without threatening their continued rule”.<sup>105</sup>

Jones Luong and Weinthal seek to explain how states choose to develop their energy resources, especially in relation to whether keep the reserves national or under private ownership. Furthermore, attention is drawn to the degree of involvement of the international community in the energy sector. The explanatory strength of the presented model is limited to developing countries, to which Russia after collapse of the Soviet Union, is said to belong. The authors study strategy formation according to two domestic determinants and their varying combinations: “the degree of access to alternative export revenue” and “the level of political contestation within the country”. These determinants are valued either high or low. Jones Luong and Weinthal place value on the internal political process between state and society that happens before energy sector related issues are resolved.<sup>106</sup>

Jones Luong and Weinthal see that the energy sector provides a way for current heads of state to maintain their power position. If their political power is weakened, the control over the energy sector will increase, unless other relevant alternative export artefacts are available. A diversified economy with a large number of revenue sources makes states give up control over natural resources. Jones Luong and Weinthal claim that post-Soviet Russia chose an energy development strategy of privatization with minimal international involvement, because it had a high degree of access to alternative sources of revenue and a high level of political contestation. Access to alternative sources originated from the industrial base of the Soviet Union that remained within the borders of the new Russia. The political contestation was being played out between “(a) regional cleavages based on the country’s primary administrative-territorial divisions and (b) division based on nationality”. The privatization of the energy sector was restricted to involve only domestic buyers, because state leadership needed the support of the volatile and competing regions and areas with strong nationalistic movements.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Jones Luong&Weinthal 2001, pp. 373-374.

<sup>106</sup> Jones Luong&Weinthal 2001.

<sup>107</sup> Jones Luong&Weinthal 2001.

Douglas Reynolds and Marek Kolodziej (2007) discuss how institutions harvest economic growth for oil exporting countries. The authors examine the institutional change of Russia with regards to the oil and gas reserves re-nationalization process. The case of Russia is reflected with the actions of OPEC (Oil Producing Countries) to nationalize their oil production in the 1970s. The conclusion is that the institutional structure chosen by Russia will have a negative effect on supply of oil as “there will be less private investment, and actual production will be lower than any forecast”. State ownership of energy resources will inevitably lead into a decrease in energy supplies available for world markets and further accelerate the realization of the peak oil scenario. In the long run, pertaining state control over strategic assets such as gas and oil will lead into an oil crisis.<sup>108</sup>

The underlying assumption of Reynolds and Kolodziej is that Russia should embrace market structures with an open economy and a free flow of investments and withdraw the national grip on natural resources. Reynolds and Kolodziej argue that “true private ownership cannot be restricted to a single nationality of the owners in a globalized world market”.<sup>109</sup> Also Perovic accords with this by asserting that the re-nationalization of the energy sector starting from Yukos Oil Company has not proven successful in terms of production and the economy as a whole<sup>110</sup>. Or as Robert Orttung (2009) phrases it, “[t]he energy industry is becoming less efficient as the state asserts control over it”<sup>111</sup>.

In addition to Reynolds and Kolodziej, Michael Fredholm (2005) argues that state control over energy resources is a bottleneck for development. The ineffectiveness of state ownership creates an obstacle to sustained economic growth especially in the context of rapidly decreasing hydrocarbon resources of the world. A publicly owned energy sector is incapable of drawing the necessary investments for such areas as transportation infrastructure. Fredholm presents that energy policy is plagued by a constant struggle of state and commercial interests. Control over energy resources does not produce wanted effects and the much orchestrated energy as a political tool has been a very unsuccessful instrument when implemented for foreign policy goals.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Reynolds&Kolodziej 2007.

<sup>109</sup> Reynolds&Kolodziej 2007.

<sup>110</sup> Perovic 2009a, p. 7.

<sup>111</sup> Orttung 2009, p. 53.

<sup>112</sup> Fredholm 2005.

#### *2.2.4. Towards a constructivist approach*

Albeit International Relations' research in the context of Russian energy policy and the energy sector has been particularly vivid, on theoretical level the application of different approaches has gone little beyond the categories proposed by Ronald Dannreuther and to a certain degree by Andrei Belyi. Realist and neorealist theories and geopolitics, and the liberal tradition still occupy a dominant position in this research area. Notwithstanding the valuable contributions of contemporary study, new approaches become useful in broadening our understanding on the subject and in supplementing the minor shortcomings related to their application.

In general, neorealist and neoliberal approaches have often received the critique of “[taking] goals and interests as given”<sup>113</sup>. In the present context, this argument also has merit. First of all, present studies are heavily characterized by the tendency to interpret Russian energy policy through geopolitical lenses, whether it would be on the accounts of criticizing current political decision-making or explaining the main trends in the state policy. Although some studies try to elucidate the internal dynamics of the decision-making system, the explanatory power in this regard remains weak, because eventually state policies and interests are only reflections of the current system of states and a country's position in it. Interests are predetermined by factors attributed to the international structure, which is in itself characterized by continuous struggle. The energy policy of a given country is counterbalanced with its material basis and the international system of states. Even though managing energy at sustainable rates for future demand cooperation among states is unlikely or designed to serve national interests which are not attainable by other means. The realist, neorealist and geopolitical approaches give no room to change, as the struggle for survival remains the main condition for state behaviour.

Although the liberal tradition sees global energy system in a more positive light, it suffers from the same shortcomings as realism, neorealism and geopolitics, when it comes to state interest formation. For example according to Jeromin Perovic (2009b), the key interest of producer countries is to maintain a stable market for their products “at the highest possible prices”. In contrast, the consumer countries' interests are characterized by secure inflow of affordable energy.<sup>114</sup> Energy should be considered as an enterprise free of political influence operating on purely economic principles. State interests are therefore defined by global market structures and the

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<sup>113</sup> Litfin 1994, p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> Perovic 2009b, pp. 36-40.

embedded principles of supply and demand on energy. States are portrayed as utility maximizers in the sphere of energy. If politics are allowed to interfere in an enterprise of pure economic activity, problems occur, and it should be the interest of no one to allow this to happen. The liberal tradition thus fails to problematize the institutions it advocates as neutral or natural state of things.

Against these ideas and explanations, constructivism offers a rather different kind of approach towards international and national energy politics. Simultaneously, constructivism enables to examine the themes raised by those who employ the traditional theories from a critical point of view. When observing the reality of energy politics, constructivism does not underline the determinate influence of structure over state behaviour. Constructivists do not seek for regularities, which authenticate the existence of objective and constant international structures. In contrast, international relations is seen as a social construction, where agency is regarded possible. The reality does not exist independently from “human meaning and action” but is created in processes of interaction between actors.<sup>115</sup> Thus, as such constructivism does not constitute a “third” option to the other theories but applies to a rather different dimension in comparison to them. Energy politics is first and foremost a social reality, which is structured through language. The social reality is a human construction, and for this reason, it is open for transformation<sup>116</sup>. Furthermore, the language conveys a particular kind of reality, which is a system of things and objects, separable from each other by the use of different concepts.<sup>117</sup>

Consequently, how Russian energy policy may appear today, is not determined by the international structures defined by the neorealist and neoliberal theory. In the production of the social reality of energy politics, agency is performed on international, subnational and domestic levels of policy-making. As the hypothesis of the present study indicates, agency plays a significant role in defining the content and orientations of the Russian energy policy. However, traditional theories applied in this thematic area are incapable to respond to such research task. In the context of the Russian energy policy, this study will examine a particular kind of agency. The current research will analyse the influence of *an epistemic community* in the formation of the Russian energy policy.

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<sup>115</sup> Fierke 2007, pp. 168-169.

<sup>116</sup> Antoniadou 2003, p. 21.

<sup>117</sup> Häkli 2004, pp. 133-141.

### 3. Epistemic Community Literature in International Relations

#### 3.1. Epistemic community concept and its background

The most extensive presentation on the main arguments of the epistemic communities approach appeared in a Special Edition of the *International Organization* in 1992, when the whole journal was devoted to the new approach. The theoretical foundations of the approach were laid down in the introductory and concluding parts of the winter issue by *International Relations*' scholars Peter Haas and Emanuel Adler. Additionally, the benefits of its application were exemplified in different case studies. Prior to the IO special issue, the epistemic communities approach was developed by Haas for example in *Saving the Mediterranean – the Politics of International Environmental Cooperation* published in 1990. Thus, in research applying the epistemic communities approach, Peter Haas is often the most cited author. However, Haas is not the sole entrepreneur in research discussing the relationship of science and politics. As he noted in 1992, there already existed a large quantity of prior research that had scrutinized “the role of epistemic-like communities in the decision-making process” in connection with “the interplay between expertise, technical issues, consensual knowledge and state power”<sup>118</sup>.

Since its introduction, the epistemic communities approach has been used in a wide array of issues relating to international relations such as nuclear weapons arms control (Adler 1992; Kutchesfahani 2010), environmental governance (Haas 1990, 1992b; Peterson 1992; Chilvers 2008) and European integration (Verdun 1999; Zito 2001). While “[t]he application of the epistemic community framework has been particularly prevalent in the realm of natural scientific and environmental policies” as noted by Kutchesfahani<sup>119</sup>, its usage specifically in the field of Energy Studies in *International Relations* has been low or non-existent according to the secondary material of this study.

In signifying the importance of epistemic communities as an actor in the study of international relations, Haas departs from the assumption that decision-makers face an increasingly complex and difficult international policy-making environment. Decision-making is said to require a broader understanding of policy-related technology-specific information, a knowledge field in which the heads of states are said to have little competence. In this condition of uncertainty over issue-specific

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<sup>118</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 7 footnote.

<sup>119</sup> Kutchesfahani 2010, p. 16.

technical information the epistemic community is said to emerge. Often the demand for an epistemic community arises in the reorganisation phase of power “in the wake of a shock or crisis” or at an institutional breakpoint.<sup>120</sup> If the condition of uncertainty does not exist, state leaders would go along the decision-making process without the consultation from “knowledge-based experts”. The demand for advice has to be present because the participation of the epistemic community in the policy process is dependent on whether decision-makers are not sure about what should be done with an issue-area. Furthermore, emerging issues can be viewed as a more prominent ground for epistemic community participation, as they form a fairly new and unfamiliar terrain for decision-makers.<sup>121</sup>

Haas sees the growing numbers of government workers with a background in science, engineering and computing analogous to the increasing complexity surrounding decision-making.<sup>122</sup> Some authors have interpreted that scientists or experts are allowed to participate in policy processes, because they are believed to be politically impartial and to follow strict “professional methods and norms of scientific inquiry”. They take integrity in their work and are competent producers of “advanced and reliable knowledge”.<sup>123</sup> The growth trend concerning scientific and technical workforce has been the case especially in the Western countries after the Second World War. In 1983 in the United States, 15 % of government workers belonged to technical and scientific personnel, an amount that had nearly doubled since 1954 (123,927 → 238,041).<sup>124</sup> In 2009, the size of scientific and technical workforce was likewise high, 235,000.<sup>125</sup>

In comparison, in the same year the number of personnel engaged in research and development for the Russian state was 260,360, according to the Centre for Science and Research Statistics (Tsentr Issledovaniy i Statistiki Nauki).<sup>126</sup> In 2008, the total public sector in Russia (including federal and regional level officials and authorities) comprised of 1,670,800 workers.<sup>127</sup> A rough estimate gives a percentage of 15 (260,854/1,670,800)<sup>128</sup> for the amount of R&D workforce in the state sector. In addition, 75.1 % of the organisations that are engaged in research and development are

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<sup>120</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 1, 14.

<sup>121</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 29.

<sup>122</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 9.

<sup>123</sup> A. Underdal 2000 by Steel et al. 2004, p. 4.

<sup>124</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 9-10. Haas refers to statistics from National Science Foundation, *Federal Scientific and Technical Workers: Numbers and Characteristics, 1973 and 1983* (Washington, D.C.: National Science Foundation 1985).

<sup>125</sup> Burrelli&Falkenheim 2011, pp. 1-4.

<sup>126</sup> Centre for Science Research and Statistics 2010, p. 49

<sup>127</sup> Rosstat 2009.

<sup>128</sup> Figures calculated by author from Centre for Science Research and Statistics 2010, p. 51 and Rosstat 2009.

governmental and of those over 94 % are federal.<sup>129</sup> In industrial production, manufacturing activity (Obrabatyvayushchie proizvodstva) is the highest employer for research and development with 35,855 workers.<sup>130</sup>

The statistics presented above are not fully compatible with each other due to probable differences in original source and possible methodological differences in data processing. Whether science and engineering or research and development personnel's real occupational tasks and duties fully respond to actual such work cannot be derived from the data set. However, they contribute to the claim of Haas about the importance of science and engineering workforce to contemporary governments and those of the recent past. Haas argues that the mere "expansion and professionalization of bureaucracies and the growing technical nature of problems have fostered an increase [in the appreciation of] technical expertise and, in particular, to that of scientists"<sup>131</sup>. Haas further continues that politics is never removed from dealing with complex issues. The more inconclusive the issue is on scientific grounds, the more politics steps in. However, in many cases this excludes the traditional sphere of high politics, where the resistance for so called foreign involvement in the policy process is said to have remained high.<sup>132</sup>

### 3.2. Constructivist foundations

Peter Haas's theoretical conceptualisation of epistemic communities dates back to the third great debates in the discipline of International Relations.<sup>133</sup> The explanatory value of neorealism and neoliberalism had saturated many scholars and Haas along with authors such as Emanuel Adler began seeking new more sufficient ways to approach international policy coordination. Although structural constraints to state behaviour are still given some merit, the idea of systems and structures as the main origin of state interests is resisted. Therefore, in examining state action and its

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<sup>129</sup> Centre for Science Research and Statistics 2010, p. 18.

<sup>130</sup> Centre for Science Research and Statistics 2010, p. 58. In defining different fields of economic activity, the Centre for Science Research and Statistics uses the Russian National Classification of the Forms of Economic Activity (OKVED – Obshcherossiyskiy Klassifikator Vidov Ekonomicheskoy Deyatel'nosti). Classification system title translated by author. The Centre for Science Research and Statistics includes parts C,D,E of the OKVED under industrial production (p. 22 in *Nauka Rossii v Tsivrakh: 2010*). Manufacturing activity contains among other things the production of electricity and other energy power engineering. For full list of OKVED, see for example <<http://www.statkod.ru/okved.html>>.

<sup>131</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 11.

<sup>132</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 11-12.

