



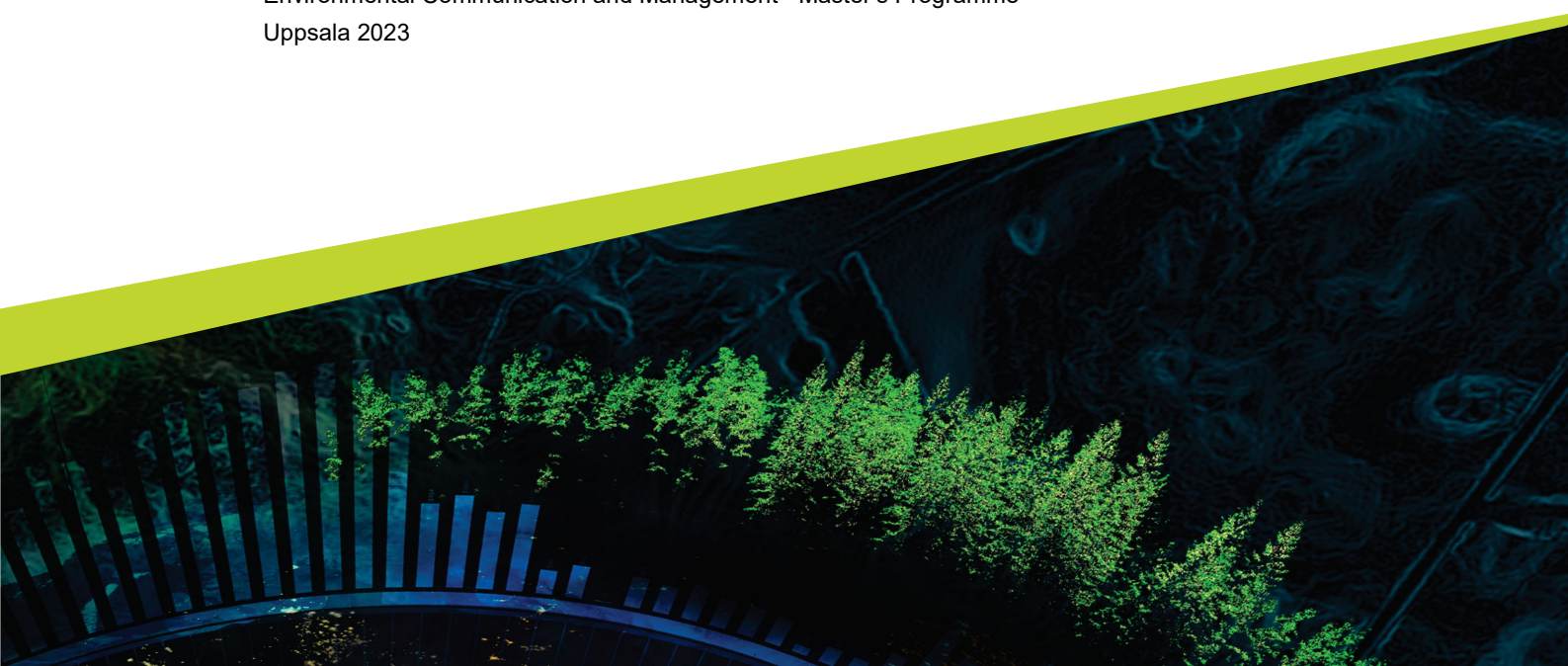
The German Coal Exit

– An argumentative discourse analysis
of storylines and discourse coalitions

*Der deutsche Kohleausstieg
– eine argumentative Diskursanalyse von 'storylines' und
Diskurskoalitionen*

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Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU
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The German Coal Exit – An argumentative discourse analysis of storylines and discourse coalitions

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Abstract

Germany passed a Coal Phase-out Act in 2020 to reduce carbon emissions and to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement, at a time when Germany was already phasing out nuclear energy. Thus, Germany faces a dual challenge: not only to break its dependence on coal as a resource, but also the overlap of the phase-outs of nuclear and coal energy. In order to develop a sustainable solution, the government formed a commission of relevant actors with the task to find a 'broad societal consensus'. The commission negotiated for a year and the results were published in a report and passed to the legislative process, which resulted in the Coal Phase-out Act. Including the year of the commission's work, the development of the Act took more than two years, and during this time there were heated debates about how the coal phase-out should be planned and implemented. In addition, the process to the Act was criticised since the agreement achieved by the commission was changed by the legislative process in spite of politicians' promises to institutionalise the agreement as presented in January 2019.

This thesis uses Hajer's discourse analysis approach to examine storylines and discourse coalitions in the period from the presentation of the coal commission's agreement to August 2020, some months after the Act was passed. Among a range of emerging storylines, the two storylines 'fair/just' and 'betrayal' were analysed in particular as they were strongly promoted by actors in the debate. The findings show that the two storylines 'fair/just' and 'betrayal' were the core of two discourse coalitions which were fighting for dominance in the discursive field of the German Coal Exit. The coalition 'fair/just' was successful in its aim to stay dominant and in pushing the draft bill through the legislative process to become an Act. The coalition 'betrayal' tried to stop the process and to prevent the draft bill to pass as it was argued to contain too many changes to the original agreement, made during the legislative process. The analysis further revealed an unconventional, possibly strategic, use of the term 'consensus' instead of 'compromise' to frame the GCE process as positive. The results show why discourse coalitions were formed by actors in the discursive field of the German Coal Exit and how the coalition 'fair/just' remained dominant.

Keywords: German Coal Exit, Coal Phase-out Act, energy transition, discourse analysis, Energiewende, Kohleausstieg

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|--|
| BMAS | Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs [Bundesministerium für Soziales und Arbeit] |
| BMI | Federal Ministry of the Interior, for Construction and Home Affairs [Bundesinnenministerium] |
| BPK | Federal Press Conference [Bundespressekonferenz] |
| BMU | Federal Ministry of Environment [Bundesministerium für Umwelt] |
| BMWi | Federal Ministry of Economics [Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft] |
| BVerfG | Federal Constitutional Court [Bundesverfassungsgericht] |
| DA | Discourse Analysis |
| EU | European Union |
| GCE | German Coal Exit |
| OECD | Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development |
| PPCA | Powering Past Coal Alliance |
| RegPK | Government Press Conference [Regierungspressekonferenz] |
| SLU | Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences |
| TWh | Terawatt hours |
| UBA | German Environment Agency [Umwelt Bundesamt] |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| WBS | Commission on growth, structural change and employment [Kommission für Wachstum, Strukturwandel und Beschäftigung] |

1. Introduction

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was formed in 1994 to “prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (UNFCCC 2021a). As a member of the UNFCCC and by signing the Paris Agreement in 2016 (UNFCCC 2021b), Germany has committed itself, like most other countries in the world, to implement climate targets to limit global warming below 2 and if possible, below 1.5 degrees Celsius. In this context, greenhouse gases (GHG) and especially carbon dioxide (CO₂) are considered to be one of the main problem sources and therefore, decreasing GHG emissions and reaching carbon neutrality by 2050 are crucial objectives (ibid.). To achieve these objectives of the Paris Agreement, transitions in all areas of societal life are necessary.

An analysis by the non-profit institute *Climate Analytics* shows that coal needs to be phased out in Europe by 2030 and worldwide by 2050 to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement (Climate Analytics 2016). Based on this analysis, the Canadian and UK governments launched the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) in 2017 (PPCA 2021a), of which Germany is also a member (PPCA 2021b). Their goal is to phase out coal by 2030 in the European Union (EU) and in the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (PPCA 2021c). As a coal-dependent country, Germany is facing two challenges at the same time: to end its dependence on coal while already phasing out nuclear power.

1.1. Coal and gross electricity generation in Germany

There are several types of coal but the most common distinction which is also made in German politics is between hard coal [Steinkohle] and lignite [Braunkohle] (UBA 2017). A statistic from 2017 shows that the general energy production in Germany increased by almost 100 TWh since the 90s, especially through the production of renewable energy (Figure 1, UBA 2017:16). As visible in the graph, the production of nuclear power decreased since the decision in 2011 to shut down all nuclear power by 2022 (Bundestag 2011). For Germany’s goal to phase out coal, this means that there will be a period of overlap during which two largely weather-independent energy sources will decline and cannot backup each other. Although by 2016, Germany achieved a decline of 12% in hard coal and 21% in lignite, hard

coal and lignite together still covered 40% of the assured energy production (UBA 2017:16). Furthermore, the report of the German Environment Agency points out that the use of nuclear and coal energy does not decrease to the same extent as the production of renewable energy increases and, surpluses are sold abroad instead of reducing coal use to the same extent as the use of renewables increases (ibid.).

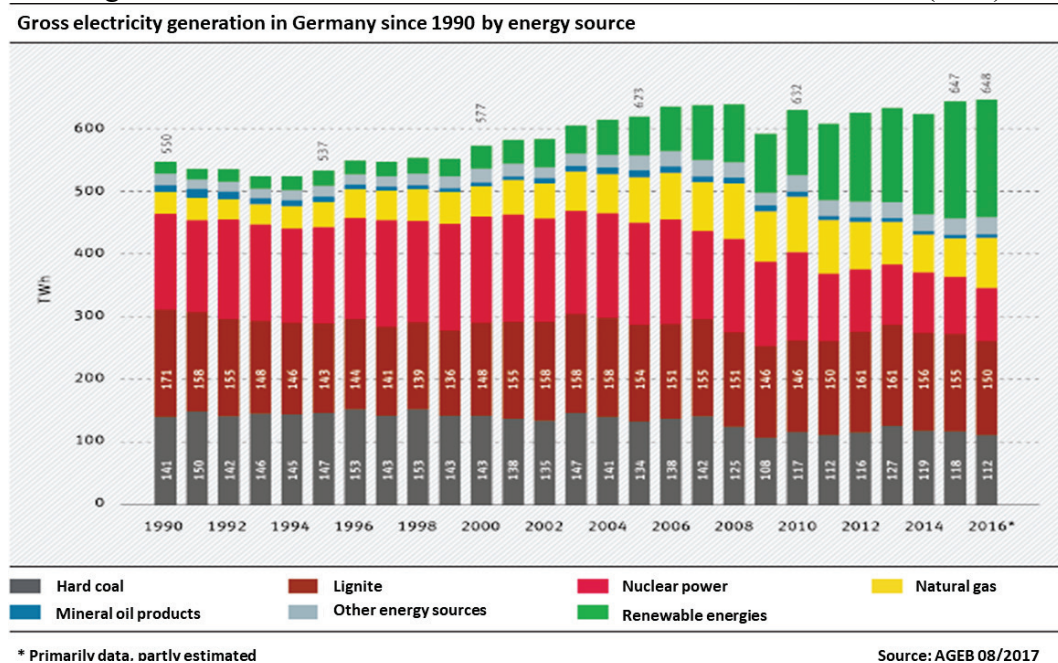


Figure 1: Gross electricity generation in Germany since 1990 by energy source (AGEB 08/2017 in UBA 2017:16, own translation)

The mining and use of hard coal has a long tradition, provided many jobs and was a profitable business until the 1950s (Oei et al. 2019). After the 50s, the extraction of hard coal became costly compared to its import, and therefore received state subsidies. During the financial crisis in 2007, the Federal Government [Bundesregierung] decided to phase out the hard coal mining within 10 years by 2018 in order to save money by ceasing subsidies (ibid.).

Although the mines for hard coal are closed in Germany, the power plants are still running. Germany was in 6th place in the global ranking of importing hard coal in 2015 (UBA 2017:13). Consequently, Germany's dependency on hard coal produced energy still remains. To assure a stable energy supply for system-relevant power plants, a law even prevents the closure of hard coal power plants (UBA 2017:19).

In comparison to hard coal, lignite is considered as an irrelevant energy source on a global scale but in Germany it is still profitable (UBA 2017). Germany has three regions with 66 mines (UBA 2017:17) which are mining lignite and have a relatively high dependency on the coal industry (Figure 2). Historically, in these coal regions, the coal sector made a crucial contribution to the economic development which made Germany a leading industrial country (Kommission WSB

2019:2). This influenced not only the economy but social and cultural aspects in these regions over generations (ibid.). Germany's deep-rooted dependence on coal at various levels (e.g. economic, social, cultural) is therefore a major challenge for German policy in planning and realising the GCE. However, despite its multifaceted dependence on coal, Germany has committed itself to phasing out coal in order to achieve the goal of climate neutrality by 2050.

