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TITLE: Populism, identities and responses to energy infrastructures at different scales in the United Kingdom: A post-Brexit reflection

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ABSTRACT

Recent socio-political events - such as Brexit - have provoked discussion and uncertainties about the future of the European Union, including European sustainable energy transitions. Nevertheless, not much research in the energy and social science domain has discussed and empirically explored how these socio-political events and related processes - rise in right-wing populism, post-truth politics - are shaped by and impact public beliefs about energy issues and the role of changes in people's different-level identities (local, national, European). In this paper, we discuss the importance of further exploring these ideas in energy social science research. We examine results of the Eurobarometer survey in the time span 2007-2016, and of two different representative surveys of United Kingdom adults, conducted in 2007 and 2012. This data allowed us to explore similarities and differences during this period regarding attitudes and beliefs about high voltage power lines and other energy and climate change related issues at different levels, and associated identities. Results suggest that feelings of belonging to different imaginary communities play out socio-political and psychological intergroup relations. We conclude that the ways that these impact on people's responses regarding energy issues at local, national and European levels represent promising directions for future research.

KEYWORDS: social/place identities; multi-scalar approach; beliefs about renewable energy generation and associated infrastructures; Brexit

1. The European Union, right-wing populism and the energy transition: The importance of a socio-psychological approach

In recent years, governments worldwide and specifically within the European Union have been fostering the deployment of renewable energy generation and associated technologies, such as high voltage power lines (RET). These technologies have pan-European relevance to tackle climate change and guarantee security of supply (Sataoen et al., 2015). As put forward by the European Commission itself (2015), the ‘Energy Union’ aims to integrate state energy systems and institutions while envisaging to reduce bills, increase renewable energy deployment and reduce the likelihood of blackouts (Kanham et al., 2017). This has been mainly promoted by regulatory and normative frameworks - such as the Renewables Directive 2009 - that are legally binding, enforcing specific renewable energy generation targets to be achieved within a specific timeframe. These legal changes come in tandem with socio-technical changes (Batel & Devine-Wright, 2015). So far these have mainly materialized as large-scale energy infrastructures at three different levels. First, within national contexts, with renewable energy generation infrastructures (and associated power lines) being constructed in specific locales (Bridge et al., 2013). Second, in trans-boundary infrastructures projects, notably grid interconnectors (Ciupuliga & Cuppen, 2013; Battaligni et al., 2012). Third, in infrastructures built locally/nationally but with European relevance – such as large-scale storage, as suggested by the idea of Norway being the green battery of Europe (Gurzu, 2016). In turn, these initiatives seem to depart from the assumption of the cooperation between groups, be it between local/national communities and European level institutions, or between European nation-states.

However, the deployment of large-scale RET at a local level is often contested, as much research within the Energy Research and Social Science field testifies to (e.g., Walker, 1995; Wolsink, 2000; Devine-Wright, 2005; Burningham, Barnett & Walker, 2015). Additionally, recent socio-political events also question that assumption. ‘Brexit’, meaning the United Kingdom (UK) announcing in 2016 its intention to leave the European Union (EU), is a very good example of how inter-group relations – between Britain and the EU, between Britain and other European countries - can significantly impact on different social issues, such as migration movements, the economy and eventually on the deployment of RET and associated initiatives to tackle climate change, both in the UK and in the European Union as a

whole (Hepburn & Teytelboym, 2017). Meyer-Ohlendorf & Görlach (2016) identify two potential implications of the crisis of the EU – as materialized with Brexit – for climate and energy policies. First, countries might perceive that they are better off tackling climate change problems in isolation, which can have immediate consequences for issues such as fostering renewable energy generation as this is a challenge that arguably requires coordinated, multilateral response. Second, climate and energy policies may be side-lined by other issues, namely migration and ‘terrorism’, which are seen by citizens as more pressing (p. 3-4).