<sup>133</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2, 4.

underlying causes a wider set of influential factors needs to be acknowledged. State interests are not viewed as static and unchangeable or the product of systemic constraints or unit-level factors.<sup>134</sup>

Consequently, along with the temporal ascend of constructivist thinking within the field of International Relations, Peter Haas' theorizing on epistemic communities coincides with the basic tenets of constructivism with few exceptions. Constructivism migrated to International Relations from other areas of social research in the early 1980s<sup>135</sup>. However, a strict typology of the epistemic communities approach has remained difficult to produce. For example John Ruggie (1998) has placed Peter Haas under the variant of neo-classical constructivism, which orientates epistemologically towards pragmatism<sup>136</sup>. Haas and Adler, on the other hand, claim that the approach enjoys methodological pluralism, as it tries to incorporate the best insights from other approaches, such as liberal institutionalism and neofunctionalism<sup>137</sup>. Furthermore, in contrast to neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism, epistemic community literature is said to represent a reflectivist approach<sup>138</sup>, because it highlights the role of interpretation in examining what happens in international politics<sup>139</sup>.

The epistemic community term itself found a path to the discipline of International Relations through the writing of John Ruggie in the 1970s<sup>140</sup>. In defining epistemic communities, Ruggie took use of Michel Foucault's term *episteme* which is said to "refer to a dominant way of looking at social reality, a set of shared symbols and references, mutual expectations and a mutual predictability of intention". Based on this, an epistemic community "may be said to consist of interrelated roles which grow up around an *episteme*; they delimit, for their members, *the* proper construction of social reality".<sup>141</sup> In contrast to Ruggie's formulation, Haas says to use the term in a narrower sense. It is applied with reference to "a concrete collection of individuals who share the same worldview (or *episteme*) and in particular share the four aspects of it", meaning causal beliefs, principled beliefs, interests and a consensual knowledge base.<sup>142</sup> Epistemic communities work as carriers of new ideas "from societies to governments [and] from country to country"<sup>143</sup>. Energy experts

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<sup>134</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2, 4.

<sup>135</sup> Fierke 2007, p. 167.

<sup>136</sup> Ruggie 1998, p. 881.

<sup>137</sup> Haas&Adler 1992, p. 368.

<sup>138</sup> Litfin 1994, p. 3.

<sup>139</sup> Haas&Adler 1992, p. 367.

<sup>140</sup> For example Haas 1992a, p. 26; Antoniadis 2003, p. 23.

<sup>141</sup> Ruggie 1975, pp. 569-570.

<sup>142</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 27.

<sup>143</sup> Haas 1992, p. 27.

frequently participate in international forums and joint research projects on a wide spectrum of themes ranging from energy security to the development of Russia and East Asia energy cooperation. Dunlop among others sees a theoretical continuum in Haas' "notion of epistemic community" and Thomas Kuhn's (1962) "community of knowers" and their binding together by a shared paradigm.<sup>144</sup>

Despite the number of different theoretical associations, the ontological basis of the epistemic communities approach can be viewed as idealist, because it gives primacy to ideas over material factors. As one of the major contributors to the constructivist approach in International Relations Alexander Wendt formulates, constructivists suppose "that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces"<sup>145</sup>. Furthermore, interests and identities do not exist independently, but are "constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature"<sup>146</sup>. Interests are not treated as fixed objects without any spatial and temporal dimensions. There is a continuous process of "production and reproduction of [...] interests [...] in social interaction"<sup>147</sup>.

In addition, Wendt views patterns or reasons for defining state behaviour in international relations, such as self-help as institutions that are constructed in a process of state interaction. Self-help is not an independent character of an anarchic state structure that exists outside process. "[S]tructure has no existence or causal powers apart from process".<sup>148</sup> As opposed to the constructivist view, "[n]eorealism and neoliberal institutionalism treat the identity and interests of actors as exogenous and given".<sup>149</sup> Wendt maintains that structure in international relations is a set of collective meanings that actors share about objects and themselves with each other.<sup>150</sup> Rules and norms are expressions of structure. However, these rules are not compelling, if the "socialization and participation" of actors "in collective knowledge" is missing.<sup>151</sup> Actors do not have self-built identities but only come into having them through participation "in such collective meanings". Actors' identities do not come into being without interaction with others. "Identities are inherently

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<sup>144</sup> Dunlop 2000, p. 140. According to Dunlop, for example Guy Peters (1996) notes that Haas' work proceed in parallel with Kuhn's conceptualisation.

<sup>145</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 1.

<sup>146</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 1.

<sup>147</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 36.

<sup>148</sup> Wendt 1992, pp. 394-395.

<sup>149</sup> Ruggie 1998, p. 862.

<sup>150</sup> Wendt 1992, pp. 396-398.

<sup>151</sup> Wendt 1992, p. 399.

relational”. Actors identities are not restricted to the quantity of one, but can become many when following different institutional roles.<sup>152</sup>

Subsequently, in the epistemic communities approach room is given to human agency that is said to lie “at the interstices between systemic conditions, knowledge and national actions”. Interests are created in a process-like interaction between government officials and members of the epistemic community. Haas maintains that “the epistemic community approach suggests a nonsystemic origin for state interests and identifies a dynamic for persistent cooperation independent of the distribution of international power”. Haas believes that epistemic communities may influence, how different social institutions, operative and new, will appear.<sup>153</sup> Furthermore, Wendt asserts that state interests are not predetermined and free from the social context that surrounds states. In other words, like identities, interests are “relationship-specific”.<sup>154</sup> As a result, state interests reflected in the national energy policy of Russia are the outcome of interaction between a number of actors that operate on international, regional and domestic levels of policy-making.

Respectively, Haas can be said to follow a social ontology, which is specific to constructivism. There the basic unit of analysis is the social structure, which both limits and “constitutes the identity of actors”. The social structure is made out of shared norms, beliefs and understanding that defines what type of behaviour among actors is considered acceptable and authorized. The relationship between the social structure and the agents is that of ‘mutual constitution’. Both affect the essence of the other and develop in time to a particular form through the process of mutual influence.<sup>155</sup> In sum, “constructivists view international structure to be social structure [...] made up of socially knowledgeable and discursively competent actors who are subject to constraints that are in part material, in part institutional”<sup>156</sup>. Although material factors cannot be said to fully dominate state interest formation, the vast energy resources of Russia still create certain limitations to the country and its position in the social structure.

The essence of interests is in constant flux as they are “constituted by collective meanings that are always in process”. Historically, interests may prevail for long periods of time. Despite of long

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<sup>152</sup> Wendt 1992, pp. 396-398.

<sup>153</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2, 4.

<sup>154</sup> Wendt 1992, pp. 398, 408.

<sup>155</sup> Dunne et al. 2007, pp. 169-171.

<sup>156</sup> Ruggie 1998, p. 879.

historical continuums, they are not constant.<sup>157</sup> The intersubjective construction only prevails under circumstances, where actors continue interacting according to the formerly created institutions. Actors continue realising the expected behaviour. Only as the mutually implemented practices are changed, “the intersubjective knowledge [constituting] the system” will change.<sup>158</sup> Ruggie posits that social facts are made out of intersubjective knowledge or ‘intersubjective beliefs’ which are grounded on intentionality that is shared among individuals. Collective intentionality may serve as a limiting factor for behaviour, as states start to share similar views of inappropriate international actions. Collective intentionality may also lead into the establishment of new rights and responsibilities to actors.<sup>159</sup>

Haas sees that institutions are the driving force of state behaviour in the international arena. The complexity of world affairs makes for example realist and neorealist notions on state interest formation incomplete and too narrow as important definers are left outside examination.<sup>160</sup> States are not compelled to behave according to distant independent structural constraints, but their behaviour and definitions of identity and interests are results of their own choices for action.<sup>161</sup> According to Ruggie, ideational factors work as the drivers for causal factors to lead development into certain direction. They are not the cause in themselves. “[T]he *aspiration* for a united Europe has not *caused* European integration as such, but it is the reason the causal factors have had their specific effect”.<sup>162</sup> One could say that Russia’s quest for an energy superpower status is not the cause for the country’s leading position in international energy markets “as such”. However, the material forces available to the country have been harnessed to support this idea driving the development towards current and future state of affairs. The energy strategy itself builds the road map to achieve this objective.

Besides standing opposite to the materialist orientation, the epistemic communities approach seems also to follow a holistic view to international relations, according to which “the effects of social structures cannot be reduced to independently existing agents and their interactions”<sup>163</sup>. In addition, structures are conducive to “the construction of agents in both causal and constitutive senses”<sup>164</sup>. However, epistemic communities approach does not take a rigid stand on, whether it is fully holistic

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<sup>157</sup> Wendt 1992, p. 407.

<sup>158</sup> Wendt 1992, pp. 406-407.

<sup>159</sup> Ruggie 1998, pp. 869-870, 879.

<sup>160</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2, 4, 14.

<sup>161</sup> Wendt 1992, p. 410.

<sup>162</sup> Ruggie 1998, p. 869.

<sup>163</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 26.

<sup>164</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 26.

or individualistic approach. Structures are said to have causal importance but for example the stance of neorealism in “deducing expectations only from structures of defining structure in reference only to material distribution of power” does not receive support from Haas and Adler. There is an interactive relationship of mutual constitution between agents and structure. Attention is given to both the structure and the “processes by which agents and their expectations are created and by which the alternatives and outcomes of [policy coordination] are defined”. If an epistemic community receives strong support and exerts influence in its domestic setting, its values and practices have a greater chance of institutionalizing internationally, as states will promote their ideas while cooperating with other nations.<sup>165</sup>

Despite the lack of theoretical parsimony, the epistemic community as a social structure is more than the sum of its members and cannot be identified by the observance of one member. However, in contrast to the epistemology of Wendt that leans towards positivism<sup>166</sup>, Haas epistemology seems to draw its foundation on post-positivism as in examining epistemic communities the subject and the object cannot be distinguished apart. The epistemic community does not exist independently from its observer. The epistemic community is a theoretical creation of the observer that is projected upon a group of people. As Wendt indicates, “human subjects in some sense create the objects their theories purport to explain”<sup>167</sup>. The epistemic community concept is used as a tool to explain agency in energy policy formation in Russia. The epistemic community does not exist without the interference of the researcher. It is not something that the experts are self-aware of, although they feel certain unity with their colleagues.

The epistemology of the epistemic communities framework is said to bear a strong link to intersubjectivity as “learning [is seen to] occur through reflection on empirical events rather than through their representation”<sup>168</sup>. The approach which Haas represents is concentrating on the “process through which consensus is reached within a given domain of expertise and through which the consensual knowledge is diffused to and carried forward by other actors”. Whether the epistemic community’s advice can be evaluated as correct, sufficient or insufficient, is not the main interest.<sup>169</sup> Claire Dunlop (2000) for example asserts that the consensus on knowledge over a subject field is the most central matter in “an epistemic community’s claim to authority”. Dunlop

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<sup>165</sup> Haas&Adler 1992, pp. 369, 371-372.

<sup>166</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 39.

<sup>167</sup> Wendt 1999, p. 39.

<sup>168</sup> Haas&Adler 1992, p. 371.

<sup>169</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 21-23.

though continues that the claim to authority should not be regarded as “a synonym for ultimate truth”. The content of the truth receiving authority in a given moment is time-dependent and context-driven and will most likely change in the future due to new developments in science.<sup>170</sup> This is especially evident in Russia when it comes to renewable sources of energy. Some energy research institutes have only recently created a specialisation within their organisation on renewables, because earlier “these kind of directions were in a sort of explorative state”<sup>171</sup>.

In contrast, what concerns those who apply this approach, is “the political influence that an epistemic community can have on collective policymaking”. The political and social influence of epistemic community originates from the constructivist viewpoint to epistemology. As it is impossible to gain direct access to reality, those in the position of defining and articulating issues of public concern have great importance.<sup>172</sup> As Dunlop formulates, “epistemic communities are bearers of *a* truth”.<sup>173</sup> Furthermore, the advice that the epistemic community gives to decision-makers, is “an *interpretation* of facts”<sup>174</sup>, an interpretation of many possible and probable ones. As one Russian interviewee phrased it, the energy strategy “is our choice. And there are people who for example think that development is to be achieved by other means. It is their right as experts.”<sup>175</sup> Following John Searle’s (1995) thinking, Ruggie states that the existence of social, non-physical facts “depend[s] on human agreement and typically require human institutions for their existence”.<sup>176</sup>

### 3.3. Community engagement in policy-process

Mitigating uncertainty is the main driver for epistemic community participation. First of all, the epistemic community takes part in policy processes by “articulating the cause-and-effect relationships of complex problems”. In addition to this, the community helps “states identify their interests”. The defined interests may not follow a historically consistent path as completely new objectives might also emerge. Epistemic community helps policymakers better understand how their decisions are interlinked with the interests and positions of other states. Haas argues that for

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<sup>170</sup> Dunlop 2000, p. 139.

<sup>171</sup> Interview with a Russian expert IN2 2010.

<sup>172</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 21-23.

<sup>173</sup> Dunlop 2000, p. 140.

<sup>174</sup> Verdun 1999, p. 314.

<sup>175</sup> Interview with a Russian expert IN1 2010.

<sup>176</sup> Ruggie 1998, p. 856.

the purposes of a collective debate the epistemic community may show what things need to be taken into account or left out from the discussion aiming at solving a particular problem. The community can also put forward, how these issues should be dealt with nationally or internationally in cooperation with other actors. The epistemic community has a supportive function in decision-making process as it “can help to formulate policies”. Furthermore, the epistemic community can advise on the main (nationally-valid) areas in which the “principal” should concentrate during negotiations.<sup>177</sup>

Uncertainty over an issue area and epistemic community participation in policy processes can also be scrutinized through the application of the concept *possible worlds*<sup>178</sup> or *possible futures* which belongs to the core concepts of *Futures Studies*. According to Kamppinen et al. (2002) possible worlds mean

“those states of things and chain of events that in principle are attainable for some actors through certain measures or can realize despite those measures. The value contents and risks of possible worlds differ, and therefore, they depend on different interests of different people who consider those desirable or to be avoided.”<sup>179</sup>

The set of instruments along the temporal line towards a possible future state is called a *future path*<sup>180</sup>. Furthermore, these instruments constitute an elementary building block of that possible future state. It is important to note that future paths entail varying levels of risks and factors of uncertainty. What risk levels the society can accept, is a matter of political decision-making. Consequently, constructing possible futures and future paths is not an objective and interest-free enterprise, because responsibilities are borne differently by the society and the individual on each course.<sup>181</sup> Therefore, in the face of uncertainty, experts or an epistemic community for that matter, is called upon to produce information primarily about different possible future states, and secondly, to offer decision-makers a set of policy choices or instruments which would contribute to the realization of that future.

In general, the demand for an epistemic community(ies) is evident in energy industries, because the sector is faced with high levels of uncertainty, a condition which seems to form a continuing trend

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<sup>177</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2-5, 13.

