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**European Energy Security, 2008 - 2020:
A Transatlantic Partnership?**

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ABSTRACT

Sto scrivendo questa tesi nel bel mezzo di un'altra crisi del gas europea: nell'ottobre del 2021 i prezzi del gas in Europa sono aumentati senza precedenti (l'ondata di crescita di \$ 1800 per 1000 m³). Nel dicembre del 2021 i prezzi hanno raggiunto un nuovo massimo: oltre \$ 2.100 per 1.000 m³.¹ Per capire meglio: negli ultimi cinque anni, il livello medio dei prezzi relativi a dicembre era più di 10 volte inferiore.

Le ragioni di ciò che sta succedendo sono molte. I prerequisiti iniziali per la crescita dei prezzi si sono presentati nella primavera del 2021. L'aumento del consumo di gas dovuto all'inverno anormalmente freddo del 2020 e alla ripresa post-Covid delle economie dell'UE, nonché alla diminuzione delle importazioni del GNL nel primo trimestre del 2021, hanno portato allo stoccaggio del tasso di riempimento in ritardo rispetto alle normali medie stagionali. Gli impianti sotterranei di stoccaggio del gas in Europa sono rimasti esauriti. Il 31 marzo 2021, ad esempio, la capacità di stoccaggio media dell'UE era già inferiore rispetto allo stesso giorno del 2020 (30,2% contro 53,9%). Il tasso di riempimento medio alla fine del giugno 2021 (47%) è il più basso, fra quelli registrati nel periodo estivo dell'ultimo decennio.²

In condizioni normali, questo deficit avrebbe potuto essere compensato in estate, ma il carico marittimo con il GNL, su cui scommettevano le autorità europee, invece dell'Europa è andato in Asia, dove gli acquirenti hanno pagato di più.³ Anche Gazprom ha rifiutato di riservare le capacità aggiuntive per il pompaggio del gas e a luglio, come programmato, aveva effettuato la manutenzione dei gasdotti.⁴ A settembre era ormai chiaro che non sarebbe stato possibile ripristinare le riserve di stoccaggio sotterraneo del gas entro l'inizio della stagione di riscaldamento.

Gazprom rappresenta circa un terzo di tutto il gas importato in Europa. Nel 2021 è stata completata la tanto attesa costruzione del gasdotto Nord Stream-2 con una capacità di

¹ "Gas price in Europe up over \$2,100 per 1,000 cubic meters for the first time," *TASS*, dicembre 21, 2021, accesso gennaio 31, 2022, <https://tass.com/economy/1378817>

² European Commission, *Quarterly Report on European Gas Markets*, vol. 14 (2), Market Observatory for Energy, Brussels, 2021, accesso dicembre 25, 2021, <https://euneighbourseast.eu/news-and-stories/publications/quarterly-report-on-european-gas-markets/>.

³ S. Stapczynski, "Asia and South America Suck Up LNG Flows at Europe's Expense", *Bloomberg*, agosto 3, 2021, accesso gennaio 31, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-03/asia-and-south-america-suck-up-lng-flows-at-europe-s-expense>.

⁴ "«Газпром» ставит Европу на ремонт", *Коммерсантъ*, giugno 29, 2021, accesso gennaio 31, 2022, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4878430>.

110 miliardi di m³ all'anno. Dopo il picco d'ottobre, i prezzi del gas sono scesi verso i \$ 1.000 per 1.000 m³, anche a causa del previsto lancio di forniture attraverso questo gasdotto nel 2022. A novembre però, la situazione geopolitica al confine tra Russia e Ucraina è peggiorata. Ciò ha costretto i partecipanti al mercato a sovrastimare i rischi associati sia al futuro transito del gas russo attraverso l'Ucraina sia ai tempi di messa in servizio del Nord Stream—2. Ciò ha anche riscaldato i prezzi.

Per decenni l'Unione Europea, con approcci diversi, ha cercato di garantire il proprio futuro energetico diversificando le rotte e i tipi di fonti nel portafoglio energetico. Tuttavia, nonostante tutti i suoi sforzi, l'Europa sta ancora lottando e sembra fallire nelle strategie per proteggersi. L'attuale crisi ha dimostrato ancora una volta quanto la terza economia più grande del mondo, l'Europa, dipenda dagli importatori di energia per il suo funzionamento.⁵

Anche le politiche verdi, l'aspetto dell'energia in cui l'Ue ha ottenuto i risultati più convincenti, sono sembrate inciampare nell'Unione aggravando la situazione recente. Per fare un esempio, a causa degli sforzi per ridurre le emissioni di CO₂ nella regione, tante centrali elettriche a carbone sono state chiuse negli ultimi 10 anni, sostituite con centrali di produzione solare ed eolica. Poiché questo tipo di energia necessita una rete di sicurezza, - in caso di maltempo, la potenza nel sistema di alimentazione diminuisce drasticamente, - queste differenze sono compensate dalla generazione di gas, che fornisce una minore impronta di carbonio e un funzionamento instabile più facile da tollerare. Ma nonostante i prezzi record del gas, i politici europei non hanno sospeso il ritmo di disattivazione delle capacità "sporche". Inoltre, nell'aprile 2021, la Germania ha confermato l'intenzione di chiudere altre 3 centrali a carbone (in aggiunta alla prima tornata di aste a dicembre 2020, quando 11 centrali a capacità combinata sono andate offline) e tre reattori nucleari a capacità combinata.⁶

⁵ IMF, *World Economic Outlook Update*, Washington, IMF Publication Services, gennaio 2021, accesso febbraio 4, 2022, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2020/October>.

⁶ K. Appunn, "Three more German coal power plants to go offline in December 2021," *Clean Energy Wire*, aprile 1, 2021, accesso febbraio 4, 2022, <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/three-more-german-coal-power-plants-go-offline-december-2021>, Benjamin Wehrmann, "First phase-out auction for German hard coal deemed success, modern plants go offline," *Clean Energy Wire*, dicembre 1, 2020, accesso febbraio 4, 2022, <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/first-phase-out-auction-german-hard-coal-deemed-success-modern-plants-go-offline>, and Rachel Morison, "Germany Is Closing Half of Its Reactors at Worst Possible Time," *Bloomberg*, dicembre 21, 2021, accesso febbraio 4, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-12-21/germany-is-closing-half-of-its-reactors-at-worst-possible-time#:~:text=The%20shutdowns%20of%20Grohnde%2C%20Gundremmingen,emissions%20are%20on%20the%20rise>.

Nel 1951 fu firmato il "Trattato che istituisce la Comunità Europea del Carbone e dell'Acciaio" (CECA), avviando il processo di integrazione europea. L'obiettivo era quello di controllare congiuntamente due risorse essenziali sia per la guerra che per la ricostruzione, creando così un interesse politico generale e aumentando la cooperazione.⁷ Un'altra delle prime istituzioni di cooperazione europea si è basata sull'energia: la Comunità europea dell'energia atomica (EURATOM), creata sei anni dopo la CECA. Nonostante queste iniziative e il problema energetico al centro dell'agenda politica, l'integrazione europea in questo settore non è progredita sostanziosamente. Non solo perché il ruolo del carbone è diminuito da quando ci si è resi conto delle sue riserve in rapido esaurimento, ma soprattutto a causa di un panorama energetico eterogeneo, strutture di mercato e rotte di trasporto in 27 paesi, gli Stati membri che sono guidati da interessi diversi, non potendo certo facilitare la cooperazione. A partire dagli anni '80 sono stati compiuti diversi sforzi e tanti piccoli passi verso una base più formale della politica energetica europea. La cooperazione si è gradualmente rafforzata, ma molti degli ambiziosi piani politici coerenti al suo rafforzamento sono falliti di fronte all'opposizione degli Stati membri, variando considerevolmente i risultati attesi.

Da anni si sottolinea l'importanza strategica della stabilità dell'approvvigionamento energetico tra gli obiettivi che includono anche l'efficienza economica e la compatibilità ambientale. Data la crescente dipendenza dell'Europa dal petrolio e dal gas, il crescente fabbisogno energetico delle potenze emergenti come Cina e India, il previsto esaurimento delle riserve di combustibili fossili dopo la metà di questo secolo, le minacce legate ai cambiamenti climatici e il continuo interesse di molti paesi per l'energia nucleare pacifica, la sicurezza energetica negli ultimi decenni è diventata un argomento importante nei dibattiti internazionali sulla sicurezza.

Il panorama energetico globale in evoluzione del 21° secolo e le elevate preoccupazioni ambientali hanno spinto l'Unione sulla strada della ricerca di fonti energetiche alternative e la quota di gas naturale, che è diventata l'opzione più conveniente, nel portafoglio energetico europeo è andata aumentando rapidamente.⁸ A differenza però dagli altri combustibili fossili che sono maggiormente trasportabili e possono essere consegnati da diverse destinazioni logistiche, il gas naturale rappresenta più una sfida. Il fattore che rende gli impianti del gas più vulnerabili agli shock dei prezzi o ai vincoli di

⁷ S. Müller-Kraenner, *Energy Security*, Earthscan, London, 2008, p.78.

⁸ Statista, *Liquefied natural gas trade volume worldwide from 1970 to 2020*, luglio 29, 2021, disponibile su <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264000/global-lng-trade-volume-since-1970/>.

fornitura è il suo transito attraverso gasdotti, di difficile manutenzione. I gasdotti richiedono anni per essere costruiti, un passaggio tra esportatori e rotte di transito non può essere facilmente modificato in caso di gravi problemi.

Sebbene il grado di dipendenza dal gas, - e quindi di vulnerabilità ai rischi associati, - all'interno dell'UE vari considerevolmente da uno stato all'altro, l'Unione nel suo insieme fa molto affidamento sulle importazioni di questa fonte. Pertanto, il concetto di sicurezza energetica in Europa è diventato in larga misura definito dalla sicurezza dei gasdotti, che sono associati a una serie di fattori esterni.

L'affidabilità degli esportatori e i rischi di transito avrebbero potuto rappresentare un problema minore se gli importatori fossero stati numerosi. Invece, l'Europa ha messo tutte le sue uova in un solo cesto: il 40% del gas proviene da un unico fornitore, la Russia. Le controversie dell'inverno 2005-2006 tra Mosca e l'Ucraina hanno mostrato esplicitamente quanto siano elevati i rischi esterni per la stabilità energetica dell'UE. Questo momento spartiacque ha trasformato la sicurezza dell'approvvigionamento energetico dell'Europa in oggetto di ampie discussioni. La decisione del gennaio 2006 della Russia di interrompere le forniture di gas all'Ucraina ha mostrato che anche la politica, non solo gli effettivi conflitti armati, possono minare il flusso di energia e che le conseguenze vanno ben oltre i soli paesi coinvolti nella controversia.

Per mitigare l'effetto di future sfide simili, l'Europa ha intensificato gli sforzi sia al suo interno che all'esterno. A livello nazionale ha proseguito il processo di liberalizzazione, elaborando il mercato interno dell'energia e promuovendo le energie rinnovabili. Esternamente, ha tentato di rafforzare la cooperazione con altri attori globali e paesi terzi.

Fra gli stati europei ventidue sono stati membri della NATO. L'Alleanza, che aveva già lavorato sulla sicurezza energetica - attraverso attività di monitoraggio dei rischi per la sicurezza energetica, condivisione di intelligence e migliori pratiche, svolgendo esercitazioni di difesa dagli attacchi di stati ostili e terroristi - è stata chiamata a svolgere un ruolo più forte nella protezione delle infrastrutture energetiche critiche.