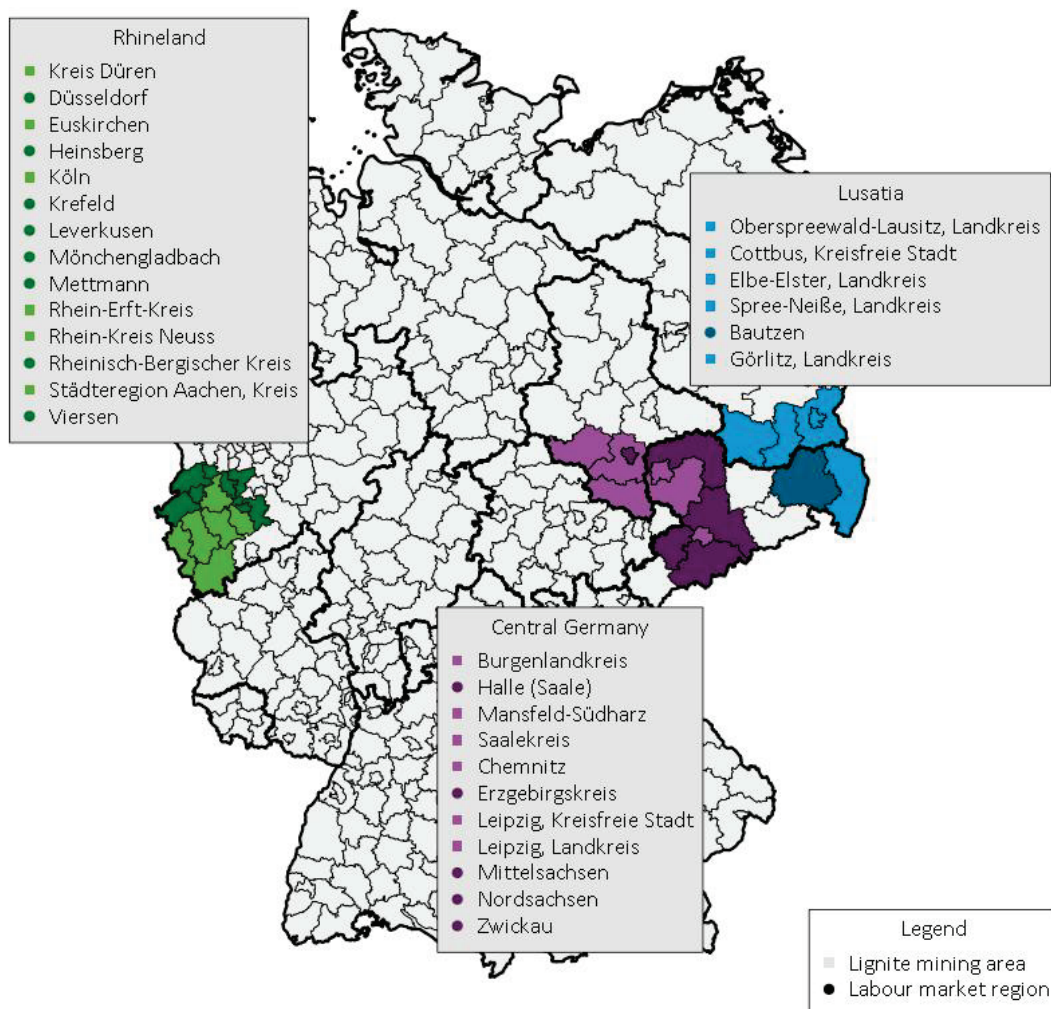


Figure 2: Lignite-mining areas and labour market regions in Germany (Oei et al. 2019:42)

1.2. The process of the German Coal Exit

The following section provides a chronological overview of the timeline of events in the German Coal Exit (GCE) political process, starting with the establishment of the coal commission and ending with the passing of a new act.

On 6th June 2018, the German government formed the Commission on Growth, Structural Change and Employment [Wachstum, Beschäftigung und Strukturwandel (WBS)], also called coal commission, and tasked its 29 members with finding a societal acceptable solution to phase out coal with a “broad societal consensus” considering social, political and economic as well as climate and environmental interests (Kommission WBS2019:6). The idea of a “broad societal consensus” was that through participation of all relevant actors, the developed GCE would find greater approval in society and thus become more sustainable. The members of the commission were appointed by the government (Kommission WBS 2019:2). In addition, three representatives of the parliament and one representative for each of the six involved counties (Brandenburg, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saarland, Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt) were present as observers with the right to talk but not to vote (Kommission WBS 2019:7). Four ministries and the State Secretary Committee were accounted to organise and support the commission. The Chancellor Angela Merkel was included as a guest (Appendix 1).

The commission negotiated for seven months, and the final agreement was made on the 26th January 2019 in the early morning at 5 o’clock, after 21 hours of negotiations (Szent-Iványi BPK 26.01.2019). The results were announced on the same day in a *Federal Press Conference [Bundespressekonferenz]* (further referred to as *BPK*¹) and published in the same month in a final report. In order to preserve and support economic as well as social and cultural aspects equally during the GCE, the commission suggested to determine the concrete phase-out of mines and power plants combined with laws for structural change and for renewable energies, especially wind power (Kommission WBS 2019). Following the commission’s final report, the government started to negotiate conditions for a phase-out with the operators of the coal-fired power plants and several politicians promised to realise the results (exactly) as they were suggested by the commission (Jung RegPK 13.01.2020).

On the 31st January 2020, one year after the commission’s final report, the first official draft bill for the *German Coal Exit (GCE)* was released (Appendix 2). The draft was discussed in the Federal Council [Bundesrat] and the Federal Parliament [Bundestag]. Five times, the draft was sent back and forth between the two institutions (Appendix 2). In total, the draft was debated, and votes on motions were taken on 10 different days between January and July 2020 (ibid.).

The final decision on the *Coal Phase-out Act [Kohleausstiegsgesetz]* was made on the 3rd of July 2020, first by the Parliament and subsequently by the Council

¹ The BPK (Bundespressekonferenz) is an association of full-time journalists who invite guests to their conference. These conferences are unique because in contrast to other countries, they are organised by the journalists. The journalists need to be part of the association to attend but questions are not predefined and can be critical. The downside of this model is that guests do not have to attend and can avoid critical questions by declining an invitation (BPK 2020). The BPK also organises a Government Press Conference (Regierungspressekonferenz, RegPK) three times a week with spokespersons of the government and the ministries (BPK 2020).

(Appendix 2). Both institutions had to agree on the same draft which came into force on the 14th of August 2020. A second act to support structural change in the coal regions was passed in the same process (Bundesgesetzblatt 2020) but will not be considered in this work because it would go beyond the scope of this thesis.

The new laws and legislative changes passed after a long democratic and bureaucratic process that took over 2 years. However, there were complaints that the decision of the coal commission in January 2019 had not been implemented by the politicians as promised to the commission members and the public (Niebert² & Kaiser³ BPK 28.11.2019; Bundestag 2020). The political process of negotiating new legislations or changing existing ones is complicated (see Appendix 6), and the influence of different actors or perspectives on the outcome are often not accessible to an outsider. But what is apparent even for a layperson is that despite the attempts to find a ‘broad societal consensus’ with different actors and groups, the conflict seemed to continue in other arenas as many environmental actors complained that environmental concerns had been neglected and that they felt betrayed. There were different ideas and claims of how the GCE should be implemented. For example, scientists calculated different scenarios which supported phase-out strategies that either aimed to phase out as quickly as possible for the benefit of the environment, or strategies that proceeded more slowly, as the economy and social structures would otherwise not be able to adapt (Kittel et.al. 2020).

In addition, the changes to the measures that the commission suggested in their report in 2019 were assessed differently by different actors. In the 2019 decision, for example, it was advised against completing and commissioning the new power plant “Datteln 4”. During the process, however, it was decided that the power plant would be allowed to go into operation and that instead, older, less efficient power plants would be phased out earlier than originally planned. Critics objected that less CO₂ would be saved as a result of this change.

Such controversies raise questions about the perspectives represented in the GCE debate, how actors promote their perspectives and how these coalesce or clash with others. Exploring these questions should help to better understand why the conflict around this issue repeatedly flares up.

1.3. Aims and Research Questions

This thesis aims to examine and reflect on different perspectives within the GCE debate by using discourse analysis (Section 2). I intend to trace the emerging per-

² Kai Niebert is the president of the German Nature Ring [“Deutscher Naturschutzring”- DNR], the umbrella organisation of nature and environmental organisations in Germany and member of the coal commission.

³ Martin Kaiser is the Head of Greenpeace in Germany.

spectives during the process and how actors play them out discursively to gain support for their definition of reality and push related interests forward. Tracing the perspectives expressed in the political process gives an overview of the understandings represented in the discursive field of the GCE. As part of this, I aim to map differences and similarities of the perspectives to uncover overlapping understandings or interests that could coalesce or support each other while opposing ones would fight each other to achieve hegemony. The following research questions are applied to fulfil the thesis' aims:

- I. Which perspectives emerge within the process and discursive field of the GCE?
- II. How do actors promote their perspectives discursively?
- III. How do different perspectives expressed in the debate around the GCE relate to and interact with each other?

2. Theoretical Framework

To address these research questions, I chose a discourse analytical approach which allows the study of language-in-use (Wetherell et al. 2001 in Hajer & Versteeg 2005), provides insights into perspectives and allows to map them and their argumentative interplay in a discourse. In this thesis, I understand perspectives to be different ways of looking at a particular issue. Perspectives emerge in a discourse as different realities produced from different understandings or different knowledges which varies the angle of view.

This chapter introduces the conceptual framework that underpins my analysis, first presenting the concepts of *discourse* and *power*, followed by a description of Hajer's (1993) approach to *discourse analysis* and his key concepts *storylines* and *discourse coalitions*, which are central for the argumentative discourse analysis approach used in this thesis.

2.1. Discourse and Power

Reality can only be recognised if it is also perceived and accepted as such by an individual or social group. Based on Kant's (1787 in Inglis 2012:168) idea that people will always be separated from reality by their perception, it follows that what we consider and treat as truths are cognitive constructs, often learned through the interaction with other people or their environment (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, Inglis 2012:171). Therefore, in line with the idea of *social constructivism*, there is not only one reality (Westin 2019:46).

Language is essential in this respect because it is the expression and manifestation of the speaker's reality. Language is a process of meaning-making by social interaction that creates and (re)produces socially accepted truths as social knowledge (Bacchi 2018), and *discourses* are part of this meaning-making.

Foucault (1977 in Inglis 2012) describes discourses as *systems of thought*. Further, Foucault "*traces the role of discourses in wider social processes of legitimation and power, emphasizing the constitution of current truths, how they are maintained and what power relations they carry with them*" (Lessa 2006:285). It is crucial to emphasize that discourses should not be understood as objects, but as relations that provide a social arena and boundaries "*of what can be known, said, or*

practised” (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine 2019). Therefore, Hajer (2006) distinguishes between a *discussion* which is the object of analysis and *discourse* which he defines as “*a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that is produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities*” (Hajer 1997:44 in Arts, Fischer & van der Wal 2012:912).

Since Hajer’s definition is rooted in Foucault’s understanding of discourse, it is necessary to address the concept of *power* as well. Although *power* lays in the acceptance of ideas and discourses (Inglis 2012:184), discourses often remain invisible and unconscious which makes them even more powerful (ibid.:171). For Barthes (1988), shaping and dominating ideas in a society is a form of exercising power because “*Discourses hide forms of social power while simultaneously expressing and promoting them*” (in Inglis 2012:173). Foucault (1977) states that “*discourses themselves are forms of power*” (in Inglis 2012:182) as they define “*regimes of truths*” (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine 2019) and thereby frame the social arena. According to Foucault, power and knowledge are fundamentally intertwined (Hajer & Versteeg 2005:181). Power in that sense cannot be possessed by people but is situated in discourses, which incorporate and reflect socially constructed knowledge and are used or influenced by people. Consequently, power relations are always existent. Compared to Habermas’ (1984 in Inglis 2012:77) approach which suggests to exclude power from a discussion and let the strongest argument win, Foucault’s approach insists that it is impossible to exclude power from a debate or discourse even if everyone would agree on wishing such an exclusion.

2.2. Discourse Analysis

I have chosen Hajer's approach to discourse analysis for this thesis because it allows to take an argumentative turn in the analysis which is necessary to examine perspectives emerging and interacting in a debate and thus to answer the research questions of this thesis. In addition, this approach provides some other advantages: it does not only consider situational logic such as the historical, cultural, and political context (Hajer & Versteeg 2005) but also the knowledge about counter-positions which give meaning to an argument (Hajer 1993). According to Hajer (1993:45), “*this process of constructing, or framing, political problems is a highly significant element of the political process. Actors try to impose their views of reality on others, sometimes through debate and persuasion, but also through manipulation and the exercise of power.*”

Based on these premises, framing is crucial as it influences what is understood as the real problem (Litfin 1994 in Hajer & Versteeg 2005). Discourse analysis is

therefore a good way to understand how regimes work and what they do (ibid.). For argumentative analysis, Hajer saw the challenge in finding a way to combine “the analysis of the discursive production of reality with the analysis of the (extradiscursive) social practice from which social constructs emerge and in which the actors make these statements emerge” (Hajer 1993:45).

As a solution he developed the *discourse coalition approach* and names three main advantages: (1) it provides the tools to analyse strategic action in discourses as well as controversies over individual issues in a wider political context, (2) it can shed light on how interests are used in specific discourses and organisational practices, (3) and it illuminates how existing biases are reproduced or contested with the help of different actors and organisational practices which can happen without any coordination of actions or shared deep values. The following section will explain how to apply this approach.

2.3. Storylines and Discourse Coalitions

To perform an argumentative discourse analysis, Hajer (1993) provides the two concepts’ *storylines* and *discourse coalitions* as tools. He presumes that a discourse produces storylines on specific problems. Storylines can be understood as narratives that share “*a similar way of conceptualizing the world*” (p. 47). They summarise and sometimes even simplify complex descriptions, stories and debates (Hajer 2006 in Arts, Fischer & van der Wal 2012). Storylines can therefore be interpreted as the smallest entity in discourse, summarizing central ideas in a discourse. Although common understandings are sometimes mistakenly assumed when a storyline is used by multiple actors (ibid.), “*the use of storylines implies unity and gives permanence to a debate*” (Arts, Fischer & van der Wal 2012:912) but does not necessarily mean that actors really agree the more complex narratives that lie behind a seemingly clear storyline.

With increasing use by actors, storylines can evolve into discursive symbols for coalitions between users (ibid). Here comes the concept of *discourse coalitions* into play. Hajer (1993:47) describes it as follows: “*A discourse coalition is thus the ensemble of a set of story lines, the actors that utter these story lines, and the practices that conform to these story lines, all organized around a discourse.*” In other words, a discourse coalition is a social practice in which actors’ group around a common social construct. By “*trying to empower its definition of reality on the basis of credibility, acceptance and trust (and not necessarily internal logic)*” (Hajer, 1995 in Arts, Fischer & van der Wal 2012:912), a discourse coalition strives for hegemony and influences the power inherent in a discourse.