<sup>178</sup> I would like to thank Docent (Sociology) Seppo Raiski at the University of Tampere for suggesting this idea to me.

<sup>179</sup> Kamppinen et al. 2002, p. 26. Translation by author.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. p. 25. The term is translated from Finnish “tulevaisuuspolku”.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. pp. 23-25.

both world-wise and especially in Russia. Orttung et al. (2009) among others see the global energy system to be at the verge of a downturn or even a collapse. The contemporary system is experiencing “extreme price volatility [and] investment insecurity”. Further insecurity within the energy markets is created by “the rise of large new consumers in Asia”. Pressure does not have roots only in the functioning of the world economy but it is increasingly a political matter. For example the new rise of state-run national oil companies might produce unexpected consequences.<sup>182</sup>

Global economic trends have significant repercussions in the Russian energy sector first of all, because it is a highly capital intensive industry. In order to realize different extraction plans to increase the production capacity, large-scale, long-term foreign investments are necessary. Furthermore, the know-how on how to extract energy resources in harsh climatic conditions, such as the Arctic Ocean and the Barents Sea, are still developing in Russia and so, technology transfer from abroad is vital. Although the Asian markets offer prospective business opportunities to Russian energy companies, sudden political tensions between producer, consumer and transit countries might hinder or stall joint cooperative agreements for an undetermined period of time. Hence, building energy strategies or other important policy documents and national plans for decades ahead is a very complex enterprise, in which decision-makers have limited capacity. Orttung (2009) argues that because the energy industry is increasingly led by “top members of the political elite”, their ability and technological proficiency “to run large corporations in the energy sphere” is severely constrained<sup>183</sup>. Diversified analytical expertise is therefore needed to resolve for example the most preferable mechanisms to attain specified national objectives or to assess the economic viability of various development projects and their attainability by current and future technological means.

Haas posits that international policy coordination is not a product of conflict solution but the recognition that an issue affects all states. A multitude of actors with interrelated policy choices works as a stimulus for the need to involve an epistemic community in the policy process. Mutual dependence across a large number of states creates a condition of uncertainty, which calls for relevant scientific and technical expertise. Information is sought after to facilitate understanding of a specific policy issue. The epistemic community provides decision-makers with a (simplified) account of what is the current status of a policy area, and what are the possible outcomes of

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<sup>182</sup> Orttung et al. 2009, p. 3.

<sup>183</sup> Orttung 2009, p. 63.

selecting certain policy options. Before embarking upon cooperative arrangements, states need to find an agreement or “a consensus about the nature and scope of the problem and also about the manner in which the problem relates to other concerns in the same and additional issue-areas”. Scientific consensus offers the possibility to search for collective consensus among states within a certain sphere. The epistemic community may further in the process influence that body of consensual knowledge by occupying relevant positions in the organisational structure of the government.<sup>184</sup>

Haas however reminds that the members of an epistemic community are not the only group of actors that serve governments and state representatives with information. Nonetheless, state leaders may consult the epistemic community on more politically than issue motivated grounds in order to strengthen their own position or standing on a particular situation.<sup>185</sup> The exclusion of certain (unfavourable) policy options is justified with information received from a relevant expert community<sup>186</sup>. The independence of the epistemic community is therefore limited to whether state leaders are willing to give it latitude to influence or not. As Litfin demonstrates, “the power of technical experts is proportional to the trust that decision-makers have in them”<sup>187</sup>.

Furthermore, if a policy eventually proves to be stillborn, decision-makers can place responsibility for failed action also on the shoulders of the epistemic community thus maintaining their own position unchanged.<sup>188</sup> Epistemic communities are in this manner used for “instrumental purposes”. The instrumentality of the epistemic community in policy process is underlined, when it is used to “depoliticise decision-making”. Decision-makers make use of people’s perceptions on the neutrality and objectivity linked with experts. Negative voters return their support to the government as they are convinced by an epistemic community that decision-makers are truly making the right choices.<sup>189</sup> According to Haas and Adler, the existence of the epistemic community is “limited to the time and space defined by the problem and its solutions”.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2-4, 15-16, 29-30.

<sup>185</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2-4, 15-16.

<sup>186</sup> Dunlop 2010, p. 207.

<sup>187</sup> Litfin 1994, p. 40.

<sup>188</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 2-4, 15-16.

<sup>189</sup> Dunlop 2010, p. 207.

<sup>190</sup> Haas&Adler 1992, p. 317.

### 3.4. Membership structure

Which individuals constitute an epistemic community, can be derived from Haas's definition of the concept:

“An epistemic community is a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area. Although an epistemic community may consist of professionals from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, they have (1) **a shared set of normative and principled beliefs**, which provide a value-based rationale for the social action of community members; (2) **shared causal beliefs**, which are derived from their analysis of practises leading or contributing to a central set of problems in their domain and which then serve as the basis for elucidating the multiple linkages between possible policy actions and desired outcomes; (3) **shared notions of validity** – that is, intersubjective, internally defined criteria for weighting and validating knowledge in the domain of their expertise; and (4) **a common policy enterprise** – that is, a set of common practises associated with a set of problems to which their professional competence is directed, presumably out of the conviction that human welfare will be enhanced as a consequence.”<sup>191</sup>

Haas asserts that a background in natural sciences is not a prerequisite for the members of an epistemic community. A particular disciplinary background is not decisive.<sup>192</sup> Verdun also makes this point by saying that “a purely scientific community is not an epistemic community if it does not interpret fact, and/or does not aim for a common cause”. In addition, it is not given that every group of experts will “form an epistemic community”.<sup>193</sup> However, the community should “have a sufficiently strong claim to a body of knowledge that is valued by society”. Furthermore, the methodological standing of the epistemic community is not either tied to that of natural sciences, but to the “shared knowledge about the nature of social or other processes”.<sup>194</sup> For example Makarov (2009) sees that the energy sector makes use of the achievements of “practically every science that creates basic conditions (prerequisites) for the innovative development of humanity's energy foundation”. In relation with the different scientific branches within the Russian Academy of Sciences, these include earth sciences, mathematical sciences, physical sciences, mechanics and machine building and social sciences among others. The knowledge sphere utilized within the energy sector is immensely wide, because it is “an expressly interdisciplinary science”.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 3. Bold text by author.

<sup>192</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 16.

<sup>193</sup> Verdun 1999, pp. 316, 320.

<sup>194</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 16-19.

<sup>195</sup> Makarov 2009, pp. 99-100, 102.

Haas distinguishes epistemic communities from other (influence) groups by demanding, that its members share both causal and principled (analytic and normative) beliefs. Haas especially places value on the shared normative beliefs and sees that members of an epistemic community seek more cooperation with groups that “reflect or [aim at promoting] these beliefs”. Haas notes though, that alliances of short duration can also be built between members and non-member of the epistemic community on the basis of joint research concerns. In addition to causal and principled beliefs, interests should be shared and the knowledge base of the epistemic community to be consensual, not disputed or absent.<sup>196</sup> James Sebenius (1992) reads the common policy project “as an often tacitly proposed agreement (or class of agreements) on a set of relevant issues that reflects the community members’ underlying shared interests (values) by way of a common causal model”<sup>197</sup>.

As opposed to epistemic communities, Haas views for example legislators and bureaucratic agencies to have a disputed knowledge base and incompatible policy enterprises. These groups share neither causal nor principled beliefs.<sup>198</sup> Although there might be ideological congruence on questions about ownership in the Russian energy sector within for example the ‘siloviki’ faction, there are significant differences in the extent of how rigorously and with what means it should be enforced in reality. The same is apparent also with the faction affiliated with a more liberal standing.<sup>199</sup>

Haas continues to assert that epistemic communities would be independent from traditional problems related with bureaucracy, such as a compulsion on own budgetary constraints and constitutional missions than pursuing a cohesive policy together with other bodies.<sup>200</sup> The incompatible information published by different governmental bodies over the Eastern vector of the Russian energy policy exemplifies this case<sup>201</sup>. The normative component of epistemic community forms a weak point in Haas’ theorizing. It is questionable whether the behaviour of the epistemic community is truly distinct from that of bureaucrats on the basis of normative and causal beliefs. It is likewise feeble to assume that the shared interests of the epistemic community “are based on cosmopolitan beliefs of promoting collective betterment”<sup>202</sup>.

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<sup>196</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 16-19.

<sup>197</sup> Sebenius 1992, p. 352.

<sup>198</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 18.

<sup>199</sup> E.g. Larsson 2006, pp. 60-65.

<sup>200</sup> Haas 1992a, pp. 16-19.

<sup>201</sup> See chapter 2.1.2.

<sup>202</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 20.

Nevertheless, Haas is not the only one to have thought along these lines. Many authors have been in the view that scientists contribute to policy-making without politically or otherwise attached views. Perceptions on the objectivity of scientific information have a long history. According to Levien (1979) who is introduced by Steel et al. “science and scientists can provide a clear understanding of the basic dimensions of [problems], identifying both what is known and what is uncertain.” Furthermore, scientists have the ability to suggest suitable policy guidelines which might not all be apparent to policy-makers. “[F]inally, science can contribute to the resolution of [energy] problems by estimating the economic, social, environmental and political consequences of proposed solutions through time and space, and across population groups”.<sup>203</sup>

These assumptions are said to rest on the traditional foundations of the Enlightenment and positivist epistemology. In a way, scientists act outside the decision-making process, only providing the ones in power relevant information about the discussed issue. They are facilitators, not active members of policy-making. The supporters of the opposing view call for a more visible and defined role for research scientists in policy-making. Research scientists are expected to step into the public arena of decision-making, not only to produce topic related information within the confined spaces of research laboratories. Scientists are expected to be willing and keen on taking a wider role themselves.<sup>204</sup>

Haas distinguishes epistemic communities as a research object from the social structures which condition its action. Epistemic communities do not merely occur alongside a particular policy process due to “a consistent set of deeper economic, political, and social structures that in some way generate a preconditioned set of outcomes”. Haas underlines the active role of the epistemic community in introducing new viewpoints and choices for decision-makers to adapt.<sup>205</sup>

Dunlop presents that there are two types of epistemic communities, an idea that is supported also in other more recent epistemic community literature. The epistemic communities in Haas’s writings are seen as ‘evolutionary’. They exist independent from decision-makers. Governmental epistemic communities represent another type of epistemic communities. They have a limited “control over the knowledge they produce”, and they are “subject to external socio-political pressure”. On the basis of a study on two epistemic communities that took part in European Commission decision-

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<sup>203</sup> Mazur 1981 by Steel et. al 2004, p. 3.

<sup>204</sup> Steel et. al 2004, p. 4.

<sup>205</sup> Haas1992a, p. 19.

making on hormone growth promoters, Claire Dunlop (2010) argues that governmental epistemic communities operate more efficiently as a delegation than more autonomous epistemic communities. However, efficiency does not come with high credibility.<sup>206</sup>

### 3.5. Influence

How is the influence of epistemic communities then measured by the approach? Adler and Haas title their influence as **policy evolution**, which is said to happen through four phases: **policy innovation**; **policy diffusion**; **policy selection**; and **policy persistence**. The influence in *policy innovation* happens on three levels. First, the epistemic community helps in framing an issue-area in a particular context and also points out the most suitable instances where problem-solving should take place. Secondly, the epistemic community assists to identify state interests, which is a logical step from contextualizing the problem. Finally, the epistemic community sets standards and formulates international regulations on the debated matter.<sup>207</sup>

*Policy diffusion* on the other hand refers to the diffusion of the ideas of the epistemic community to national and international arenas of decision-making. The diffusion does not only happen on government to government basis, the epistemic community exchanges information transnationally through networks of scientists and international organisations, which take an interest in the same field. Ideas may be spread through formal or more informal ties with relevant governmental organs and participation in decision-making bodies, where the epistemic community may have different degrees of power. Members of the epistemic community do not need to be numerous.. However, it is important that they enjoy high occupational deference and influence.<sup>208</sup>

Epistemic communities may exert influence also through *policy selection*. How much influence the community has depends on whether its advice is sought in a situation, when decision-makers have or do not have much prior information about similar problems. Adler and Haas suggest that the epistemic community would enjoy greater influence, when an issue-area is relevantly new to decision-makers. With a more familiar set of problems, the advice of the epistemic community is

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<sup>206</sup> Dunlop 2010, pp. 205-206.

<sup>207</sup> Adler&Haas 1992, pp. 375-378.

<sup>208</sup> Adler&Haas 1992, pp. 378-380.

often justified to meet the political purposes of the policy-makers, such as building suitable international or national coalitions.<sup>209</sup>

The fourth step of measuring influence is that of *policy persistence*, which infers to how enduring the institutionalised ideas of the epistemic community will be. The persistence of new policies is among others dependent on “the degree of consensus among community members”. If that consensus is lost, the community’s authority disintegrates, and decision-makers will seek advice from somewhere else.<sup>210</sup>

Andreas Antoniadis (2003) offers a different viewpoint on analysing epistemic community action in policy processes. This formulation will be implemented in the current study. Antoniadis sees that epistemic community influence happens on two levels: **cognitive** and **practical**. The constructivist approach maintains that the social reality is made of “social facts, social structures and identities” which “constitute and consist of intersubjective knowledge”. By exercising its authorial claim to knowledge the epistemic community plays “a decisive role in the interactions that produce and reproduce the intersubjective knowledge constructs on which social reality is based”.<sup>211</sup>

Furthermore, when epistemic communities have an influence on the social reality they influence “the conceptual framework in which every policy process is embedded”. In other words, the epistemic community first of all influences actors’ understanding of a policy process, and what roles separate actors have in the process. Influence also extends to the definition of different situations and to the conceptualisation of their boundaries. Consequently, the epistemic community influences “the way in which actors conceptualise structural constraints”.<sup>212</sup>

On the *practical level*, the epistemic community may participate in policy processes and decision-making directly as government officials or indirectly as outside consultants or “members of think-tanks”. Antoniadis presents three dimensions on which indirect engagement may happen. To begin with, when the members of an epistemic community are called to give advice or give information on a particular issue, they can “decisively influence agents’ policy and interests”. Secondly, the

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<sup>209</sup> Adler&Haas 1992, pp. 381-383.

<sup>210</sup> Adler&Haas 1992, pp. 384-385.

<sup>211</sup> Antoniadis 2003, pp. 29-31.