Brexit and other similar events, such as Donald Trump’s US presidency, illustrate that the EU and other international agreements for promoting cooperation over the protection of human, ecological and other rights¹ (Ishay, 2008; also Olwig, 2007) may be seen as imposing rules, policies and ways of living that threaten national and local identities (Zavala, Guerra & Simão, 2017; Batel et al., 2015), in both utilitarian and symbolic ways. As Krouwel & Abts (2007) propose, attitudes towards European integration are mostly shaped by three dimensions – a utilitarian one, which focuses on socio-economic impacts of being integrated in the EU; an identity dimension, which accounts for feelings of cultural and economic threat (or its contrary) mainly from migrants; and a trust dimension, regarding both national and European-level authorities and in how democratic they are/serve the best interests of ‘the people’ (see also Stegemann and Ossewaarde in this special issue [Stegemman & Ossewaarde, 2018]). In the particular case of the UK, several authors highlight how in the years leading to Brexit these three dimensions were strongly interwoven in the right-wing populist discourses of parties like UKIP in order to reinforce Euroscepticism (Vines, 2014; Gifford, 2015).

Political rhetoric such as that of UKIP² (UKIP, 2015), challenges established policy priorities, such as meeting EU targets for increasing the production of renewable energy. This is performed both by employing discourses relying on climate change skepticism and by incentivizing the erasing of conflicts over renewable energy

¹ However it is also relevant to acknowledge that there are several limitations and hurdles to overcome with EU’s policies on the deployment of RET, which have many shadows of neoliberal capitalist business as usual (Barry & Ellis, 2011; Nadai & Labussière, 2017; Batel, 2017), based on colonialist practices (Walker, 2009; Batel & Devine-Wright, 2017) that accentuate people’s feelings of environmental loss and guilt (Letzerman, 2015).

² An example taken from UKIP’s manifesto 2015: “While our major global competitors – the USA, China, India – are switching to low-cost fossil fuels, we are forced to close perfectly good coal-fired power stations to meet unattainable targets for renewable capacity. If we carry on like this, the lights are likely out” (p.39).

generation by simply continuing with (fossil-fuel) business as usual (see Swyngedouw, 2010 for a discussion; see also Fraune and Knodt in this special issue [Fraune & Knodt, 2018]). In other words, a right-wing populist post-truth logic is used: right-wing populist because it claims to talk for the people and against the system while pushing forward for agendas such as anti-immigration ones; and post-truth because that is performed by appealing to the public's concerns and fears – such as the 'destruction of the British countryside' by migrants and wind farms alike -, while neglecting scientific evidence and facts – such as that climate change is happening due to anthropogenic causes (IPCC, 2013).

This type of populist rethoric has already been identified in anti-wind energy voices, who present themselves as defending democracy from “non-elected, non-local corporate and bureaucratic elites and special business and environmental interest groups” (Barry, Ellis & Robinson, 2008, p. 78). And in fact, in the UK, opposition to large-scale renewable energy generation technologies has been shown to be mainly related with national and European level decision-making processes that are perceived to be too centralised and opaque (Bridge et al., 2013; Devine-Wright, 2005; see also Stegemann and Ossewaarde in this special issue [Stegemman & Ossewaarde, 2018]), as well as with the feeling of identity threat to Britishness – or Englishness –, as emplaced in the green rolling hills of the British countryside (Batel et al., 2015)³.

In other words, attitudes and beliefs about RET-related policies and regulations seem to accompany political and institutional changes that are often the precursor to and/or the outcome of specific ideological climates and associated inter-group relations and socio-psychological processes (Batel & Devine-Wright, 2017; Roccato, Mannarini & Pacilli, 2017), such as in the current context in Britain. In sum, new European energy policies have been aiming to reform, rescale and reterritorialize energy systems towards a supposedly sustainable and unified energy transition across European states. At the same time, political or governance institutions such as the European Union are being strongly contested by some political parties, publics and other institutions (see also Stegemann and Ossewaarde in this special issue [Stegemann & Ossewaarde, 2018]). This is an important time to explore if and how these socio-political events and associated socio-psychological processes are having

³ This is not to suggest that supporting RET is always contrary to populist-nationalist perspectives – in fact, and because RET can be seen as fostering national energy security and as more environmentally safe and sustainable, they can also be supported based on a populist-nationalist rationale (e.g., Barone, 2018).

consequences for people's senses of identity at national and European levels and, through that, for people's beliefs about the 'Energy Union' and related energy issues at national and European levels.