Identifying storylines and discourse coalitions offers an understanding of how actors conceptualize and express their reality, by “*actively ‘positioning’ themselves and others drawing on discursive categories*” (Hajer & Versteeg 2005).

Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that problems are often complex with many different aspects and layers that encompass different discourses. As Hajer (1993:46) explains, “*political arguments of actors typically rest on more than one discourse at the time*”. This can make it empirically difficult to identify different discourses in the same debate or political process.

For my study, Hajer’s approach is very useful as his concepts facilitate structuring actors’ different conceptualisations, how they present and promote their point of view, their problematisations and accompanying interests, and thus, to analyse the perspectives (see Section 1.3) emerging from the discursive field of the GCE. In order to answer the research questions properly and to avoid confusion, the term ‘perspective’ will be replaced by the term ‘storyline’.

2.4. Contextualization of the study

The GCE is particularly meaningful for other exit strategies in Germany and for other countries that plan a coal-exit, because Germany faces an overlap of phasing-out nuclear power and coal at the same time. German politics experienced already the struggles of processing a phase-out as they decided on the phase-out of nuclear power in 2004. The operating time of the nuclear power plants was extended in 2010 and then after the incident/accident with a nuclear power plant in Fukushima, Japan, the extension was revoked again in 2011 (Bundestag 2011, Mecklin 2012).

In line with other research in the field of energy transition(s) (Isoaho 2019, Markard, Rinscheid & Widdel 2021), this thesis uses the discourse analysis approach of Hajer (1993) with discourse coalitions and storylines as key analytical concepts. The thesis covers a shorter period of time than e.g., Rinscheid and Widdel (2021) with fewer data sources, but in contrast to other research in this field (Markard, Rinscheid & Widdel 2021, Hodgson et al. 2018) that used news articles as research material, the data set of this thesis included videos and transcripts of press conferences and the final parliament discussion. This type of data was chosen to be able to analyse language-in use in more depth, since the analysed content was originally from actual debates and, as we will see (Section 4) comprised spontaneous reactions as well as tensions between advocates of different storylines and discourse coalitions.

3. Methodology

3.1. Material selection

In this thesis, I use a qualitative approach to argumentative discourse analysis, to identify storylines and discourse coalitions, based on a wide range of transcripts of press conferences during the GCE process, parliamentary debate and an interview after the Act passed (Table 1, details in Appendix 3⁴). The selected videos encompass the period from the 26th January 2019 to the 16th August 2020.

Table 1: Summary overview of research material

| Object | Author(s) | Source Type |
|--|--------------------|---|
| Federal Press Conferences (9) (26.01.2019 – 03.07.2020) | Tilo Jung & Vox | Videos (published by authors), Transcripts (extracted from YouTube and proofread by me) |
| Final Discussion & Negotia- tion (03.07.2020) | Parliament | Protocol (published by authors) |
| Interview with Kai Niebert (16.08.2020) | Tilo Jung | Videos (published by author), Transcript (extracted from YouTube and proofread by me) |

With two exceptions (BPK 16.01.2019, Bundestag 2020), the BPKs and the interview were recorded and published by the journalist Tilo Jung⁵ on YouTube (Jung 2021). He produces his content on a donation basis and his videos are all uncut. This means that bloopers and tensions during recording cannot be concealed and may give insights into tensions during the debates. The first BPK (16.01.2019), which is also the first source of the time frame in the data set, was published by the German TV channel “VOX” as a live stream on YouTube. The protocol from the

⁴ In Appendix 3, people are also presented in their political/social position/context in order to better understand the relevance of the statements quoted.

⁵ Tilo Jung is a journalist, founder, and moderator of the format “Jung und Naiv – Politik für Desinteressierte” [Jung and Naïve - Politics for the Indifferent] who provides uncut interviews and BPKs on YouTube and in his online archive (Jung 2021).

final parliament discussion before the vote in June 2020 was published on the official website of the parliament and includes the positions of the different parties as well as their main concerns and arguments regarding the new act. The interview with Kai Niebert took place after the Act passed. As Niebert is a former commission member, I consider his retrospective assessment to be as important as the positions presented by politicians in the parliamentary debate. For these reasons, I chose the described sources.

To prepare the content for the analysis the videos were transcribed automatically by YouTube and proofread by me.

3.2. Procedure

For the qualitative analysis of the content, I used the programme NVivo and identified in the first step 45 storylines in the 12 uploaded documents. Following Hajer's understanding of storylines, I searched for "clusters of common themes" (Hodgson et al. 2018:334) and summarised repeated or content-wise similar statements by a sentence or key word that expresses the core message of the storyline. To structure the storylines, some were categorised as subcodes of a theme. Further, each statement coded as a storyline was also assigned to an actor group. For this reason, not all coding categories used in the analysis are automatically storylines.

NVivo enabled a quantitative overview of all coded quotes. Based on this overview, I decided to focus on two major themes, "process" and "consensus" because the storylines they included contained the most codes and thus indicated high relevance in the debate. Further steps of selection were necessary to reduce the storylines to a scope manageable in an in-depth analysis. The selection was focused on storylines which expressed ideas or concerns regarding the process leading up to the passing of the act. By excluding pro and contra storylines that discussed (technical) content of the implementation of the GCE from the in-depth analysis, the thesis focused on those parts of the discourse that questioned not only the content of the act but its legitimacy. The selected storylines are analysed in Section 4.2 in order to answer my first research question: "*Which storylines emerge within the process and discursive field of the GCE?*" For the second research question "*How do actors promote their storylines discursively?*", I picked the two most striking storylines 'fair/just' and 'betrayal' from the data and analysed how they were promoted by actors over time. Further, I included an analysis of the terms 'consensus' and 'compromise' as they were used by actors in shifting and dynamic ways. In order to answer Research Question 3, "*How do different storylines expressed in the debate around the GCE relate to and interact with each other?*", discourse coalitions among the selected storylines were identified by analysing which storylines argumentatively supported each other.

4. Analysis and Results

4.1. Thick description of the decision-making process in the selected time frame

Looking at the timeline again, which was already described in the introduction (Section 1.2), the data reveals tensions in the press conferences and in the debates (see also Appendix 4). As an in-depth understanding of the decision-making process is crucial for my analysis, I provide here a more detailed description of this process. Since the commission was tasked with finding a “broad societal consensus” at the beginning of the process, it is also important for the analysis to clarify the definitions of consensus and compromise beforehand: According to the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary (2022) a *“consensus is an opinion that all members of a group agree with”* while a compromise has a slightly different definition: *“a solution to a problem in which two or more things cannot exist together as they are, in which each thing is reduced or changed slightly so that they can exist together”* (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary n.d). The German dictionary “Duden” also refers to two different origins from the Latin words: *consentire* and *compromittere* (Duden n.d.) which can be translated as “to agree/to consent” and “to compromise” (lingvanex n.d.). This distinction is crucial in evaluating how the two terms have been used by actors.

When the coal commission presented its results in January 2019, the members were exhausted from a long night of negotiations. Already at this press conference, there were actors, especially from the environmental NGOs, who said they would have liked to see more ambitious objectives for the environment. In order to make progress on climate policy, they nevertheless agreed to compromise and made concessions they were not satisfied with. However, the compromise was also viewed positively by them as a first step to move in the right direction, and the commission members presented the compromise jointly as a result that should be implemented through the political process. As the commission was consisting of representatives of all actor groups, it was assumed that most concerns of different interest groups were already considered in the compromise. After this press conference, politicians

also promised on various occasions that the presented results would be implemented as it had been worked out by the commission (Jung RegPK 13.01.2020). However, this promise was not bound by any legal obligations, and it was not explicitly discussed if and how the legislative process could change the compromise. Negotiations between politicians and coal operators started then as the operators had regulatory approvals that included a term permit that was now to be renegotiated by the politicians for the GCE. In autumn 2019, some former members of the coal commission who were representing environmental NGOs gave a press conference to express their anger at the slow process and the changes that were planned to the compromise and that they feel betrayed by the politicians. After this press conference in which the participants spoke openly about their feelings journalists tried to get updates about the development in several press conferences in the beginning of 2020. The political representatives were often restrained in their answers and sometimes even refused to answer because they were not allowed to give information about ongoing negotiations. Some journalists reacted frustratedly to the restrained answers and tried to get more information by rephrasing their questions several times, but this did not have much success. In January 2020 the first official draft bills were discussed by the council and started the legislative process, sending the drafts back and forward between the council and the parliament to rework suggested changes until the bill was discussed in a final parliamentary discussion before the vote. Changes and change suggestions were all published in the minutes and, in that way, were very transparent but at the same time confusing through the many changes and the back and forward between the two legislative institutions. Even in the final debate in the parliament some politicians seemed to be not up to date or mixed up the different draft versions that they were going to finally vote for. The act passed combined with another one (which was supposed to support structural change and thus was intended to mitigate the negative effects of the GCE, e.g., unemployment in the coal sector, loss of regional identity etc.). In an interview in August 2020, Kai Niebert, one former commission member, gave his retrospective assessment arguing that the passed Act neglected environmental problems compared to social and economic concerns which, by comparison, were given a lot more weight. Moreover, he criticised that the process itself was not fair, apart from the outcome. He was disappointed that the commission's work was not fully considered in the Act but also angry that the commission had put a lot of effort into a political promise that he believed had been broken.

4.2. Emerging storylines in the discursive field and in the process

In terms of the first research question “*Which perspectives emerge within the process and discursive field of the GCE?*”, I can generally state that there were countless storylines. The storylines presented in this section were particularly remarkable to me as a reader because their content was often repeated or because of the way these storylines were formulated or presented.

A quantitative overview of the codes with Nvivo (Figure 3) shows that there was a trend that the storylines either dealt with the practical implementation of the GCE in detail or evaluated the process as such on a deeper level. To give a better overview, the storylines that are chosen for further analysis are framed in red in figure 3.

An example for storylines that addressed questions of practical implementation is the theme *deadline* (Table 2). Storylines positioned themselves in relation to the suggested exit date of 2038. Some of these storylines maintained that this date was good, others said that it was too early or too late and questioned its feasibility. Another striking theme was *money* (Table 2). Storylines associated with this theme dealt with the costs incurring through implementation of the act, arguing that it was right to spend this amount of money or, conversely, that the exit was too expensive. Another storyline of this theme argued that the introduction of a carbon price in the economy would, in the long run, make the use of coal uneconomical without the need for further measures. As a counterpart to this, the opposing storyline retorted that carbon pricing was not sufficient to achieve the carbon targets. Another storyline, also related to money, expressed concern about rising electricity prices for consumers due to the GCE.

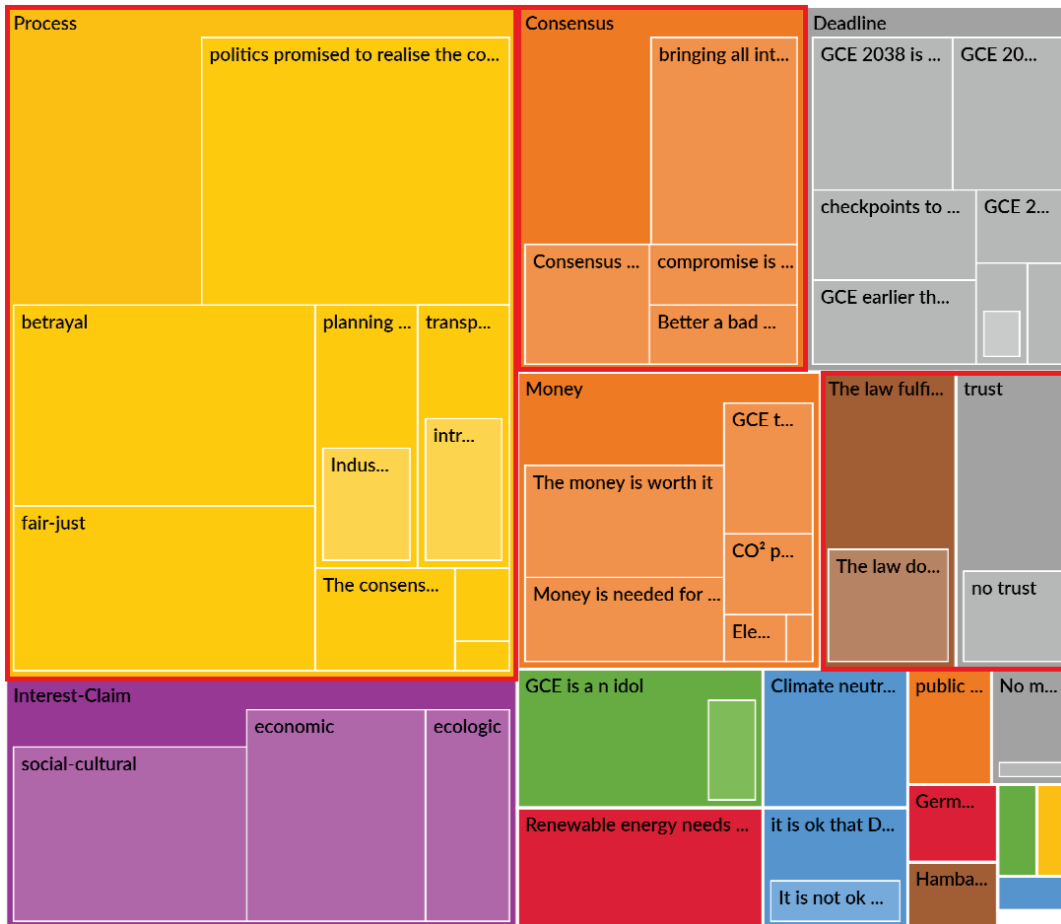


Figure 3: Quantitative overview of the codes; selected storylines in red (see also Table 2)