La cooperazione bilaterale diretta con gli Stati Uniti, in quanto uno dei più importanti contributori alla crescita e allo sviluppo europei, ha ricevuto un forte impulso nell'anno 2009. È stato istituito un nuovo canale, il Consiglio per l'energia UE-USA, per riunire le due parti dell'Atlantico. Gli Stati Uniti sono stati inoltre invitati a contribuire a risolvere il principale problema interno che impedisce l'unificazione dei mercati energetici europei: gli investimenti insufficienti nelle infrastrutture del gas. Il progetto europeo più ambizioso in questo ambito, la Three Seas Initiative (TSI), è stato ideato dagli Stati

dell'Europa centro-orientale e fin dalla sua nascita ha goduto del sostegno diplomatico degli Stati Uniti, e in seguito anche sostenuto da diversi contributi finanziari. Le ragioni alla base di un così forte interesse delle autorità statunitensi, e persino di un interesse personale dell'allora presidente degli Stati Uniti Donald Trump, sono complesse e lontane dall'essere altruiste. Tuttavia, finora la STI e i progetti infrastrutturali realizzati sotto il suo auspicio sono diventati il risultato più visibile sulla strada per un'Europa più stabile e resiliente dal punto di vista energetico.

La tesi è divisa in quattro capitoli. Al fine di comprendere appieno l'argomento prescelto delle relazioni transatlantiche che è stato scelto, il primo capitolo fornisce soprattutto un'indagine attraverso la letteratura accademica sul concetto di “sicurezza energetica” nella varietà delle sue sfumature. Esistono dozzine di definizioni diverse del termine e ancora nessun consenso tra gli studiosi su quali dimensioni dovrebbe comprendere con precisione. Due cose sembrano essere chiare: dalla crisi petrolifera degli anni '70, quando si era originato il parere sui possibili rischi per la produzione di energia percepiti come rischi per la sicurezza dello Stato e per uno sviluppo economico stabile, la disponibilità fisica (geologica) di sufficienti riserve di energia e l'accessibilità economica (a prezzi ragionevoli) di energia per i consumatori sono rimaste due componenti indiscusse della sicurezza energetica. Un'ulteriore discussione del concetto dipende in modo significativo dalla contestualizzazione, ovvero dall'identificazione dei rischi associati ai sistemi energetici. La seconda sezione del primo capitolo è quindi incentrata sull'esplorazione di tali rischi che sfida l'Unione europea. Allo scopo della tesi, la sicurezza energetica e le sfide attuali ed emergenti pertinenti ad essa, sono messe in luce attraverso il punto di vista del fruitore, poiché l'Unione è (e rimarrà) essenzialmente un continente importatore di energia.

Dopo aver mappato il contesto dell'Unione per quanto riguarda il suo ambiente energetico e le questioni che hanno giocato e stanno svolgendo un ruolo nella definizione delle politiche energetiche dell'istituzione, il capitolo prosegue con un'indagine sul percorso verso una strategia energetica comune per tutti i 27 paesi al suo interno. L'inverno 2005/2006, quando si è verificata la più grave crisi energetica dagli anni '70, ha spinto i governi europei ad affrontare le politiche energetiche in modo più approfondito. Le successive crisi degli anni 2008-2009 e del 2014 hanno sancito la dipendenza da un fornitore dominante, Gazprom, come il principale rischio esterno per la sicurezza energetica. Tuttavia, i mix energetici fondamentalmente diversi degli Stati membri e la diversa quota di gas russo nel bilancio energetico di ogni paese hanno impedito all'Unione

di formulare un'opinione inequivocabile sui modi per confrontarsi e negoziare con Mosca - la quarta sezione del Capitolo prosegue attraverso questi dibattiti interni europei sugli atteggiamenti nei confronti del principale fornitore di gas. Il quesito dominante nelle discussioni sulla sicurezza energetica europea, invece, è diventato un'altro: il cambiamento climatico globale. Il primo capitolo si conclude con il modo in cui questa dimensione ambientale ha acquisito slancio e si è consolidata nei documenti della Commissione europea.

La crisi del gas del gennaio 2006 è avvenuta appena due anni dopo il più grande allargamento unico dell'Unione Europea: Repubblica Ceca, Estonia, Cipro, Lettonia, Lituania, Ungheria, Malta, Polonia, Slovacchia, Slovenia hanno aderito all'UE il 29 marzo 2004. La maggior parte di loro lo stesso anno entrò anche nel blocco NATO.⁹ I "nuovi" membri della NATO dell'UE, i paesi dell'Europa orientale sono casualmente i più soggetti ai sistemi di gasdotti che partono dalla Russia e costruiti decenni fa durante il periodo sovietico. Nel 2006 questi paesi sono rimasti fra i più colpiti in Europa. Allo stesso modo in seguito- nel 2009 e nel 2014, quando la Russia ha nuovamente fatto ricorso a manipolazioni con il flusso di gas. Non sorprende che i membri orientali dell'UE siano diventati particolarmente preoccupati per il loro futuro energetico e abbiano considerato la NATO un forum legittimo in cui poter discutere la sicurezza energetica. Sono diventati una forza trainante nelle discussioni su legami transatlantici più forti nella sfera energetica, spingendo per un ruolo più visibile per la NATO negli affari energetici europei per opporsi alla posizione aggressiva della Russia.¹⁰

Le crisi sequenziali e il grave effetto delle manipolazioni del gas russo sulle economie hanno sollevato interrogativi sulle minacce alla sovranità dei "nuovi" stati NATO e hanno causato preoccupazioni anche tra alcuni "vecchi" membri dell'Alleanza, che hanno sostenuto l'idea di ampliare l'elenco delle responsabilità della NATO. Il segretario della difesa ombra del Regno Unito, il dott. Liam Fox, ha sostenuto un impegno più audace della NATO nella sicurezza energetica perché "ciò che non possiamo fare è lasciarlo all'unica istituzione dell'UE ... (o) consentire che la nostra sicurezza energetica nazionale sia tenuta in ostaggio da i sogni di Bruxelles per creare l'integrazione della politica estera e di sicurezza."¹¹

⁹ Estonia, Lettonia, Lituania, Slovacchia e Slovenia hanno aderito alla NATO il 1 maggio 2004.

¹⁰ M. Rühle, "NATO and Energy Security: From Philosophy and Implementation," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 10, N. 4, 2012, p. 389.

¹¹ Liam Fox's speech at Chatham House on defense and energy security, maggio 22, 2007, accesso gennaio 15, 2022, https://conservativehome.blogs.com/torydiary/files/liam_fox_over_a_barrel_speech.pdf.

I funzionari statunitensi hanno anche sostenuto attivamente l'idea: "Poiché il gas naturale è scambiato a livello regionale e poiché l'Europa dipende da pochi fornitori, il rischio che le forniture di gas naturale vengano utilizzate come la leva politica contro un singolo Paese è persino maggiore di quella del petrolio: sarebbe irresponsabile per l'Unione Europea e la NATO rifiutare il coinvolgimento nella sicurezza energetica."¹² Alla 44a Conferenza sulla sicurezza di Monaco nel febbraio 2008, il Segretario generale Jaap de Hoop Scheffer ha affermato che l'Alleanza ha visto la sicurezza energetica come una questione "collettiva" da affrontare "collettivamente" con una risposta che riflette un "approccio sfaccettato" e "una grande quantità di coordinamento tra i governi nazionali e le organizzazioni internazionali."¹³

Il secondo capitolo della tesi è dedicato alle discussioni tra l'UE e gli Stati Uniti attraverso i vertici della NATO per stabilire se l'Alleanza debba essere in qualche modo responsabile della protezione della sicurezza energetica dei suoi membri, quali aspetti della questione può affrontare e da cosa si intende. Le proposte più radicali, quelle della Polonia, sono state respinte, eppure l'istituzione ha effettivamente ampliato il suo mandato e ha lanciato alcune iniziative di cui potrebbero beneficiare i membri europei della NATO.

Il lavoro sulla sicurezza energetica sotto l'egida di un'organizzazione militare ha rivelato molti dissensi tra gli stati della NATO e ha portato a un ruolo limitato e complementare della NATO nella sfera. Tuttavia, nel frattempo, l'Unione Europea rafforzava i legami bilaterali con gli Stati Uniti. Il Capitolo Tre parte dall'esame del Consiglio Energia UE-USA. Istituito nel 2009, il forum si è sviluppato fino al 2018 ed è diventato la principale piattaforma globale sulla cooperazione energetica transatlantica. Ma quando è cambiato il governo degli Usa, è cambiato anche l'approccio alla questione, trasformando le condizioni del discorso sulla sicurezza energetica o addirittura bloccandolo in alcuni aspetti.

Ciò che è sopravvissuto nel corso degli anni e attraverso il cambiamento dei governi sia in Europa che negli Stati Uniti è stata la suggestione del commercio di GNL, che entrambe le parti hanno promosso e incoraggiato. Anche qui, dalla parte europea, i Paesi del Centro e dell'Est hanno preso posizioni in prima linea, guidando la cooperazione.

¹² R. G. Lugar, "A Concert in Energy Security: Building Trans-Atlantic Cooperation to Confront a Growing Threat", *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Summer/Fall, 2007, pp. 23-27; V. Socor, "Lugar Urges Active Role for NATO in Energy Security Policy," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, dicembre 1, 2006, <https://jamestown.org/program/lugar-urges-active-role-for-nato-in-energy-security-policy/>; e J. Dempsey, "US Senator Urges Use of NATO Defence Clause for Energy," *International Herald and Tribune*, novembre 28, 2006.

¹³ NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, at the 44th Munich Security Conference speech, febbraio 9, 2008, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_7527.htm?selectedLocale=fr.

I paesi CEE sono i più limitati nelle loro fonti di energia quando si tratta di alternative al gas russo. Per ragioni storiche, la maggior parte delle rotte infrastrutturali e dei gasdotti europei correvano lungo l'asse est-ovest, isolando la regione CEE dai suoi vicini occidentali e ostacolando uno sviluppo economico uniforme del continente. Il think tank statunitense Atlantic Council nel 2014 ha pubblicato un rapporto e ha attirato l'attenzione dei presidenti di Polonia e Croazia su un potenziale di sviluppo non sfruttato dei paesi. Nel 2015 è nata l'Iniziativa Tre Mari, volta a promuovere il miglioramento dei sistemi energetici e infrastrutturali nella regione e a rafforzare la coesione e lo sviluppo dell'Unione nel suo insieme. La STI si concentra in gran parte sugli impianti GNL, poiché il gas trasportato tramite rotte marittime è stato considerato l'opzione principale per diversificare il bilancio energetico della regione. Gli Stati Uniti sin dall'inizio hanno espresso un sostegno bilaterale all'impresa e sono diventati il principale paese al di fuori dell'Europa a sostenere il programma con consegne di GNL oltre che finanziariamente. Il quarto capitolo della tesi ripercorre come le relazioni tra la CEE e gli Stati Uniti siano progredite attraverso la STI e in che misura i progetti e gli impegni dichiarati siano stati finora completati.

In conclusione, cercherò di rispondere alla domanda principale di questa ricerca: quali progressi in materia di sicurezza energetica europea sono stati compiuti dal 2008 attraverso la cooperazione transatlantica. Siccome l'andamento della politica energetica europea non era lineare e univoco, cercherò di specificare anche quelle carenze che sono persistite durante l'intero periodo preso in esame, portando l'Unione europea ad autoinfliggersi una posizione energetica insatbile.

INTRODUCTION

I am writing this thesis in the midst of another European gas crisis: in October 2021 gas prices in Europe soared unprecedentedly (the wave of growth to \$1800 per 1000 m³). In December 2021 prices reached a new high - more than \$2,100 per 1,000 m³.¹⁴ To understand: over the past five years, the average level of December prices has been more than 10 times lower.