This is a relevant time to ask questions that have been so far neglected by social sciences' energy research agenda, such as:

- What might be the impact of socio-political events such as Brexit on people's beliefs about energy issues and the deployment of RET – e.g., with large-scale wind farms built locally following European directives, with grid interconnectors between EU member-states, with energy being imported from other European countries to avoid blackouts (Office for National Statistics, 2016)?
- Are those impacts preceded and accompanied by inter-group processes such as changes in people's feelings of belongingness to Britain and Europe over the period of time leading to Brexit?
- Do right-wing populist-nationalist⁴ discourses and related political rhetoric influence or change discourses about energy transformation processes and their scale and territoriality?
- Do those discourses and potential related changes in group identities go in tandem with supporting an 'energy Brexit' as well as a political one?

Next, we will further discuss and present some exploratory data collected with representative samples of UK residents with a view to illustrate why it may be relevant for future research on energy and social science to focus on these questions.

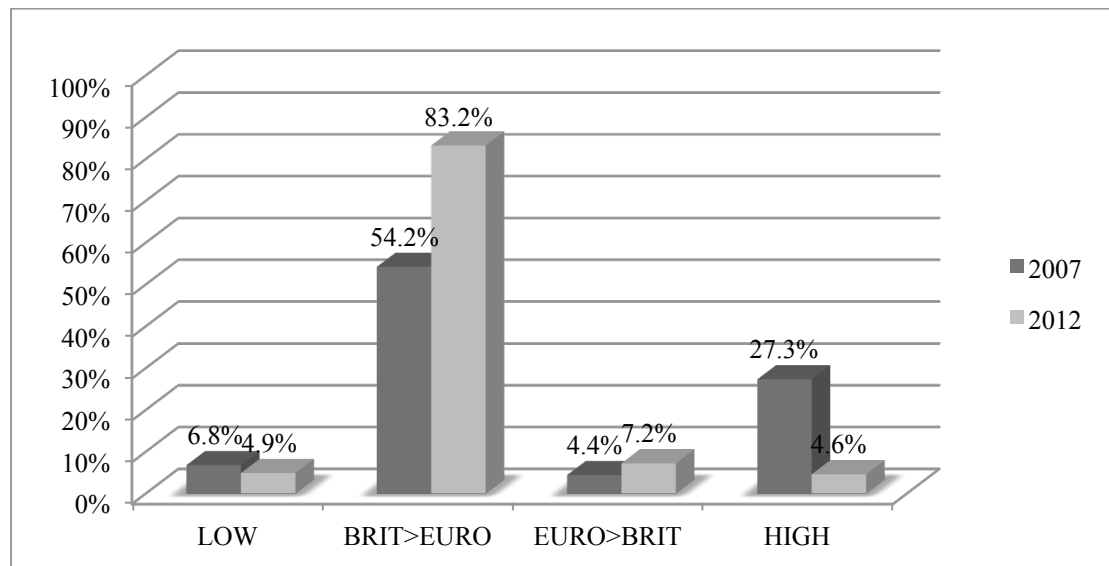
2. Different-level identities and energy beliefs: An empirical exploration and discussion

One important question to ask is whether there was a change in UK residents' feelings of belonging to Europe and to Britain in the years leading up to Brexit, going through the 2008 economic crisis and the 2010 start of the 'refugee crisis', which might indicate an effect of the rise of right-wing populist-nationalism political rhetoric (see also Zavala, Guerra & Simão, 2017). Here, we explore this through data

⁴ Right-wing nationalism is used in this context to refer to the belief in the distinctive identity and often superiority of one nation compared with other nations and the defense of associated beliefs and policies in order to protect that nation's supposed identity (Gifford, 2015).

we have collected at two points in time, 2007 and 2012, through large-scale surveys completed by representative samples of UK adults⁵. We asked participants how important were British and European identities in describing who they are (see the Annex for a full description of the measures used and statistical analyses performed) and from there we considered four types of relational identity constellations, namely not feeling very British or very European (identified as ‘Low’), feeling both very European and very British (identified as ‘High’), feeling more British than European (identified as ‘Brit>Euro’), and, inversely, feeling more European than British (identified as ‘Euro>Brit’)⁶ (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Comparing British*European identity constellations in 2007 and 2012 (Surveys 1 and 2)