<sup>212</sup> Antoniadis 2003, pp. 29-31.

epistemic community may have influence through agenda setting or agenda formation. Lastly, the epistemic community is summoned to produce “only the details of a policy”.<sup>213</sup>

### 3.6. Epistemic communities approach and its limitations

Besides its wide usage in the field of International Relations, the epistemic communities approach has received strong scholarly criticism. Commenting authors highlight relevant weak points of the approach, and therefore it is necessary to present them here. The critiques of five researchers will be discussed and reflected upon in the thematic area of the current study. Sara Zahra Kutchesfahani (2010) among others has compiled a more comprehensive review of the epistemic community framework and its critics in her doctoral work *Politics & The Bomb: Exploring the Role of Epistemic Communities in Nuclear Non-Proliferation Outcomes*.

A first criticism discusses the issue of cooperation and conflict. James Sebenius (1992) lists the treatment of cooperation and conflict as separate affairs as one of the main weaknesses of the approach. The participation of the epistemic community more often than not happens in a conflictual, not cooperative environment. The approach offers little explanations why conflicts exist and how they are solved. In consequence, Sebenius sees that “[t]he actual influence of epistemic communities is ultimately exercised through bargaining”. Regardless of this, scholars following the epistemic community framework do not visibly utilize any strands of the theory on bargaining. As a remedy to these shortcomings, Sebenius introduces ‘negotiation-analytic approach’ which has its theoretical background in a rather different orientation, namely game-theory.<sup>214</sup>

Sebenius raises a valid point, when discussing the missing cooperation/conflict dimensions of the epistemic communities approach. The acknowledgment of bargaining processes and competition of interests are necessary, when it comes to Russian energy policy formation. The energy policy and the energy sector are all but terrains for peaceful cooperation. However, those involved in the policy-process are already thought to have passed a certain selection criteria. The key question therefore is to examine, how that credibility is achieved.

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<sup>213</sup> Antoniadis 2003, pp. 31-33.

<sup>214</sup> Sebenius 1992, pp. 325-326, 353, 364. For full description of the negotiation-analytic approach, see i.e. the referred article from Sebenius.

Besides disregarding the competitive nature of policy-making processes, the epistemic communities approach receives critique on overlooking the relevance of other groups in these processes. Dave Toke (1999) maintains that Haas ignores groups, such as environmental movements as significant actors involved in international policy coordination and in the shaping of its outcomes. According to Toke, Haas posits epistemic communities above all other social movements. The superiority of epistemic communities in relation to other groups is based upon their shared belief systems and consensual knowledge base, characteristics which are said to be foreign to for example environmental groups. Toke contests Haas' view that scientists with a positivist approach towards a given problem area would fare better in judging and advising how a policy issue should be handled. Furthermore, Toke contends the idea that the advice of an epistemic community would only be motivated by a quest for scientific truth and not political goals or values.<sup>215</sup>

This thesis does not assume the superiority of the epistemic community in the policy-process. Under initial hypothesis on the subject, it is believed that the status of the epistemic community in the policy-process is rather conditioned and “weak” in relation to other actors, many of which were presented briefly in chapter 2.1. Albeit while other groups will not be extensively studied here, the analysis part will strive to illuminate, where and how the epistemic community is present in the Russian policy-making structures, and what are its relations to other actors.

The discussion on the limitations of the epistemic community orientation has also been advanced by Claire Dunlop (2000/2010), although she contests most of the points raised for example by Toke<sup>216</sup>. However, Dunlop concurs with Toke that the approach lacks explanatory power in representing the relationship between and interaction of epistemic communities and other groups. Dunlop claims that “actual acknowledgement of [the] existence [of other groups] is made only implicitly”. Furthermore, Dunlop calls for thorough problematisation of the four elements that characterise an epistemic community. According to Dunlop, an order of importance among the characteristics should be defined. At present, the construction does not allow one to determine which elements would be central for interacting and building alliances with other groups. In a given situation certain element(s) could prove to be more important, yet not endanger the construction of an epistemic community, if all four elements do not materialize in full.<sup>217</sup> In taking these comments into account, the approach would more efficiently be able to examine the real existing competition among

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<sup>215</sup> Toke 1999.

<sup>216</sup> See Dunlop 2000, “Epistemic Communities: A Reply to Toke”. *Politics*. 20:3, pp. 137-144.

<sup>217</sup> Dunlop 2000, pp. 141-142.

epistemic communities and interest groups.<sup>218</sup> To overcome the deficits of the concept, Dunlop introduces principal-agent modelling according to which epistemic communities would be treated “as policy actors engaged in politicised relationships with decision-makers”. The degree in which agents (epistemic communities) have power to influence depends on how much leverage the principals (decision-makers) delegate to them.<sup>219</sup>

The inner dynamics of the epistemic community has too been commented by Amy Verdun (1999). Verdun suggests that there exists a possibility of a hierarchy among the members of the epistemic community, a characteristic Haas does not consider in his writings. However, it seems probable that some community members would maintain more leading positions within the community.<sup>220</sup> This thesis aims also to present the internal dynamics of the epistemic community. A thorough account on that is impossible to make, as the number of interviewees did not cover the majority believed to belong to the epistemic community. However, their positions were manifested in the energy strategy, which implies that a certain ranking order among members could be present. It is not self-evident whether the presentation of a hierarchy within the community would bring more to a study. If a strong hierarchy would exist between the members, it might be questionable whether all members would truly share all common views about the issue-area.

According to Claire Dunlop, the flaws contained within the epistemic communities approach have caused it to remain underdeveloped since its main introduction in the journal of International Organisation in 1992.<sup>221</sup> Dunlop notes that many researchers have averted using this approach, because the “identifying, locating and gaining access to those believed to be members of any epistemic community” has proven to be too difficult to achieve in practice.<sup>222</sup> The same difficulties were met in the making of the present work. It was hard to pinpoint, what was the relevant interview target group. Information about who originally participated in the policy-making boards was not available until recently. However, to overcome these problems a number of different sources were cross-referenced to track a certain group of energy experts that were participating in different seminars on the topic.

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<sup>218</sup> Dunlop 2000, pp. 141-142.

<sup>219</sup> Dunlop 2010, p. 206.

<sup>220</sup> Verdun 1999, p. 316.

<sup>221</sup> Dunlop 2000, p. 141. Dunlop 2010, p. 206.

<sup>222</sup> Dunlop 2000, p. 141.

The next line of critique by Karen Litfin (1994) addresses the failure of the epistemic communities approach to acknowledge or examine “the influence and substantive content of discursive practices in international environmental politics”<sup>223</sup>. The approach is further criticized, because it tends to see a positive (automatic) correlation between scientific consensus and political consensus. According to Litfin, Haas treats science and politics as distinct fields of social activity, where knowledge is not in any way linked with power. Although epistemic communities are said to be vested with power, it is not explained, what is the actual origin of that power. In addition, the conception of knowledge is vaguely specified and seems to “simply become whatever an epistemic community believes”.<sup>224</sup>

Litfin contests the view that science would “make politics more rational and cooperative”. In contrast to this, Litfin wants to look at how scientific knowledge is put to use in validating or strengthening a dominating discourse on a given matter. Epistemic communities approaches do not according to Litfin acknowledge that more often than not there exists no consensual knowledge over an issue but several contesting ones. Litfin proposes that the focus should be on the ‘interactive conception of knowledge and power’. Litfin concludes that “[k]nowledge is embedded in structures of power: disciplinary power, national power, and socioeconomic power”. There exists a “complex web of interaction between knowledge and power”. Epistemic communities approach fails to give a detailed account on “how power is exercised”.<sup>225</sup>

Questions on power will be addressed by this study through inclusion/exclusion of experts from the epistemic community and policy formulation process. Members outside the sketched epistemic community offer insights on the entering criteria to the community. This inclusion/exclusion framework does not however depend on language practices, but affiliation and relationships of experts to certain organisations or ideological standing. This study concurs with Litfin’s position that science does not spur only cooperative politics. In the Russian context, it is used to validate certain policy options over others. The existence of conflicting consensual knowledge unities is especially true in the energy sector. What options will be chosen for energy policy goals, are often a question of politics, not a scientific choice.

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<sup>223</sup> Litfin 1994, p. 3.

<sup>224</sup> Litfin 1994, pp. 4-12, 47.

<sup>225</sup> Litfin 1994, pp. 49-51.

## 4. Research Method and Material

### 4.1. Expert interviews as the principal means to collect primary material

The main method of this study used to generate data about the research phenomenon<sup>226</sup> is *expert interviews*. Interviews provide a means to capture tangible and intangible cooperation network(s) of experts, which is what the epistemic community represents. The networks are often a mixture of formal and informal connections and relations between people. In consequence, experts who were chosen to be approached for this research were expected to possess relevant information about the research phenomenon<sup>227</sup>. Furthermore, as Larsson points out “these kinds of [energy-related] decision-making procedures and negotiations are far from transparent and opinions not always explicitly stated, an analysis of the process will have embedded uncertainties.”<sup>228</sup>

Although the information of the existence of an epistemic community in Russian energy policy could be derived from online sources and other material to some extent, this researcher nevertheless found it necessary to pose questions directly to the members of a suspected epistemic community and ask how they perceive their influence in Russian decision-making. Following the methodology of a qualitative research, the interviews represent a sample or a building block of the phenomenon that is being examined<sup>229</sup>. The experts themselves perform a dual role in the study “as experts of the research phenomenon and [furthermore], as objects of research”<sup>230</sup>.

For the purpose of this study, six expert interviews were conducted. In addition to those, interview material from another Russian energy policy related research<sup>231</sup> was used as supplementary primary material. The author has conducted both sets of interviews. Each interview was recorded with a portable audio recorder and later transcribed by the author. The interviews were transcribed following a loose *denaturalized approach* meaning that “idiosyncratic elements of speech (e.g. stutters, pauses)” were not captured from the interview tapes. In the words of Mason et al.,

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<sup>226</sup> E.g. Alastalo&Akerman 2010.

<sup>227</sup> Alastalo&Akerman 2010, p. 373.

<sup>228</sup> Larsson 2006, pp. 64-65.

<sup>229</sup> Alasuutari 2001, pp. 87-88.

<sup>230</sup> Alastalo&Akerman 2010, p. 373.

<sup>231</sup> The New Northern Dimension and Sustainable Energy in Russia. Project participants: Jean Monnet Professor Pami Aalto, Department of Political Science and International Relations and Dr. Nina Tynkkynen, Department of Regional Sciences at the University of Tampere.

Cameron's view of denaturalized transcription practice (2001) "suggests that within speech are meanings and perceptions that construct [...] reality".<sup>232</sup> The level of accuracy of the denaturalized approach is adequate for the research goals of the study.

The interviews were structured in a thematic manner. *Thematic interviews* allow the researcher to gain information about the research topic through discussion. Although the themes of the interview are predetermined, the form of the questions and the order in which they are asked are not strict. It is only necessary to make sure that all the outlined themes will be discussed. The length of the answers under each theme may vary from interviewee to interviewee.<sup>233</sup> The interview technique applied in the thesis falls between a "strict" thematic interview and a semi-structured interview. The interview was designed according to different themes that were taken from the theoretical literature on epistemic communities.

As all the interviews apart from one were conducted in Russian, a short list of questions was drafted under each theme. I felt that I did not have the adequate language skills to be able to explain each theme at the actual interview situation, but had to have already written questions as support. During the interviews, the respondents were also asked additional theme-related questions outside of the list. No ready-made response options were given, the interviewee was free to discuss every topic at length and with the words, which he himself chose. This is in line with Pertti Alasuutari (2001), who recommends that if a study is about people's perceptions on certain issues, it is best to allow the interviewees to speak freely about the subject using their own vocabulary<sup>234</sup>. In contrast to a semi-structured interview, the questions were not followed in the same order in each interview. The effort was to make the interview situation as convenient and informal as possible in order to receive comprehensive answers to each theme. The interviews took place at the interviewees' work office.

Setting the timetable for business and other meetings differs greatly from the Finnish practice or "the cultural norm". In Russia, appointments are usually confirmed at the very last minute leaving hardly any space for planning well in advance. Agreeing on a specific (final) date and time for an interview depended on each contacted person, varying from a day to one week. Planning an interview trip to another country becomes quite a stressful task, because one is not even sure when arriving at the destination that anything will ever take place. The interviewees were first approached

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<sup>232</sup> Mason et al., 2005, pp. 1273-1274.

<sup>233</sup> Eskola & Vastamäki 2001, pp. 24-27.

<sup>234</sup> Alasuutari 2001, p. 83.

by email and the final timetables were settled by phone after stepping out of the train in Moscow and in St Petersburg. If the email interview request was not answered, I tried to contact the research institutes by calling and repeat the interview request over the phone. The answers of the interviewees were guaranteed to be treated with anonymity.

When interviews are done in other than the native language of the researcher and with interviewees coming from a different cultural background, some precautions need to be remembered also in the analysis phase of the research<sup>235</sup>. Organising the interviews already showed that meeting practices vary significantly between Finland and Russia. It became evident during the interviews that most of the respondents positioned themselves and myself as representatives of a certain culture. References were often made in the following manner: “you live in Europe, you should know” or “well in Russia it is like this”. Sometimes the interviewees took the role of “a teacher” and described me very basic facts about the country. Other times, the interviewees had the assumption, that I am very familiar with the particular characteristics of Russia, such as “it is like it has always been here, you know”.

In addition, respondents often made comparisons between Finland (Europe) and Russia. Finland was portrayed most often in a highly positive light. A couple interviewees even made proposals on cooperation within the sphere of energy between the University of Tampere and the corresponding organisation, although I was in no way presenting this opportunity to them. One reason might be that the intention of the interview was initially misinterpreted or on the other hand, it was seen as a first step to creating cooperative links between the countries.

The language the interviewees used did not cause a multitude of problems for the analysis, although many used culture-related idioms, metaphors and even jokes to describe different things. Most of them were fairly easy to understand and grasp from direct translation, such as “Russia does not have enough hands [expertise – knowhow] to raise energy efficiency”. Eventually, none of them were included in the analysis.

Due to the uncertain nature of organizing the interviews, no test interview was done prior to departure. Preliminary interview questions were however discussed with thesis instructor Mikko Vähä-Sipilä. On the basis of his commentary, the interview structure was simplified and the number

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<sup>235</sup> See Ilkka Pietilä 2010.

of questions significantly reduced. In retrospect, it would have been extremely helpful if the list of questions would have been tested with an expert beforehand. A native speaker was asked to help in translating the questions into Russian<sup>236</sup>. I wanted to make sure that the chosen Russian concepts and terminology corresponded properly their English equivalents. The interview was structured according to the following themes: **uncertainty**; **cause and effect relations**; **acknowledged expertise**; **cooperation networks**; **membership**; **the degree of influence**; and **access to the political system**. With these theory-driven themes, the interviewees were asked about why an epistemic community is needed and how they are recognized as an actor in decision making. Furthermore, the intention was to find out, what the so-called internal dynamics of the epistemic community are and whether its boundaries cross national borders.