The reasons for what is happening are many. The prerequisites for price growth appeared in the spring of 2021. Increased gas consumption due to the abnormally cold winter of 2020 and the post-Covid recovery of the EU economies, as well as decreasing LNG imports in the first quarter of 2021, resulted in storage fill rates lagging behind normal seasonal averages. Underground gas storage facilities in Europe were depleted. On 31 March 2021, for example, the average EU storage capacity was already lower than on the same day of 2020 (30.2% vs. 53.9%). The average filling rate at the end of June 2021 (47%) was the lowest at this time in the last decade.¹⁵

Under normal conditions, this deficit could have been compensated in the summer, but sea cargo with LNG, on which the European authorities were betting, instead of Europe went to Asia, where buyers paid more.¹⁶ Gazprom also refused to reserve additional capacities for pumping gas, and in July carried out scheduled maintenance of gas pipelines.¹⁷ In September, it became clear that it would not be possible to restore reserves in underground gas storage by the beginning of the heating season.

Gazprom accounts for about a third of all imported gas to Europe. In 2021, the long-awaited construction of the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline with a capacity of 110 billion m³ per year was completed. After the October peak, gas prices fell closer to \$1,000 per 1,000 m³, including due to the expected launch of supplies through this pipeline in 2022.

¹⁴ “Gas price in Europe up over \$2,100 per 1,000 cubic meters for the first time,” *TASS*, December 21, 2021, accessed January 31, 2022, <https://tass.com/economy/1378817>

¹⁵ European Commission, *Quarterly Report on European Gas Markets*, vol. 14 (2), Market Observatory for Energy, Brussels, 2021, accessed December 25, 2021, <https://euneighbourseast.eu/news-and-stories/publications/quarterly-report-on-european-gas-markets/>.

¹⁶ S. Stapczynski, “Asia and South America Suck Up LNG Flows at Europe’s Expense”, *Bloomberg*, August 3, 2021, accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-03/asia-and-south-america-suck-up-lng-flows-at-europe-s-expense>

¹⁷ “«Газпром» ставит Европу на ремонт”, *Коммерсантъ*, June 29, 2021, accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4878430>.

But in November, the geopolitical tension on the border of Russia and Ukraine escalated.¹⁸ This forced market participants to overestimate the risks associated with both the future transit of Russian gas through Ukraine and the timing of the commissioning of the Nord Stream—2. This also warmed up prices.

For decades the European Union with diverse approaches has been trying to secure its energy future by diversifying the routes and types of sources in the energy portfolio. However, despite all its efforts Europe is still struggling and seems to fail in the strategies to protect itself. The current crisis has illustrated once again how much the third largest economy of the World, Europe, is dependent on energy importers for its functioning.¹⁹

Even the green policies, the aspect of energy in which the EU has attained the most convincing results, appeared to trip up the Union exacerbating the recent situation. To make an example, due to efforts to reduce CO₂ emissions in the region, coal-fired power plants have been closed for the last 10 years, replacing them with solar and wind generation. Since such generation needs a safety net - in bad weather, the power in the power system drops sharply - these differences are compensated by gas generation, which gives a smaller carbon footprint and easier to tolerate unstable operation. But despite record gas prices, European politicians did not suspend the pace of decommissioning of "dirty" capacities. Moreover, in April 2021, for example, Germany confirmed plans to close 3 more coal-fired power plants (additionally to the first round of auctions in December 2020, when 11 plants with combined capacity went offline) and three nuclear reactors with a combined capacity.²⁰

In 1951 the "Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community" (ECSC) was signed, launching the process of European integration. The aim was to jointly

¹⁸ S. Westfall, "What you need to know about tensions between Ukraine and Russia," *The Washington Post*, November 26, 2021, accessed January 31, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/11/26/ukraine-russia-military/>.

¹⁹ IMF, *World Economic Outlook Update*, Washington, IMF Publication Services, January 2021, accessed February 4, 2022, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2020/October>.

²⁰ See: Kerstine Appunn, "Three more German coal power plants to go offline in December 2021," *Clean Energy Wire*, April 1, 2021, accessed February 4, 2022, <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/three-more-german-coal-power-plants-go-offline-december-2021>, Benjamin Wehrmann, "First phase-out auction for German hard coal deemed success, modern plants go offline," *Clean Energy Wire*, December 1, 2020, accessed February 4, 2022, <https://www.cleanenergywire.org/news/first-phase-out-auction-german-hard-coal-deemed-success-modern-plants-go-offline>, and Rachel Morison, "Germany Is Closing Half of Its Reactors at Worst Possible Time," *Bloomberg*, December 21, 2021, accessed February 4, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-12-21/germany-is-closing-half-of-its-reactors-at-worst-possible-time#:~:text=The%20shutdowns%20of%20Grohnde%2C%20Gundremmingen,emissions%20are%20on%20the%20rise>.

manage two essential assets for both warfare and reconstruction, thus creating a general political interest and increasing cooperation.²¹ Another of the first institutions of European cooperation was based on energy - the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), created six years after the ECSC.

Despite these beginnings and energy being at the center of the political agenda, European integration in this area has not progressed very well. Not only because the role of coal has diminished since its reserves have been rapidly depleting, but facing a heterogeneous energy landscape, market structures, and transport routes of 27 countries, the Member states have been led by different interests, which could not but hinder cooperation in the field of energy policy. Starting from the 1980s, some efforts were made and several smaller steps were taken to put European energy policy on a more formal basis. Cooperation gradually tightened, but many of the European Commission's most ambitious coherent political plans have often failed in the face of opposition from the Member states, so the ultimate results varied considerably.

The strategic importance of stability of energy supply among objectives that also include economic efficiency and environmental compatibility has been emphasized for years. Given Europe's escalating reliance on oil and gas, the growing energy needs of emerging powers such as China and India, the projected depletion of fossil fuel reserves after the middle of this century, threats related to climate change, and the continuing interest of many countries in peaceful nuclear energy, energy security over the last decades has turned into a major topic in international security debates.

The global evolving energy landscape of the 21st century and high environmental concerns have been pushing the Union on a path of looking for alternative energy sources, and the share of natural gas, which became the most convenient option, in the European energy portfolio has been further increasing rapidly.²² But while other fossil fuels are more transportable and can be delivered from different logistic destinations, natural gas is more of a challenge. Since it is mainly supplied via pipelines, which take years to be built, a switch between exporters and transit routes cannot be easily changed in case of serious problems. This factor makes gas facilities the most vulnerable to price shocks or supply constraints.

²¹ S. Müller-Kraenner, *Energy Security*, Earthscan, London, 2008, p.78.

²² Statista, *Liquefied natural gas trade volume worldwide from 1970 to 2020*, July 29, 2021, available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264000/global-lng-trade-volume-since-1970/>.

Although the degree of dependence on gas - and therefore of the vulnerability to associated risks - within the EU varies considerably from one state to another, the Union as a whole has a very high reliance on imports of this source. Thus, the concept of energy security in Europe became to a huge extent defined by the security of gas pipelines, which are associated with a number of external factors.

Reliability of exporters and risks of transit might have been less a problem if importers were many. Instead, Europe has put all of its eggs in one basket - 40% of gas comes from a single supplier, Russia. The winter 2005-2006 disputes between Moscow and Ukraine illustrated explicitly how high are the external risks to the EU energy stability. This watershed moment evolved the security of Europe's energy supply into the subject of extensive discussion. Russia's New Year's decision to cut off gas supplies to Ukraine showed that politics, not just armed conflicts, can undermine the flow of energy - and that the consequences go far beyond just the countries involved in the dispute.

To mitigate the effect of future similar challenges Europe intensified the efforts both internally and externally. On a domestic level, it continued the liberalization process, elaborating the internal energy market and promoting renewable energies. Externally, by attempts to strengthen cooperation with other global actors and third countries.

22 European states are members of NATO as well. The Alliance, which had already been working on energy security - through activities of monitoring energy security risks, sharing intelligence and best practices, carrying out exercises on defense from attacks by hostile states, and terrorists - was invoked to play a stronger role in the protection of critical energy infrastructures.

The direct bilateral cooperation with the United States, as one of the most important contributors to European growth and development, got a strong impetus since the year 2009. A new channel, the EU-US Energy Council, was established to bring together two sides of the Atlantic. The United States was invited also to contribute to solving the main inward problem impeding the unification of European energy markets - the insufficient investment in gas infrastructure. The most ambitious European project in this sphere, the Three Seas Initiative (TSI), was established by Central and Eastern European states, and since its inception was enjoying the diplomatic support of the US, and later the financial contributions too. The reasons behind such a strong interest of US authorities, and even a personal interest of the then US President Donald Trump, are complex and are far from being selfless. However, so far the TSI and infrastructural projects being built under

its auspice became the most visible result on the way to a more energy stable and resilient Europe.

The dissertation is divided into four chapters. In order to fully understand the chosen subject matter of the transatlantic relations that has been chosen, Chapter One provides firstly an investigation through academic literature on the “energy security” concept in the variety of its shades. There are dozens of different definitions of the term and still no consensus among scholars on which dimensions it should precisely encompass. Two things appear to be clear: since the oil crises of the 1970s, when the opinion on possible risks posed to energy production being perceived as risks posed to state security and stable economic development had originated, physical (geological) availability of sufficient energy reserves and affordability (at reasonable prices) of energy for consumers persisted as two undoubted constituents of energy security. Further discussion of the concept depends significantly on contextualization - on identifying the risks associated with energy systems. The second section of the first Chapter thereby is focused on exploring such risks challenging the European Union. For the purposes of this thesis, energy security and the existing and emerging challenges to it are contemplated from the position of the demand side, since the Union is (and will remain) an energy importing continent.

Having mapped the background of the Union with regards to its energy environment and the issues that played and are playing a role in shaping energy policies of the institution, the Chapter continues with an investigation of the path to a common Energy Strategy of the 27 countries.

The winter of 2005/2006, when the most severe energy crisis since the 1970s happened, made the European governments approach energy policies in a more thorough way. The subsequent crises of the years 2008-2009 and 2014 enshrined dependence on one dominant provider, Gazprom, as the main external energy security risk. Yet, fundamentally different energy mixes of the Member States and diverse share of Russian gas in every country’s energy balance have impeded the Union to come up with an unequivocal opinion on the ways how to confront and negotiate with Moscow - the fourth section of the Chapter goes through these internal European debates on the attitudes towards the major gas supplier. The uniting value of energy security for 27 countries, instead, became another concern - global climate change. Chapter One concludes with how this environmental dimension gained momentum and was solidified in the European Commission documents.

The gas crisis of January 2006 happened just two years after the largest single enlargement of the European Union - Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania,

Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia joined the EU on 29 March 2004. Most of them the same year also entered the NATO bloc.²³ The “new” EU NATO Members, Eastern European countries are coincidentally the most subjected to the gas pipeline systems running from Russia and built decades long ago during the Soviet time. In 2006 these countries suffered the most in Europe. Likewise they were the most affected thereafter in 2009 and 2014, when Russia resorted to manipulations with the gas flow again. Not surprisingly the Eastern EU Members became particularly concerned about their energy future and regarded NATO as a legitimate forum where energy security could be discussed.²⁴ They became a driving force in discussions of stronger transatlantic bonds in the energy sphere, pushing for a more visible role for NATO in European energy affairs to oppose Russia’s aggressive position.