Also supported by Eurobarometer data from 2006 to 2016⁷, across this period, the percentage of people feeling more British than European increased substantially from 2007 to 2012. In addition, the percentage of those that felt equally British and

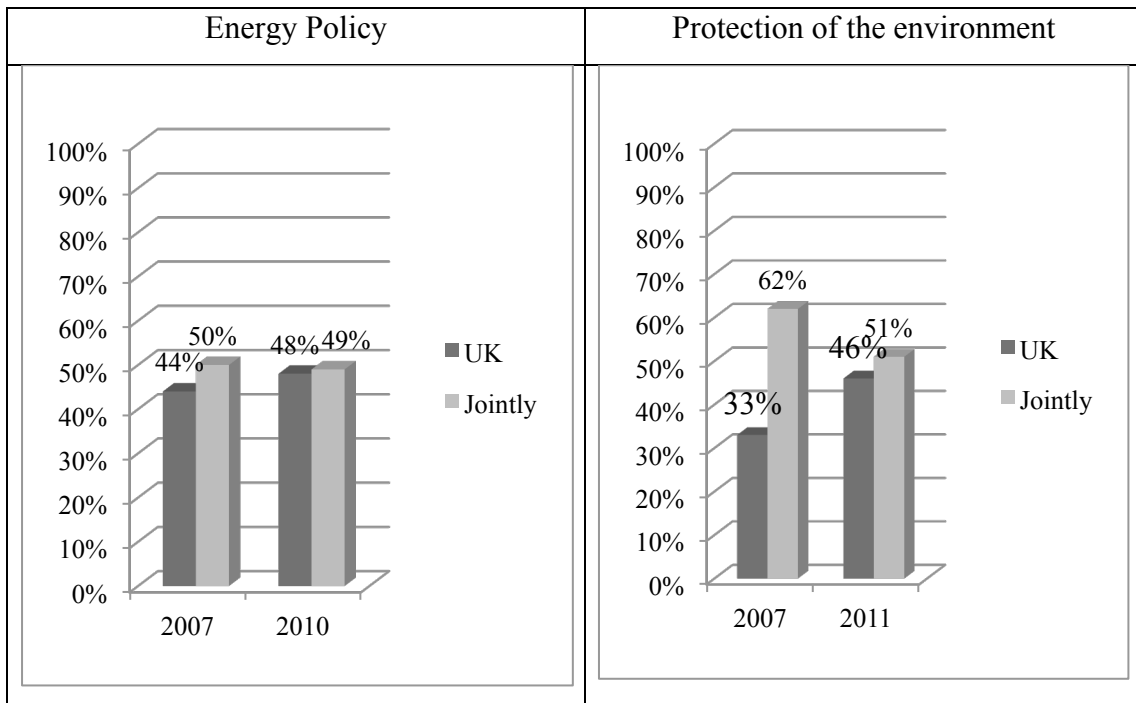
⁵ Survey 1 was administered in 2007 to a sample of N=1041 UK residents (for more information see Devine-Wright, Devine-Wright & Sherry-Brennan, 2010) and Survey 2 was administered in 2012 to a sample of N=1519 UK residents (for more information see Aas et al., 2014). The surveys were conducted online by a market research company with samples that are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+) by age, gender, and social-grade, living in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The surveys included slightly different questions/measures (More information about the surveys and the measures that composed them can be found in Annex 1).

⁶ These groups were calculated by considering Low ≤ 2 ; High ≥ 4 ; Brit>Euro when feeling British is higher than feeling European and Euro>Brit the other way around – for more information on this procedure see Devine-Wright & Batel, 2017.

⁷ Data under the question “Please tell me how attached you feel to...(UK) (EUROPE)”.

European decreased from 2007 to 2012, suggesting that these might be the individuals that started to feel more British than European across this period. But what relation might these changes have with UK residents' beliefs and practices regarding energy and specifically the deployment of RET? Let us now take a look at the results from the Eurobarometer regarding questions about whether UK respondents think that decisions about energy policy and decisions about the protection of the environment should be made by the UK government or jointly with the EU (Figures 2 and 3).