Table 2: Identified storylines of the data set

| Storylines selected for in-depth analysis | Consensus | Process | Storylines without a theme |
|---|--|--|---|
| | Better a bad climate protection than no climate protection | Betrayal | Trust |
| | Aligning all interests with each other | Fair-just | No trust |
| | Compromise is not satisfying | Politics promised to realise the compromise | The law fulfils its aim |
| | Consensus is necessary or even good | The consensus finding process was a struggle | The law does not fulfil its aim |
| | | Transparency | |
| | | Intransparency | |
| Other storylines | Money | No planning security | The Hambacher forest should remain |
| | CO ₂ prices are an alternative | Planning security | No more villages should be expropriated |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | CO ₂ prices are no alternative | Industry needs reliable electricity sources to remain successful | The expropriation is necessary |
| | Electricity gets too expensive. | We need more participatory processes | public pressure-support (expressions that try to create/get pressure/support by involving the public) |
| | GCE too expensive | No decision available yet | Lobbyism is a problem |
| | Money is needed for structural change | | Lobbyism is no problem |
| | The money is worth it | | Rebound effect |
| | Deadline | | Renewable energy needs to be improved |
| | Checkpoints are needed to speed up the GCE if possible | The exit should be continuous | Germany's society needs more electricity than the green sector can produce |
| | GCE 2038 is too late | GCE earlier than 2038 not possible | It is ok that Datteln 4 runs |
| | GCE 2038 is ok | GCE is unnecessary | It is not ok that Datteln 4 runs |
| | GCE 2038 is too early | GCE is necessary | Climate neutrality is necessary |

Storylines associated with the themes process and consensus occurred particularly frequently. Similar to the themes presented before, there were storylines of these themes that were evaluating implementation measures, defining the GCE process for the future years. One example was “*planning security*” of the theme process which was expressing the concern, that consumers and industries needed a guarantee that there will not be a lack of energy while reducing coal-based energy production. Such storylines dealing with the measures were not the focus of this thesis and therefore excluded from further analysis even though they were assigned to the theme process (see Table 2).

Instead, to reach a deeper level of analysis, I selected storylines that evaluated the process in the chosen time frame from the commission’s presentation of the results in January 2019 to the interview with Kai Niebert in August 2020 after the act came into force. Thus, the theme process was reduced to six associated storylines (see Table 2 and Figure 4).

The theme consensus was also restructured to five associated storylines (see Table 2 and Figure 4). This theme is important for the thesis because the process leading up to the GCE act was based on the idea of avoiding a conflict by including actors before the legislative process and by building a compromise which was also

often called a consensus. The inconsequent usage of the terms implies that the basis for the process was not clear to everyone or was interpreted differently by different actors. Therefore, the analysis will take a closer look at the use of the terms consensus and compromise in Section 4.3.

I further chose to include two storyline pairs which were not associated to a specific theme, but they were often linked to the two main themes. The first pair of storylines were ‘The law fulfils its aim’ and ‘The law does not fulfil its aim’. They were chosen to get a better picture of actors who supported or did not support the draft bill. The other pair of storylines ‘trust’- ‘no trust’ is included because they can be interpreted as a product of other storylines. As we will see in Section 4.4, both pairs of storylines become essential when it comes to discourse coalitions.

Figure 4 gives an overview of all selected storylines. The themes are coloured yellow. Storylines that were predominantly positive are coloured green, while the more critical storylines are coloured red. Blue storylines contain both positive and negative statements were classified as "neutral". Further conclusions about these "neutral" storylines can only be made from the context of the statements or from the combination with other storylines. The storylines selected for analysis are described in more detail below.

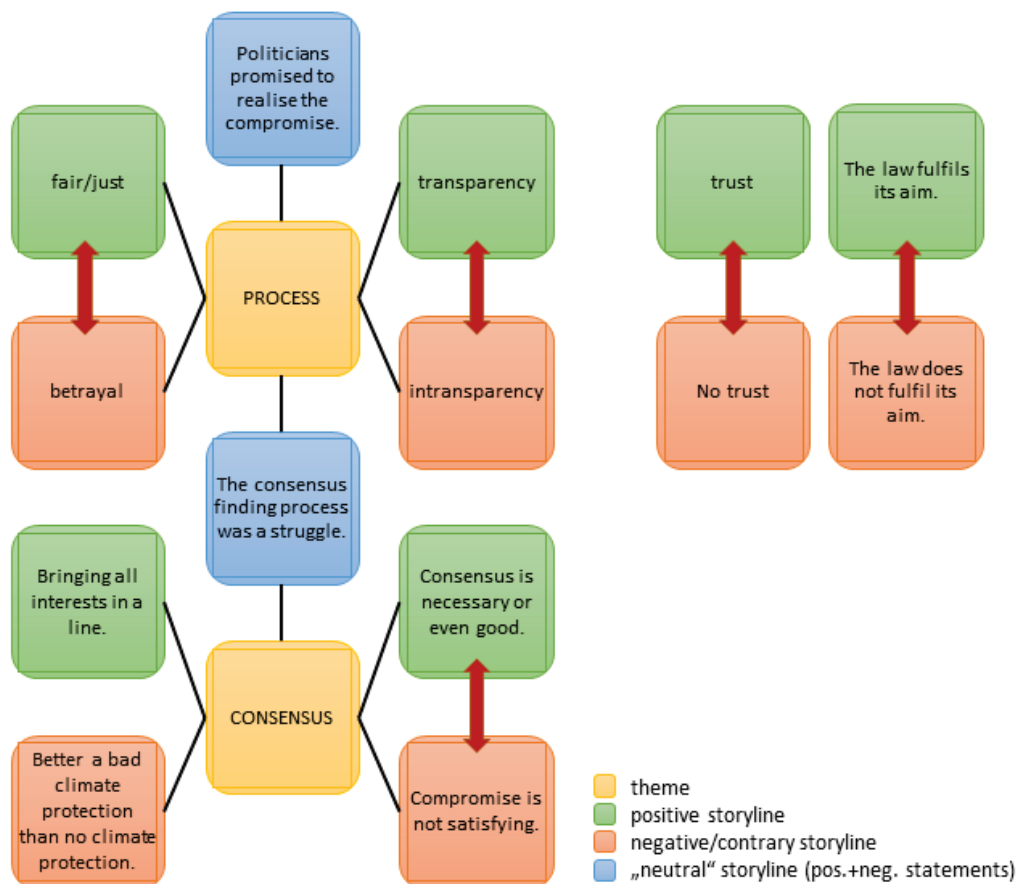


Figure 4: The two themes Process and Consensus and associated storylines

Storyline *Politicians promised to realise the compromise*

This storyline referred to a point of contention that was repeatedly taken up in the time frame studied: *“Our demand to the Federal Government, to the Federal Parliament and also to the Federal Council at this point is very clear: do not shake the coal compromise, implement it one-to-one.”* (Niebert BPK 28.11.2019). This storyline was used by various actors to either complain that the promise was not kept: *“Why do you not comply with it?”* (Krischer, Green Party [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen] Bundestag 2020:21389) or, on the contrary, to emphasise that the promise was kept against all obstacles: *“If you look at the law, you will see that the review of the 2022 climate targets is anchored there. [...] And also with regard to the negotiated solution for lignite, exactly what was agreed in the commission is in the law”* (Westphal, Social Democratic Party [SPD], Bundestag 2020:21396).

The storylines *fair/just* and *betrayal*

The two storylines ‘betrayal’ and ‘fair/just’ were very close to the previous storyline. While the storyline ‘fair/just’ acknowledged the problems and weaknesses of the GCE, speakers of this storyline also insisted that the process as well as the outcome (the act) should be seen as positive, and that the best possible outcome (of consensus, process and outcome/act) was achieved: *“The phase-out is necessary, but also painful for some. That is why we are not leaving it up to the market, but acting in a politically responsible way to make it socially acceptable”* (Westphal, Social Democratic Party [SPD], Bundestag 2020:21397).

‘Betrayal’, by contrast, was especially striking as a storyline because in comparison to other storylines, where the core of the statements was more hidden, betrayal and disappointment were expressed very freely and directly by several representatives that they literally felt betrayed. This dissatisfaction did not only point to the draft bill as an outcome, but also and especially to the process: *“It is simply not right that a coal commission is chaired by a former prime minister who then switches to lignite as a lobbyist, so to speak”* (Bülow, independent politician of the parliament, Bundestag 2020:21402).

The most fundamental storyline that was used to argumentatively back up the storyline ‘betrayal’ was ‘Politicians promised to implement the commission’s compromise’ (see also Section 4.4.) which was strongly spelled out by environmentalists from NGOs:

Of course, we feel completely betrayed in the promise to implement this one-to-one. (Kaiser, Executive director of Greenpeace, BPK 28.11.2019)

Neither honest with her voters, nor honest with the young people in this country, nor honest with themselves. Because it contradicts the will of the majority in this country and also the majority in the regions. (Niebert BPK 28.11.2019)

But some actors from the Green and Left parties promoted the storyline ‘betrayal’ as well and criticised their colleagues from other parties for how they treated the work done by the coal commission:

The market for coal has really collapsed. In this light, you would have had the chance to do what was necessary in terms of climate policy, to phase out by 2030. But you have unilaterally annulled this compromise that was found between the trade unions, the environmental associations, the industry representatives and the scientists. (Baerbock, Green Party [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen], Bundestag 2020:21391)

Baerbock further pointed out the problematic of transparency in her speech and includes hereby the storyline ‘intransparency’ in her argumentation. As a result, her speech is a good example for overlapping storylines of ‘betrayal’ and ‘intransparency’. Therefore, the storyline ‘intransparency’ and its counterpart ‘transparency’ will be presented in the following subsection.

The storylines *transparency* and *intransparency*

When comparing the storylines ‘transparency’ and ‘intransparency’, the first thing that is noticeable is that there were more voices that spoke about non-transparency or criticised it than there was talk about transparency. This could be due to the fact that transparency is rarely discussed and usually only criticised when it is not present. It is therefore a subliminal storyline that is not easy to identify. Actors said that the chancellor Angela Merkel was brave enough to speak honestly but that not everyone had the courage to tell uncomfortable truths in public:

The Chancellor was simply more honest in her answer to the question of my colleague Krischer. She at least admitted that we have a bit of a hang-up in the 20s. In this point this Coal Phase-out Act also deviates decisively from the coal compromise. (Baerbock, Green Party [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen], Bundestag 2020:21393)

The Chancellor said that differently yesterday. At least she had the courage to say that it will not be implemented one-to-one. (Krischer, Green Party [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen], Bundestag 2020:21399)

Such statements demonstrated transparency of the speaker at the same time as it expressed transparency of the chancellor. Therefore, such quotes are part of the storyline transparency, but it can also imply the storyline of intransparency pointing at those who did not have the courage, pointing at things that were possibly not said.

On the other hand, it could be that there was actually a lack of transparency, as it was expressed several times that there was confusion and ambiguity, especially when it came to the political process and legal details that were not clear to the public, which brings us to the storyline of intransparency:

The problem is also that if you are not as familiar with it as you and I are, then you don't see it at all. That's why we have to look into the details of this act. Yes, that's why we pick out the parts of this act that are really problematic. (Baerbock, Green Party [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen], Bundestag 2020:21392)

The storyline *The consensus finding process was a struggle*

This storyline was linked very clearly and directly to both themes process and consensus and represented an important connection, because the concept of consensus and the democratic idea behind it was the basis for the legitimisation of the process. Although the compromise and the process were heavily criticised, this storyline was often framed in a positive way. It emphasised the effort and strain of such a negotiation, but also expressing satisfaction that the effort was worth it to reach a common outcome that should be supported by all:

I can confirm that, of course, it didn't just take so long for fun, but we really struggled hard. We had many rounds of discussions and there were certainly moments when a compromise seemed to be hanging on a very thin thread, and I am really very glad that we always managed to coordinate the situation and bring it together, and that in the end we succeeded in bringing it together. (Praetorius, Scientist BPK 26.01.2019)

The storylines *Bringing all interests in a line* and *Consensus is necessary or even good*

These storylines describe the positive perspective on the concept of consensus. Positive statements that considered consensus as necessary or even good as a method to find a solution could be found under this storyline: “*In what other country in the world would it has been possible, in such a huge conflict, to bring together people with such different interests, have them agree in the end and come to a reasonable, workable compromise?*” (Kretschmer, prime minister of Saxony, Bundestag 2020:21400).

The storyline *Compromise is not satisfying* and *Better a bad climate protection than no climate protection*.

In contrast to the two previous storylines, statements in these storylines were more critical towards the idea of consensus. This was partly due to different definitions of compromise and expectations to it, but also because they recognised the disadvantage of compromise, namely that usually no one can be completely satisfied at the end of such a negotiation:

Now an era is coming to an end. Today we are deciding to phase-out coal. For some, the phase-out comes too early, for others too late. It is a compromise, and the essence of a good compromise is when none of the parties involved is 100 per cent satisfied. (Moll, Social Democratic Party [SPD], Bundestag 2020:21401)

The statement “*Better a bad climate protection than no climate protection*” (Niebert 26.01.2019) became famous at the very beginning, when the results of the commission were announced. The sentence came from Niebert, the chairman of the environmental NGOs in Germany, and was taken up by several actors throughout the process, partly word by word, partly in content, as an argument to emphasise that the coal compromise had already neglected the interests of the environment in the commission before the legislative process started:

We wanted much more ambitious climate protection, but we have seen how difficult it obviously is, as we already saw in the Jamaica⁶ negotiations, how difficult it obviously is to move the energy economy. And in contrast to the failed Jamaica negotiations, we want to say here clearly: better bad climate protection than no climate protection at all. (Niebert BPK 26.01.2019)

This simple idea of ‘better something than nothing’ became a storyline that expressed, in very simple terms, the attitude of the actor to the compromise.

