

Advocacy Coalition Framework

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Outline

- Advocacy Coalition Framework
- Case study: Czech coal policy subsystem

Advocacy Coalition Framework

Policy process

- **Policy process**: a process through which the public policy (or its components) is produced, terminated, or revised
- Policy process is **shaped by**:
 1. interactions of **diverse actors** influenced by **institutional structures** (Ostrom 2014; Sabatier 1988)
 2. policy **discourses** and **frames** (Shanahan et al. 2011)
 - (number of more general structures and events)
- Different policy process theories tend to emphasize different dimensions of the policy process

Agency: bounded rationality

- Individuals are **goal-oriented** but have **limited** time, resources and cognitive ability to consider all information, solutions, etc. (Simon 1957, Cairney 2012)
 - they use **heuristics** to make “good enough” decisions
- Individuals rely on **beliefs** to decide to which information pay attention
 - Individuals (actors) tend to **act** according their **enduring beliefs** rather than according their short-term rational interests

Belief system

- Actors related to the world through **perceptual filters** (heuristics) based on **enduring beliefs**
- **Assimilation bias:** belief systems condition actors to accept and interpret policy-relevant information in way that supports their beliefs

Type of Belief	Resistance to Change	Entrenchment	Example
Fundamental core beliefs	Very resistant	Span multiple subsystems	Political Ideology
Policy core beliefs	Resistant	Subsystem wide	Effectiveness of policy instruments
Secondary beliefs	Most susceptible	Relate to area within a subsystem	Budgetary allocations

Policy process and advocacy coalitions

- Policy process involves (1) **diversity of actors** and their **groups** and occurs (2) mostly at the level of a **policy subsystem** – subset of political system defined by issue area
- Actors perceive policy problems through a **system of policy beliefs** and struggle to translate their beliefs into policies
- **Advocacy coalitions** (1) share policy beliefs and (2) coordinate their efforts
- Dominant vs. minor **coalitions**
- Principal vs. auxiliary **coalition members**
- Policy **brokers**

Policy subsystem

- **Policy subsystem** is a subset of political system defined by particular issue area (Weible et al. 2016).
- # of coalitions, patterns of coalition's beliefs and coordination → three **different types of subsystems**

Table 1 – Three policy subsystem types.

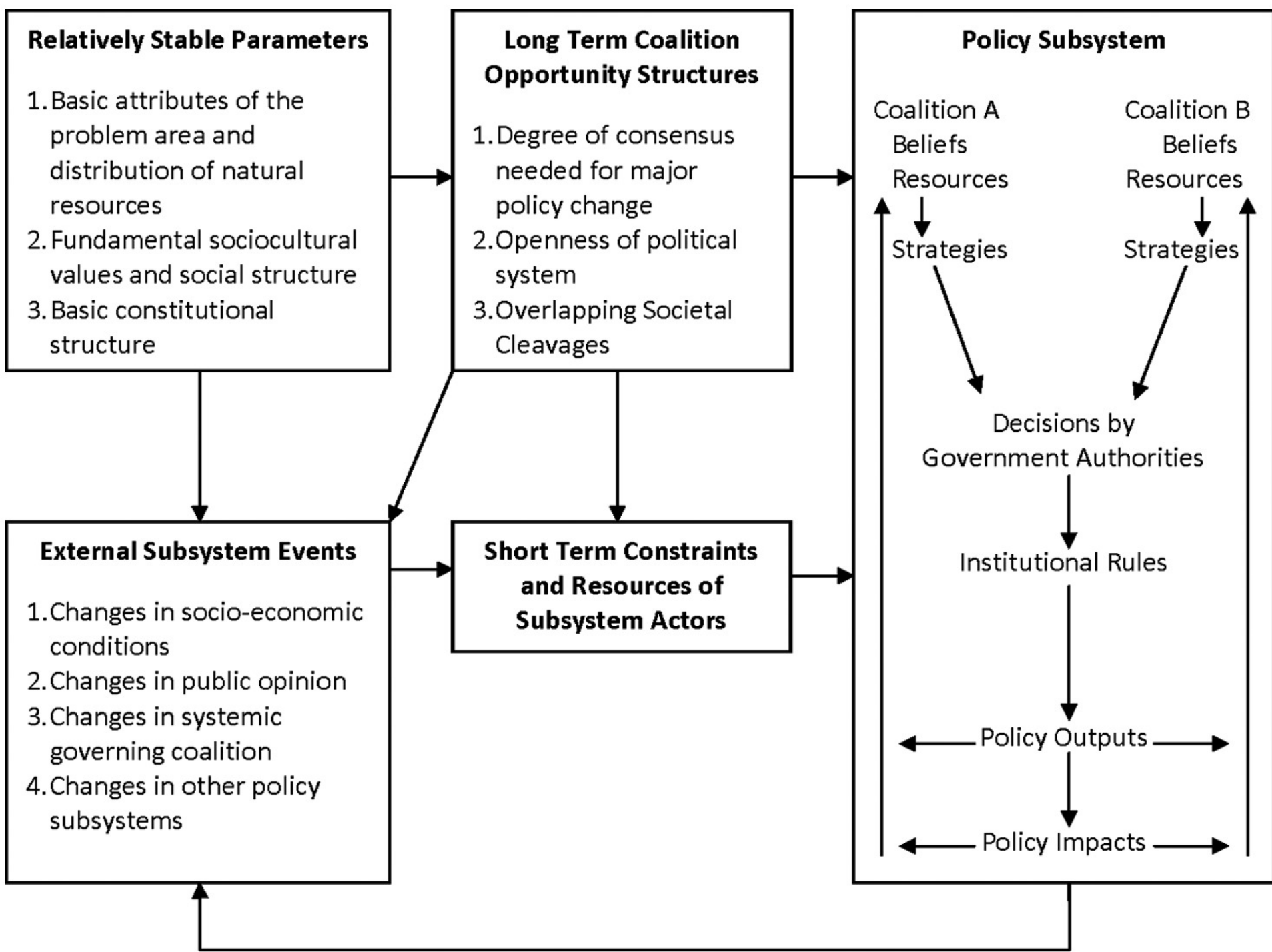
	Unitary subsystems	Collaborative subsystems	Adversarial subsystems
Coalitions	Dominant coalition with high intra-coalition belief compatibility and high intra-coalition coordination	Cooperative coalitions with intermediate inter-coalition belief compatibility and high inter and intra-coalition coordination	Competitive coalitions with low inter-coalition belief compatibility and high intra-coalition and low inter-coalition coordination
Degree of Centralization and Independence	Authority is centralized and interdependence with other subsystems ignored	Authority is decentralized, fragmented across policy subsystems, or both. Coalitions share access to authority.	Authority is centralized but fragmented within the policy subsystem, fragmented across policy subsystems, or both. Coalitions compete for access to authority
Venues	Coalition influences decisions in one or two amiable venues (legislature, agencies)	Coalitions attempt to keep decisions within inclusive, consensus-based institutions	Coalitions seek to influence decisions in any amiable venue (courts, legislatures, agencies)