Figures 2 and 3 – Results of responses to the item “Do you think that decisions about (ENERGY POLICY)(PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT), should be made by the UK government or jointly with the EU?”, of the Eurobarometer⁸



From 2007 to 2010/11 there was an increase in the percentage of UK respondents who believed that decisions about energy policy and the protection of the environment should be made by the UK government only – and a decrease of those thinking that decisions about these issues should be made together with the EU, especially regarding the protection of the environment. Despite the differences being marginal (especially regarding beliefs about energy policy), this trend seems to

⁸ For all the Eurobarometer data shown in this paper: scales included a ‘Don’t know’ option and data is shown for different years and different response categories as available and presented in the Eurobarometer; and margins of error were of ±1.9 points for 10% or 90%; ± 2.5 points for 20% or 80%; ±2.7 points for 30% or 70%; ±3 points for 40% or 60%; and ±3.1 points for 50%.

accompany the trend of people tending to feel more British and less European across those years. This is not too surprising, as the years in the UK leading to Brexit have witnessed a rise in right-wing populist-nationalist political discourses that have put side by side the need to defend Britain and the unique British countryside from migrants and wind farms alike (see Batel & Devine-Wright, 2017; also Mahendran et al., 2014). In turn, research examining political discourses over energy projects in their relation with other countries/groups in other socio-geographical contexts (Fischendler, Boymel & Boykoff, 2014; Fischendler & Nathan, 2014), also indicate that intergroup relations impact beliefs about energy issues, at least at the polity level. Batel & Devine-Wright (2017) showed that one of the main factors associated with the opposition of community members in Wales (UK) to new high voltage power lines was the lack of distributive justice, with costs supported by Wales and benefits to be given to England, after a past (and present – see Ellis et al., 2013) history of England ‘raiding and milking’ Wales (see also Robinson & Gardner, 2006). This work therefore suggests how energy policies and their materialization might create and reinforce intergroup tensions and specific dynamics, which, in turn, are related with particular socio-historical and political events and processes. It also highlights that the intergroup relations and dynamics between different local communities, different regions and/or different countries are important to examine and understand as a barrier and/or a facilitator of the deployment of RET within and beyond national boundaries.

Research on energy transitions has been highlighted as disregarding the role played by people’s place/social identities or place attachments - beyond the local level - on their beliefs about RET and other measures to tackle climate change (Devine-Wright, 2013; Devine-Wright, Price & Leviston, 2015; Devine-Wright & Batel, 2017). This line of research has emphasized how it is often actually place attachments or social identities at more global levels – rather than at a local or national level – that are most related with people’s willingness to tackle climate change and to endorse associated measures such as the deployment of RET. For example, Devine-Wright and colleagues (2015), in a study conducted with a representative sample of Australian citizens, illustrated the relevance of the relation between national and global place attachments, with individuals expressing stronger global than national attachments more likely to attribute climate change to anthropogenic causes, and to

oppose hierarchy-enhancing myths that legitimize climate inaction, in comparison to individuals indicating stronger national over global place attachments.

Let us therefore now look precisely at how UK residents' different-level identities directly relate with different energy beliefs. The data presented refers mainly to beliefs regarding high-voltage power lines, which have been deployed to integrate renewable energy infrastructures into the grid, both within and between European countries (European Commission, 2017). Despite UK interconnectors with Europe involving subsea cables, this is still often the target of concern by local communities and NGOs, in tandem with the impacts of related infrastructures such as substations and overhead grid strengthening. As suggested before, the symbolic dimension of identities and intergroup-relations – such as ‘giving away electricity to Europe’ – can be an important component of people’s responses to, and acceptance of, energy infrastructures (Batel & Devine-Wright, 2017)⁹. Table 1 presents survey data on the neglected topic of UK public support for a pan-European integrated electricity network. The data suggests that, in 2007, the more people felt Scottish, Northern Irish, Irish, or European, the more they supported the construction of a European SuperGrid (described in the survey as ‘a system that would interconnect the national grid networks of different European states’, and consistent with the Energy Union policy aim already described above). Results show significant associations, although correlations are not very strong, especially taking into account the large sample size. By contrast, feeling British, English or Welsh does not seem to relate in any way to supporting a European SuperGrid.