The storylines *trust* and *no trust*

The storyline *trust*, like *transparency*, appeared more subliminally through a positive assessment of the GCE outcome or through hopes or expectations expressed especially during the announcement of the coal compromise but also during the final votes on the draft bill:

And this second path of structural adjustment that we are taking together, also today united between the federal government and the counties, that we realise it in such a resilient and socially acceptable way, so to speak, that the stability of our democracy and our democratic decisions are not questioned, but we must, as I said, now justify this trust that people have placed in us and that will be the task of the next 20 years. (Haseloff, prime minister of Saxony-Anhalt, BPK 03.07.2020)

In contrast to *trust*, the storyline *no trust* often appears in combination with already disappointed expectations and a resulting scepticism. Therefore, parallels to the storyline betrayal can also be found here:

In the preliminary stage, many climate scientists and environmental associations have always emphasised that in order to achieve the German climate goals, the phase-out must take place in the first half of the 2030s. Now it's supposed to be 2038. From your point of view as a scientist, is it guaranteed that the German climate goals can be achieved with this result? (Kreutzfeldt, journalist, BPK 26.09.2019)

A huge majority in the country is in favour of phase-out coal as soon as possible. You are doing the opposite here. That's why you could call what we're presenting a historic low. Why did you listen to science and the population during the Corona crisis, but not when it came to the coal phase-out? (Jung, journalist, BPK 03.07.2020)

⁶ A constellation of German political parties that remind in colours of the flag of Jamaica

The storylines *The law fulfils its aim* and *The law fulfils does not fulfil its aim*

These storylines represent the pros and cons of why actors interpret the implementation of the political promise as fulfilled or not. The storylines occurred with strong overlaps to trust/no trust, betrayal/fair/just and the storyline ‘Politicians promised to realise the compromise’. A closer look at the storyline ‘The law fulfils its aim’ reveals that the wording of some statements did not simply express "the compromise has been implemented", but rather that the basic ideas of the coal compromise had been implemented:

That, ladies and gentlemen, is the implementation of the basic idea of this Commission. (Miersch, Social Democratic Party [SPD], Bundestag 2020:21389)

That is why the structural change funds, which are also being decided today, are of great importance. This was only possible due to the social consensus in the "Growth, Employment and Structural Change" Commission, where trade unions, business, regions and environmental associations developed proposals together with external experts, which, in my view, will be implemented to a large extent. The basic statements of the coal commission are being cast into law today and that is why this is a good day. (Laschet, prime minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, BPK 03.07.2020)

Although there are overlaps between many storylines, the two most striking storylines ‘fair/just’ and ‘betrayal’ had not much overlap as they were counterparts. Therefore, these two storylines, and how they were promoted by different actors, will first be examined in the following Section 4.3, to answer Research Question 2. In order to answer Research Question 3, the relations of ‘fair/just’ and ‘betrayal’ to other storylines will then be examined in more detail and the interaction of the storylines with each other analysed (Section 4.4).

4.3. Actors promoting their storylines

4.3.1. Dynamics of the storylines ‘fair/just’ and ‘betrayal’

In order to answer the second research question “*How do actors promote their storylines discursively?*”, the following section will take a closer look at the storylines ‘fair/just’ and ‘betrayal’ over time and consider the actors who promote them. Further, the usage of the terms consensus and compromise will be examined to consider how this, surprisingly, contributed to the promotion of storylines. Other storylines will be included afterwards in Section 4.4.

The storylines in the data were not always clearly connected to certain actor groups, but there were clear tendencies which storylines were promoted more by certain actors. The data shows that the occurrence of the storyline ‘fair/just’, which

was mainly presented by politicians, was relatively stable over time, while its counterpart ‘betrayal’ occurred particularly frequently on certain occasions, often promoted by environmentalists.

Table 3: Chronological heat-map of the press conferences and the number of quotes from the storylines "betrayal" and "fair/just".⁷

| Date, data source | betrayal | fair-just |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 26-01-2019 BPK | 2 | 5 |
| 27-11-2019 RegPK | 0 | 0 |
| 28-11-2019 BPK | 32 | 1 |
| 13-01-2020 RegPK | 1 | 0 |
| 17-01-2020 RegPK | 2 | 6 |
| 22-01-2020 RegPK | 1 | 6 |
| 27-01-2020 RegPK | 0 | 1 |
| 29-01-2020 BPK | 2 | 11 |
| 24-06-2020 RegPK | 0 | 0 |
| 03.07.2020 Dt Bundestag 171. Sitzung | 27 | 19 |
| 03.07.2020 BPK | 2 | 12 |
| 16.08.2020 Niebert Interview | 8 | 1 |

In terms of chronology, there were three occasions on which the storyline ‘betrayal’ was particularly prominent: (1) in autumn 2019 on a press conference, (2) in the final debate in parliament in 2020 and (3) after the act was passed in August 2020 (Table 3).

The first time the storyline ‘betrayal’ dominated the discussion was at the press conference of environmentalists and former commission members who com-

plained about the planned changes to the coal compromise.

Some commission members and journalists expected that the implementation would not differ much from the coal compromise despite the legislative process it had to go through. But the expectations and hope raised in January 2019 with the announcement of the coal compromise were disappointed by the developments unfolding during the year. In particular, the environmental representatives were concerned because the compromise was, in itself, already a major concession in which the environment was, in their opinion, neglected and made worse by the negotiations:

When we sat here at the beginning of the year to comment on the results of the coal commission, I did so with the words "even bad climate protection is better than no climate protection at all". When I look at the current drafts from the Federal Ministry of Economics, I have to say that we not only have bad climate protection, but we have no climate protection, if not climate protection prevention policy. (Niebert BPK 28.11.2019)

Therefore, they tried to counteract this development in the press conference by calling for more activism, such as protests by Fridays for Future, and demanding a more precise implementation of the coal compromise from the government. This press

⁷ BPK and RegPK are explained on p. 14

conference shows that timing and audience played a big role in getting the most positive response and, possibly, support. The environmental actors were trying to use their presentation to build pressure through the public to prevent changes to the draft bill against their interests.

The second occasion on which the ‘betrayal’ storyline was strongly represented was in the parliamentary debate and mainly by the Green and Left parties. As the representatives of environmental organisations, they criticised that the coal compromise had been changed too much and that they would therefore vote against the act in the upcoming vote. Here, actors who promoted the storyline ‘betrayal’ were expressing their opinion not only in speeches but also by voting against the draft bill.

Now the day would have come when we could jointly adopt a Coal Phase-out Act for the future here; but unfortunately, you make it impossible to agree to this because it is oblivious to the future, ladies and gentlemen. (Baerbock, Green Party [Bündnis 90/Die Grünen], Bundestag 2020)

The last event was the interview with Kai Niebert in August 2020, in which the former commission member and representative of environmental NGOs retrospectively affirmed that he felt himself and the environmental interests betrayed.

I felt betrayed for the lifetime that I invest in such a commission. I have often spent nights in small circles, we had a small negotiating group, the "Friends of the Chair", I have negotiated and when I am told all the time "do something, do something good, we will do it", then I say - of course the parliament can decide what it wants, that's how democracy is knitted in Germany, but if I make this commitment beforehand, I have to implement it that way. (Niebert Interview 2020)

The storyline is so relevant because it also reflects the representation of actor groups. At the time, the conservative parties Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Social Democratic Party (SPD) were forming the government. Politicians from these parties were consequently designing the process. Therefore, it is not surprising that actors of these parties were promoting the process as fair and that the law fulfilled its aim. Further, politicians and representatives of the government were invited regularly on and thus had a constant stage to perform and promote the storyline ‘fair/just’. The complaining actors were from NGOs or journalists, thus outsiders regarding the legislative process. Even opposition parties such as the Green and Left parties were only able to support environmentalists in the final parliamentary debate. Thus, those actors could only occasionally strengthen the storyline ‘betrayal’. In addition, the compromise in itself was not satisfactory to all but was accepted as the nature of a compromise. By changing the compromise during the legislative process, the environmental representatives considered the compromise illegitimate and environmentally unfriendly:

After the results of the coal commission, there was also a press conference with the environmental associations. They told me that it was a very bad result, but better than none at all. The results of the coal commission have very little to do with the plan you are now presenting here. The scientific community and the environmental associations expressly distance themselves from your current plan. (Jung, journalist, BPK 03.07.2020)

The following section takes a closer look at the understandings of consensus and compromise expressed in my study material.

4.3.2. The role of the terms 'consensus' and 'compromise' in the discourse around the GCE

One surprising result from the data was the usage of the terms consensus and compromise. This section takes a closer look at the theme consensus and how consensus and compromise related to each other in the discursive material that I analysed, or rather, how the two terms were used to improve a certain performance.

According to dictionaries (see Section 4.1), there is a clear difference between the two terms which is mainly that consensus means finding common ground that already existed on both or more sides while a compromise is a result of negotiations which implies that at least some participants have to make concessions. The ideas of involved actors on how to implement the phase-out were not consensual but negotiated, and therefore should probably best be called a compromise between different interest groups.

However, considering language-in-use, there was a different understanding or at least presentation of these terms in the discussion around the GCE. Based on the data actors used the terms as synonyms:

The aim of this commission was not only to represent the consensus of society as a whole, but also to achieve it with its proposals. (Tillich, Christian Democratic Union [CDU], BPK 26.01.2019)

[...] but this commission has proven that it is indeed possible to reach far-reaching consensual results in a comprehensive and honest dialogue. (Weiger, Head of BUND, BPK 26.01.2019)

Such statements suggested that a consensus, a shared agreement, had been found, which was not the case. Possibly, actors were either unaware of the difference or they understood the compromise as the new basis for the further process and therefore called it consensus. Mixing the terms made the nature of the agreement unclear. Perhaps the term consensus was also used on purpose to present unity and to create solidarity by claiming that the process was fair.

According to the data, there were different attitudes to the concepts of consensus and compromise in the GCE debate as was visible from the different storylines related to the theme consensus (Figure 6). Although a clear distinction exists, and

despite the criticism towards compromises, the terms seemed to be mixed up by actors. To some extent the term compromise was replaced by “(broad) consensus”. In the debate this inconsequent usage of the terms was not problematised as such.

Positive storylines around consensus were often stressed by politicians who focused on the social or economic challenges and were satisfied with the new laws (Altmaier, minister of Economics and Energy, Christian Democratic Union [CDU], BPK 2020, Kretschmer, prime minister of Saxony, Bundestag & BPK 03.07.2020, Laschet, prime minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, BPK 03.07.2020). For instance, Altmaier (BPK 26.01.2020) declared that it would have avoided an east-west conflict.⁸ Actors of environmental NGOs emphasized that the result of the commission was a compromise, not a consensus, but even they had a clear trust and hope in the compromise they agreed to in the beginning of the process.

Nevertheless, the awareness that compromises do not create satisfaction among all actors was expressed in the storyline ‘Compromise is not satisfying’. Although a compromise tended to be perceived as the best solution, the disadvantage was also recognised, namely that none of the actors involved can have their needs fully satisfied: *“That is the compromise, and we have to live with it”* (Fichtner, speaker of the Federal Environment Ministry [BMU], BPK 17.01.2020). Another more radical statement of this storyline that even questioned the concept of compromise was openly and explicitly advocated by only one person. Niebert (Interview 16.08.2020) argued directly against compromises because they would only bring disadvantages for everyone, and instead he demanded a balance of interests as an alternative:

I never wanted a compromise because compromises are always putrid. Compromise always means that everyone suffers. What I wanted was a balance of interests, because I could somehow understand: the interests of the workers, that they somehow want a perspective, I can understand the interest of the region, that they want to have a perspective, that they don't want to de-industrialise, I can understand the interest of the surrounding industry, the energy-intensive industry, that they of course need competitive electricity prices and can thus continue to produce and I also have the interest of climate protection. Climate protection was already neglected in this Commission, and when I look at what was done later on, these Minister Presidents somehow weakened the path so that the result was 20% more CO₂ emissions than the reduction we negotiated in the Commission at the time. I would say that the protection of workers was also considered very generously, and the regions were also considered very generously, but the climate protection was cut back.

Niebert’s distinction is that in a compromise, points of interest, demands or the like are gradually abandoned in order to move towards each other, whereas in a balance of interests, the parties each consider the interests of the other and look for a way to combine these interests with their own and integrate them into joint solutions to find most satisfaction possible on all sides.

⁸ There are still structural and economic differences between the former East- and West-Germany that can cause tensions in negotiations.

Another criticism from the storyline ‘Compromise is not satisfying’, which also questions the compromise more fundamentally, relates to the inclusion of all actors: *“This is not a compromise because those who have to bear the brunt of it were not able to participate in the decision-making process.”* (Bülow Bundestag 2020:21402). Bülow raised an essential concern that was left unproblematic by other actors which is the consideration of silences, groups that cannot represent themselves such as future generations or nature.

Questions of inclusion and exclusion are essential for a sustainable compromise (see Section 5), therefore the most heated debates focused on storylines that discussed how the compromise was processed as the following section will show.