Policy change

- **Major PC:** changes in the core aspects of the policies
- **Minor PC:** changes in the secondary aspects of the policies

Four **pathways** to policy change:

1. **External events:** changes in government, disasters, crisis, etc.
2. **Internal events:** actor collapses, corruption affairs, etc.
3. **Policy-oriented learning:** gradual change in coalition beliefs reflecting new information
4. **Negotiated agreement:** resulting from collaborative institutions or hurting stalemate



Advocacy Coalition Framework: A Case of Czech Coal Policy

Case study: Czech coal policy

- brown coal production accounts for 46% of TPES and 51% of electricity mix
- it is concentrated in the Sokolov Basin and the **North Bohemian Basin**
- the **territorial mining limits** has been established by **government decree** in 1991

stakes:

- a lifting of “the limits” became a key issue in energy policy since then
- **transition pathway** to decarbonized economy very much depends on the future of coal



Adversarial subsystem

- Defined by (1) **competing coalitions** with (2) low inter-coalition belief compatibility and (3) high intra-coalition and (4) low inter-coalition coordination (Weible et al. 2010: 524)
- Further expected: **coalitions compete for access to decision-making**
- Further expected: (some) experts are principal allies or opponents of the coalitions → **high political use of expert info by coalitions**

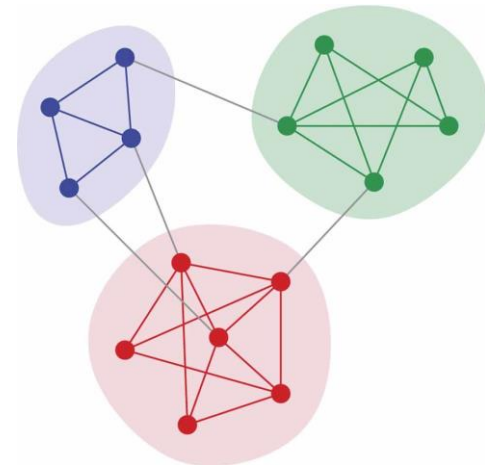
Advocacy coalition detection

1. Shared policy core beliefs

- normative assumptions on how specific **policy field** ought to be organized
- captured by 4 Likert-type scales:
 - **economy:** costs/benefits of coal, regional development
 - **environment:** environmental and health impacts
 - **policy:** future of coal in energy mix, question of the mining limits
 - **process:** trust among key actors, regulatory framework

2. Factions

- **cohesive parts of a network**
- groups of actors that are connected more among themselves than with others



Data collection

- organizational actors involved in **coal policy** subsystem

sector	responded	total	response rate (%)
central and regional governance	16	16	100
central and regional political parties	16	18	89
environmental non-governmental organizations	8	9	89
research organizations	14	16	88
professional associations & trade unions	3	7	43
industry	11	17	65
total	68	83	82