#### 4.2. Selection, solicitation and execution

This thesis examines the role of an energy epistemic community in Russian energy policy. The basic assumption influencing the choice of the approached potential interviewees was that members belonging to the epistemic community are experts working for a research organization specialized in energy production, energy economics or energy policy. In other words, the interviewees were chosen due to “their institutional position or part in the process in which the research focuses”<sup>237</sup>. The relevant research institutes or centres were found by means of an online scan with Russian search words such as ‘energy research institutes’ and ‘energy policy studies’. Some of the institutes were already familiar from my previous work as a research assistant at the University of Tampere. Others were recommended to me by an expert that I had interviewed in the former research project.

Nine interview requests were sent to either the general e-mail address of the institute or to work mail addresses of the general director which was found on the institutes’ homepage. In contrast to Finnish universities, research institute or company websites, it is difficult to find direct contact information for an individual researcher or other relevant staff member. Six persons agreed to an interview. All respondents were male. The interviews were conducted on a two week trip in September-October 2010. I only chose to contact institutes that were located in St Petersburg and Moscow, because I did not see it feasible and necessary to travel to more distant destinations.

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<sup>236</sup> I would like to thank my study colleague Alena Rasi for the needed language support.

<sup>237</sup> Alastalo&Akerman 2010, pp. 373-374.

Moreover, as the state capital, Moscow lies at the top of the political decision-making hierarchy of the country with important research institutes mostly located there.

The interviews were conducted at the Institute for Energy Strategy (Moscow), the International Finance Corporation (Moscow), the Institute for National Energy (Moscow), the Energy Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences ERIRAS (additional material from previous research - Moscow), the Institute for Energy and Finance (Moscow), the Peterburg Power Engineering Institute of Professional Development (St Petersburg), the Institute for Energy Electronics Department of Electroenergetic Problems of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St Petersburg), the World Wildlife Fund Russian Branch (additional material from previous research – Moscow), and the Environmental Rights Centre (ERC) Bellona (additional material from previous research – St Petersburg).

#### 4.3. Additional material

In order to gain a wider spectrum of samples of the research phenomenon, this study loosely made use of the method of *data triangulation*, in which “researchers explicitly search for as many data sources as possible that bear upon the events under analysis”<sup>238</sup>. The background and description of work of the research institutes were investigated by looking at the official websites of those organizations. The research institutes that were not reached by interviews included: The Institute of Energy Systems SB RAS (Russian Academy of Sciences, Siberian Branch); A.A. Trofimuk Institute of Petroleum Geology and Geophysics SB RAS; Institute of High Energy Densities of RAS (Russian Academy of Sciences); Krzhizhanovsky’s Energy Research and Development Institute; and The Institute of Oil and Gas Problems RAS. This list is available for example in the English translation of the introduction of *the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2030*.

Key interest areas in the organization websites concerned their everyday operation, institutional history and organization mission. Furthermore, Power Point Presentations about the energy strategy itself were used as well. The fact that these websites are produced for a certain audience is recognized by the author. However, it is believed that these websites publish relevantly accurate information about the institute and what it does. Consequently, the analysis of these websites tries to focus on the “factual” content of the websites.

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<sup>238</sup> Denzin 1989, p. 237.

In addition to the online sources, the author searched for different articles written by representatives of those research institutes, mainly their directors, which discussed the energy strategy itself or the process of its making. Articles which focused on the Russian energy sector in general were also used. The articles were published in Russian and other academic journals such as *Energeticheskaya Politika* (Energy Policy) and in Russian energy periodicals *Neft Rossii* (Oil of Russia) and *Neftegazovaya Vertikal* (the Oil and Gas Vertical).

#### 4.4. Taking the analysis further – content analysis as a methodological tool

The transcripts of the expert interviews and the additional material were chosen to be analysed using qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is a traditional research method with a long history. It has its origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was first utilized for analysing religious hymns.<sup>239</sup> Cryptography, the subject classification of library books and the construction of biblical alphabetical verbal indexes have formed the basis for elaborating the methods of content analysis. Early versions of content analysis were used for example by Thomas Young in interpreting the written symbols of the Rosetta Stone.<sup>240</sup> The method eventually migrated into social sciences in the 1950s.<sup>241</sup> Harold Lasswell has been named as one of the most important figures in developing content analysis while studying the political propaganda of the First and the Second World Wars.<sup>242</sup> In addition to Lasswell, Paul Lazarsfeld and Bernard Berelson also advanced content analysis in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The influence of these social scientists in the evolution of the technique was manifold. It was supported with a stronger theoretical background, enhanced concepts and quantitative tools. Content analysis now became an elementary part of wider research projects.<sup>243</sup> More generally, the post Second World War period witnessed a vast expansion of the research technique that had been almost exclusively applied in the field of mass communication before the breakthroughs of Lasswell and others.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 3.

<sup>240</sup> Neuendorf 2002, p. 31.

<sup>241</sup> Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 3.

<sup>242</sup> Neuendorf 2002, p. 35.

<sup>243</sup> Lazarsfeld by Krippendorf 1985, p. 16.

<sup>244</sup> Krippendorf 1985, p. 18.

In the discipline of International Relations content analysis has been used in versatile ways. Contemporary examples include studies of political leaders (individuals – elites), printed and electronic media, ideology, and geopolitical discourse (Dyson 2009 – Margaret Thatcher; Shlapentokh & Woods 2004 – Foreign power elites attitudes toward the USA after 9/11; Alimi 2007 – Palestinian press; Flint et al. 2009 – US geopolitical discourse in the Presidential State of the Union Speeches 1988-2008 among others). For example Margaret Hermann (1982/1986) has influenced the theoretical progression of content analysis in her studies of political leadership in international affairs.

Content analysis has its theoretical foundations in communication theory, in which language has an instrumental role in transferring messages from sender to receiver.<sup>245</sup> Source, message, channel and receiver form the main elements of communication. Content analysis provides a way to make predictions about all of the elements to a varying degree. It is “a systematic technique for analyzing message content and message handling – it is a tool for observing and analyzing the overt communication behaviour of selected communicators.”<sup>246</sup> The meaning of communication content can be explained with the help of Lasswell’s famous formulation: “who says what to whom with what effect?”<sup>247</sup> According to Berelson, “communication content is the what”.<sup>248</sup> In other words, communication content is “the means through which one person or group communicates with another”.<sup>249</sup>

Ontologically and epistemologically content analysis cooperates fluently with the theoretical framework of the study. Similar to constructivism, content analysis emphasizes language based information as relevant knowledge about the world. A “content analyst views data as representations not of physical events but of texts, images, and expressions that are created to be seen, read, interpreted, and acted on for their meanings, and must therefore be analysed with such uses in mind.”<sup>250</sup> The importance of meanings, contents, intentions, and references is underlined. The key starting point for content analysis is to investigate the ways in which texts are used. The same is highlighted by constructivism. The physical characteristics of text are irrelevant.<sup>251</sup> Primary material applicable to a content analysis is not limited to documents that originally come in a

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<sup>245</sup> Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 4.

<sup>246</sup> Budd et al. 1967, pp. 2-3.

<sup>247</sup> Quoted in Berelson 1952 p.1.

<sup>248</sup> Berelson 1952, p. 1.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>250</sup> Krippendorff 2004, p. xiii.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid. p. 22.

written form. For analysis, it is possible to use nearly anything (e.g. videotapes, photographs). The only requirement is that the data can be transformed into text.<sup>252</sup>

Before embarking upon a content analysis a researcher needs to choose, whether his interests lie in the manifest or the latent content of communication. Manifest content is the content of the communication that is clearly expressed in the material.<sup>253</sup> As opposed to analysing the *surface structures* of messages, in examining the latent content of text the researcher aims at interpreting the *deep structural meanings* behind the written material<sup>254</sup>. Consequently, studying the manifest content of communication would lead to a more quantitative research, while latent content implicates a more qualitative approach. For example Berelson defines content analysis as “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.”<sup>255</sup> Quantitative analysis examines the frequency of elements in the material while qualitative analysis focuses on the appearance and non-appearance of certain elements in the text. Furthermore, this study will make assumptions on the material on an instrumental basis, where importance is given to what is wanted to be communicated with a help of a certain message in a particular setting and situation.<sup>256</sup> Overall, as Bruce Berg (2009) states (qualitative) content analysis gives the researcher a tool “to listening to the words of the text and understanding better the perspective(s) of the producer of these words.”<sup>257</sup>

How text is understood in content analysis correlates with constructivist assumptions that frame this research. For example Krippendorff has introduced six features of text that work in line with constructivist reasoning. First, “[t]exts have no objective, [...] no reader-independent qualities.” In addition, “[t]exts do not have single meanings”. Thirdly, “[t]he meaning invoked by texts need not be shared.” Fourthly, “[m]eanings (contents) speak to something other than the given texts”. Moreover, “[t]exts have meanings relative to particular contexts, discourses, or purposes.” Lastly, “[t]he nature of text demands that content analysis draw specific inferences from a body of texts to their chosen context”.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Berg 2009, p. 341.

<sup>253</sup> Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 5.

<sup>254</sup> Berg 2009, p. 344.

<sup>255</sup> Berelson 1952, p. 18.

<sup>256</sup> Hermann 2008, pp. 155-156.

<sup>257</sup> Berg 2009, p. 343.

<sup>258</sup> Krippendorff 2004, pp. 22-24.

People give meanings to language and contextualize it. The meaning of energy markets between different countries changes significantly when discussed in terms of energy security for instance. Both content analysis and constructivism do not assume that perceptions and meanings are the same across countries/nations/people. There would not be any distinction between different cultures, societies and political order if meanings would be shared. Context is also important for constructivism. The meaning of even the same texts or more widely language differentiates with the context upon which it is reflected. For example, the states of the Cold War are not the states of today, although we use the same language to describe them.

The present study can be viewed as a preliminary step to identifying and defining an energy epistemic community within the Russian context. A method was needed first of all to construct a structured description of the epistemic community from the textual material (interviews, articles, online sources) used for the study. Content analysis was thought to provide adequate means to capture the deep structural meanings embedded in the primary material that tell something about the principled, normative and causal beliefs of the epistemic community. Furthermore, the use of content analysis was expected to indicate what notions of validity the community members might share. Ideas about the common policy enterprise were thought to surface by applying the means of content analysis. The producers of the textual material were believed to communicate something on Haas's characterization of an epistemic community and about the way in which that community influences in Russian energy policy.

However, the analysis phase of the thesis writing illuminated some serious limitations to the employed method. To begin with, especially when analysing the online sources and articles it was very hard to move beyond the manifest content or the surface structures exhibited in the text and capture those more deeper meanings related to the research phenomenon. It was not simple for example to explain what it actually means when a research institute claims to provide the scientific basis for the energy policy of a country.

Additionally, with content analysis it was not possible to extract from the material for example what are the contentious issues that would result in the dissolution of the consensual knowledge-base of the epistemic community. It was difficult to find answers to what are the controversial questions within the whole of the scientific community on energy and what elements would distinguish one epistemic community from another. In other words, another method would have to be employed to examine the dominant *discourses* that exist among the experts engaged in Energy Studies in Russia.

Although in the interviews different emphases of the energy strategy were discussed, no direct controversies rose as such. Nonetheless, these considerations might have made the current research too extensive. Therefore, as suggested in the final chapter a discourse analytic approach would be an interesting way to continue working on the subject.

#### 4.5. Different analytical stages

In this thesis, the theoretical framework of epistemic communities occupies a strong position. The process of content analysis begins from choosing and specifying the unit of analysis.<sup>259</sup> Therefore, in the first stage of analysis the primary material was reorganised according to different themes. According to Hermann, many things can work as units of analysis, such as words, phrases, sentences or themes<sup>260</sup>. The themes set in the interview framework were refined on the basis of first reading observations of the recorded material. The refined themes were: **policy-making condition; actor status; access to the political system; actor relations; mode of relations; attitudes to policy process; degree of influence; membership structure**. These themes are intended to picture different dimensions of the research phenomenon. The themes have strong relation to the theoretical framework, however, while reading through the research material, new themes emerged and the ones used for the interview structure were refined.

After reaffirming the themes, the material was carefully read through and appropriate extracts were placed under each theme. This counted for both the interviews and material from online sources and articles. In the first reorganisation stage of the material, the extracts were copied in original language. Individual interviews were coded according to the following system: IN + interview number in a running order + year of make. The year differentiates the two sets of interviews used for the study. Interviews IN1-2 2010; IN 1-2 2009 were done in institutes participating in the ES2030 project; interviews IN3-4 2009 were done with the members of the civil society; and interviews IN3-5 2010 in other expert organisations. The coding system for the interviews is used to fade out the identity of the interviewee. Material from online sources and journals was coded in the following manner: OS/J/P + a number in a running order. A full reference list of the other sources is found in the bibliography of the study.

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<sup>259</sup> Kyngäs 1999, p. 5.

<sup>260</sup> Hermann 2008, pp. 157-158.

The next steps of the analysis followed the form of reduction, grouping and abstraction. “Reduction means that expressions are coded from the material.”<sup>261</sup> In other words, the material was either made into a more concise form or divided into smaller sets. Everything unnecessary was left outside the analysis.<sup>262</sup> Next, expressions that describe the same concept were grouped together under one heading. This unit can be for example a feature or an assumption of the research object. The grouping eventually results in building generic categories from sub-categories and main categories from generic categories. Categorization is followed by further abstraction, in which original information is translated into theoretical concepts. These concepts are used as the building blocks of the final model.<sup>263</sup>

This research aims at analysing how the epistemic community influences the formation of the Energy Strategy of Russia and furthermore, the Russian energy policy. Another subordinate goal is to offer a structured description of the research object meaning the energy epistemic community. The analysis first intends to depict the membership structure of the energy epistemic community. Later, the analysis will turn to look at the influence patterns of the epistemic community in the Russian energy policy and in the making of the energy strategy. As the end result of content analysis involves constructed categories, the conceptual system or conceptual maps of the research object<sup>264</sup>, the research goals are met by the last analytical stages. Content analysis is often seen only as a simplistic technique for information retrieval and categorization.<sup>265</sup> However, this is not the case. On the contrary, if successfully used content analysis will increase our understanding of communication<sup>266</sup> and the information value of the primary material<sup>267</sup>.

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<sup>261</sup> Kyngäs 1999, p. 5. Translation by author.

<sup>262</sup> Sarajärvi et al. 2009, p. 109.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid. pp. 110-111.

<sup>264</sup> Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 4.

<sup>265</sup> Cavanagh by Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 4.

<sup>266</sup> Cavanagh by Kyngäs et al. 1999, p. 4.