4.4. Discourse Coalitions - Relating and interacting storylines

Throughout the process, the two storylines ‘fair/just’ and ‘betrayal’ formed the most striking camps. Some other storylines (described in Section 4.2.) were used to strengthen the argumentation of one side or the other. For further analysis this observation is essential because it helps to identify discourse coalitions and thus to answer Research Question 3: *“How do different storylines expressed in the debate around the GCE relate to and interact with each other?”*

According to Niebert’s (Interview 16.08.2020) observation, different interests cannot always be clearly assigned to a political actor group:

[...] if I actually take a very serious look at who formed the three poles last night, it was three Social Democrats. [...] a former prime minister who supported the culture of coal, a trade union leader who had to represent certain interests and the president of the German Nature Conservation Ring who said "we will only solve the social question if we solve the ecological question and also climate change". So how people with, let's say, the same set of values in their background can obviously take completely different positions and have taken them, that was very exciting [...] (Niebert Interview 16.08.2020)

The reason for this described situation could be that all interests, social as well as economic and ecological, were comprehensible to most actors involved and that discussions arose rather because although sharing values, the actors set their priorities differently, even within parties. Similar to this, only a few storylines could be assigned to just one coalition because actors considered concerns of their counterpart in their argumentation, too. This should be a cautionary note for the following analysis, as storylines and thus also discourse coalition contain a certain degree of generalisation.

However, the two storylines ‘fair/just’ and ‘betrayal’, which were analysed in depth in Section 4.3.1, clearly formed competing coalitions to pursue different interests: the storyline ‘fair/just’ was pushed to legitimise the process and to thus gain sufficient support for the bill so that it could pass, while on the contrary side ‘betrayal’ tried to delegitimise the process and, consequently, the resulting act to prevent the changes that had been made. Based on this understanding I restructured Figure 4 as follows (see Fig. 5).

The storylines that were associated to the theme consensus are still located at the bottom of the figure. They were part of the debate but neither ‘fair/just’ nor ‘betrayal’ questioned the concepts of consensus or compromise in general (except for Kai Niebert). The storylines reflected positive and negative opinions towards the theme, but the data showed that all actors- even if not fully satisfied- accepted the concept of a compromise as a basis for the further process. With this understanding I consider the whole theme as a first basic discourse coalition shared by most actors which is why the whole theme is positioned at the bottom of the figure.

The unrealistic promise of politicians became the breaking point that split storylines over time into the two coalitions. Combined with the storyline ‘The law fulfils its aim’ it supports the storyline ‘fair/just’ and by this forms a coalition that legitimizes the process. In line with these storylines, the storyline ‘trust’ expressed confidence in the process as well as in the policy and implementation of the act.

In contrast to this coalition, the counterpart ‘betrayal’ coalesced with the storyline ‘The law does not fulfil its aim’. Actors understood that the draft bill (and later Act) that was developed in the legislative process was changed too much compared to the results that were presented by the coal commission. The coalition ‘betrayal’ considered therefore the promise given by politicians as broken and consequently, questioned the legitimacy of the process. Probably as a result of assessing the promise as broken, the storyline ‘no trust’ became more prominent and supported the storyline ‘betrayal’. Moreover, the coalition was further backed up by the storyline ‘intransparency’.

The two fighting coalitions were characterised by the emotions (in the case of ‘betrayal’ strong emotions) that further fueled the debate. The expressed emotion was substantiated by storylines that had a factual base (‘The law does/does not fulfil its aim’, ‘Politicians promised to realise the compromise’) and become hence a rational, plausible support for the argumentation.

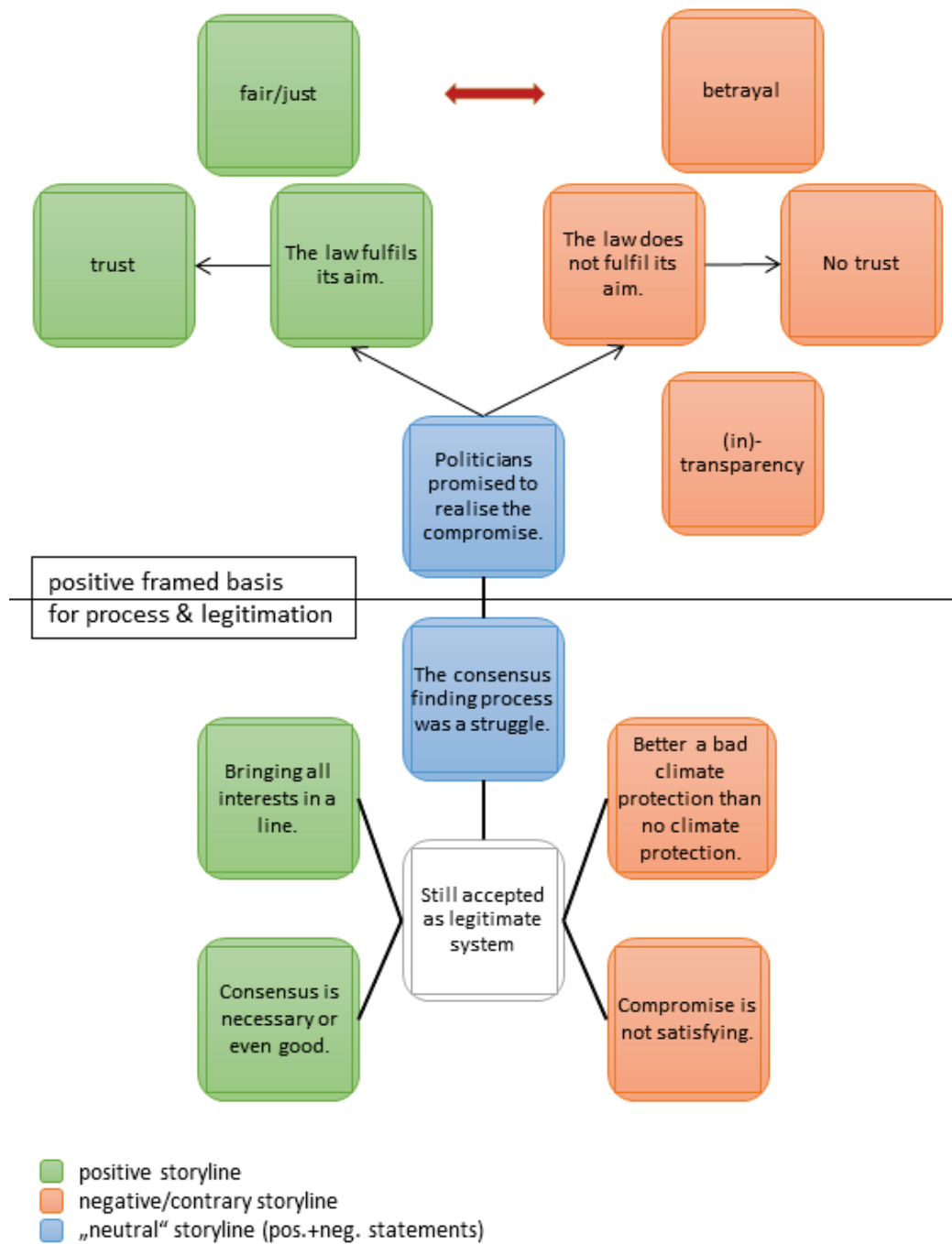


Figure 5: Identified discourse coalitions of the GCE

Considering the symmetry of Figure 5 and the emotional engagement with which the discourse coalition ‘betrayal’ was performed and defended in the data, it is surprising why the draft bill was passed, and the storyline ‘betrayal’ was not (more) successful. Different factors might have been decisive for the performance of the coalitions:

(1) Although promoted by the storyline ‘The law does not fulfil its aim’ and ‘intransparency’ which raised the problems inherent to the changes made to the compromise decided in January 2019, the differences between the compromise agreement and the legislation passed in 2020 were difficult to grasp for an outsider from the flood of information available.

(2) Consensus and even compromise have a positive, well-established image in society (see Section 5) as they are associated to democratic processes and fairness and were therefore not questioned or seen as illegitimate; even the dissatisfaction resulting of compromise was accepted by all actors as the nature of a compromise.

(3) Similarly, political processes were accepted as given and thus, the promise politicians made was never realistic anyway because politicians were bound to the legislative process and therefore changes were probably unavoidable (see Section 4.3., p. 38, Niebert 2020).

(4) Actors who promoted the coalition ‘fair/just’ were mainly politicians from the leading government or respective parties and therefore more powerful. Even a better performance of the counter coalition would possibly not have helped to destabilise the image of consensus, democracy, and the politicians’ opinion.

5. Discussion

My analysis showed that, although the storyline ‘betrayal’ received a lot of support by different actors and strong argumentative storylines, its presence was not stable over time and overall not powerful enough to persuade relevant actors (politicians of the leading parties). Thus, it did not achieve to influence the institutional practice or the discussed draft bill to their satisfaction.

According to Hajer (1993), two conditions are necessary for a coalition to become dominant/successful: (1) An increasing number of relevant actors, especially such as politicians, who use its set of storylines and signalise the acceptance of a new discourse, and (2) the new discourse should be institutionalised in political practices.

As initiators and designers of the process, politicians of the government were convinced of the discourse coalition ‘fair/just’ and fulfilled both necessary conditions. The actors of the coalition ‘betrayal’ did not have the necessary influence on politics to prevent an Act they did not agree with. Interestingly, a court decision related to the Federal Climate Change Act of December 2019 reveals another way in which the act could be changed in favour of these actors after all, as this act sets emission reductions of 55 % compared to 1990 levels by 2030, but does not contain any further ambitious targets to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The court ruled in favour of the plaintiffs that the Federal Climate Change Act did not sufficiently consider future generations and needed to be revised (BVerfG 2021). This sort of ruling, in favour of more ambitious climate change policies, could also affect the Coal Phase-Out Act.

Very interesting and unexpected in the results was the usage of the terms consensus and compromise. The ambiguous use was not addressed and intentionally or unintentionally helped to portray the process as fair.

The assumption to achieve good/fair results in negotiations is often following Habermas’ (1984) theory of the *ideal speech situation*, trying to exclude all power and base decisions on the strongest arguments (in Inglis 2012:77). Similar to Habermas’ *ideal speech situation*, Innes’ (1998) principles characterising a *deliberative process* are described as follows:

[...] individuals representing all the important interests in the issue must be at the table. All the stakeholders must be fully- and equally informed and able to represent their interests. All must

be equally empowered in the discussion; power differences from other contexts must not influence who can speak or who is listened to, or not. The discussion must be carried on in terms of good reasons, so that the power of a good argument is the important dynamic. (Innes 1998:60)

The idea is widely accepted in Western cultures but has also been criticised for being unrealistic. Wood (2004 in Ganesh & Zoller 2013) argues against common ground that it is “*almost inevitably the dominant culture defines what ground is common or legitimate.*” (p. 77). Looking at German culture, Lewis (2006:112) states that Germans work in hierarchal structures but also value and strive for consensus. But Lewis’ composition of hierarchy and consensus raises the question of how or what kind of consensus can be reached in a hierarchical working structure. Lewis explains:

Consensus is obtained by clarification and justification, not by persuasion or truly open discussion. Consensus creates solidarity, which makes everyone feel comfortable. Each participant in the discussion makes a contribution, but does not query a superior too energetically and certainly does not question his or her judgment. (Lewis 2006:112)

This explanation shows that a desire for consensus does not consequently lead to efforts to create equity in discussions.

Connelly and Richardson (2004) distinguish between ideal consensus and practical consensus. According to them three dimensions of the ideal of inclusivity can be affected by the choices of process designers: “*exclusion of people; exclusion of issues; and exclusion of outcomes*” (ibid.:9). This kind of framing, deciding on exclusions, is unavoidable to move forward but as a result it also changes an ideal consensus into a practical consensus (ibid.). This definition is comparable to the one of a compromise since exclusions such as those in practical consensus are made in the course of negotiations. According to the authors, there is a high risk that “*compromises are often confused or remarked by a rhetoric of ideal consensus. This is clearly problematic, since such (mis)representations break the principles of transparency and so threaten the legitimacy of a process*” (Connelly & Richardson 2004:4). This description very aptly captures what has happened in this debate. As already explained in the analysis, the term compromise was replaced by the term consensus by some actors in order to create a more positive image of the process. In addition, Niebert also described his desire for a balance of interest which is in principle an ideal consensus. According to Connelly and Richardson (2004), however, such an ideal consensus is never achievable, as exclusions on one, if not several levels are necessary to reach a practical consensus. Thus, the setting, the framework conditions are particularly important to keep exclusion as low as possible and at least come as close as possible to the ideal.

Connelly and Richardson further draw attention to the power of designers for consensus-seeking processes as it is widely recognized but framed as unproblem-

atic. This part is perceived as an administrative task rather than an element to determine the outcomes or legitimacy of the process. Consequently, process designers get through agenda setting and framing the power to influence the process as well as the outcome (ibid.). The environmentalists (of NGOs and Green and Left parties) were not involved as process designers and, the poor outcome for climate protection can be partly ascribed to the fact that the agenda was planned by others who therefore had more power over the outcome of the negotiations (Connelly & Richardson 2004).

Furthermore, setting consensus as a goal of a process pressures a shift of consensus *building* (an ideal consensus) into a consensus *making* process, a compromise by bargaining. As a result, “*In such processes either the status quo may be the natural outcome (Blowers, 1980) or the outcome may gravitate towards the interests of those forcing the agenda.*” (ibid.:8). Hence, in line with Wood (2004 in Ganesh & Zoller 2013), there is always a risk of stronger parties dominating the discourse and pushing their advantages in negotiations.

Nevertheless, the sustainability of a compromise is dependent on the involvement of all actors (Innes 1998) and thus equity can only be achieved by recognising all perspectives, even the ones disagreeing, and by attempts to balance/compensate existing powers.

