Preface

This book is concerned with the law and politics of the EU gas market and particularly the regulatory and competitive choices of institutions and bodies operating in the market, in view of rendering it more integrated. The main question under discussion is how regulatory and competitive choices influence the achievement of an integrated EU gas market and the gas market design. The answers are pursued in an interdisciplinary manner. This is done with regard to the fact that legal choices and afferent institutional arrangements occur not in the protective confines of a legislative laboratory, but in a constantly evolving geopolitical perimeter, where gas relationships are frequently renegotiated. The book considers a number of legal and political science subquestions and theories, which allow an analysis of causes and facilitating factors for the choice of market regulation tools and of the legislative and institutional effects that such choices determine.

The structure is divided into seven chapters, including introduction and conclusion. These look at the factual and legal benchmarks for the reformation of the European gas market, the specificities of the natural gas sector in terms of legal and policy setting of relationships with third-country producers, the legal and geopolitical aspects contributing to the gas market segmentation, the gas market structure in the aftermath of the Energy Sector Inquiry and the adoption of the Third Energy Package, the relationship between market liberalization and market integration, and the flaws of the gas market design, deriving from the ambiguous articulation of gas policy goals at an EU level and the shabby matching of legal tools and accompanying institutional design available to their pursuit.

The conclusions attempt to contribute to the discussion regarding the reassessment of the concurrent application of competition law and regulation in the EU gas market.