- the survey instrument (a self-administered online questionnaire) collects data on attribute variables: (1) **policy core beliefs** and (2) **network ties**

network	tie
political influence (PI) network	directed binary tie
expert information (EI) exchange network	directed binary tie
political cooperation (PC) network	directed binary tie

Usual suspects: Industry coalition

policy core beliefs:

- coal as a basis of economic growth
- should be part of future energy mix
- mining limits should be rescinded
- legislative framework and stakeholder engagement are adequate

- Led by **state-owned energy company** and **Ministry of Trade and Industry**
- Highly influential with **direct access to decision-making**

consists of **16** organizations:

- 2 state agencies (central)
- 1 regional agency (Ústí region)
- 2 political parties (central)
- 3 political parties (Ústí region)
- 1 research organization
- 5 companies, 2 NGOs

Usual suspects: Environmental coalition

policy core beliefs:

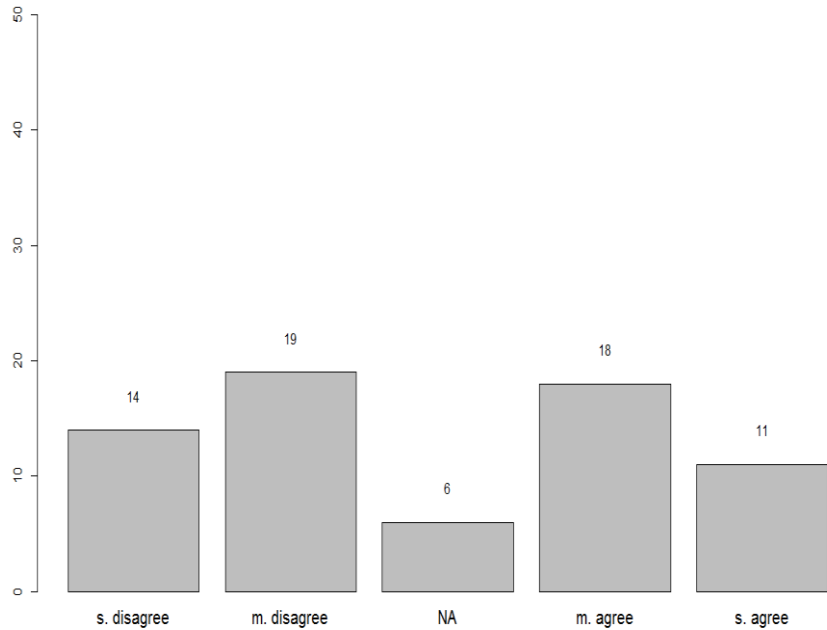
- coal mining has severe enviro impacts
 - should not be base for future energy mix
 - mining limits should not be rescinded
 - legislative framework and stakeholder engagement are not adequate
-
- Consists mainly of ENGOs and research organizations
 - Emphasis on **relational capacity** as well as **expert knowledge**

consists of **17** organizations:

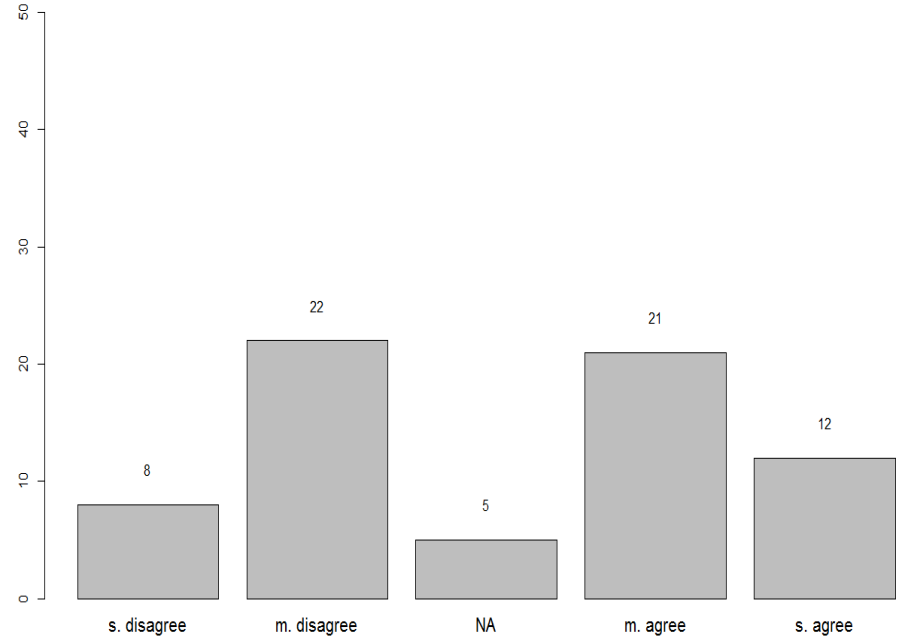
- **8 ENGOs**
- 2 state agencies (central)
- 1 political party (central)
- 6 research organizations

Polarized policy core beliefs distribution

Coal should remain a key part of energy mix and its mining should be developed further (N = 68)