The sequential crises and the severe effect of Russian gas manipulations on economies raised questions about threats to sovereignty of “new” NATO states and caused concerns also among some “old” Alliance’s members, who supported the idea of broadening the list of NATO’s responsibilities. Shadow Defence Secretary of the UK Dr Liam Fox, advocated for NATO’s bolder engagement into energy security because “what we cannot do is leave it solely to the EU as an institution... (or) allow our own national energy security to be held to ransom by the dreams of Brussels for creating foreign and security policy integration.”²⁵

The US officials were also actively backing the idea: “Because natural gas is traded regionally and because Europe is dependent on a few suppliers, the risk that natural gas supplies will be used as political leverage against an individual country is even greater than that of oil. It would be irresponsible for the European Union and NATO to decline involvement in energy security.”²⁶ Later in February 2008 the NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer affirmed that the Alliance saw energy security as a “collective” issue to be addressed “collectively” with a response that reflects a “multifaceted approach” and

²³ Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia joined NATO on 1 May 2004.

²⁴ M. Rühle, “NATO and Energy Security: From Philosophy and Implementation,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 10, N. 4, 2012, p. 389.

²⁵ Liam Fox’s speech at Chatham House on defense and energy security, May 22, 2007, accessed January 15, 2022, https://conservativehome.blogs.com/torydiary/files/liam_fox_over_a_barrel_speech.pdf.

²⁶ R. G. Lugar, “A Concert in Energy Security: Building Trans-Atlantic Cooperation to Confront a Growing Threat”, *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Summer/Fall, 2007, pp. 23-27. See, also V. Socor, “Lugar Urges Active Role for NATO in Energy Security Policy,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, December 1, 2006, <https://jamestown.org/program/lugar-urges-active-role-for-nato-in-energy-security-policy/>; and J. Dempsey, “US Senator Urges Use of NATO Defence Clause for Energy,” *International Herald and Tribune*, November 28, 2006.

"great deal of coordination between national governments and international organisations."²⁷

The Second Chapter of the thesis is devoted to discussions between the EU and the United States through NATO summits about if the Alliance should be responsible in a way for protection of energy security of its members, which aspects of the issue it can approach and by what means. The most radical proposals, those of Poland, were rejected, yet the institution has indeed broadened its mandate and has launched some initiatives that could benefit European NATO members'.

Working on energy security under an umbrella of a military organization revealed many dissents among NATO states and led to a limited and complementary role of NATO in the sphere. However, in the meanwhile the European Union was strengthening the bilateral ties with the United States. The Chapter Three starts from examination of the EU-US Energy Council. Established in 2009, the forum was developing until the year 2018 and became the main overarching platform on transatlantic energy cooperation. But when the government of the U.S. changed, the approach to the question changed as well, transforming the conditions of the discourse on energy security or even partially blocking it in some aspects.

What has survived through the years and through changing governments both in Europe and in the U.S. was the suggestiveness of the LNG trade, which both parties have been promoting and fostering. Here, again, from the European side the Central and Eastern countries became at the forefront driving the cooperation.

The CEE countries are the most limited in their energy sources when it comes to alternatives to Russian gas. Due to historical reasons, most of the European infrastructural routes and pipelines were running along the East to West axis, isolating the CEE region from its Western neighbours and hindering an even economic development of the continent. The U.S. think tank Atlantic Council in 2014 issued a report and drew attention of presidents of Poland and Croatia to an untapped development potential of the countries. In 2015 the Three Seas Initiative was born, intended to promote energy and infrastructure systems improvement in the region and to strengthen cohesion and development of the Union as a whole. The TSI in large part is focused on LNG facilities, as the gas being transported via marine routes was assumed as the main option to diversify the energy balance of the region. The United States since the beginning has been expressing bipartisan

²⁷ NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, at the 44th Munich Security Conference speech February 9, 2008, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_7527.htm?selectedLocale=fr.

support to the endeavor and became the major country out of Europe to support the program with LNG deliveries as well as financially. Chapter Four of the thesis traces how the relations between the CEE and the U.S. have been advancing through the TSI and to what extent the declared projects and commitments were completed so far.

In conclusion, I will try to answer the main question of this research: what progress on European energy security has been made since 2008 via transatlantic cooperation. And as the process has been not an easy path, I will additionally examine some shortfalls that have been persisting during the entire period, and also recently, self-inflicting an unstable energy position of the European Union.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Conceptualizing Energy Security

There is still no consensus among energy policy researchers on how to conceptualize energy security. The modern literature on this subject offers dozens of definitions that compete in formulating a clearer and more accurate wording for the concept. So did every institution working on energy security throughout history trying to find a definition that suits its concrete needs. Winzer (2012)²⁸ revised 38 definitions of energy security; Sovacool (2011)²⁹ counted 45 of them; Ang et al. (2015)³⁰ summed up 83 definitions of energy security in the current literature. The last two decades pushed both scholars and practitioners to shift from a classical political economy understanding of energy security as a security of oil supplies and to develop a more holistic term encompassing a range of energy sectors and challenges. These definitions range from the uninterrupted supply of oil to the physical security of power plants and support of alternative renewable energies. So, this evolution of a thought resulted in a confusing diversity of interpretations of the concept. Almost every scholar who is trying to systemize definitions, to group them or even to suggest his/her own new one, starts a paper carefully saying that the concept is “rather blurred” (Löschel et al., 2009)³¹, “elusive” (Kruyt et al. 2009)³², or “inherently slippery” (Chester, 2009).³³ Consequently, the energy policy literature is generating serious debate about the nature of the concept of energy security and its applicability to different situations.

The sense of energy security, if we put it simply, is where we can get energy from and what social costs we are willing to pay for it. These social costs are to some extent a natural explanation for variations in the language on energy security. And since all social costs - economic, political, environmental - are burdened with national values and goals,

²⁸ C. Winzer, “Conceptualizing energy security”, *Energy Policy*, n. 46, 2012, pp. 36–48.

²⁹ Benjamin K. Sovacool, *The Routledge Handbook of Energy Security*, London, Routledge, 2011, pp. 1-42.

³⁰ B. W. Ang, W. L. Choong, and T. S. Ng, “Energy security: Definitions, dimensions and indexes”, *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, n. 42, 2015, pp. 1077–1093.

³¹ A. Löschel et. al., “Indicators of energy security in industrialised countries”, *Energy Policy*, n. 38(4), 2009, pp. 1665–1671.

³² B. Kruyt et al., “Indicators for energy security”, *Energy Policy*, n. 37(6), 2009, pp. 2166–2181.

³³ L. Chester, “Conceptualising energy security and making explicit its polysemic nature”, *Energy Policy*, n. 38(2), 2010, pp. 887–895.

any discourse on energy security includes the evaluation not only of technical indicators, such as the share of imported energy sources, the diversity of the energy mix, etc., but also of regional context. Even the most notorious and important legislative acts (for example, neither the USA's Energy Independence and Security Act (2007) nor its Food and Energy Security Act (2007) offered any definitions of the term "energy security") give no definition of energy security. A slippery term and the discussions on the subject of the importance of energy security can be traced back decades but there is still no common wording, neither in academic literature nor in strategic documents of states and institutions, about what energy security means. With this part of the chapter I will try to clear the conceptual underbrush and to define what we will mean as energy security in the course of this thesis.

What is clear is that "energy security" falls under the umbrella term "security." As Baldwin stated in his fundamental article, "economic security, environmental security, identity security, social security, and military security are different forms of security, not fundamentally different concepts" (Baldwin, 1997, 23). This view is supported by Bauman: "to put it simply, energy security – or in other words stability – is all about security."³⁴ So prior to defining energy security let us start with clarifying what is embodied in the more general concept.

In the same article Baldwin defines security as a "low probability of damage to acquired values."³⁵ He then warns that this general definition should be applied to concrete situations and that such "closer specifications of security" should answer at least the following questions: Security for whom? Security for which values? From what threats? This is a common ground among scholars: yes, security in its core meaning is "the absence of threats", but since the word "threat" depends a lot on context and perspective, a strict designation of these threats should be done.

Each energy system faces a huge number of threats of various types. The complexity of energy security emerges when addressing the broad spectrum of threats to different aspects of energy use by different energy consumers (Ciută, 2010). Numerous attempts have been done to find comprehensive solutions to the multiple threats to energy security. As mentioned above, the choice of threats and methods of analysis and policy decisions are the main sources of differences in the conceptualization of energy security. Early and still highly influential concepts of energy security were mainly two-dimensional.

³⁴ F. Baumann, *Energy security as multidimensional concept*, München: Universität München, 2008.

³⁵ David A. Baldwin, "The concept of security", *Review of International Studies*, 23, 1997, pp. 5–26.

For instance, Yergin (1988, p. 111) in his classic volume focused primarily on the availability and affordability of energy for consumers, claiming that “the objective of energy security is to assure adequate, reliable supplies of energy at reasonable prices and in ways that do not jeopardize major national values and objectives.” Thus, two major elements of energy security are stated in this definition. The first refers to the physical (geological) availability of sufficient energy reserves. However, many energy resources, such as oil and gas, have become a global trump card, and the simple problem of a lack of resources has become quite rare. Instead, the price constituent, or affordability, the second element of energy security according to Yergin, is a more acute problem. Providing energy services at the lowest cost, maintaining stable prices for fuel and energy services, and equal access to energy services has a crucial meaning for secure energy provision. As Bohi and Thoman (1996, p. 1) argued: "Energy security refers to the loss of economic welfare that may occur as a result of a change in the price or availability of energy." This scientific understanding of the need to include the price element in the definition of energy security is echoed in some policy documents as we will see later.

The two-dimensional approach is still relevant for many scholars nowadays. For example, Valentine (2010, p. 59) follows the same logic and gives energy security the definition as “the aggregate capacity to fulfill energy demand through existing sources of supply. Or, for instance, Winzer (2012) after examining dozens of definitions concludes with his own, two-dimensional - the continuity of energy supplies relative to demand. He complements his definition with introducing energy security parameters, like the sources of risk (technical, human, and natural types of threats) and the scope of the impacts of those risks (in other words, threats to the continuity of energy services).³⁶ To measure the second parameter he suggested the severity filters such as speed, size, sustention, spread, singularity and sureness of impacts, so as to determine whether a continuity level is safe or not. He uses three European countries as case studies to illustrate that security of supply should be separated from other policy objectives as the energy security parameters (sources and their impact) differ a lot from one country to another.

The two-dimensional definition is tied primarily to the economic aspects of energy security. It is viewed as a product of the market and is defined in simple market

³⁶ Sovacool (2010) made a similar attempt to classify threats to energy security. Based on the scales at which they arise, he proposed three categories of such. The macro level thus covers global threats such as geopolitical issues, war, trade, investment barriers, and cross-border (environmental) externalities. The micro level comprises local energy security threats such as energy poverty. Finally, the meso level includes technology-based energy security threats that span global and local scales.

terms: supply and demand. Markets, in turn, are supposed to automatically adjust and to find the equilibrium price at the intersection of the supply and demand curves.

Consequently, energy insecurity is often attributed to market failures - mismatches between supply and demand. The reason for these mismatches then is a disruption in energy supply, which can happen due to military conflicts, sanctions, embargoes, and other non-economic actions of states. For market problems stand market solutions: the dominant energy security strategy in this case was associated with the idea of deregulating parts of the energy supply (Chester, 2010³⁷; Cherp and Jewell, 2011³⁸).

