Preface and acknowledgements

To truly appreciate European integration development, it is crucial to understand the role energy has played (and still has the potential to perform) throughout the 50-year-plus history of this process. Indeed, given energy's trajectory in this process it is accurate to argue that energy is not only deeply rooted in European construction, but that energy itself, with more or less success, has also been a driver of integration. Paradoxically the integration process has never developed so far as to lay the foundations for a fully-fledged and coherent Common Energy Policy (CEP), which has instead become one of the weakest policy areas to date.

But after years of persistent neglect at the core of EU policies, energy is today a hot topic on the EU's political agenda, also attracting the attention of scholars. Even though the EU's participation in energy policy really took off in the 1990s through contiguous areas (primarily the environment and the liberalization of the internal market), it was not until recently that the barriers hindering Brussels's action in this policy area were finally broken down. Against this backdrop, while the past years have seen an unprecedented development of the European energy policy, the understanding of this process has lagged behind.

Alongside the scarce literature on this emergent policy, there is also a gap regarding the attention paid to its different components. This book stems from the perception of a mismatch between the valuable debate that certain dimensions of energy policy have triggered (namely energy security and the market and competition framework) and the neglect of its environmental and climate change dimensions. The book highlights the significance of environmental policy concerns, instruments and objectives *vis-à-vis* the competing security and market dimensions in order to achieve an all-embracing European energy policy perspective for the future.

This book has its roots in the seminar 'European Energy Policy: the Environmental Dimension' organized by the University Institute of European Studies (IUEE) in November 2009 and financially supported by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. Held on the campus of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, this event was attended by a long list of scholars dealing with the European energy policy. This volume is a product of that enriching experience and so far it has facilitated the development of a network

of scholars working in the field of energy policy at the EU level. The editors of this volume are especially grateful to all the participants who attended our research seminar. We extend our special thanks to Professor Christoph Knill and Dr Esther Zapater for their support in organizing the panels of the event and we also want to express our gratitude to all our contributors for the patience they have shown us.

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