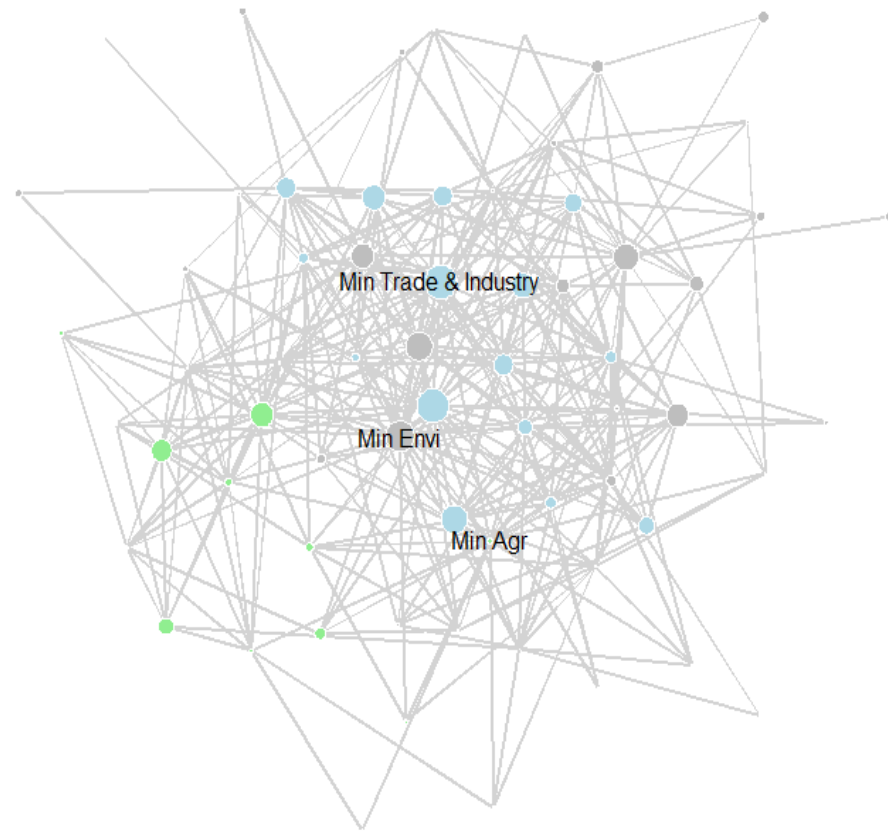


Economic benefits of coal mining to society are irreplaceable (N = 68)



Fragmentation of the decision-makers

- Decision-making actors (DMAs): competent ministries and ruling (central and regional) political parties
- Key DMAs – three competent ministries – belong to different groups



Industry Coalition = blue
Environmental Coalition = green
residual group = grey
node size = reputational power

ACF: Coal policy in Czechia

Two competing coalitions in a fragmented political system (Ocelík et al. 2019)

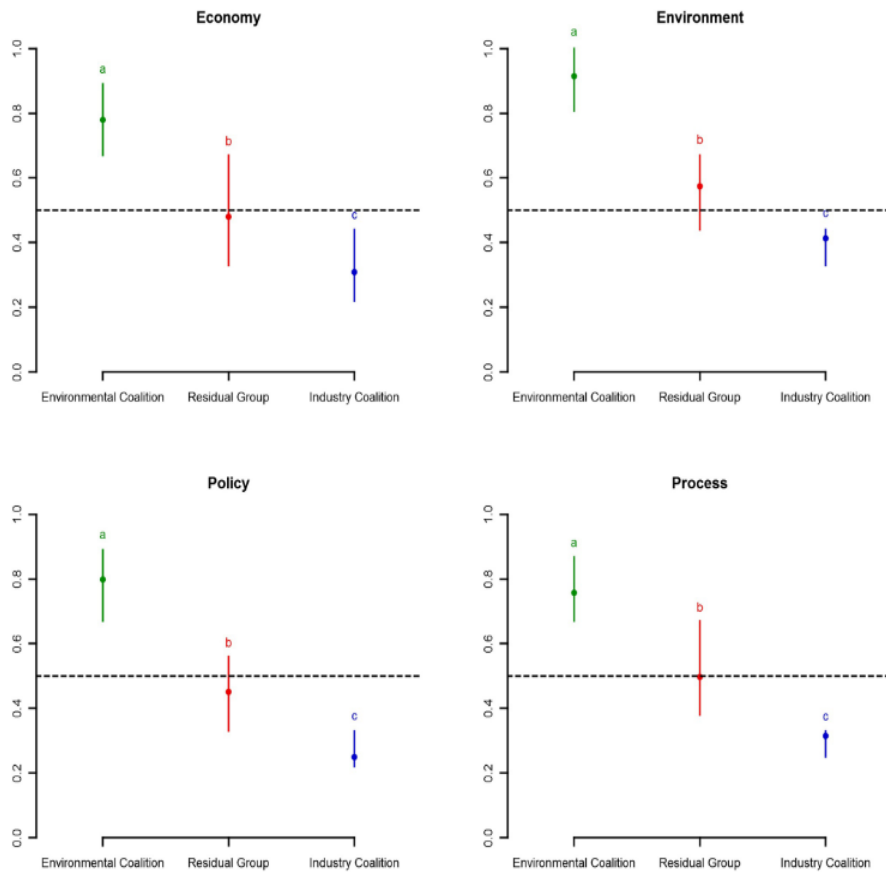


Fig. 1. PCB comparison based on coalition membership.^{1,2}

¹All variables range between 0 (strong pro-coal position) and 1 (strong anti-coal position). For details on PCB dimensions, see the *Data and Methods* section and Appendix B.