A very different and more sophisticated is another approach that developed along with the two-dimensional one described above. The Asia Pacific Energy Research Center (APEREC) has defined energy security “as the ability of an economy to guarantee the availability of energy resource supply in a sustainable and timely manner with the energy price being at a level that will not adversely affect the economic performance of the economy.”³⁹ The authors added to availability and affordability two more dimensions to the concept of energy security: accessibility and acceptability. According to APERC, availability is conceptualized as the quantity of energy reserves measured, meanwhile accessibility is primarily defined as the absence of barriers that prevent energy consumers from accessing available energy resources.⁴⁰ Therefore, these first two factors are fundamental physical elements of energy security. The third dimension of energy security, acceptability, has an environmental connotation and means that is the absence of environmental damage from the entire energy supply chain. Finally, affordability, an economic element of the definition, is explained by the affordability of acquiring energy resources and developing energy infrastructure. All together it has become known as the so-called “four A’s approach” and has become an extremely popular and influential framework for energy security analysis, giving a rise to further interpretations and modifications. For example, Chester (2010)⁴¹ referred to the APERC report in her important paper on four ‘dimensions’ of energy security (availability, adequacy, affordability, and

³⁷ L. Chester, “Conceptualizing energy security”, p. 890.

³⁸ A. Cherp and J. Jewell, “The three perspectives on energy security: Intellectual history, disciplinary roots and the potential for integration”, *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, n. 3(4), 2011, pp. 202–212.

³⁹ Intharak, N. et. al., *A quest for energy security in the 21st century: resources and constraints*, Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre, Tokyo Inst. of Energy Economics, 2008, p.6.

⁴⁰ These barriers can be geopolitical, such as political instability in the energy region, geographical, for example, associated with poor transport infrastructure, or technological, financial or insufficient human resources.

⁴¹ L. Chester, “Conceptualising energy security”, p. 888.

sustainability), very similar but not exactly matching the four A's. Hughes' (2012) 'generic framework for the description and analysis of energy security' has three indicators: availability, affordability and acceptability.⁴² The 'new comprehensive energy security paradigm' by von Hippel et al. (2011) suggests six dimensions⁴³; Vivoda (2010) goes on with five more.⁴⁴

Several energy security scholars highlight the importance of taking into account the time dimension of energy security, especially for the development of effective energy security policies. Indeed, the preferred energy structure that existed 50 years ago may seem inappropriate from today's point of view. For example, Ang et al. (2015) showed some change in the importance of various aspects of energy security over the decade. While the importance of energy availability has remained stable over time, the importance of energy security aspects such as energy efficiency, environmental concerns, social impacts, prices, and governance has increased significantly.

We should not forget also the difference between short-term energy security, such as subsequent blackouts in power systems, fuel shortages at service stations, sudden surges in energy prices for end-users, etc., and a long-term energy security, which is usually associated with the stability of supplies and prices in the national energy system (Kruyt et al., 2009; Valentine, 2010). Jansen and Seebregts (2010, p. 1654), for example, define long-term energy security as a "proxy of the certainty level at which the population in a defined area has uninterrupted access to fossil fuels and fossil-fuel-based energy carriers in the absence of undue exposure to supply-side market power over a period ahead of 10 years or longer. "

Pointing out at a single definition as the only true one would be absolutely incorrect and irresponsible. This thesis focuses on the EU and its partnership with the United States on the subject of energy security - both parties to the conversation are extremely dependent on energy coming from foreign suppliers, so they define the issue from the perspective of an importer. Albeit the perspective of the exporting states is not introduced in this section since for our further research it is not particularly relevant, the concept obviously exists in these parts of the world too and has its peculiarities there.

⁴² L. Hughes, "A generic framework for the description and analysis of energy security in an energy system", *Energy Policy*, n. 42, 2012, pp. 221–231.

⁴³ D. von Hippel et al., "Energy security and sustainability in Northeast Asia", *Energy Policy*, n. 39 (11), 2011, pp. 6719–6730.

⁴⁴ V. Vivoda, "Evaluating energy security in the Asia-Pacific region: a novel methodological approach", *Energy Policy*, n. 38 (9), 2010, pp. 5258–5263.

In conclusion, the findings of the scholarly literature done in this section can be summarized as follows:

- the views are very disparate, but the common elements included in all definitions mentioned is the “security of energy supply,” or “energy security” is even defined as “security of energy supply” per se;
- two approaches are the most frequently cited: two-dimensional (supply and demand) and four-dimensional (availability, accessibility, acceptability, affordability);
- the definition of energy security varies depending on the subject matter of energy security, threats/risks to energy security, the measures to ensure energy security, and how these three points are identified/measured;
- the concept of energy security for sure cannot embrace all possible risks or vulnerabilities, but it should help to define a framework for identifying, measuring, and managing these vulnerabilities.

2. What is Energy Security for the European Union

Harking back to 1952 when the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was created, energy has always been at the center of the political agenda of the Union. Indeed, the question of the security of energy supplies is fundamental for all import-dependent countries. Moreover, the European Union, for historical reasons, has significant power over the coal sector, as well as over nuclear energy. Given the regional and global interdependencies affecting energy policy, this area may seem the most natural field to cooperate and to be one of the priorities on the agenda. Yet, energy policy is still to a great extent a matter of the individual affairs of member states, and the attempts to create a universal language, to define the values to stand together for, and to create a common approach to build a more energy secure community gained momentum only within the last decades.

The issue of energy security for the first time appeared on the European agenda in the context of the 1973/74 oil crisis. The quadrupled oil prices and the stunning impact of the shock on European consumers and businesses made the Governments take serious measures for preventing further possible flow disruptions and seek alternative supply routes. Following the crisis, the Council adopted a Resolution, which did not give the definition of what is energy security but stipulated some guidelines for improving it from

demand and supply sides with such measures as reduction of the rate of growth of internal consumption, development of domestic nuclear, hydrocarbon and solid fuel production, and diversifying reliable external supplies.⁴⁵ Thus, we can see a two-dimensional approach of the EU to energy security, which basically implies stability of supply at affordable prices, or "safe and lasting supplies under satisfactory economic conditions" as the document says.

In the next years, environmental protection came into the discussions of energy security, but climate change was not yet so much scrutinized so no legislation or certain objectives were determined. The promotion of a common energy policy has followed economic paths, although this has changed slightly since the inclusion of environmental protection in the Single European Act in 1987.⁴⁶ However, the focus continued to be on economic goals such as completing domestic market energy. For example two directives on gas and electricity were adopted to facilitate the rules of the internal energy market.⁴⁷ But with the first Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report of 1990, subsequent IPCC reports, the Rio Earth Summit (1992), and the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol (1997), climate change and together with energy issues gained momentum in a global agenda, creating a backstone for more ambitious steps.⁴⁸

In 1995, in the very first Green Paper The European Commission named the 'three pillars of European energy policy' - security of supply, competitiveness and environmental protection.⁴⁹ The stance the Commission had chosen and the language of the first, and also of the second Green Paper, echoes the four As approach of the APERC, introduced in the first section of this chapter, and its constituents: "The European Union's long-term strategy for energy supply security must be geared to ensuring [...] the uninterrupted physical availability of energy products on the market," so, availability and accessibility, "[...] at a price which is affordable for all consumers," thus affordability, "[...] while respecting environmental concerns and looking towards sustainable development"

⁴⁵ Council Resolution concerning a new energy policy strategy for the Community, *Council Of European Union*, September 17, 1974, accessed November 16, 2021, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A31975Y0709%2801%29>.

⁴⁶ Single European Act, *European Commission*, July 1, 1987, accessed November 16, 2021, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/sea/sign>.

⁴⁷ Namely, Directive 96/30/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 19 December 1996 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity, OJ L 27/10 (First Electricity Directive); Directive 98/30/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 22 June 1998 concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas, OJ L 204/1 (First Gas Directive).

⁴⁸ Susanne Langsdorf, "EU Energy policy: From the ECSC to the Energy roadmap 2050", *Green European Foundation*, December, 2011, p. 2.

⁴⁹ "For a European Union energy policy: Green Paper", European Commission, (COM(94)0659 - C4-0026/95), Brussels, 1995.

which is the acceptability component.⁵⁰ This cannot be called a clear definition, but apparently is the only explanation of the view of the EC on energy security we can find. Likewise the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2004, p. 42) follows the most spread interpretation of ‘energy security’ as ‘security of supply’ and defines it as “the availability of energy at all times in various forms, in sufficient quantities and at affordable prices without unacceptable or irreversible impact on the environment.”

The international efforts on broadening the concept to encompass environmental issues did not find any implementation in strategic documents of the European Union though. Neither got any promotion the core problem of energy security, the choice of sources and the need of multiple suppliers: “despite the various crises besetting the European economy in the last thirty years, there has not been a real debate on the choice of energy sources and even less an energy policy regarding security of supply.”⁵¹

Acknowledging this, five years later in 2005 the Commission highlighted the urgent need for developing feasible steps and a plan to address the long-lasting oil price crisis and growing environmental awareness.⁵² Sticking to the three energy pillars, the document nonetheless at most focuses on the security of supply, which is defined as the reduction of risks linked to the dependence of the Union on the imported energy, and not as striving for self-sufficiency or at least on minimizing the dependence.⁵³ Hence, sharing the U.S. concerns about increasing energy imports, on the one hand, the EU does not surely aim to maximize energy self-sufficiency, but rather focuses on diversifying supply sources.

In December 2003 the EU adopted the European Security Strategy. In general it was an important moment for advancing the security of the Union, however, “A Secure Europe in a Better World” hardly included any steps for strengthening the energy constituent of security. A three-lines paragraph only is devoted to energy as “a special concern for Europe” and the steadily growing dependence on imports is mentioned as one of “global challenges” of the Union.⁵⁴ So the first strategic document tackled an economic aspect of energy solely - a very slow evolution of the concern through the official policy documents.

⁵⁰ "Towards a European Strategy for the Security of Energy Supply. Green Paper", European Commission, COM769, Brussels, 2000.

⁵¹ Green Paper, 2000: 3.

⁵² Between March 1999 and November 2000 crude oil price tripled, after the OPEC countries once again in the history limited their production volumes.

⁵³ Green Paper, 2000: 2.

⁵⁴ “A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy”, The Council of The European Union, Brussels, December 8, 2003, p. 30.

The following years were indicative and fateful for the entire world for taking the issue of energy security more thoroughly. The geopolitical alterations (e.g. the gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine in 2005-2006)⁵⁵ and wars (the 2003 US invasion in Iraq), natural catastrophes (e.g. hurricane Katrina in 2005)⁵⁶, equipment failures (e.g. 2003 blackout in Northeast US)⁵⁷, and strikes (Venezuela 2002-2003)⁵⁸ showed to what extent energy importing countries are really vulnerable to energy supply disruptions and how the lack of an elaborated concept and developed energy strategy affects the overall security (or, in other words, stability) of a country or a region. The role of the Russian imported gas will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter but what is important to say now is that in the case of Europe the gas disputes between Russia and Ukraine had become the major reason to change the perception about energy and to endow the concept with a strong political connotation. The trend in Europe before 2005/2006 had been of the energy policies being increasingly driven by market forces, business interests of the companies (and so the short-term economic benefits), and the separation of energy issues from political context. As Umbach noted, “mid- and long-term national interests of energy supply security have been neglected by both energy companies and national governments.”⁵⁹ The episode of disrupted deliveries indeed questioned the long-term assumptions (for example, about the oil and gas as economic, and not strategic goods, or about the leading role of the private sector in providing security of supply) existing previously. The first Russian-Ukrainian gas conflict had a striking effect on Europeans and sparked with renewed vigor the discussion

⁵⁵ After the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine inherited at its disposal the main gas pipelines (built in Soviet times), through which gas from Russia is supplied to European consumers. In March 2005, the chairman of the national joint-stock company Naftogaz of Ukraine, Aleksey Ivchenko, suggested that Gazprom revise the tariffs for the transit of Russian gas to Europe through the territory of Ukraine. On July 6, the Russian gas concern agreed to a new transit tariff, subject to a simultaneous increase in the gas price for Ukraine from \$ 50 to the European average (\$ 160-170 per 1,000 cubic meters). The Ukrainian side refused to consider this requirement. As a result, the contract for the supply of gas in 2006 was not signed, and from January 1, 2006, the supply of gas to the Ukrainian market was stopped. At the same time, according to the Russian side, during the first days of the year, Ukraine carried out an unauthorized selection from the export gas pipeline through which fuel was supplied to Europe.