Limitations of the work

This thesis is limited in many ways. Similar to the study of Markard, Rinscheid & Widdel (2021), the dataset analysed consists mainly of one type of resource: transcripts of press conferences (exceptions are the parliament discussion and the interview). Moreover, this work focuses on the time frame from the presentation of the commissions’ results to the interview shortly after the act passed. This period includes the legislative process, which is, so to speak, the last hot phase. The complete GCE could also be defined as a much broader process, as the other study has shown. However, this would have been beyond the scope of this thesis and would not have allowed such detailed observations in the analysis. As already mentioned in the analysis, other limits of this thesis were that many other storylines could not be addressed (also due to the scope of the thesis, see Section 4.2) and that storylines offer a risk of generalisation (see Section 4.4).

For further research a closer look at the internal work of the coal commission would be very interesting as some members already gave some insights and explained that although presented as successful, there were in this phase of the process issues as well. Furthermore, since the act was passed, there have been a number of new developments, especially political ones, which could influence the entire act again.

6. Conclusion

The GCE act was passed with the intention of accelerating the coal phase-out and the government set up a commission before the legislative process to create a more sustainable basis involving all key actors. Nevertheless, after the multi-stage process of negotiations, first in the commission, then in the legislative process, there was continued criticism of the changes to the Coal Phase-out Act.

In this thesis, I identified and examined striking storylines with the help of Hajer's (1993) discourse analysis approach and found two rival discourse coalitions. Furthermore, I found that the terms consensus and compromise were used to present a more positive image of the process.

The findings of this thesis show that two competing coalitions were formed in the selected time frame between the presentation of the coal commissions results and the interview with Kai Niebert: (1) 'fair/just' and related storylines legitimised the process with widely accepted concepts of consensus and compromise as a basis and thus pushed the bill forward to make it an act. (2) 'Betrayal' as a counterpart tried to question the bill in many ways, among others by delegitimising the process - not the first version of the coal compromise! - and tried to prevent the bill from being passed with unwanted changes. In this context it is essential to emphasize that the storyline 'betrayal' did not try to prevent the act in general but the version that was discussed and developed until the vote.

Another interesting finding was the use of the terms consensus and compromise. Both terms were used to legitimise the process of the GCE, but actors also replaced compromise by consensus to create an even better impression.

Despite all the heated debates and objections, the act was finally passed. Whether Germany will manage to implement both phase-outs and how sustainable the Coal Phase-out Act is will only become clear through developments in the coming years.

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Appendix 1: Composition of the Coal Commission

| Coal Commission | |
|--|---|
| Members with the right the speak AND to vote | Representatives/guests with the right to speak but NOT to vote |
| <p>*Matthias Platzeck *Ronald Pofalla *Prof. Dr. Barbara Praetorius *Stanislaw Tillich</p> <p>Prof. Dr. h.c. Jutta Allmendinger** Antje Grothus Gerda Hasselfeldt Christine Herntier Martin Kaiser Steffen Kampeter Stefan Kapferer Prof. Dieter Kempf Stefan Körzell Michael Kreuzberg Dr. Felix Matthes Claudia Nemat Prof. Dr. Kai Niebert Prof. Dr. Annkatrin Niebuhr Reiner Priggen Katherina Reiche Gunda Röstel Andreas Scheidt Prof. Dr. Hans Joachim Schellnhuber Christiane Schönefeld (from 22.08.2018) Dr. Eric Schweitzer Michael Vassiliadis Prof. Dr. Ralf Wehrspohn Prof. Dr. Hubert Weiger Hannelore Wodtke</p> | <p><u>From Parliament:</u> Andreas G. Lämmel, MdB Dr. Andreas Lenz, MdB Dr. Matthias Miersch, MdB</p> <p><u>Representatives from counties:</u> Brandenburg Lower Saxony North Rhine-Westphalia Saarland Saxony Saxony-Anhalt</p> <p><u>Representatives assigned to support and accompany:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of State Secretary Committee • The Ministry for Economy and Energy [BMWi] • The Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Security [BMU] • The Ministry of the Interior, for Construction and Home Affairs [BMI] • The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs [BMAS] <p>The Chancellor (Angela Merkel) with guest status</p> |

* Chairperson ** (until 21. 08. 2018)

(Source: Kommission WSB 2019, adapted)

Appendix 2: Process of drafting of the Coal Phase-out Act (31.01.2020 – 03.07.2020)

BR - Gesetzentwurf, Urheber: Bundesregierung, Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie (federführend)

 31.01.2020 - BR-Drucksache 51/20

Ausschüsse: Wirtschaftsausschuss (federführend), Ausschuss für Arbeit, Integration und Sozialpolitik, Finanzausschuss, Rechtsausschuss, Ausschuss für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit

BT - Gesetzentwurf, Urheber: Bundesregierung, Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie (federführend)

 24.02.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/17342

BR - Empfehlungen der Ausschüsse

 02.03.2020 - BR-Drucksache 51/1/20

Stellungnahme - Wi, AIS, R, U: zus. Änderungsvorschläge

BT - 1. Beratung

 06.03.2020 - BT-Plenarprotokoll 19/150, S. 18741D - 18758D

Beschluss: S. 18758D - Überweisung (19/17342)

Ausschüsse: Ausschuss für Wirtschaft und Energie (federführend), Ausschuss für Arbeit und Soziales, Ausschuss für Bildung, Forschung und Technikfolgenabschätzung, Ausschuss für Recht und Verbraucherschutz, Ausschuss für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit, Ausschuss für Bau, Wohnen, Stadtentwicklung und Kommunen, Haushaltsausschuss gemäß § 96 Geschäftsordnung BT, Haushaltsausschuss

BR - 1. Durchgang

 13.03.2020 - BR-Plenarprotokoll 986, TOP 25, S. 52 - 68

Beschluss: S. 68 - Stellungnahme: u.a. Änderungsvorschläge (51/20), gemäß Art. 76 Abs. 2 GG

BR - Beschlussdrucksache

 13.03.2020 - BR-Drucksache 51/20(B)

BT - Unterrichtung über Stellungnahme des BR und Gegenäußerung der BRg, *Urheber:* Bundesregierung

 08.04.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/18472

BT - Nachträgliche Überweisung, *Urheber:* Bundestag

 24.04.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/18779

Ausschüsse: Ausschuss für Wirtschaft und Energie (federführend), Ausschuss für Arbeit und Soziales, Ausschuss für Bildung, Forschung und Technikfolgenabschätzung, Ausschuss für Recht und Verbraucherschutz, Ausschuss für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit, Ausschuss für Bau, Wohnen, Stadtentwicklung und Kommunen, Haushaltsausschuss
Nachträgliche Überweisung der Stellungnahme BR und Gegenäußerung der BRg gem. § 80 Abs. 3 Geschäftsordnung BT

BT - Beschlussempfehlung und Bericht, *Urheber:* Ausschuss für Wirtschaft und Energie

 02.07.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/20714

Empfehlung: Annahme der Vorlage in Ausschussfassung und Annahme von Entschlüssen

BT - Bericht gemäß § 96 Geschäftsordnung BT, *Urheber:* Haushaltsausschuss

 01.07.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/20727

BT - Änderungsantrag, *Urheber:* Fraktion BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN

 01.07.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/20729

BT - Änderungsantrag, *Urheber:* Fraktion BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN

 01.07.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/20730

BT - Änderungsantrag, *Urheber:* Fraktion BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN

 02.07.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/20771

BT - Änderungsantrag, *Urheber:* Fraktion BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN

 02.07.2020 - BT-Drucksache 19/20772

BT - 2. Beratung

 03.07.2020 - BT-Plenarprotokoll 19/171, S. 21385B - 21405C

Beschluss: S. 21403D - Ablehnung des Änderungsantrags (19/20729)
S. 21404C - Ablehnung des Änderungsantrags (19/20771)
S. 21403D - Ablehnung des Änderungsantrags (19/20772)
S. 21415B - Ablehnung des Änderungsantrags (19/20730), Namentliche Abstimmung, 120:539:0
S. 21422B - Annahme in Ausschussfassung (19/17342, 19/20714)
S. 21423C - Annahme einer Entschließung (19/20714)
S. 21423C - Annahme einer Entschließung (19/20714)

BT - Nachtrag: 2. Beratung

 03.07.2020 - BT-Plenarprotokoll 19/171, S. 21505C - 21508D

BT - Nachtrag: 2. Beratung

 03.07.2020 - BT-Plenarprotokoll 19/171, S. 21508D - 21511A

BT - Nachtrag: 2. Beratung

 03.07.2020 - BT-Plenarprotokoll 19/171, S. 21511A

BT - 3. Beratung

 03.07.2020 - BT-Plenarprotokoll 19/171, S. 21422B - 21423C

Beschluss: S. 21423C - Annahme in Ausschussfassung (19/17342, 19/20714), Hammelsprung, 314:237:3

BR - Unterrichtung über Gesetzesbeschluss des BT, Urheber: Bundestag

 03.07.2020 - BR-Drucksache 392/20

BR - Unterrichtung über Gesetzesbeschluss des BT

 03.07.2020 - BR-Drucksache zu392/20

Unterrichtung über Annahme der Entschließung unter Buchstabe b der Drs 19/20714 (neu)

BR - Unterrichtung über Gesetzesbeschluss des BT

 03.07.2020 - BR-Drucksache zu392/20(2)


Unterrichtung über Annahme der Entschließung unter Buchstabe c der Drs 19/20714 (neu)

BR - 2. Durchgang

 03.07.2020 - BR-Plenarprotokoll 992, TOP 87a, S. 214 - 257

Beschluss: S. 256 - kein Antrag auf Einberufung des Vermittlungsausschusses (392/20), gemäß Art. 77 Abs. 2 GG

BR - Beschlussdrucksache

 03.07.2020 - BR-Drucksache 392/20(B)

(Source: Deutscher Bundestag, Dokumentations- und Informationssystem [DIP] 2021)

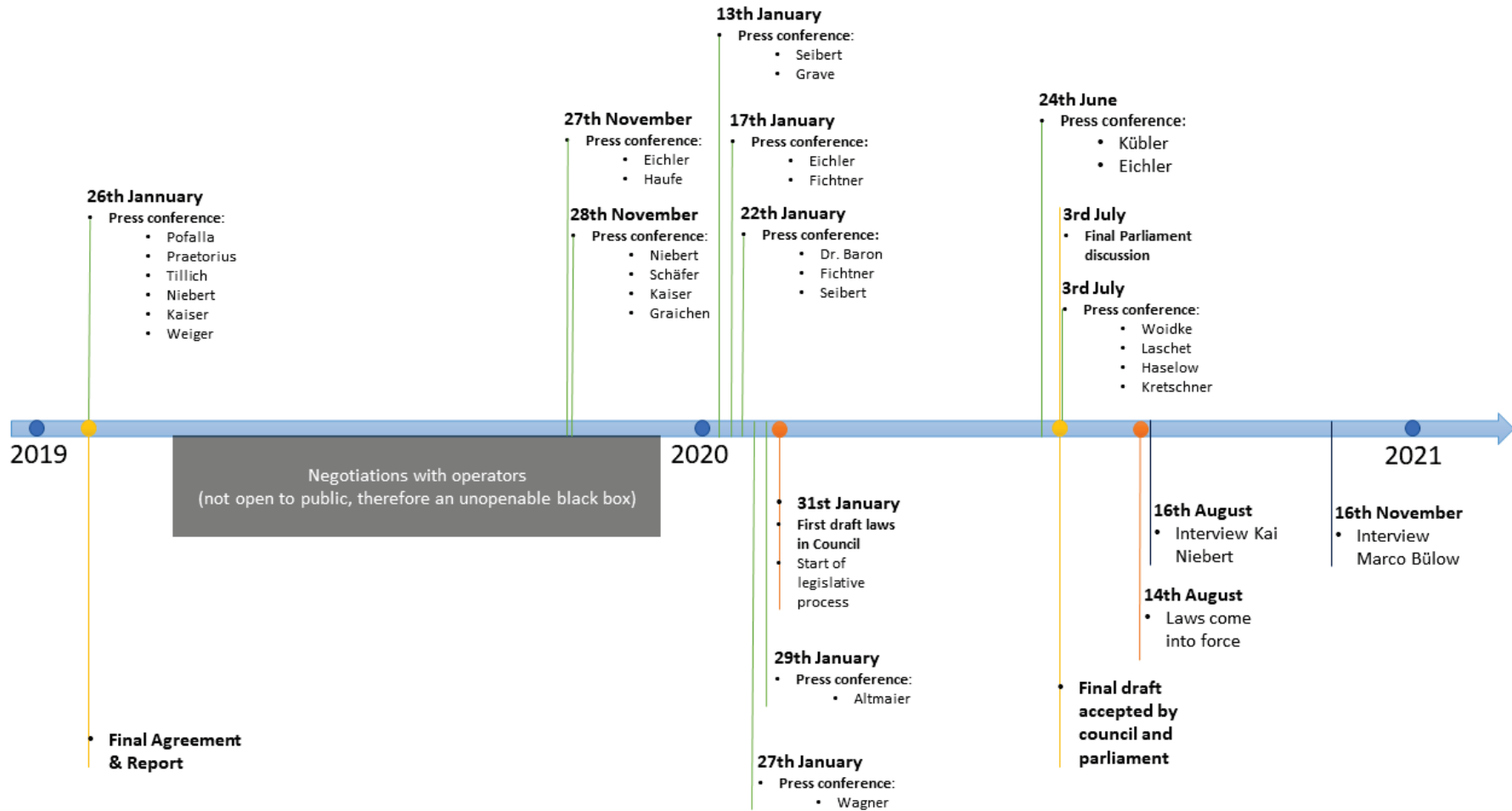
Appendix 3: Material used in the Analysis

| Date | Video/Protocol title (linked to source) | Actors |
|------------|---|--|
| 16.08.2020 | Präsident des Deutschen Naturschutzrings, Kai Niebert – Jung & Naiv: Folge 471 | Kai Niebert is the president of the “Naturschutzring”, the umbrella organisation of nature and environmental organisations in Germany and member of the Coal Commission. |
| 03.07.2020 | Die vier Kohlekönige (Laschet, Kretschmer, Woidke & Haseloff) über den beschlossenen Kohleausstieg BPK 3. Juli 2020 | Prime Ministers: - Armin Laschet, prime minister of North Rhine-Westphalia and candidate for the Chancellor position in autumn 2021. - Michael Kretschmer, prime minister of Saxony - Woidke, prime minister of Brandenburg - Haseloff, prime minister of Saxony-Anhalt |
| 03.07.2020 | Bundestagsdebatte Kohleausstiegsgesetz 3. Lesung | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lange - Bülow - Claudia Moll - Kretschmer - Krischer - Lay - Köhler - Westphal - Kotré - Pfeiffer - Annalena Baerbock - Beutin - Neumann - Miersch - Chrupalla - Altmaier |