²Multiple comparisons test was used to determine pairwise differences between the three groups for each dimension. The groups marked with a different superscript letter and different color are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. For more information, see Appendix B.

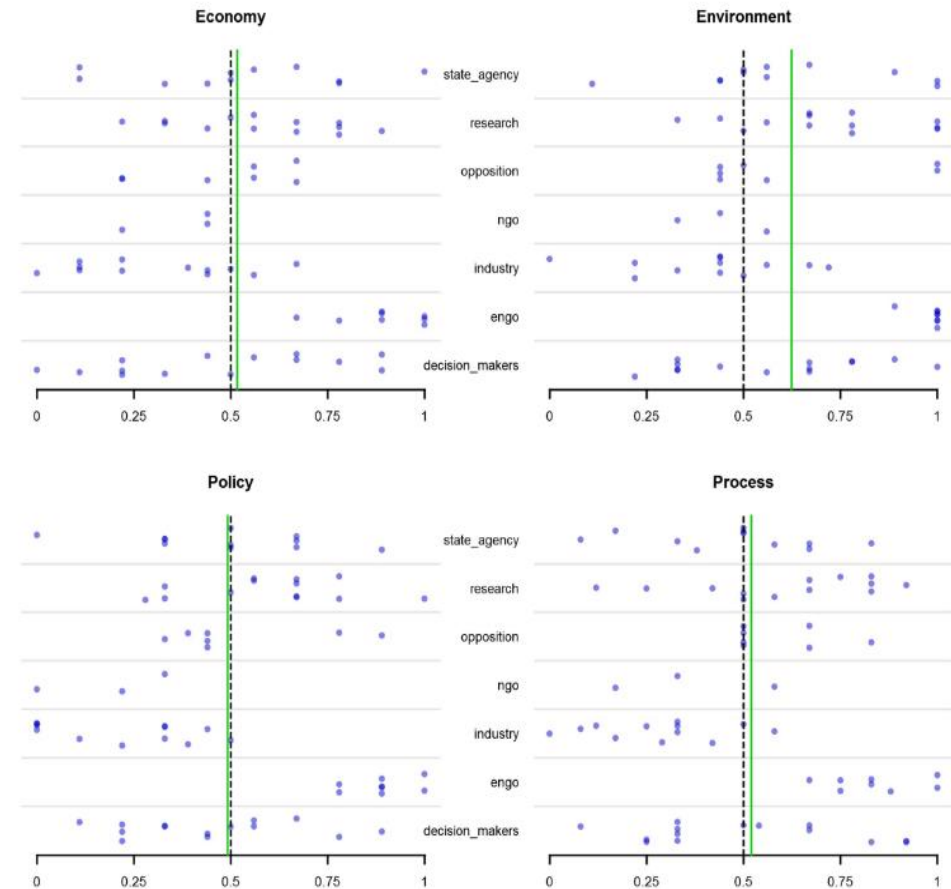


Fig. 2. PCB scores based on actor type.^{1,2}

¹All variables range between 0 (strong pro-coal position) and 1 (strong anti-coal position). For details on PCB dimensions, see the *Data and Methods* section and Appendix B.

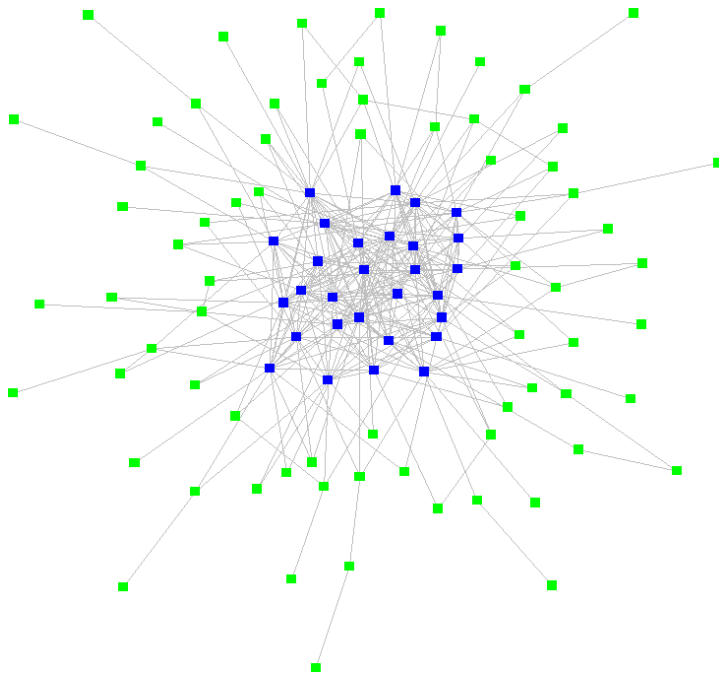
²The blue dots represent the scores of individual organizations. The dotted line represents a neutral position (0.5); the green line represents the mean value.