Table 1 – Results from questions about people’s beliefs about energy and the environment – 2007 (our data – N=1041)

		Welsh	English	Scottish	Northern Irish	Irish	British	European
Support for a European SuperGrid		.103	-.042	.143* ¹⁰	.153*	.153*	.043	.077*
Which THREE of the following,	Avoid blackouts under	ns.	Yes= 6.18 No= 5.85 p<.05	Yes=3.73 No=4.93 p<.05	Yes=3.03 No=4.08 p.05	ns.	ns.	Yes=3.06 No=3.71 p<.05

⁹ There are currently eleven interconnectors planned between the UK and other European countries, and while there have not yet been direct impacts from Brexit on these projects, the UK’s position as part of the EU internal energy market will be negotiated in the next months (Bosch, 2017; Moffat, 2017).

¹⁰ *= $p<.05$; **= $p>-.001$.

if any, do you think are the most important priorities of a national energy policy?	any circumstances							
	Ensure the UK's energy independence	ns.	Yes=6.17 No=5.77 P<.001	ns.	ns.	ns.	ns.	Yes=.3.38 No=3.74 p<.05

One important first note regarding Table 1 is that the similar results for the British and English identities echo previous research showing that Britishness is still mainly associated with Englishness (Batel et al., 2015; Vines, 2014; Neal & Agyeman, 2006; Johnson, 2002). Another important note goes for the fact that the more participants feel English, the more they are likely to say that ‘ensuring the UK’s energy independence’ and ‘avoiding blackouts under any circumstances’ are one of the three important priorities for national energy policy. Inversely, those with stronger European identities seem to feel that UK energy independence is less important as a policy goal. This reinforces the idea that social identities do play a role in energy beliefs and thus that the rise of right-wing populism might give way to more closeness, competitiveness and conservatism, namely in British energy policies, through more salient national identities (see also Meyer-Ohlendorf & Görlach, 2017). It also highlights how such identity dynamics might easily accommodate apparently contradictory beliefs, such as wanting to ensure UK’s energy independence but at the same time wanting to avoid blackouts – even if interconnection reduces the risks of blackouts (Bosch, 2017).

Let us now discuss the findings for 2012 (see Table 2). We can see that the same pattern is found, albeit more markedly: feeling one belongs to Britain does not relate with beliefs about the construction of a European-wide grid, whereas feeling that one belongs to Europe or to the whole Earth are significantly and positively correlated with supporting the construction of a pan-European grid network.

Table 2 – Results from questions about people’s beliefs about energy and the environment – 2012 (our data – N=1519)

2012	Neighbourhood belonging	Regional belonging	Britain belonging	Europe belonging	Earth belonging
I support the construction of an European-wide SuperGrid	ns.	ns.	ns.	.401**	.105**

Reduce personal electricity use to avoid constructing new power lines	.084**	.086**	.088**	ns.	.085**
A more climate friendly system is not dependent on more powerlines	.072*	ns.	ns.	ns.	.131**

It is the participants who indicated feeling they belong more to the neighborhood and those feeling they belong more to the whole Earth that believe that a more climate friendly system is not dependent on constructing more powerlines. It is also interesting to note in Table 2 that those feeling they belong more to the neighborhood, the region, Britain and/or the Earth, are also more willing to reduce their personal electricity consumption in order to avoid constructing new power lines. This might be seen as slightly at odds with the results for 2007 in which those feeling more English were willing to accept ‘everything’ to avoid blackouts and ensure the UK’s independence. This seems to suggest changes in energy beliefs which accompany changes in belongingness to different groups, with the timeframe and socio-political events leading to Brexit accentuating the rejection of European level policies. These changes might be seen to be associated with an increase in the deployment of power lines and other large-scale RET and, we might speculate, eventually a more widespread belief in ensuring the UK’s energy security through other means – either in the sources of energy production (e.g., nuclear; shale gas), or in the ways in which renewables are deployed (e.g., more decentralized).