⁵⁶ The hurricane eroded the coastal areas, they suffered from both infrastructure and business loss; oil and gas operations were disrupted by the catastrophe.

⁵⁷ On August 14, 2003 at 4:10 p.m. ETA an electricity outage across the eastern United States and parts of Canada happened. In three minutes 21 power plants shut down, affecting fifty million people. While utilities were able to resume some work in two hours, electricity in other places remained disconnected for more than a day.

⁵⁸ In December 2002 due to a five-day strike against President Hugo Chavez's government stopped oil shipments from Venezuela. In total, during the Venezuelan strikes of 2002-2003, Chávez fired 19,000 employees of the state oil company Petróleos de Venezuela, replacing them with people loyal to his government.

⁵⁹ F. Umbach, “Global energy security and the implications for the EU”, *Energy Policy*, n. 38(3), 2010, pp. 1229-1240.

among politicians about the need to take a more comprehensive stance on energy security, and to rethink traditional “business” approach to energy.

The next gas crisis in winter 2009 and following Russia-Ukraine disputes over gas supplies in 2014, reaffirmed this shift on politicization of the concept on the part of the European Commission.⁶⁰ From now the main strategic priority has become finding a clearer solution to one major energy security challenge facing the EU, according to its many Member States: gas imports from Russia. It was May 2014, when for the first time the Commission distinctly stated that Russian gas supplies are the most important energy security issue for the EU states.⁶¹ In the context of 2005/2006 gas disputes the focus of EU energy policy has modified, adding to a purely market point of view, a stronger political meaning to energy, especially when it comes to energy diplomacy and gas supply agreements between the EU and Russia. The afterwards initiative of the establishment of the Energy Union in 2014/15 provided a bolder political perspective on this issue.

The pivotal role of energy security and its compound nature were consolidated in the last edition of the European Global Strategy of 2016. The document substituted the Global Strategy of 2003 and, compared to the previous edition, in 2016 the Commission expressed clearly that energy security is in the list of “priorities for external action.” Again, in the text there is no distinct definition of the concept, however, the Commission stipulates some directions of the policies to adhere: diversification of energy sources, routes and suppliers, by strengthening the energy diplomacy “with reliable energy-producing and transit countries” and by developing infrastructures to allow these sources to come to European markets. The Commission acknowledged also that the growing infrastructural ties with third countries may have different effects on Members as well as impede the

⁶⁰ In October 2008, Russia and Ukraine signed a memorandum that provided for a gradual three-year transition to market prices in gas supplies to Ukraine. For 2009, Russia offered \$ 250 per 1,000 cubic meters. However, in the course of further negotiations, the Ukrainian side expressed disagreement with such a price, considering it too high. In December 2008, Moscow and Kiev again failed to agree on the terms of gas supplies. Gazprom refused its compromise proposals on the price and began to insist on the market option - \$ 450 per 1,000 cubic meters. On December 31, Ukraine withdrew from the negotiation process. From January 1, 2009, Gazprom cut off gas supplies to Ukraine, from January 5, gas volumes for European consumers were reduced, and from January 7, the transit of fuel through the territory of Ukraine was terminated. The gas conflict was resolved on January 19, 2009 after the RF and Ukraine signed contracts for the transit of gas from Russia to Europe and gas supplies to Ukraine at the base price for Europe (\$ 450 per 1,000 cubic meters). On 16 June 2014 Russia cut off the gas supply again, substantiating it with Ukrainian failure to pay its debts to Gazprom. After several rounds of tough negotiations, an EU-mediated agreement was reached for Russia to resume gas supplies to Ukraine. For the study that investigates the 2008-2009 Ukraine-Russia gas disputes and its implications on the European Union, see: S. Pirani, J. Stern and K. Yafimava, *The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment*, Oxford, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, February 2009.

⁶¹ “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. European Energy Security Strategy”, European Commission, COM(2014) 330, May 28, 2014, Brussels, p. 2.

functioning of the internal energy market. For this purpose, information transparency should be a crucial aspect when building energy security for the Union.

From 1952 to nowadays the EU comprehension of energy security has devolved a lot, strengthening over the years both internal and external dimensions. The policy documents are still lacking of a rigorous and precise definition of the term, but from the priorities and guidelines described in the official documents of the Union we can conclude that:

- since 1995, when ‘three pillars of European energy policy’ have been formulated for the first time, the EU still complies with this triangle (security of supply, competitiveness and environmental protection);

- the three pillars of European Energy Security in their nature constitute the four As approach, frequently found and the most established in scholar literature;

- a series of geopolitical alterations, equipment blackouts, and natural catastrophes pushed governments to turn their vision from an exclusively internal market meaning of the issue in the 1970s to a more wide context, assigning an external political perspective to energy security.

3. On the Way to Energy Solidarity

Among the multipliers which contribute to anxieties over the Union’s ability to meet future energy demand, there is one crucial factor. In various fields, like economic and trade policy, the Member States of the EU have transferred some of their national sovereignty to joint EU institutions. Energy regulations though - decisions on long-term supply contracts, development, and improvement of energy infrastructure - still remain largely the individual responsibility of the states and the vision on energy security problems is very fragmented among the Members.

In fact, the process of developing and implementing a unique energy strategy for more than 20 countries with different energy landscapes turned out to be formidable. Europe is one of the biggest importers of fuels but the extent of energy dependence differs depending on each country’s own resources and the priorities they make with respect to the domestic economy.⁶² A unified energy strategy seems impossible to formulate without

⁶² “EU energy in figures: statistical pocketbook 2018”, European Commission, September 25, 2018, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2833/279113>.

in-depth analysis of the economic situation in each member country. Particularly, a striking difference in economic potential, including in the energy sector, between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ EU countries catches the eye.⁶³

Firstly, the GDP per capita index of the so-called ‘new Union’ is considerably lower than the one of the ‘old Union’, and that means the huge gap in economic potential between the two and the impossibility for the former group of Members to compete with the latter one. Secondly, the main problem of the Union is to ensure the security and stability of energy supply. As we said in the section above, one of the reasons for the overall growing dependence on imports is the decline in own energy production in the EU. However, among the ‘new’ Members this trend is not so bold and in some countries, for example Poland, the production of primary energy in the last years is only growing, exceeding the average rate of the EU-28.⁶⁴ The division of the energy sector into ‘old’ and ‘new’ Union is best illustrated by the method of energy production. The ‘new’ EU countries are characterized by a high contribution of energy derived from carbon and much less percentage of natural gas or renewable sources in their energy mix.⁶⁵

The strategic importance of the sector and the first calls for cooperation in the energy field appeared after successive oil shocks (1973, 1979) of the 20th century. The productivity of state monopolies became criticized and questioned, so in the 1980s the idea of a common internal policy developed. A switch in the attitude to energy happened which back then started to be perceived as a commodity, and not an obligation of a state. As any commodity energy became a subject to competition laws. To facilitate the liberalization of energy, legislative and working documents were issued to make the European energy market more competitive and flexible. The Single European Act of 1986 (SEA) stipulated the economic value of energy and facilitated the creation of the domestic market, launching the attempts to integrate states in the energy field. The European Commission has sought to set common goals and to urge Member States to unite since then. For instance, in 1988 it introduced the Working Document on the possible restructuring of electricity markets. The attempt was not a successful one though. The document did not contain a comprehensive program for the creation of a unified energy market. The type of competition was not

⁶³ ‘Old Union’ namely are ten countries which joined the Union in the year 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia; two in 2007: Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia in 2013; ‘new Union’ are the fifteen countries which established the Union or entered into before the year 2000: Austria, Belgium, Dania, Finland, France, Greece, Spain, Holland, Ireland, Luxemburg, Germany, Portugal, Sweden, Great Britain, and Italy.

⁶⁴ This statistics introduced is the data before Brexit; the total number of the Member States is taken as 28.

⁶⁵ For detailed statistics on European energy production and energy balances see https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy_balances/enbal.html.

clearly defined neither were embedded clear obligations to create a single energy market. In addition, due to the unwillingness of some member states for further energy liberalization, they remained virtually free in organizing their national markets. As a result, the only instruments left to operate the internal energy market for the Commission were the provisions on competition and free movement of the Treaty.⁶⁶

Since then modest progress has been made and the market liberalization process stalled for some decades. Sharky steps on strengthening the policies were done with few documents. Two electricity and gas directives were adopted in 1990 to improve price transparency and the use of the grid for electricity transit through transmission grids appropriately.⁶⁷ They were followed by the first Green Paper (1995) and White Paper on an Energy Policy for the European Union and External Security Supply, which emphasized the need to develop an external dimension to ensure energy supply.⁶⁸ The next document on the topic was the Green Paper of the year 2000: it recognized the gap between production and demand and the consequences of this trend on the future growing import dependence of the Union.⁶⁹ Another concern was raised in the Paper - it proposed the use of renewable energies as one of the solutions to secure energy flows and to reinforce their sustainability. However, at this time there was no common opinion on whether the Union should have external powers in the energy questions, and this dispute left the EU without a proper framework capable of managing its dependency on imports.

A nonuniform energy landscape inside the Community made its Members take asymmetric energy stances and adapt differently. The lack of solidarity and the quest for supranational cooperation were highly questionable, as some Members were worried and reluctant to trust their sovereignty to the EU institutions. But some global events pushed the European authorities to invent a more coherent and ambitious framework. The recent two energy supply disruptions sparked again the discussions on the need to unite in response to external energy threats.

⁶⁶G. Block and E. Saitova, "Electricity and gas markets", in R. Leal-Arcas, J. Wouters (eds.), Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017, p. 259.

⁶⁷ Council Directive 90/377/EEC of 29 June 1990 concerning a Community procedure to improve the transparency of gas and electricity prices charged to industrial end-users, OJ L 185/16; Council Directive 90/547/EEC of 29 October 1990 on the transit of electricity through transmission grids, OJ L 313/30; and Council Directive 91/296/EEC of 31 May 1991 on the transit of natural gas through grids, OJ L 147/37. The directives have been repealed by the Second Electricity Directive and Second Gas Directive.

⁶⁸ "For a European Union energy policy: Green Paper", European Commission, COM(95) 659, Brussels, 1995. , "Energy Policy for the European Union", Commission White Paper, COM(95) 682, Brussels.

⁶⁹ Green Paper (2000), p. 20.