Use of expert information

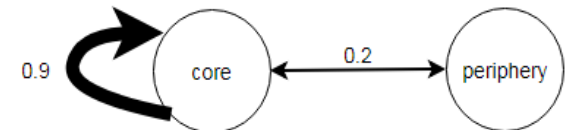
- **Expert information** is crucial for management of complex socio-technical systems (Giddens 1990) – includes **evidence-based policy-making**
- Its importance increases under **conditions of uncertainty** (Cairney et al. 2016)
- Two opposing approaches:
 - **Technocratic governance:** exp info abrades ideological differences and “builds bridges”
 - **Expertise politics:** exp info is used to defend ideological positions of their holders/providers

Block modeling

- Block model (BM) is a **simplified representation of a network** (White et al. 1976):
 - Groups of nodes with similar relations to others (blocks)
 - Patterns of relations among blocks (social roles)



	core	periphery
core	0.9	0.2
periphery	0.2	0.05



network density = 0.12
only interactions with sign. different density displayed

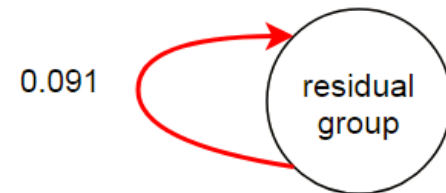
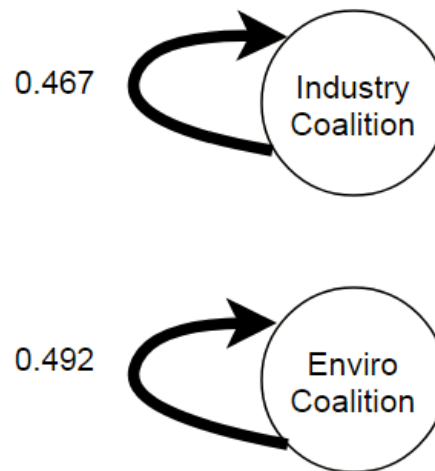
Expert information: Tell me, I am right?

- Coalitions identified based on **political cooperation** and shared **policy core beliefs**

Blocked density matrix: expert information
Adj R² = 0.102

	Industry Coalition	Enviro Coalition	residual group
Industry Coalition	0.467	0.161	0.158
Enviro Coalition	0.147	0.492	0.064
residual group	0.186	0.127	0.091

Bolded cells indicate significant differences from the average (network density = 0.173)



Network density = 0.173
Only interactions with sign. different density displayed

Expert information: Tell me, I am right?

- **expert information** is crucial for management of complex socio-technical systems (Giddens 1990)
 - **evidence-based policy-making**
 - its importance increases under **conditions of uncertainty**
- ~~**technocratic governance:** exp info abrades ideological differences and “builds bridges”~~
- **expertise politics:** exp info is used to defend ideological positions of their holders/providers
- **more than 2.5 times more likely to exchange expert information within advocacy coalitions than between the coalitions**
- contributes to **polarization** and limits **policy change by learning**