4. Discussion

The data presented and explored here are obviously not sufficient to generate firm conclusions and evidence. Nevertheless, they do begin to shed light on our discussion and on answers to the questions we posed previously. These refer to how energy policies and their materialization might create and reinforce intergroup tensions and specific dynamics, and points to future research directions that are important to follow up in examining people’s relations with energy and specifically the social acceptance of RET (Wüstenhagen et al., 2007; Dermont et al., 2017). These directions include the following:

- i.) To date, research on the social acceptance of RET has tended to be mainly cross-sectional, either focusing on single country case studies (e.g., Devine-Wright & Howes, 2010; Cowell, 2010; Firestone & Kempton, 2007) or comparing several

countries (e.g., Stedman et al., 2016; Karimi, Toikka & Hukkinen, 2016; Aas et al., 2014; Toke et al., 2008), at a certain point in time. Research on energy transitions has not frequently adopted a socio-historical perspective that examines if and why perceptions about energy transitions change and evolve over time¹¹ (but see Malone et al., 2017; Sovacool & Brossman, 2014; and Batel, 2017 for a critique) and, namely, the impact of particular socio-political and economic events on those. However, the present discussion suggests that taking time into account, materialized through socio-economic and political events and feeding into the history of groups, should more often be the focus of research in this area, as it will shed light in what might be the impact of socio-political events - such as Brexit - and related intergroup and identity processes, on people's beliefs about energy transitions and unions. A socio-psychological perspective can be particularly relevant by shedding light on the symbolic and identity processes shaping people's beliefs about energy infrastructures across time (see also Batel et al., 2015; Bailey, Devine-Wright & Batel, 2016). A good example is Malone et al.'s (2017) research that asked how national narratives and related identities shape the acceptance of RET and related beliefs in three different countries – Brazil, the USA and Sweden. They illustrate how the relative success of different types of energy generation in each of those countries depended on the socio-cultural background of each country at the time. In other words, how certain national narratives and stories that were most prevalent and with high importance in shaping national pride and identity at a certain moment in time hindered or facilitated the successful development of energy sources such as nuclear, sugar cane ethanol and biomass energy, in the USA, Brazil and Sweden respectively, during the 20th century. As the authors emphasize “as nations change their demographic makeup, type of society (e.g., rural to urban), degree of involvement with other nations (e.g., “globalization”), national narratives, can be changed, forgotten or added to” (p.71);

ii.) In multi-scalar governance systems (Swyngedouw, 2010), inter-group relations and associated identities and processes at different levels, have an impact on energy transitions. So far the majority of the literature on the social acceptance of RET has focused on the relationship between developers and policy-makers, and local community members, as the main inter-group conflict to understand and ‘solve’ in

¹¹ Not including analyses based on a socio-technical transitions perspective (e.g.; Verbong & Geels, 2007; also Bridge et al., 2013), but which do not tend to account for socio-political identities as discussed here.

RET siting. But the relationship between different-level identities and different energy transitions scenarios should be further explored. What is the relation between these different-level identities and the endorsement for other alternatives to renewable energy, such as nuclear power and shale gas? And what can they tell us about people's willingness to embrace other modes of energy system organization, such as more decentralized energy systems at household and community levels?

iii.) Finally, the most important suggestion might be to analyze the two aspects above together or to adopt a more relational approach in research on the social acceptance of RET. This could be aware of which energy policies are being enforced and at what level, but also of the other socioeconomic and political events that are shaping and impacting people's lives and how those might impact on energy transitions over time (see also Batel, 2017). The rise of right-wing populism and post-truth politics might, by increasing nationalist, sovereignty, independentist and non-evidence based beliefs, foster higher support for independent and competitive energy policies at the European and international level. These policies will eventually be mainly focused on guaranteeing security of supply and higher standards of living at the national level at the expense of further promoting renewable energy generation and of other groups (Meyer-Ohlendorf & Görlach, 2016). It is therefore crucial that future research focuses on examining if and how right-wing populist nationalist discourses influence energy transformation processes and specifically their scale and territoriality. Additionally, this discussion suggests that, also regarding energy transitions, a European counter-populism might be needed (Gavalli et al 2017, p. 11) – or a left-wing one. In fact, the analyses suggest that the relationship between right-wing populism and responses to renewable energy projects, under discussion in this special issue, is a complex one (see also Fraune and Knodt in this special issue [Fraune & Knodt, 2018]) – whereas some of the discourses opposing renewable energy projects reflect and might strengthen right-wing populist movements and parties (see Batel et al., 2015); others are a needed resistance to current post-political systems while exposing the conflictive character of the deployment of RET (see Barry & Ellis, 2011; also Batel, 2017; Mouffe, 2013). This resistance is crucial for discussing alternative ways of performing sustainable energy transitions (see also MacArthur and Matthewman in this special issue [MacArthur & Matthewman, 2018]).