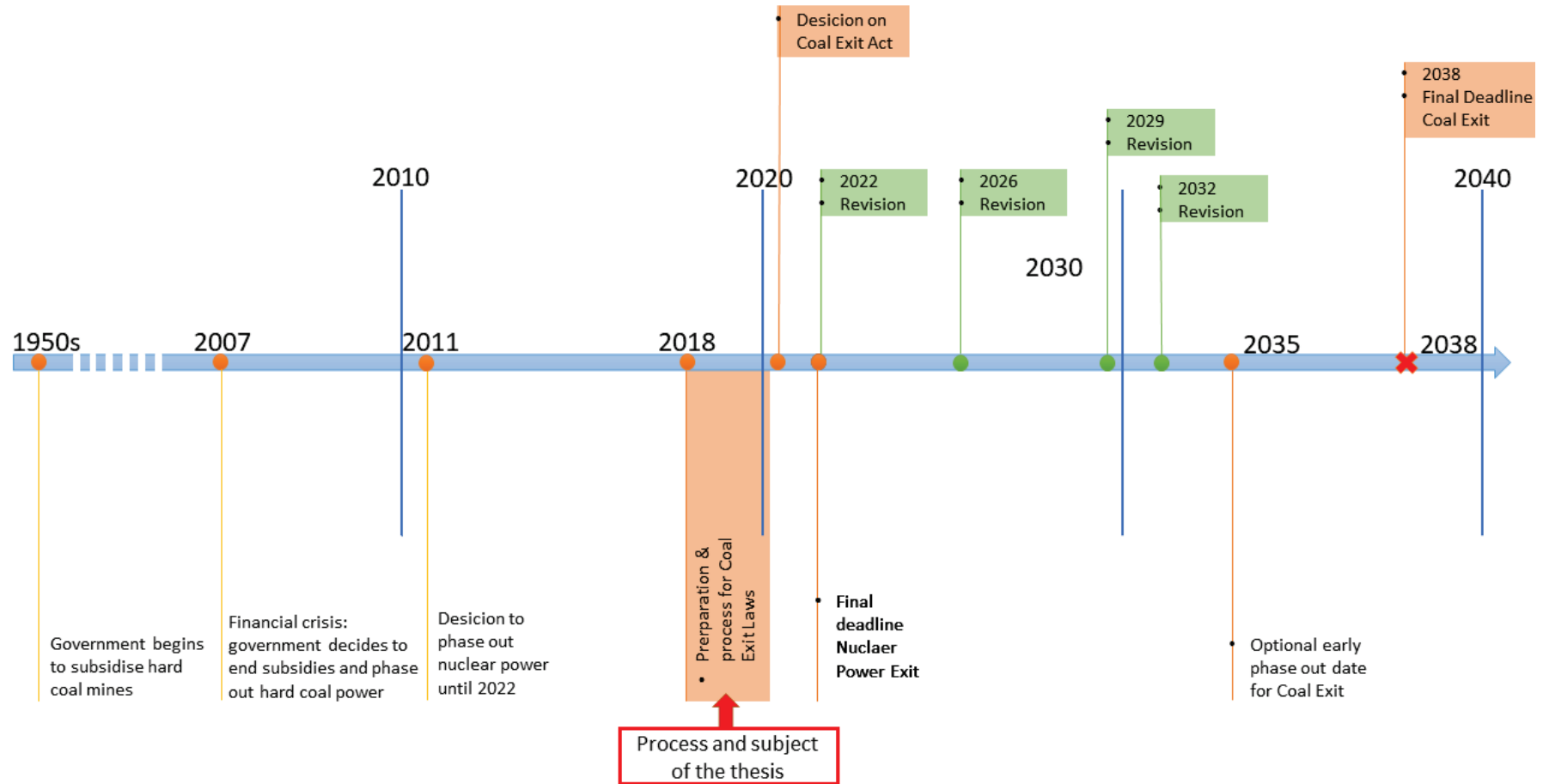
| | | |
|------------|---|--|
| 24.06.2020 | 24. Juni 2020 - Bundespressekonferenz RegPK | - Kübler - Eichler |
| 29.01.2020 | Wirtschaftsminister Peter Altmaier (CDU) über Kohleausstieg & Jahreswirtschaftsbericht 2020 - BPK | Peter Altmaier is the minister of Econom- ics and Energy. |
| 27.01.2020 | 27. Januar 2020 - Bundespressekonferenz RegPK | Wagner |
| 22.01.2020 | 22. Januar 2020 - Bundespressekonferenz RegPK | - Dr. Baron is a representative of the Federal Ministry of Economics [BMWi]. - Fichtner is a representative/ speaker for the Federal Environment Ministry [BMU]. - Seibert |
| 17.01.2020 | 17. Januar 2020 - Bundespressekonferenz RegPK | - Eichler - Fichtner |
| 13.01.2020 | 13. Januar 2020 - Bundespressekonferenz RegPK | - Seibert - Grave - (Svenja Schulze is the minister of Envi- ronment.) |
| 28.11.2019 | Umweltverbände schlagen Alarm vor der Weltklimakonferenz Sehenswerte BPK | - Niebert, - Schäfer, - Martin Kaiser is the director of Green- peace in Germany. - Greichen |
| 27.11.2019 | 27. Novemeber 2019 – Bundespressekonferenz RegPK | - Eichler - Haufe |
| 26.01.2019 | Pressekonferenzen zum Kohleausstieg bis 2038 und Einordnung durch Hubertus Bardt am 26.01.19 | Part 1 Commission Chair: - Pofalla - Prof. Praetorius - Tillich Part 2 Heads of environmental organisa- tion, Commission members: - Weiger (BUND) - Niebert (DNR) |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Kaiser (Greenpeace)- (Olaf Scholz was the minister of Finances and became Chancellor in autumn 2021.) |
|--|--|--|

Appendix 4: Timeline Press Conferences and Announcements



Appendix 5: Timeline of events and political plans related to coal



Appendix 6: "Way of Legislation" – Legislative Process to enact laws

Weg der Gesetzgebung

Deutscher Bundestag



Gesetzesinitiative

Die Bundesregierung, der Bundestag oder eine Gruppe von Abgeordneten aus über 500 Mitgliedern des Bundestages haben die Möglichkeit, eine Gesetzesinitiative zu starten. Bei einem drei-Viertel-Mehrheit im Bundestag kann die Bundesregierung eine Gesetzesvorlage einbringen. Im Falle des Bundestages sind diese Rechte nach dem Parlament als Gesetz zu beschließen. Die Gesetzesvorlage wird dem Bundestag vorgelegt. Der Bundestag kann die Vorlage ablehnen, sie zurückweisen oder sie mit Änderungen beschließen. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundesrat vorgelegt. Der Bundesrat kann die Vorlage ablehnen, sie zurückweisen oder sie mit Änderungen beschließen. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundestag vorgelegt.

Stellungnahme

Initiatoren der Bundesregierung gehen zunächst an den Bundestag, der binnen sechs Wochen eine Stellungnahme abgeben muss. Danach ist die Regierung über die Notwendigkeit der Vorlage zu entscheiden. In der ersten Lesung des Bundestages wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In der ersten Lesung wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In der ersten Lesung wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Beratung

Im Bundestag gibt es zwei Arten der Beratung: die öffentliche Beratung und die Ausschussberatung. In der öffentlichen Beratung wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In der Ausschussberatung wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Detaillberatung

Nach der ersten Beratung wird der Gesetzentwurf zur öffentlichen Prüfung und Beratung an die Ausschüsse des Bundestages weitergeleitet. In den Ausschüssen wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In den Ausschüssen wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Ablehnung

In der zweiten Beratung kann ein Antragsteller einen Antrag auf Ablehnung der Vorlage stellen. In der zweiten Beratung kann ein Antragsteller einen Antrag auf Ablehnung der Vorlage stellen. In der zweiten Beratung kann ein Antragsteller einen Antrag auf Ablehnung der Vorlage stellen.

Zweite Durchlauf

Der Bundestag hat die Möglichkeit, die Vorlage in der zweiten Durchlauf zu beschließen. In der zweiten Durchlauf wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In der zweiten Durchlauf wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Vermittlungsverfahren

Prüft ein Gesetzentwurf im Bundestag keine Mehrheit, kann der Bundestag einen Vermittlungsausschuss einberufen. In dem Vermittlungsausschuss wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In dem Vermittlungsausschuss wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Erste Beratung

Die erste Beratung des Bundestages findet in der Regel in drei Lesungen statt. In der ersten Beratung wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In der ersten Beratung wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Einspruch

Der Bundestag kann einen Einspruch gegen die Vorlage einbringen. In dem Einspruch wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt. In dem Einspruch wird die Vorlage in der Regel in drei Lesungen behandelt.

Scheitern und Annahme

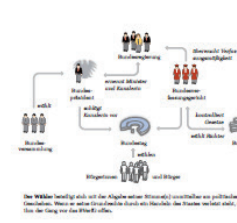
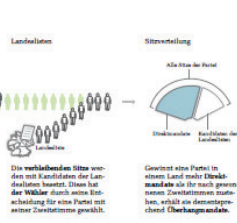
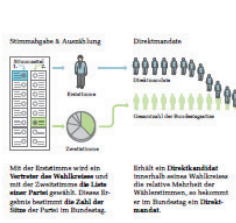
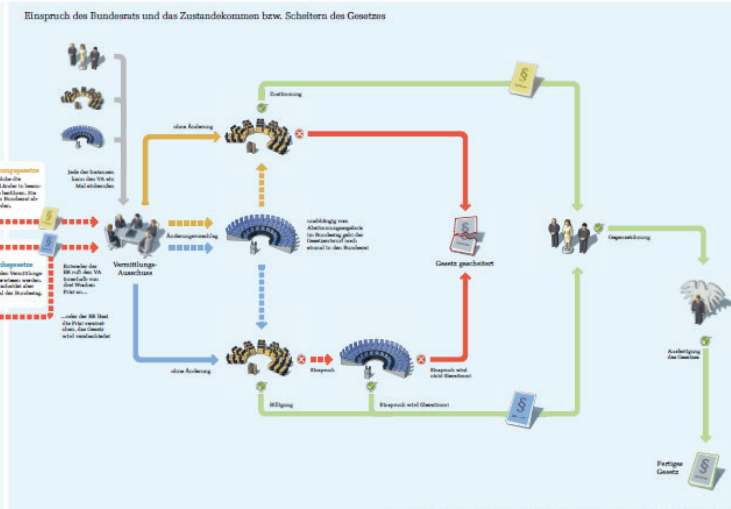
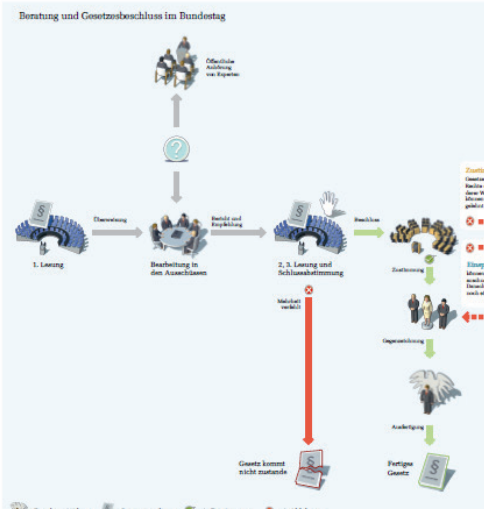
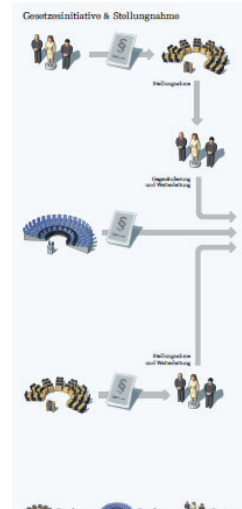
Ein Gesetz scheidet dann, wenn es in der ersten Beratung des Bundestages keine Mehrheit findet. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundesrat vorgelegt. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundesrat vorgelegt.

Gegensatzung

Nach der Verabschiedung eines Gesetzes durch den Bundestag und den Bundesrat wird es dem zuständigen Bundesminister vorgelegt. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundesrat vorgelegt. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundesrat vorgelegt.

Verkündung

Nach der Gegenzeichnung wird das Gesetz dem Bundespräsidenten vorgelegt. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundespräsidenten vorgelegt. In diesem Fall wird die Vorlage dem Bundespräsidenten vorgelegt.



Acknowledgement

“Our lives are not our own. From womb to tomb, we are bound to others, past and present. And by each crime and every kindness we birth our future.”

– Cloud Atlas –

First and foremost, I would like to thank Anke. Your patience and enthusiasm motivated me to finish this thesis.

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