<sup>267</sup> Sarajärvi et al. 2009, p. 108.

## 5. Analysis

### 5.1. Experts in state policy processes

#### 5.1.1. Continued collaboration as the ground for common policy enterprise

Many of the research organizations that participated in the preparation of the Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation up to the period 2030 were established already during the Soviet Union, mainly by the Academy of Sciences of USSR with the approval of the Supreme Soviet. One example of this is the Krzhizhanovsky's Energy Research and Development Institute (further ENIN) which was founded in the 1930s<sup>268</sup>. Early on, ENIN cooperated with the state for example in “the development and implementation of [...] the main orientations the GOELRO plan”<sup>269</sup> which dealt with the electrification of the country<sup>270</sup>. Subsequently, ENIN played an important role in advancing and developing “[t]he main ideas on the creation of the United High-Voltage Network and the United Energy System of USSR”<sup>271</sup>. More recent collaboration with the state in large-scale policy projects includes *the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2020*, in which ENIN's models on optimization of “the functioning and development of major regional energy systems and the United Energy System of Russia” were implemented<sup>272</sup>.

In addition to ENIN, the Energy Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (further INEI RAN) has provided the state with consultative help in preparing and developing different policy papers. According to the information retrieved from the website of INEI RAN, “[i]n 1986-1988, the institute was the primary organisation in specifying and supplementing the USSR Energy Programme”<sup>273</sup>, which had the nature close to a directive, because the programme had legal consequences<sup>274</sup>. INEI RAN has maintained its cooperation with the state in similar work profiles also after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

“In 1992, INEI RAN was the main contractor in the preparation of the Conception of the New Energy Policy. Later, in the context of the Energy Strategy of Russia,

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<sup>268</sup> OS9.

<sup>269</sup> OS9.

<sup>270</sup> More on GOELRO, see for example Jonathan Coopersmith *The electrification of Russia, 1880-1926*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 1992.

<sup>271</sup> OS9.

<sup>272</sup> OS9.

<sup>273</sup> OS2.

<sup>274</sup> Makarov 1989, p. 469.

INEI RAN was responsible for the scientific-methodological leadership [of the project].” OS2

Research institutes with a shorter history have also been given important roles in the preparatory work of important documents in the national energy policy. The Institute of Energy Strategy (further IES) was established in 1998 by the Russian Ministry of Fuel and Energy (now the Ministry of Energy). IES operated as the coordinator between different interdepartmental working groups for the preparation of the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2020. Additionally, the institute performed a similar task in the ES-2030 project. Currently, IES is taking part in “development of the Energy Security Doctrine of Russia”.<sup>275</sup>

In connection with important documents of the national energy policy, state – research organisation cooperation seems to form an *institutionalized practise*, which has a long history in Russia. In the production of short-term and long-term plans and different policy programmes, the state has utilized the intellectual capital of domestic energy research institutes, which are and have been separate organisations from the ministries responsible for these policies. It needs to be noted that this kind of working method is not limited to the research institutes that were the focus of this study. For example in the field of electricity production, the Energy Forecasting Agency APBE together with other research institutes and the former OAO RAO UES of Russia (The United Energy System) electric power company worked on the preparation of *the General Plan for the Distribution of the Objects of the Power Industry up to 2030*<sup>276</sup>.

It is not possible to determine whether participation on behalf of the research organisations has been “out of the conviction that human welfare will be enhanced as a consequence”<sup>277</sup> as Haas phrased it. Nonetheless, they have borne and still bear (high) importance to them. Claiming ownership over leadership in those projects and participating in them perhaps works as recognition of the status of the research organisation itself in the eyes of a national and international (academic) audience.

“The Energy Institute has to be the highest organ [to define] the energy ideas of the Soviet Union[.]” OS9

“Long-term energy developments in the USSR have been assessed at research institutes and government offices for more than 20 years. In 1967, academician

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<sup>275</sup> OS15.

<sup>276</sup> APBE 2011. Translation by author. Original: Generalnaya skhema razmeshchemiya obyektov electroenergetiki do 2030 goda.

<sup>277</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 3.

L.A. Melentiev headed a team at the Siberian Energy Institute (SEI) of the USSR Academy of Sciences (Siberian Branch) that forecast energy development until the turn of the century.” J10

### 5.1.2. *Autonomy of science and the objectivity of advice*

The analysis of the primary material identified two components forming the “value-based rationale for the social action of community members”<sup>278</sup>. Although there are visible links between the government and the institutes (for example a ministry being the founder of the institute or the staff formerly occupying high-ranking positions in state ministries<sup>279</sup>), many of them want to underline that they are independent research organizations and their clientele consists of a variety of actors from the public sector and from private business. Furthermore, it is wanted to be pointed out that different research institutes compete over work orders, as ministries are said to organize tenders for consultative needs or development projects.

This can be interpreted as a claim to *scientific autonomy*. Research conducted within these centres is based on purely scientific principles and methods and it is not influenced by outside demands. This is visible for example in the way, in which the policy document is described to have been drafted. The experts are said to have worked as mediums for integrating different opinions from a large number of actors in the energy sector. It is highlighted that the document is a balance of interests, not something that is dictated by one single strong actor, such as the Gazprom energy company.

“We aim to listen everyone’s opinion.” IN1 2010

“Once more, I would like to underline that the strategy is a platform of joint effort of the state, business and science.” IN1 2010

Furthermore, there appears to be a strong belief among the interviewees that experts are distinguishable from other groups of professions, such as politicians, journalists and people engaged in commerce. They are convinced of their professional expertise and the used scientific means to produce knowledge. For example, organisations from the civil society are considered to be in a weaker position to truly contribute to policy processes, such as the energy strategy. They do not

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<sup>278</sup> Haas 1992a, p. 3.

<sup>279</sup> A good example of this is the Institute of Energy Strategy which was first established as a state agency. The chairman of the board of directors Yuri Shafranik is a former Minister of Fuel and Energy (1993-1996). The director of the institute Vitaliy Bushuev on the other hand has been the Deputy Minister of Fuel and Energy (1992-1998). OS15.

have necessary and required capabilities and the scientific background to be credible actors in this field.

In itself, it is natural that the state energy policy-making is a closed process from the public. It is a bureaucratic process, in which actors other than the state, business and the recognized expert community are not included or are excluded, because they are not necessary. Those that are involved in the process are the only relevant organisations. Even in conditions of great uncertainty and complexity, the experts are able to create plausible forecasts of future developments.

“However, the uncertainty of the future is so great, and the science and technology process is so spontaneous that even the methodology of this school does not ensure reliable insights into innovations. Therefore, to determine the efficient STP [science and technology progress] lines and priorities, we have to study trends in the spatial and productive evolution of the energy sector, that is, the quintessence of the “way it really was” in the past.”<sup>280</sup> J10 Apostrophes in original.

“Energy Strategy for the period up to 2030 [...] is successive to previous documents and bases on absolutely different approach that increases its sustainability even while the future is not clear.” P2

The experts also seem confident about their role as *providers of objective information* for public debate among others. According to an interviewee, the discussion over energy has been much inflamed for the past ten years. The public debate is slanted with too much suspicion and distress, which the so-called specialists from the sphere of media only aggregate.

“Now everyone is an expert in this matter, everyone is giving their advice. And it happens that there is a lot of negatively inflicted nonsense in the air. And a lot less the viewpoints of experts which are less tensed, more contentual.” IN2 2010

“Unfortunately, the importance of non-specialists has risen considerably in energetics. It is the managers, commercial structures and so on. The opinion of specialists does not unfortunately predominate in many decisions at the moment.” IN4 2010

As a result, the interviewees see that their role as experts is to alleviate misbeliefs about threats and misperceptions about possible threats. The experts have confidence in their capabilities to provide the public with more substantial perspectives on how things are “in reality”. Moreover, what constitutes a genuine threat and what does not.

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<sup>280</sup> J9, p. 102.

“But our job especially was to show if feelings of danger, threat, hardship would appear, an expert is someone who will demonstrate what is a serious matter and what is not, what is primary, and what is a regular condition, do not worry, it will not happen.” IN2 2010

The objectivity of advice is believed to characterize expert participation in intergovernmental cooperation as well. The experts see that they make a positive contribution to negotiations, because they do not carry a “political burden”. With the participation of experts, negotiations remain focused on the subject and politics becomes stripped from the discussions. The inclusion of politics in debates on substance matters is negative and creates barriers to the success of negotiations.

“But if we are going to add politics in every meeting and to every issue, we are not going to proceed anywhere.” IN2 2010

If scientists are affiliated with a political orientation, it is thought that their advice will not be received. Political affiliation might therefore create a blockage of expert participation in policy processes. It is better to remain outside such discussions and maintain the role as bearers of scientific knowledge, not the transmitters of some political ideology.

Politicians and other state officials, on the other hand, are considered to be very limited in their position on what to say or promise during negotiations. In contrast to this, experts are not restricted with requirements stemming from the organisational background of a person. On the whole, it is thought that within the community of experts there exists some kind of shared understanding which positively influences the progress of different policy processes.

“Again it was successful because professionals, they understand each other better[.]” IN2 2010

The idea about the objectivity of experts is also reflected outside the epistemic community. For example in rather critical comments on the energy strategy policy-making process, the authors saw the expert community to play a distinctively objective role. Their objectivity is not questioned in the least. In policy formulation, the community of specialists is not the one to make significant *political* decisions. It is simply viewed as a community of “high-class specialists, recognized authorities in their respective fields”.<sup>281</sup> The specialists are strictly separated from politicians or government officials, in other words, the decision-makers.

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<sup>281</sup> J5.

“[I]n the course of the work, there rose a number of questions that needed determined political decisions. For example, what level of oil consumption per citizen can be permitted in the country? To which limits it is rational to increase oil exports? [...] These kind of questions need to be resolved on the political level.” J6

Although, the members of the epistemic community want to avoid the politicization of their participation in policy processes, they seem to hope for a more influential role. Colleagues in other international settings are believed to enjoy a higher status, a state of things which is also aspired by Russian experts. However, the situation still awaits realization in Russia.

“The thing is that in Russia there still is not that kind of culture that those in power would take attention to the scientific community, as it is for example in Europe and in the USA. Today one can boldly say that IEA is a kind of driver of ideas which are realized on the political level. In other words, the research that the agency makes will truly be taken into account by people in power. In our country unfortunately, that kind of system is not in use. [...] Today we feel that attention to the work of analytics has risen from the side of government structures, to learn what analytics have to say before making strategic decisions. We hope that it will be like that in the future.” IN1 2010

### *5.1.3. Experts as advocates for state policies*

The energy strategy documents have fallen under strong criticism, especially the Energy Strategy of the Russian Federation up to 2020. According to an expert outside the group of institutes working for the renewal of the energy strategy, “[n]ot one single parameter was fulfilled”<sup>282</sup>. Furthermore, another energy specialist from the civil society pointed out the following:

“[T]he former strategy and its forecasts completely did not meet the reality already after one year when it was passed. [...] It turned out to be completely without grounds.” IN3 2009

The critique towards the former strategy also has an influence on the perceptions about the renewal process of the energy strategy. There is little belief that the ES-2030 would do any better in giving efficient guidelines to the country’s energy policy.

“It is going to be the fourth attempt to define the long-term guidelines to the development of the industry. All the former ones turned out to be unsuccessful. [...] Preliminary acquaintance with the project ES-2030 does not give reasons to

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<sup>282</sup> Interview with a Russian expert 2010 – IN5 2010.

expect that the new document would turn out to be more valid and with results.”  
J6 Underlining added.

The most important reason for the expected failure of the new document is that the authors do not make a critical analysis of former mistakes. Although, the methodology of the energy strategy was sharpened and the problems with the former strategy identified, the new document is not expected to succeed. It is said to lack concrete decisions on how to tackle these problems. It is believed that the strategy, once completed, will eventually have little influence on the development of the energy sector. Reality and what is depicted in the strategy will follow separate paths. The ES-2030 will have no practical meaning to energy industries.<sup>283</sup>

Expert involvement in drafting other policy papers and energy legislation has likewise met heavy criticism.

“Those who write these plans are not the one to fulfil them. That is the problem.”  
IN5 2010

The experts’ capability to produce working documents is underlined and it is believed that the policy-making process does not include a sufficient bloc of business representatives. Besides, it is not in the interest of companies to even participate such policy-making processes. Furthermore, the importance of different ministries in relation to the energy industries is seen very differently by the critics of the strategies. According to the same interviewee,

“in Russia the Ministry of Energy does not play a very substantial role in the growth of the fuel and energy complex. [...] Companies themselves decide these questions along with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Economic Growth and the Ministry of Finance. The main questions are decided with them. The Ministry of Energy on the other hand is not [...] needed. Perhaps in questions on electricity it plays somewhat important role. In all other remaining questions it has [...] little influence.” IN5 2010

The Ministry of Energy is seen as a minor player, when it comes to momentous decisions over the energy sector. Its role is merely to produce declarative documents that have little influence at the level of business. It is even put forward that producing one policy paper after another is a validation of its existence.

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<sup>283</sup> J6.

“The Ministry of Energy needs it [the energy strategy]. Because they understood that the older one is completely unimplemented. But now they are doing nothing. They write a new programme.” IN5 2010

Against this critique, the experts involved in the policy process seem to act as exponents of the energy strategy and justify its place within the Russian energy policy. The energy strategy is said to represent the real interests of the country. The people who participated in drafting the document, whether they may be experts, members of the business community or state officials, are legitimate actors to make those choices on behalf of the country. The validity of the data which was included in the energy strategy is shared among those actors. The knowledge products of each working group are not impugned.

“Any document is a consciously chosen development path, which a country has made.” IN1 2010

“We chose it, it is our choice. And there are people who for example think that development is to be achieved by other means. It is their right as experts.” IN1 2010

The deficits of the process and the already-adopted documents are however recognized. Different temporal contexts are said to produce serious constraints in the preparation of any document that stretches far out into the future. The world is faced with occurrences, such as the 2008 economic downturn, which are impossible to precisely predict in advance. Not to mention that the impact of such events to different areas of economic activity is difficult to foresee. Moreover, as a result of a large group of people involved in the process, the end-product is always a compromise and not everyone is content with it.

“When a strategy is made for 20 years ahead, we are always struggling with the basic situation which was at the time of the formation of this document.” IN1 2010

“And to combine [...] all the knowledge that we have on concrete directions of energetics [...] in the framework of one document is extremely difficult.” IN1 2010

Furthermore, according to some experts the critique towards the energy strategy has not been well-placed. The strategy should not be seen as a document, that includes concrete proposals for each

section of the energy sector, but as “a document of documents”<sup>284</sup>, a grand-plan to which all other sector-specific documents should be adjusted. It stands at the top of a documentary hierarchy guiding all other policy papers, such as *the General Plan for the Distribution of the Objects of the Power Industry up to 2030*, which defines long-term perspectives of the power industry development in Russia. The objective is “to reach a secure and efficient energy supply (electricity and heating) for consumers and the national economy”<sup>285</sup>.