To conclude, this is a preliminary and exploratory empirical analysis of these issues. Future research should address the aspects mentioned above and, at a methodological level, use qualitative methods (e.g. focus groups); and, when using surveys, use instruments with exactly the same wording. At a conceptual level, an aspect worthy of further consideration might be to examine the role of social identities in shaping beliefs about energy issues. The majority of the energy research and social science literature has been dominated by the analysis of the role of (local) place attachments in responses to RET, but to move the conceptual focus to encompass place and social identities together might foster the development of research in other fruitful directions. The analyses presented here illustrate that intergroup relations and dynamics at different scales are important to examine and understand as a barrier and/or a facilitator of the deployment of RET within and beyond national boundaries.

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ANNEX

Measures included in the surveys:

- Survey 1:
 - Sense of belongingness [*How important are the following in describing who you are? English/Scottish /Welsh / Northern Irish /Irish / British / European – scale of 1=Extremely unimportant to 7=Extremely important*];
 - Beliefs about the most important priorities of a national energy policy [*Please select up to 3 responses: Avoid blackouts under any circumstances; Ensure the UK’s energy independence; Address global warming; Change people’s energy use behavior; Increase the use of renewable energy sources (wind, solar)*];
 - Belief about a European wide grid [*How much do you support or oppose the construction of a Europe-wide electricity network? 1=Strongly oppose to 7=Strongly support*].
- Survey 2:
 - Sense of belongingness [*To what extent do you feel a weak or a strong sense of belonging to the following areas? The neighborhood where you live/Britain/Europe/the Earth ~ whole world; scale from 1=No sense of belonging to 5=Very strong sense of belonging*];
 - Beliefs about energy issues [*How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I am willing to reduce my use of electricity if this reduces the need for new high voltage powerlines/ I think we should move from centralised energy (large power stations and high-voltage lines) to decentralised energy (local power supply and small scale solar panels and wind turbines)/ I support the construction of a European-wide SuperGrid that connects the systems of Europe together/ I support the further development and construction of power lines; To what extent would you support the building of a new high voltage overhead powerline in the area near to where you live (i.e. within 3 miles)?/ To what extent would you accept the construction of a new high-voltage power line near your community (for example, within 3 miles)?/ with a scale from 1=Strongly or not at all disagree/accept/support to 5=Strongly agree/accept/support*].

The data presented was based on the following statistical analyses:

- Figure 1: For the different identity groups (i.e., Low, High, Brit>Euro, Euro>Brit) categorical variables were devised. The ‘Low’ subgroup consisted of those with both low attachment (scoring 1 to 3 in Survey 1; scoring 1 or 2 in Survey 2) to Europe and to Britain; the ‘High’ subgroup consisted of those with both high attachment (scoring 5 to 7 in Survey1; scoring 4 or 5 in Survey2) to Europe and to Britain; the ‘Brit>Euro’ subgroup consisted of those with comparatively stronger national attachment in comparison to European levels, and inversely, the ‘Euro>Brit’ subgroup consisted of those with comparatively stronger European attachment in comparison with national attachment.
- Table 1: Results for responses to “Belief about an European SuperGrid” and its relation with different-level-identities were the outcome of correlational analyses. Results for responses to the question on “Beliefs about the most important priorities of a national energy policy” and its interaction with different level identities were calculated based on a chi-square analysis.
- Table 2: Results for responses to “Belief about energy issues” and their relation with different-level-identities were the outcome of correlational analyses.