The few days of serious pressure drop in European pipelines in winter 2005-2006 resulted from the Russia-Ukraine strife over gas price and affected most of the European countries, including Austria, Italy, Germany, Poland. These events exposed the undesirable implications of European dependence on oil and gas imports and made the Union rethink both the concept of energy security and the importance of acting as a united power in relations with its energy suppliers. As the Economist pointed out, “power has swung back to the producers for the first time since the early 1980s.”⁷⁰ The gravity of the events have prompted the European Commission to collaborate on foreign policy coordination which would aim at increasing political partnerships, investment in gas lines and energy infrastructure in producing and transit countries. The Commission was the first to initiate the dialogue between the parties to facilitate the conflict resolution. The series of meetings with Gazprom and Naftogaz in January 2006 and in October 2006 showed the readiness of the countries to guarantee uninterrupted supplies to the European Union and became a proof for the Europeans to act collectively at the negotiations table with their neighbour countries.⁷¹

The document that revitalized the discussion on a new solid and unified energy strategy has become the Green Paper 2006 on a European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy. The Commission was calling for an Energy Policy for Europe and was quickly approved by the Heads of State and Government at their March 2006 meeting. The Paper stated that “an approach based solely on 25 individual energy policies is not enough” and invoked the Members to unite in “a new common policy with a common voice on energy questions.”⁷²

The Green Paper 2006 met both dimensions of energy policy, external and internal, appealing again to the approach of “three main pillars” - sustainability, security of supply, and competitiveness. A new vision set goals for stimulating functioning energy markets, fruitful cooperation between producers and consumers, and fostered measures for making the energy system more sustainable. Following this agreement the EU Heads of States approved the first EU “Energy Action Plan” in March 2007.

The overall Commission's efforts have consolidated the “energy triangle” as a core of the energy strategy and laid a first brick for building a more integrated European

⁷⁰ “Nervous Energy”, The Economist, January 5, 2006, <https://www.economist.com/special-report/2006/01/05/nervous-energy>.

⁷¹ J. Vinois, “The Way towards an Energy Policy for Europe”, *Leibniz Information Centre for Economics*, Berlin, 2007, vol. 76 (1), p. 19.

⁷² “A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy. Green Paper”, European Commission, COM105, Brussels, 2006. p. 4.

energy strategy. Nonetheless, the EU-27 states have largely failed to develop a holistic foreign policy strategy at their Spring Summit - a political solidarity was still lacking, it was declared.⁷³ The states remained reluctant to concede national sovereignty over external aspects of energy security. Through years the hopefulness projects for alternative gas importers have been failing and the plan for reducing Europe's major reliance on Russian gas and for broadening supply sources have been melting away.⁷⁴ The process of establishing bilateral agreements between countries like Germany, Italy, Bulgaria - the main proponents of continued cooperation with Russia - has continued.

4. European Energy Security Challenges and its Uneasy Marriage with Russia

The world's demand for energy is constantly rising since the number of population, and so economies, is growing fast. Europe is not an exception: from 2000 the numbers have been increasing steadily.⁷⁵ And meanwhile the own primary energy production rate of the EU continues to decelerate, the rapid growth of China, India, and other developing economies brings the challenge of competition for world energy resources.⁷⁶ These tendencies consequently pose questions regarding the possible energy future of the Union and its high import dependency.⁷⁷

The EU countries hardly have their own energy resources to meet their needs. In 2019 its energy dependency percentage outnumbered 60% and this share is steadily growing.⁷⁸ Coal deposits, which have accommodated Europe since 1970, are shrinking, causing primary energy production to fall and resulting in rising levels of imports. Crude oil ranks first but imports of natural gas, the second largest imported product, have indeed gained an outstanding pace - the volumes have doubled over the period 1990-2019, with record levels in 2019, 19.3 % higher compared to 2009. In 2019 the EU's energy demand

⁷³ F. Umbach, "Global energy security", pp. 1239.

⁷⁴ One of the options was the Nabucco pipeline - the European flagship project of a new gas pipeline. The route should have lay via Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary and carry gas from Turkey across Europe to Austria, bypassing Russia. The project and the aspirations failed in 2013 when Azerbaijan chose to deliver its gas to the Trans Adriatic Pipeline consortium.

⁷⁵ For detailed statistics about the dynamics of European demography see <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/digpub/demography/bloc-1a.html?lang=en>.

⁷⁶ Eurostat, *Energy statistics - an overview*, Brussels, European Commission, May, 2021, p. 1, <https://www.sipotra.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Energy-statistics-an-overview.pdf>.

⁷⁷ Eurostat: "The ratio between net imports and gross available energy indicates the ability of a country or a region to meet all its energy needs. This ratio is called energy dependency." Meanwhile "gross available energy" is defined as "the quantity of energy necessary to satisfy the energy needs of a country or a region."

⁷⁸ Eurostat, *Energy statistics - an overview*, Brussels, European Commission, May, 2021, p. 1, <https://www.sipotra.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Energy-statistics-an-overview.pdf>.

for oil and gas products was covered with imports of 96.8 % and 89.7 % respectively. 44.0% of solid fossil fuels were continued to be imported too.⁷⁹ Thus, stable and affordable energy supplies are crucial for the European economy and citizens. The capacity to meet the growing energy demand depends a lot on investments in projects for building a resilient infrastructure and for replacing the aging one. These investments are important to be made already today to secure tomorrow. Hence, the need for a safe and transparent investment climate and clear government strategies to attract private investors is one of the challenges on the way to smooth functioning of European markets.⁸⁰

For the EU the task of improvement of infrastructure comes together with the task of diversification of suppliers. The concerns about supply security of Europe were initially fueled by the Arab oil embargo in the early 1970s. In particular, the embargo revealed three main problems. First, it stressed the need for closer cooperation on energy policy between European countries, as well as between Europe and the world of energy producers. Second, it became apparent that institutional arrangements for greater coordination in the event of future supply disruptions are vital. Third, a common opinion emerged that Europe must develop strategies to avoid falling prey to future attempts by exporting states to use energy as a political or economic leverage. To this end, the first multilateral institution of oil importers, the International Energy Agency (IEA) was established in 1974, which became the main tool for monitoring and analyzing global energy markets. And as for diversification of their energy supplies, European countries tried to develop new strategies and started identifying the Soviet Union as a potential energy supplier, stepping into an uneasy marriage with Moscow, which would remain such even after the transformation of the Soviet Union into the Russian Federation.⁸¹

For oil imports, the EU has many options; oil is available in abundance and can be flexibly sold and transported around the world. Gas is a greater deal as it needs to be imported through pipelines which require years to construct. What Europe had in the 21st century is that the partnership established with the Soviets in the second half of 1970s brought the Union to the situation where almost 40% of all gas imported has come mainly from one supplier, Russia.⁸² As Europe had been relying on one major oil producing region

⁷⁹ *ibid*, p. 16.

⁸⁰ J. Vinois, "The Way towards", p. 20.

⁸¹ P. Belkin, "The European Union's Energy Security Challenges", *Connections*, vol. 7 (1), 2008, p. 80.

⁸² Eurostat, *Energy statistics - an overview*, Brussels, European Commission, May, 2021, p. 1, <https://www.sipotra.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Energy-statistics-an-overview.pdf>.

after the Second World War, it found itself in a similar situation but with gas in the first decades of the new millennium.

In the aftermath of the 2014 Crimean crisis, concerns about Russia's reliability as an energy partner intensified in the European Union. It brought at the table discussions about the previous experience of the Russian-Ukrainian gas disputes of the 2000s and early 2010s. As most post-Soviet states, Ukraine hangs on to Russia for most of its energy needs. This provides the latter a significant political leverage. In 2014, Russia asked Ukraine to pay off its energy debts, which, when it failed to do so, led Russia to cut off gas supplies to the country (Larrabee et al., 2015, p. 13).⁸³ Although the measures taken addressed only Ukraine, they disrupted several other European countries. A supply shortage caused by the intentional action of a state or a non-state actor, such as a major oil company, or as Amineh and Cranes-Grauss called it “structural deficit,” is the main cause of worries of the European Union (Amineh & Yang, 2018, p. 39),⁸⁴ disruptions in the supply of natural gas can seriously affect economic and domestic activities.

Dependence on Russian imported gas has apparently been the main external weakness of the Union in the early 21st century. Russia is dependent on the EU too, as it is its main gas consumer. However, the relationship between the two parties is not a smooth one. The Eastern states of the EU, to a large extent due to their former Soviet experience, hold a strong opportunistic stance on Russia and have been warning of its attempts to use its energy for political means. The continuing geopolitical events are complicating EU-Russia relations, especially did the 2014 Crimean crisis. Nevertheless, the EU generally is inclined to consider Russia's strong dependence on the European market as a guarantee against further serious gas flow manipulations. Energy relations between Russia and the EU are not lopsided, both parties have a lot to lose if it falls apart. If in the Russian-Ukrainian tandem the distribution of power is very uneven and Russia using its advantage can literally afford to manipulate and suspend supplies, it is not the same case with the EU. The fact that the Union is Russia's largest gas buyer elevates its role in the Russian economy. In other words, the importance of the EU market to Russia is too high to force Russia to venture the supplies. The EU, the United States and some other countries, have imposed sanctions against Russia in the financial and energy sectors (Spiegel, 2014).⁸⁵ However, the sanctions

⁸³ F. S. Larrabee, P. A. Wilson, and J. Gordon, *The Ukrainian Crisis and European Security: Implications for the United States and U.S. Army*, RAND Corporation, 2015, p.13.

⁸⁴ M. P. Amineh and G. Yang, “China's geopolitical economy of energy security: A Theoretical and Conceptual Exploration”, *African and Asian Studies*, February 27, 2018, vol. 17 (1-2), p. 39.

⁸⁵ S. Von Matthias and C. Schmergal, “Sanctions on Russia Hit German Economy Hard”, *Spiegel International*, July 21, 2014,

tackled mainly the oil sector, taking into account crucial volumes of Russian gas needed for covering the EU's energy demand.

Yet a threat from Russia exists and relying on Gazprom as a major supplier, brings the risk of regular infrastructure failures that can block economic activity. So in spite of the high probability that in the short run the European Union will remain tied to Russia - for reasons of geographic closeness, available infrastructure, and the volume of Russian energy supplies - alternatives need to be found to overcome this dependence on one dominant supplier. As Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, noted in front of the Commission: "Securing our future energy resources depends mainly on diversification. That means accepting that we will continue to depend heavily on oil and gas."⁸⁶ More diversified geography of import providers can limit Russia's influence on the EU energy markets and reduce the degree of severity of possible infrastructure disruptions.

In considering threats to the European energy security, we should also bear in mind that the discontinuities in fossil fuels supply can come not only from Moscow and its apparent willingness to use energy as political leverage but also from other external factors such as continued instability in energy producing regions, the risk of terrorist attacks on energy infrastructure. The looming environmental threat is a multiplier for all the struggles mentioned. In 2001 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change presented an intimidating scenario of global warming up to 5.8°C by the end of the century (IPCC 2001). Global CO₂ emissions are now accelerating and the EU as one of the main consumers of energy is facing the responsibility to contribute to the stabilization of global climate change.

Against this complex background and all the rising concerns in Europe over how to manage exposures that could affect future energy requirements, the traditional solution for securing energy as diversification obviously has become insufficient. Even though this key element of policies remains relevant since Churchill's times, a broader approach taking into account the rapidly changing global energy trade, supply chain vulnerabilities, terrorism, and other internal and external factors is coming into the transatlantic energy agenda (Yergin 2006: 69–71).

<https://www.spiegel.de/international/business/german-economy-hit-by-us-eu-sanctions-on-russia-a-982075.html>

⁸⁶ J. Solana, "Towards an EU external energy policy" at the EU Energy Conference, Brussels, November 20, 2006.

5. The Uniting Value

Defining common priorities and measures to approach the uneven energy landscape of the Union is not an easy task. Since the structure of the energy mix varies a lot from state to state, a collective agreement on common priorities seems unreachable. However, there is one aspect on which almost all the Member States agree.