#### 5.1.4. Commitment to a distinct methodology in policy-making

Haas (1992) states, that the epistemic community members share the belief that particular actions will have certain effects on a policy issue<sup>286</sup>. Accordingly, one could say that seeing causal linkages between policy actions and desired outcomes is a result of the epistemic community members sharing the same principles to acquire information about a subject area. In analysing the shared causal beliefs, the attention was paid at the methodological principles which influence on the background of the energy strategy formation process. The methodological principles are also close to the notions of validity which the epistemic community shares.

According to Sarajärvi&Tuomi (2009), methodology defines the set of rules, how scientific information is generated. Methodology expresses, what methods and concepts are used to achieve this objective, and particularly, how they are utilized in research.<sup>287</sup> Besides examining direct presentations about the energy strategy itself, different publications from the participants of the policy process were reflected.

First, the experts underline the importance of the energy strategy within the national energy policy. Although the figures, due to changes in the national and international economic environment fluctuate significantly in various points of time, the strategy does not become an obsolete policy document. The most significant thing in the energy strategy is the *ideology*<sup>288</sup> it carries. That ideology has endured from ES-2020 to the current document. As a result, the experts do not

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<sup>284</sup> This is repeated in many papers concerning the energy strategy.

<sup>285</sup> APBE 2011.

<sup>286</sup> Haas 1992a, p.3.

<sup>287</sup> Sarajärvi&Tuomi 2009, p. 13.

<sup>288</sup> J3.

question the main strategic priorities and state interests what the strategy entails, although, there might be some sector-specific disagreements within the working groups of the ES-2030 project.

“It is always, we have to, conditionally said, cut down the appetites or the expectations of those groups that work on narrow sectorial problematics.” IN1 2010

“It is close to a consensus. In my opinion there is not a full consensus, but I do not see any radical contradictions between us when we meet and discuss [the matter] in different working groups[.]” IN2 2010

The renewal process, therefore, focused on the methodology of the document.

“ES-2030 is not exceptionally new document. This document is like a recipient of the ES-2020. The main ideology was preserved in it, meaning those ideas to which we strive for in the strategy. Main objectives, tasks, those were kept. Only the methodological apparatus changed.” IN1 2010

The methodology of the ES-2030 rests on four principles<sup>289</sup>:

- “orientation towards innovative development of the national economy and qualitative transformation of the energy sector”
- “continuity with the ES-2020”
- “adaptation to new conditions and challenges of time”
- “the complexity of approach into the energy-economy-ecology system”

Moreover, the fundamentals of the formation of the energy strategy<sup>290</sup> are said to be:

- “compatibility: interrelation and hierarchy towards key strategic national documents”
- “evolution: continuity with former energy strategies”
- “sustainability and adaptability: invariance of the objectives under possible operative modifications of the tasks and the mechanisms during the monitoring of the energy strategy”

First, the members of the community see that under current and future economic conditions, development and wealth are achieved by an innovative society in comparison to other modes of production, such as the industrial society. Innovative society will also provide the means to change former structures of energy production and increase its sustainability. Innovations are the only leading idea of the modernization of the energy sector.

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<sup>289</sup> P3.

<sup>290</sup> P4.

“Today one of the main orientations of the policy and the activities of the Russian government is the attempt to direct the economy into an innovative channel. For the country to be less dependent of its resource base. [...] Without innovative means it is not possible to solve these problems.” IN3 2010

“Nowadays for quite some time innovative modernisation has been at the centre.” IN2 2010

“Further development of the oil and gas industries of Russia depend to significant extends on the establishment of highly efficient innovative technology.” J8

Secondly, despite heavy critique, former strategies are seen as a resource and the basis for the current strategy. The authors of the ES-2030 do not sway away from former documents, but believe that the energy strategies create a continuum in the national energy policy.

“One can acknowledge that the development and the realization of the energy strategies of Russia have been methodologically and in practise sufficiently smoothly running procedures. It is good to adhere to them further on for example in the formation of ES-2050.” J7

State energy policy therefore manifests itself as an open process. Furthermore, the evolutionary character of policy papers emphasizes the belief that mistakes of the past are taken into account and the strategies are developed to be better than the predecessors.

Thirdly, the energy strategy is not treated as a definite document which content remains the same whatever happens in the world. It is believed to be adaptable to timely situations. Although the main priorities will carry through the period of validity of the strategy, it is in a condition of continuous reproduction. In contrast to the ES-2020, the ES-2030 does not aim at stating definite facts, such as the expected development of prices on hydrocarbons, but attempts to monitor the progress of the strategy along its period of validity in the form of a road map.<sup>291</sup>

“In general, we have a tradition that in every five years this strategy will be specified and updated.” IN3 2009

“For the length of five years it is a normal period for to understand whether some fundamental changes happened in the conditions.” IN1 2010

Finally, the authors underline the importance of system thinking in issues related with energetics. The energy sector is not a distinct field of economic activity with little impact on society and the

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<sup>291</sup> J2.

ecological surroundings. Energetics should be analysed through a system of “nature-society-human”<sup>292</sup> which underlines the interlinkages between “natural resources, organisational-technological potential and the social-human capital which have equal rights and equal importance as components of our [Russian] national wealth”<sup>293</sup>.

### 5.1.5. Result matrix A

	<b>common policy enterprise</b>	<b>shared normative/ principled beliefs</b>	<b>shared notions of validity</b>	<b>shared causal beliefs</b>
<b>MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE</b>	- institutionalized practise of state-science interaction	- scientific autonomy - objectivity	- advocacy - distinct methodology in policy-making	- innovative society - policy continuity - policy evolution

## 5.2. Influence patterns

### 5.2.1. Cognitive level

In the construction of the energy strategy of Russia, and more widely, the Russian energy policy the epistemic community plays a cognitive role in “the production and reproduction of social reality”<sup>294</sup>. First and foremost, this role is performed through the construction of *the scientific basis* or *the scientific rationale* for state energy policy<sup>295</sup>. The scientific basis can be viewed as a set of “intersubjective knowledge constructs”, which work as the elements on which social reality is built

<sup>292</sup> For example J5.

<sup>293</sup> J5.

<sup>294</sup> Antoniadis 2003, p. 34.

<sup>295</sup> The scientific basis for the ES-2030 was published for example in *Energetika Rossii: Vzglyad b Budushchee – Obosnovyuyushchiye materialy k Energeticheskoy strategii Rossii na period do 2030 goda* (Energetics of Russia: A Glance to Future – Substantiating materials to the Energy Strategy of Russia up to the period 2030) Moscow: Energiya, 2010. The authors of this publication include all working group leaders of the ES-2030 policy project.

upon<sup>296</sup>. In other words, the scientific basis construes the social reality of energy policy. Moreover, it provides the conceptual framework that structures Russian energy policy and makes it understandable. The influence on the conceptual framework is absorbed in all dimensions of the energy strategy, from general energetics to a specific niche within the energy sector.

“In 2010 the Institute, in cooperation with a wide range of scientific institutions and experts, completed elaboration of Substantiating Materials to the Energy Strategy-2030 containing the scientific rationale of the energy policy of Russia for the years to come and predictive estimates of development of the Fuel and Energy Complex of Russia and its branches for the period up to 2030.” OS15

“the scientific grounds of tariffs and investment policies of the fuel and energy complex in transition to market economy” OS12

“scientific basis for the development of energetics” OS1

The institutes’ work does not cease, when a new policy paper reaches its publication date. The production and reproduction of social reality continues, as the institutes also monitor the implementation of the policy and offer corrective measures, if the strategy strays away from its expected course.

The construction of the scientific basis of state energy policy has not been the task of the epistemic community only in present circumstances of policy-making. The same expert organisations have also performed the role in the past.

“In 1992, INEI RAN was the main contractor in the preparation of the Conception of the New Energy Policy and later the Energy Strategy of Russia[.]” OS2

“The main ideas on the creation of the United High-Voltage Network and United Energy System of USSR were advanced and developed in ENIN.” OS9

“The Energy Institute has to be the highest organ [to define] the energy ideas of the Soviet Union[.]” OS9

The task of producing the scientific basis for state energy policy has been an aspired objective for research institutes during the Soviet Union. Today taking part in these kinds of governmental projects also receives merit.

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<sup>296</sup> Antoniades 2003, p. 29.

The epistemic community influence is conditioned by interaction with the business community and relevant governmental bodies. The justification of the energy strategy is heavily dependent on the shared understanding about policy objectives. The technocratic nature of energy strategy policy-making seems to have changed over time, as the importance of cooperation is underlined by the members of the epistemic community in reference with the preparation of the ES-2030. It is thought that a dialog between the three actor groups is a necessary condition to produce a successful policy paper.

“It is important that all stages of the energy strategy development [...] were endorsed by governmental organs (including first of all the Ministry of Economic Growth, Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Atomic Energy RF). Furthermore, they were accepted by leading energy corporation Gazprom, RAO EES Rossii, Rosenergoatom, oil and coal companies.” OS1

“I took part in the thematic group on energy dialog[...] We were supported by the ministry and Gazprom, I think that is important.” IN2 2010

“And naturally, we are interested in receiving a substantial contribution from our energy companies (oil, gas, coal) to the formation of the new strategy – not only financial and material help, but ideological, problems which are better known to them.” J3

At the cognitive level, the epistemic community also makes an influence by other means, namely through *forecasting* and *modelling desirable energy futures*.

“At the institute we have completed the formation of a scientific orientation that is tied with energy foresight and the prognosis of the development of world energetics.” IN1 2010

“Consultation is necessary, our level specialists are necessary, it is a way to glance into the horizon. So that we could give an idea of that at the governmental and business level. [...] That is why our job is to try to picture future growth trends[.]” IN1 2010

The epistemic community develops different methodological approaches about how to forecast future trends for example of the use of energy<sup>297</sup> or on “the growth of the power industry”<sup>298</sup>. Moreover, the working group headed by Academician E.P. Volkov, the director of the Krzhizhanovsky’s Energy Research and Development Institute, developed “the STP [science and

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<sup>297</sup> OS12.

<sup>298</sup> OS9.

technology progress] Concept for the electric power industry until 2030”<sup>299</sup>. In other words, the experts built estimates on trends future industry development. Additionally, the concept includes guidelines to national actors how to best utilize those upcoming trends and by what means.

These projections or depictions lay at the centre of cognitive level influence, because these future images are not freely derived facts, which the epistemic community only illuminates for decision-makers. The future state of a country and the path to achieve it influence how decision-makers understand certain policy processes. In addition, the epistemic community directly influences how the energy future of a particular country is defined.

“What waits us in the future.” IN1 2010

“The main task of this document is that we show the future horizon to which the country is striving at.” IN1 2010

The epistemic community does not only take part in the production of definitions of the future social reality, but draws the boundaries and limitations of what is possible to achieve and what are the constraints of the national energy policy.

“ES-2030 is [...] target model of energy sector development, consciously chosen way with target indicators as landmarks the achievement of which will determine its real efficiency in the future.” P2

Even if the objectives and priorities of the energy policy would be set by politicians and government officials, the epistemic community creates the so-called channel, which allows the obtainment of those goals. As the minister of energy Sergey Shmatko stated in a government session, “in a strategy the most important are not the numbers, but priorities and orientation with give a long-term course for the growth of the energy sector.”<sup>300</sup> Furthermore,

“[i]n relation to this, the key task is not to guess the parameters of energy development, but to minimize risks and to safeguard the sustainability of the chosen strategic course in conditions of natural uncertainty related with long time lines.” J1

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<sup>299</sup> J9, p. 106.

<sup>300</sup> Shmatko 2009.

### 5.2.2. Practical level

In the context of Russian energy policy, the epistemic community engages in the development of tools and mechanisms for policy implementation. Put differently, the epistemic community participates in the production of means by which state policies are transmitted to level of practise and everyday life. In the ES-2030, these instruments come in the form of a *road map*<sup>301</sup> which specifies the guidelines, tasks and solutions, how to realize the energy industries' development plans. Some of these mechanisms offer the state a possibility to intervene and force commercial actors to comply with state objectives. These mechanisms also imply a shared understanding of causality, because their implementation would lead to the realization of certain policy objectives.

In relation to the use of minerals, the following graph<sup>302</sup> exemplifies the proposed mechanisms to achieve policy goals during the first stage of the implementation of the energy strategy 2007-2012 (now corresponding the time period from 2013 to 2015):

#### **Current situation:**

Weak state control on the use of minerals →

Tightening the system of economic measures and sanctions on the violation of licence agreements →

Tightening the licence agreements in order to increase the efficiency in deposit exploration and extraction projects →

Development of uniform non-discriminatory principles of control and monitoring of mineral users →

#### **Accomplished Objective:**

Increase of efficiency in state governance on the use of minerals

Besides road maps, the epistemic community is involved in the preparation and development of *energy legislation* (e.g. the law on energy efficiency<sup>303</sup>) and *federal programmes* (e.g. *Energy*

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<sup>301</sup> For example J1.

<sup>302</sup> Figure adopted from P3.

<sup>303</sup> The law was passed in 2009. For document, see for example <<http://base.garant.ru/12171109/>>.

*Efficient Economy*<sup>304</sup>) which are aimed at resolving different problems related to the functioning of the energy sector.

“In recent times, with direct participation of the representatives of the institute in the state Duma prepared the projects of two federal laws: "About the use of gas in the Russian Federation"[...], and "About the use of natural gas as motor fuel". OS2

“In the Ministry of Natural Resources, we are beginning a work related to the development of mechanisms and also legislative acts [...] to stimulate energy efficiency in Russia.” IN2 2009

“In INEI RAN, mechanisms for the stimulation of energy savings are developed. These ways of state support include taxation policy, the formation of federal and regional energy saving funds, the creation of energy service companies, benefits for producers of energy saving and energy efficient equipment.” OS2

In addition to legislative, economic and social measures and federal programmes, the epistemic community gives very concrete proposals on what needs to be done to overcome the barriers of energy sector development, such as the high inefficiency or inertia of the Russian power industry. In order to increase the generation capacity of the industry, specific instructions are given for example on the allocation of resources to necessary production facilities or to the build-up of new production plants. Furthermore, these guidelines define which sources of energy are suitable to fulfil the energy demand in different geographical areas of Russia.