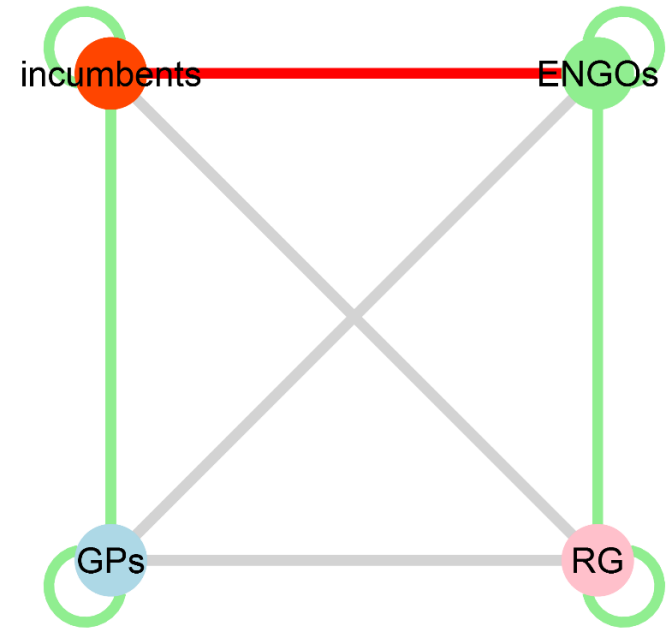
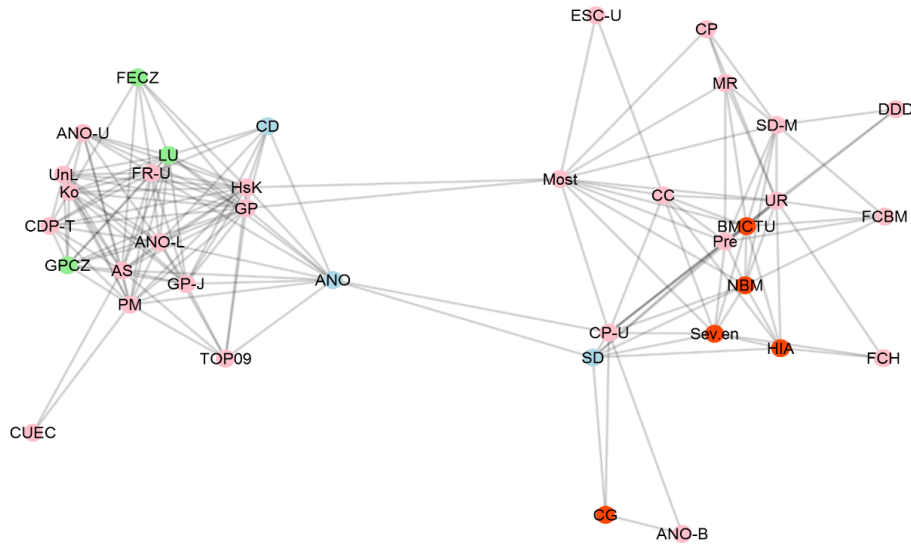
Main findings

- **Two adversarial coalitions** detected
- Support for a **fragmentation of the decision-making actors** → limits formulation of coherent policies
- **Expert info exchange strongly overlaps with the coalition patterns** → limits policy learning between coalitions
- Altogether, findings support the thesis on **contestation of the transition process**
- **Expectation:** major policy change rather due to external factors such as the EU's regulation and macro-economic trends

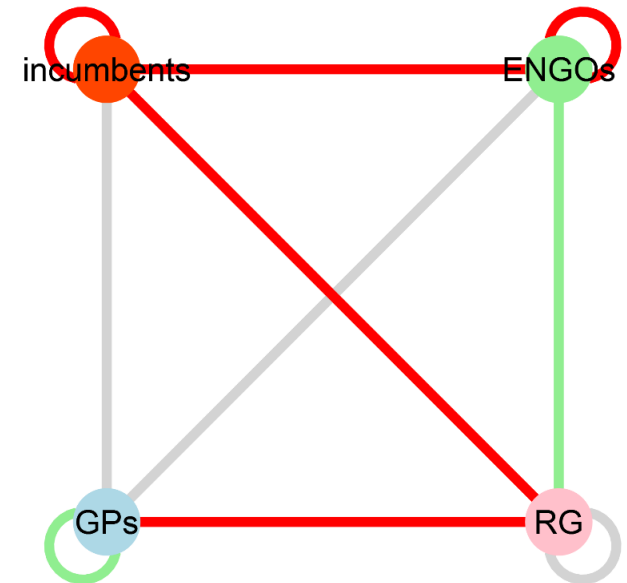
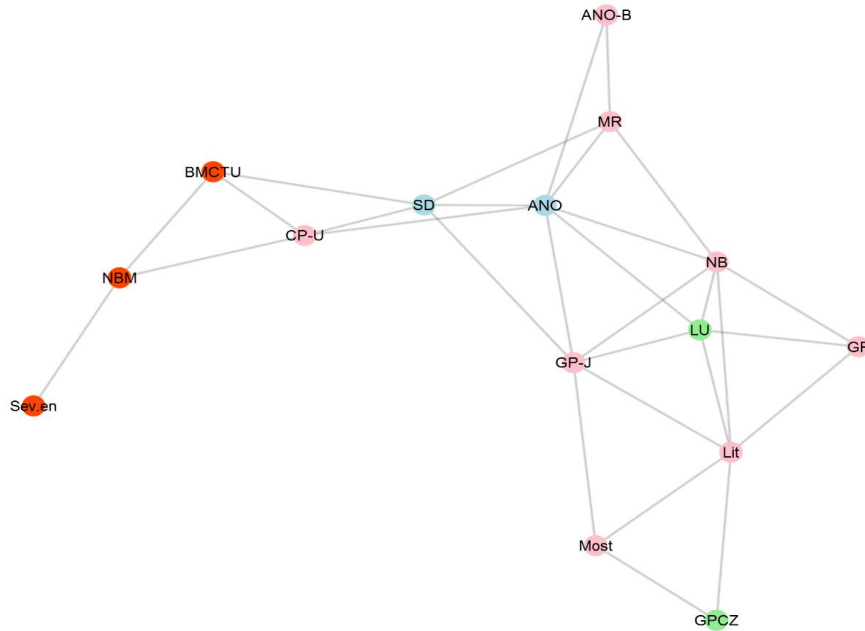
Case study: Policy debate on mining limits