“In Ural the power industry will develop primarily on the basis of construction of gas- and coal-fired and nuclear power plants. In Siberia and the Far East the power industry will develop chiefly owing to construction of new HPP [hydropower plants] and coal- and gas-fired power plants (as gas fields in this region of the country are developed to mitigate environmental situation first of all in large cities).” P1

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<sup>304</sup> Energoeffektivnaya ekonomika (2002-2005 and up to 2010) is a federal programme that was adopted in 2001. It aims at increasing energy efficiency in the country. For document, see for example <<http://govportal.garant.ru:8081/SESSION/PILOT/main.htm>>.

5.2.4. Result matrix B

	cognitive level		practical level
<b>INFLUENCE</b>	- scientific basis for state energy policy	- energy forecasting	- the creation of different policy instruments

5.3. Contemplating the analysis results

Content analysis of the primary material has brought forth different elements that describe the membership structure of the energy epistemic community. Moreover, it has given indications of the types of influence that the community has on Russian energy policy. This concluding subchapter of the analysis will further discuss the results in light of the epistemic communities approach.

The analysis results indicate that the epistemic community is used to depoliticize energy strategy policy-making in Russia. Supposedly, this is done for internal purposes such as domestic politics. As noted above, the former energy strategy, its successor documents and the processes of their making have received heavy criticism from an academic audience and from the general public. The epistemic community has therefore become a tool for the government to primarily justify the closed bureaucratic procedure of policy-making on energy issues. As acknowledged experts along with relevant governmental bodies and large energy corporations are included to the process, it is legitimate that public scrutiny is restricted. Open discussion for example on the energy mix of Russia and a change in those structures (increasing significantly the portion of renewables e.g.) is not necessary. The figures and policy orientations presented in the energy strategy are rational choices that are supported by veracious scientific information produced by the epistemic community.

In the context of Russia, the energy epistemic community cannot be said to perform an evolutionary role in introducing new objectives to the national energy policy. Although many of the research institutes are not public organisations, the energy epistemic community seems to be in Claire Dunlop's (2010) words a governmental one. What awareness or new trends the energy epistemic

community is able of raising independently to the political agenda is hard to define. The system of “nature-society-human“ is something that the community promotes, but it is not contradictory to what the Russian state is at the moment at least on the public level advocating. For example sustainable development and the ideas it carries within are rather diffused in current government policies. It is not believed that the epistemic community had the true initiative in pushing these issues into the political agenda. These matters have persisted within the community, but only once the state itself woke up to these ideas, they surfaced at the level of politics.

Moreover, it is difficult to see that evolutionary epistemic communities would have significant influence in the national energy policy. The community maintains that it enjoys scientific autonomy. It can be assumed that the community truly controls the knowledge it produces. However, there are tangible external socio-political pressures, namely the policy-making environment that notably limits the action of epistemic communities. The author sees that controversial views simply would not enter the political debate or they would just be ignored by decision-makers.

Nevertheless, there appears to be a strong trust towards these research institutes from the side of the government. Their responsibilities have not ended as they continue receiving research and other work assignments from different ministries, regional authorities and also from major and small-scale Russian energy companies. It does not seem that different interest groups would compete over influence with the scientific community. They are in an agreement over responsibilities related with energy strategy policy-making and where the expertise of the research institutions is needed in that process. The advisory role performed by the epistemic community is confirmed by other participants of the policy process.

The membership structure of the identified energy epistemic community indicates certain criteria for inclusion in and exclusion from this particular community. However, as Dunlop (2000) comments, there is a loose order of importance within the four characteristics of an epistemic community. Different possible epistemic communities on energy are likely to share a common policy enterprise and normative and principled beliefs. Firstly, as the analysis showed, even recently established institutes have been able to form strong cooperative links with the government. The institutionalization of state-science interaction has been rather quick. Secondly, it is plausible that the belief in scientific autonomy and own objectivity is shared among members of separate epistemic communities.

Thus, in connection with the boundaries on membership dissimilarities can be claimed to arise from the notions of validity and shared causal beliefs. Experts associated with another energy epistemic community are unlikely first of all to communicate advocacy for state policies. Epistemic communities more of an evolutionary character probably do not highlight the importance and validity of contemporary state policies if their attempt is to raise a problematic issue to the political agenda. In addition, there appears to be quite different views on which actors (ministries, businesses etc.) truly matter in Russian energy sector and policy-making. Moreover, the methodology to draft policy documents is believed to vary between separate communities. As one interviewee remarked upon, there is no consensus among all energy experts in Russia that development will be achieved by the particular means (innovative society e.g.) and mechanisms proposed in the energy strategy.

In a way the epistemic community can be said to carry responsibility over the energy strategy and the mistakes made in the former strategies, namely the ES-2020. In the course of the renewal process, the epistemic community changed the methodology of the strategy, an ingredient in the policy-making that for perhaps many policy critics is hard to understand what that actually means. If the failure of the former document is a question of methodology, it takes attention away from more crucial issues associated with the strategy. The failure becomes an academic mistake and the ideology on the other hand continues on living intact in each consecutive document. The composition of the ideology behind the energy strategy is the responsibility of the state and in this way the government conveys that it did not make mistakes in the former policies and it will not do them in upcoming ones.

Finally, Haas and Adler argue that the existence of the epistemic community is “limited to the time and space defined by the problem and its solutions”<sup>305</sup>. On the basis of the analysis of this study, it is not presumed that this epistemic community dissolved after the promulgation of the Energy Strategy of Russia up to the period until 2030 in November 2009. Work is already undergoing to draft a new version of the energy strategy with a time span up to 2050. Furthermore, the same experts continue working together in formulating other energy sector-related public documents and different policy mechanisms. There are no signs that the position and mutual relations of the institutes examined in this study would change in the near future. Their participation and cooperation with the state is well established.

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<sup>305</sup> Haas&Adler 1992, p. 317.

## 6. Conclusion

This Master's Thesis has been a study of Russian energy policy to which the approach of epistemic communities by Peter Haas (1990/1992) and others has been implemented. In the Russian energy policy exemplified by the Energy Strategy of Russia up to the period 2030, the research has identified a particular kind of agency that has significant influence in policy formulation. Similar research direction has not been utilized before in the discipline of International Relations that concentrates on energy issues in Russia. The research task has been met as the thesis has increased understanding of Russian energy policy formation. The study has recognised an actor, an energy epistemic community, which has a meaningful function in policy-making processes despite the fact that it does not perform a decisive and evolutionary role in bringing novel issues to the political agenda.

According to Haas, a condition of uncertainty operates as the main driver for epistemic community engagement in policy processes. However, on the basis of this study this requirement does not seem to apply in institutionalized policy processes that happen in regular intervals (e.g. once in every five years), such as the energy strategy policy-making in Russia. Uncertainty in energy policy-making somehow appears to be a permanent state of things that has its effects on the background of policy-making. The political choice of what possible world or possible future to pursue is not closed, because new time windows are continuously opened further and further into the future (e.g. Energy Strategy of Russia up to the period 2050). Additionally, the degree of uncertainty varies between different emphases within the energy strategy, whether one talks about more exploratory projects in the Barents Sea or deciding proper mechanisms to increase energy efficiency. Therefore, the condition of uncertainty cannot be thought to be the primary driver for epistemic community participation. Community presence in policy processes is dependent on other factors, such as state interest in validating policy choices with scientific knowledge.

The objective of the present study has also been to explore the benefits of a constructivist approach in the field of Energy Studies. This study has come to the conclusion that the theoretical framework of constructivism offers valuable insights to research on energy policy formation. It proposes tools to problematize current explanations and determinants of national energy policies and international energy regimes and demonstrates that they are interpretations of a particular social reality that these policies represent. Nevertheless, the interpretations produced by agency are not static, context-free

and final but open for transformation. Constructivist approach allows examining for example how the interpretation of Russia as a geopolitically motivated international actor has been formed. Moreover, by employing constructivism state identity as a producer, consumer or a transit country can be problematized. These identities are very much linked with the material resources of the countries in question. Nevertheless, they are not essential and permanent features but interpretations that are produced and reproduced for example in energy research. Constructivism gives the instruments to examine how these interpretations and shared meanings are maintained and what might lead to their deterioration.

This study has raised many areas of further research, in which the approach of epistemic communities can be implemented, especially in the field of international energy politics. Its usability in energy studies is evident as shown by the present study. Firstly, as the current study left a number of different dimensions of the research phenomenon uncovered, further research on the Russian energy epistemic community could be conducted for example by applying a discourse analytic approach. The objective of the study would then be to examine what are the controversial issues within the whole scientific community on energy that would separate one energy epistemic community from another in Russia. In other words, what are the dominant discourses in the field of Energy Studies in Russia.

Furthermore, the power aspect of scientific knowledge raised for example by Karen Litfin (1994) offers an interesting direction to be pursued in this connection since it would expand our understanding how scientific knowledge is used to validate energy policy choices that are political or sometimes even carry an ideological nature. This is visible for example in the discussion on the role of nuclear energy and wind power in the energy mix of Germany. Here the criticism towards the epistemic community approach on account of the cooperation/conflict dimension introduced by James Sebenius (1992) could also be developed. It is clear that there are palpable bargaining processes on-going when debating the most suitable structure of energy production for a country. These debates take place in a competitive environment where different interests groups, environmental organisations and epistemic communities present different policy options. Experts participating in the discussion might form competing epistemic communities or they might just be affiliates to certain environmental organisations or energy companies. With regards to this, further research should not be limited to investigating national energy policies of different countries but also could be expanded to international entities and organisations, such as the International Energy Agency.

On a subnational level, this research direction could concentrate on diverse energy resources and modes of energy production and make a comparative study between different countries and influential epistemic communities within those countries. What similarities or dissimilarities are there between these communities? Do they share the dominant discourses on particular issues? A comparison could be made for example between Russia and Germany, where attitudes toward nuclear energy seem to vary a great deal also at the level of experts. Such research task would also allow to examine, what kind of role of scientific discourses on energy have in national and international energy policy-making and furthermore in energy regime formation, such as the EU-Russia Energy Dialog.

Utilizing the epistemic communities approach can help us gain wider understanding of the outcomes of policy-making processes. Energy experts that are present in public national and international debates are communicating the possibilities and restrictions of energy management in a specific context thus limiting and narrowing the amount of choices available to us. In which forums energy experts appear and whom they eventually represent are relevant research subjects as their function is to offer incontestable scientific knowledge on what are the best energy solutions for a particular country or a region, such as the European Union.

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**Symposium Paper P1-4**

Bushuev, V.V., Saenko, V.V., Gromov A.I. (Institute of Energy Strategy): *Energy strategy of Russia for the period up to 2030: Eastern vector*

**P3 = Presentatsiya otchyota o NIR “Razrabotka proyekta Energeticheskoy strategii Rossii na period do 2030 goda” (Presentation about the research work “Development of the project Energy Strategy of Russia up to period 2030”)**

Bushuev, Vitaliy (Institute of Energy Strategy): *Energeticheskaya strategiya Rossii (ES-2030)* (The Energy Strategy of Russia (ES-2030)). November 2007. Accessed 20.07.2011.

Available at <[http://www.energystrategy.ru/projects/present\\_es-2030.htm](http://www.energystrategy.ru/projects/present_es-2030.htm)>

**P4 = Power Point Presentation**

Bushuev, Vitaliy (Institute of Energy Strategy): *Podkhody, priority i orientiry proyekta Energeticheskoy strategii Rossii na period do 2030 goda* (Challenges, priorities and orientations of the project Energy Strategy of Russia up to period 2030). 21<sup>st</sup> of July 2009. Accessed 20.07.2011.

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**Outline of the Expert Interviews (Autumn 2010)**  
**SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IN RUSSIAN ENERGY POLICY**

*ACKNOWLEDGED EXPERTISE*

- 1) What does your organisation do? Is your organisation governmental or private? When was your organisation established?
- 2) In which fields does your staff specialize? (Economics etc.)
- 3) What is your mission? What are the main objectives of your work?
- 4) What kind of education and specialisation are needed of specialists who are members of the scientific community in energy? What constitutes as a “serious” advisor, what are his/her necessary qualifications?

*COOPERATION NETWORKS / ACCESS TO THE POLITICAL SYSTEM*

- 5) Do you cooperate with governmental bodies and/or local authorities? What kind of cooperation do you have? Work related to legislative initiatives, regulations, scientific projects etc.?
- 6) Have you cooperated with the government for a long period of time? Is the cooperation with the government important for your organisation?

7) Are there specific organisations in Russia that advice the government on questions related to energy issues? Where are they located? In Moscow? Do these organisations compete with each other?

8) Do you have international partners? In which international or national organisations does your organisation participate?

9) What are the main objectives, plans and priorities of this cooperation? (Producing and developing information over energy efficiency etc.) What is difficult/successful in this cooperation?

10) Is there a kind of web of specialists or a so-called energy scientific community in Russia which has regular cooperation among its members?

#### *THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE*

11) Which actors have the most influence in the content of the Russian energy policy? From where do new, innovative ideas, decisions and tendencies arrive to the energy policy? Where are the mechanisms for the achievement of energy policy objectives developed? (Organisations, actors etc.)

12) What kind of contribution does the scientific community have on the energy policy? Is the government always content with your research results? Does the government always follow your recommendations?

13) What kind of role does your organisation play in Russian energy policy? Do you for example support the objectives of the energy strategy?

#### *UNCERTAINTY – POLICY-MAKING CONDITION* (themes also present in other questions)

14) Why a new energy strategy was needed? Where the objectives of the former strategy achieved?

#### *CAUSE AND EFFECT RELATIONS / MEMBERSHIP*

15) What kind of function does the energy strategy play in the energy policy?

16) Is the energy strategy a successful document in order to achieve economic development in the country? Does the energy strategy offer effective and real means to achieve the objective of the Russian energy policy?

17) Within the scientific community, is there a consensus (an agreement):

- on the degree of state ownership in the energy sector?
- over the establishment of open energy markets? (electricity, heating etc.)
- over the most important sources of energy which should be developed and in which investments should be directed at? (nuclear energy, coal etc.)
- about the role of the government? Should there be a more active or passive government? (more governmental regulation to guarantee free competition in markets etc.)
- about the strategic priorities of the energy policy? (energy security, energy efficiency of the economy, economic efficiency of the energy sector, ecological safety of the energy sector)
- over the main challenges of the Russian energy markets?
- on the role of the national energy complex, the energy sector in the Russian economy? Is the national energy complex a donor for the Russian economy, a locomotive for growth or an innovative constructor of the Russian economic structures? Does the national energy complex have social influence on the conditions of the country?
- about energy intensity? Is the Russian economy too energy intensive? It is necessary to reduce it? To which level in comparison with other countries?
- on supporting national technology? Is it something necessary?
- about the reduction of the energy sector's share in the governmental budget?