- Policy debate on the limits → rescindment on the Bílina mine in 2015
- Media discourse analysis of daily newspapers
- **Discourse coalition:** group of actors who share a social construct (Hajer 1993)
 - E1.** There are **two coalitions** with low-compatible beliefs (Ocelík et al. 2019; Weible 2008)
- **Discourse alignment:** similarity-based relationship between specific actor groups
 - E2.** There is a **discourse alignment** between **incumbents** and **governing parties** (Geels 2014; Johnston et al. 2017; Smink 2015)

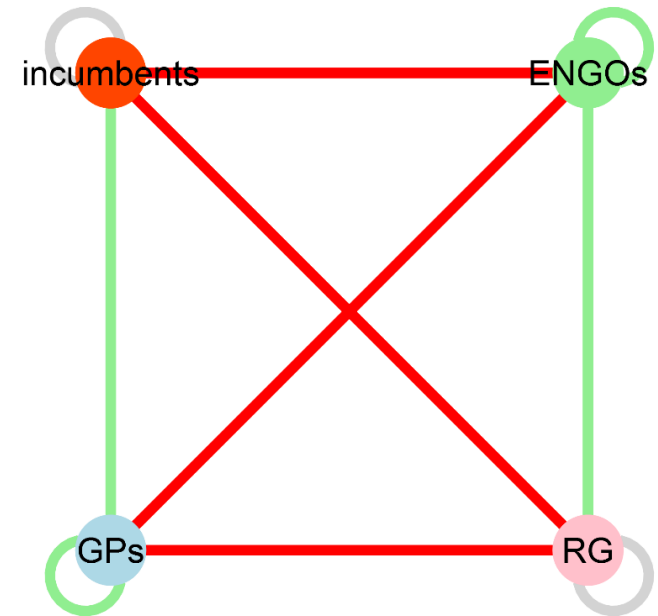
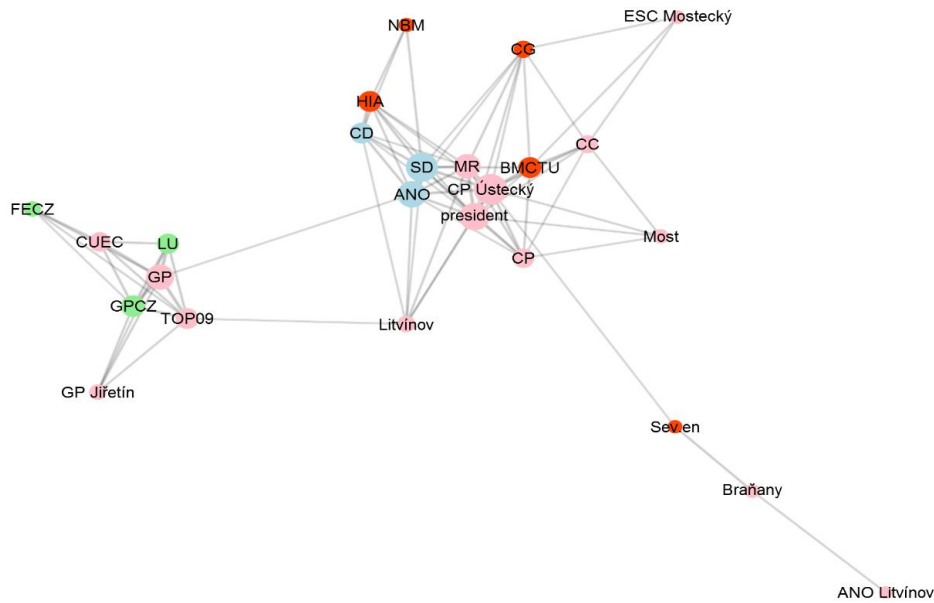
Stage 1 (Jan-Apr 2015): Incumbents mobilization



Stage 2 (May-Aug 2015): Incumbents retreat



Stage 3 (Sep-Oct 2015): Incumbents dominance



Incumbent's discursive strategies

- **Masking:** environmental issues, displacement
- **Securitization:** socioeconomic
- Reinvention: cleaner technology, heat supplies
- Capture: not articulated, already in place
(Černoč & Osička 2018)
- Surprisingly, little emphasis on **supply dependency**

Masking



Hiding, socializing, or externalizing the full costs of an incumbent regime or sociotechnical system

Capture



Placing stakeholders with vested interests in positions of political or regulatory power

Reinvention



Changing the frame of an incumbent system or regime so that it appears new or innovative

Securitization



Connecting an incumbent to a pressing national security issue, topic, or compelling threat

Johnston et al. 2017

Main findings

- **Two competing coalitions:** Industry vs. Environmental (**E1**)
- The **discourse alignment** between incumbents and GPs in the **1st and 3rd stages** (**E2**)
 - Consistent support of the Social Democrats
 - Fragmented position of the ENGOs
 - Absence of countervailing industries
- Incumbents mostly relied on **securitization**, masking, and reinvention strategies
 - Inability of the Environmental Coalition to formulate efficient counter-narrative