The world is currently being redrawn by climate change. Unlike the security of energy supply, climate change has become a concern recently but is closely related to energy policy and energy security. Since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, this topic is only gaining momentum on the European agenda. The Eurobarometer surveys, conducted every two years on behalf of the EU Institutions, on the attitudes of the citizens towards energy policy of the Union show the pattern of the evolving consciousness over climate change within the general public too. In ten years from 2009 to 2019, the awareness about the topic has grown by 16% and now results in 79% of respondents thinking about climate change as a “very serious” issue. The impressive fact is also that climate change has bypassed international terrorism and now is perceived as the second most serious problem facing the world (after poverty, hunger and lack of drinking water (71%).⁸⁷

Facing divisions in views over ‘security of supply’ and ‘competitiveness’ among the Member States, and fostered by the pressure of growing interest of the general public in ecological issues, the European Commission focused on targets for enhancing the third constituent of the triangle - sustainability. It started developing measures to address global climate change, so climate and energy policies have become considered together. The EU indeed took strong initiatives in this field. Jean Paul Juncker, when he became President of the European Commission, gave special importance to the climate issue and made one of his priorities the establishment of the Energy Union: “In Europe we all know that climate change is a major global challenge – and we have known for a while now.”⁸⁸ And if we refer again to the argument of Cherp and Jewell that “a central question for contemporary energy security studies is to identify and explore connections between energy systems and important social values,” we can say that of this social value uniting most Europeans, the

⁸⁷ “Climate Action and the Environment. Energy”, Eurobarometer survey, European Commission, September 2019, <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2212>.

⁸⁸ Jean-Claude Juncker’s speech at the European Parliament, September 9, 2015, <https://www.climate-kic.org/news/europes-2015-state-of-the-union-speech-priority-is-an-ambitious-robust-and-binding-global-climate-deal/>.

Union in fact did take care and took steps to enhance the security. And the overall decline in primary energy production in the EU can, at least partially, be explained by the efforts to decarbonize the energy system and improve energy efficiency.

For the first time a joint agreement was reached by the States on priority areas for action. The common policy goals of diminishing greenhouse gases, building renewable energy systems and improvement of energy efficiency raised the question of how the mutual responsibilities and necessary obligations should be shared between countries. In setting national targets to achieve the 20-20-20 task,⁸⁹ the EU was able to take into account the development and prosperity of each country, as well as the specific challenges faced by each member state. An impressive solidarity of European states was demonstrated.⁹⁰

In the World Energy Outlook of 2006, the IEA forecasted energy-related carbon-dioxide emissions to increase by 55% between 2004 and 2030, or 1.7% per year.⁹¹ Some scholars (Umbach, 2008; Dreyer, 2013) even claim that today the most relevant problem is not the one of oil and gas deficit but rather the continued abundance of fossil fuels, especially coal. These are available and easy for transportation fuels, but until they continue to dominate the fuel mix of a country, it will be difficult to lower the CO₂ emissions. Yet, extreme weather conditions can result in energy supply disruptions, with global implications for world oil prices, climate change, energy policies and perceptions of security of supply.⁹² Umbach, for example, names energy security and climate change “twin challenges,” arguing that the two have to be approached in conjunction: “As long as fossil fuels continue to dominate the global fuel mix, energy-related greenhouse gas emissions and increased reliance on imports of oil, gas and coal from politically unstable countries will increase concerns about climate change as well as energy security.”⁹³

With ambitious plans of establishing itself as the world’s climate champion the EU is the leading actor on the international arena of climate talks and the transition towards a decarbonized economy. The benchmarks were the introduction of a carbon emissions trading scheme (ETS) and binding measures for reaching at least to 20% of renewable energy in the energy mix of a country and for reduction of CO₂ emissions (20% reduction

⁸⁹ The EU set the objective to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent and increase the share of wind, solar, hydropower and biomass energies from 6 to 20 percent of total EU energy consumption by 2020.

⁹⁰ S. Andoura, “Energy Solidarity in Europe: from Independence to Interdependence”, *Notre Europe – Jacques Delors Institute*, July, 2013, p. 28.

⁹¹ “Energy and Climate Change: World Energy Outlook Special Report”, *IEA*, November, 2006, p. 41, <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2006>.

⁹² In August and September 2005, the hurricanes Katrina and Rita shut down 27% of US oil production and 21% of US refining capacity in the Gulf of Mexico and turning into a global oil shock.

⁹³ F. Umbach, “Global energy security”, p. 1234.

compared to 1990) by 2020. Climate change policy and its implementation brings on the agenda new energy security concerns. Decarbonising the energy system while ensuring stable electricity markets and universal access to alternative clean forms of energy, is a major challenge facing energy security in Europe nowadays (Dreyer, 2013⁹⁴; Dyer and Trombetta, 2013⁹⁵).

The ETS, adopted in 2005, became a “cornerstone of the EU’s policy to combat climate change.” This concern corresponded then with the growing worries about the Union’s gas imports dependency, highlighted by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in 2006. The European Council renewed efforts on establishing a comprehensive strategy and responded with the worldwide most ambitious integrated climate and energy policy - an “Energy Action Plan” for the years 2007-2009. Together with the position paper of the Council on “Energy Diplomacy” these were the first documents which attempted to stipulate energy security measures going beyond a pure market consolidation, and which were agreed by all Member States.⁹⁶

A series of proposals were elaborated on the basis of the wider set of measures presented in the 2006 Green Paper. With the declared EAP, the Council promised one more time to maintain a diligent balance between the three pillars, three interrelated strategic goals: security of supply, competitiveness, and environmental sustainability.⁹⁷ However, from March 2007 a clear deviation from classical market-driven approaches was done and in the heart of the strategy energy efficiency and energy conservation were put. Commission officials paid particular attention to the relationship between energy security, energy efficiency and carbon reduction in the EU. The EU's proposed energy policy, which some see as a reflection of both growing public pressure to tackle global climate change and the continued reluctance of member states to relinquish the right to formulate domestic economic and foreign policies, is largely aimed at building sustainability, so at the ecological constituent of the energy triangle.⁹⁸ The Member States have also pledged to move towards further liberalization of the EU energy market and generally approved the strengthening of the coordination of foreign policy in the field of energy supplies. However, broader EU commitments focus on improving energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas

⁹⁴ I. Dreyer and G. Stang, “What Energy Security for the EU”, *European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)*, November 8, 2013, p.4.

⁹⁵ H. Dyer and M.J. Trombetta, *International Handbook of Energy Security*, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Cheltenham, 2013, p. 11.

⁹⁶ “Council Conclusions on Energy Diplomacy”, Council of the European Union, July 20, 2015, Brussels.

⁹⁷ Full text available at europa.eu.

⁹⁸ P. Belkin, “The European Union’s Energy Security Challenges”, *Connections* vol. 7 (1), Spring 2008, pp. 76–102.

emissions and stimulating the use of renewable energies, alternative fuels and related technologies. The Action Plan aims at developing a framework of steps and measures to reduce the annual primary energy consumption by 20% by 2020. This top priority is quite reasonable because cutting the energy intensity growth allows to address simultaneously the questions of climate, security of supply and competitiveness.⁹⁹

Indeed, Europe nowadays is seen as a global leader in seeking new answers to energy challenges. Development of new alternative forms of energy in line with appropriate low-carbon technologies and demand management resulted in the growth of up to 222% in renewables and a drop by 56% in hard fuels, compared to 1990.¹⁰⁰ The ETS is the only system in the world which financially rewards low-carbon energy production, and allegedly climate related efforts have become the only bond of European States in the field of energy security.

⁹⁹ J. Vinois, "The Way towards", p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ Eurostat, *Energy statistics - an overview*, Brussels, European Commission, May, 2021, p. 1, <https://www.sipotra.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Energy-statistics-an-overview.pdf>.

CHAPTER TWO

1. 2006 Gas Crisis Reinvigorates Calls for NATO

As European demand for imported energy, first of all for the natural gas, increases,¹⁰¹ a sense of vulnerability, especially concerning the reliability of foreign energy suppliers, began to creep into discussions about energy security in the European Union.¹⁰² As it was explained in the section 3 of the first chapter, until recently, these problems mainly were considered individually by states. However, international institutions are playing an increasingly important role in ensuring energy security. Since 2000, the European Union has been showing more interest in trying to develop a coherent energy agenda and policy. But sustained prioritization of national interests often became a struggle when creating a common agenda. In part as a consequence, some called for NATO's commitment in energy security issues, largely due to the international context since late 2005.¹⁰³

Intensified calls for approaching energy security through membership in NATO could not be explained simply by the long-standing threat of natural disasters or terrorist attacks, changing market trends and possibly today's world critical energy situation. Energy crises happened before (1973 and 1979 years to mention) but were approached by countries on a state level, mostly through market means, and did not resort to NATO for settling the issue. Thus, the rationale for nowadays more visible NATO role in energy security obtained also another dimension - the immediate political climate of the Alliance.¹⁰⁴

Indeed, Russia-Ukraine-EU disputes during winter 2005/2006 significantly “securitized” the topic of international energy relations. A long-standing negotiations over gas prices and transit tariffs between Gazprom and Ukraine's state-owned NAK Naftogaz Ukrainy, not only led to an unprecedented disruption in gas supplies to EU markets and caused significant economic harm in the affected states¹⁰⁵ but emphasized a clear

¹⁰¹ Eurostat, *Energy statistics - an overview*, Brussels, European Commission, May, 2021.

¹⁰² A. Checchi, A. Behrens and C. Egenhofer, *Long-Term Energy Security Risks for Europe: A Sector-Specific Approach*, Brussels, Center For European Policy Studies, January, 2009.

¹⁰³ A. Monaghan, *Energy Security - What Role for NATO?*, Rome, NATO Defense College, 2006, p. 2.

¹⁰⁴ T. Legendre, “The North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s Future Role in Energy Security,” *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, vol. 8 (2), 2007, pp. 29–35.

¹⁰⁵ The fall in volumes delivered to European Union countries caused a resonance all over Europe. By January 2, Hungary was reported to have lost up to 40% of its Russian supplies; Austrian, Slovakian and Romania supplies were said to be down by one third, France 25-30% and Poland by 14%. Italy reported having lost 32 million cubic metres, around 25% of deliveries, during January 1-3. German deliveries were also affected. By January 3, Austrian and Hungarian supplies were back to normal levels although some other

vulnerability of NATO EU countries, especially of those on the eastern flank, to the risk of being exposed to similar crises in future.

Although in 2018 Russia ceded the status of the world's largest producer of oil and gas to the United States, it continues to be the main importer of gas to Europe.¹⁰⁶ Such European NATO members as Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia receive from 75 to 100% of natural gas imports from Russia. For six of these countries Russia is also the major oil supplier, having a share of over 50% of oil imports.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the importance of Russia as a strategic supplier to Germany is growing after the decision of the German government in 2011 to exclude nuclear energy from its energy balance.¹⁰⁸ The bulk of electricity previously generated by nuclear power plants and currently supplied by lignite power plants is reckoned to be substituted by natural gas coming from Russia through the Nord Stream pipeline, which bypasses Eastern NATO countries.¹⁰⁹ The European green policies have even deepened Russia's share in European gas markets since it became the most apparent - the cheapest - option to substitute traditional fuels. So from the economic point of view there are weak incentives for buyers to substitute Russian gas for another source.

But the year 2006 showed that the potential problems associated with unreliable energy partners and with transition countries that provide access to these supplies, took the question of energy security out of a purely economic context. Growing concerns over energy becoming a coercive tool in case of political tensions prepared the ground for a number of European and US officials, politicians and experts to call NATO to play a more prominent role in Europe's energy security affairs.¹¹⁰ The decisions on countries' energy balances and infrastructure investments were much to individual policies of European states and at the Union level. But energy supply being cut and manipulated by a state becomes, in

countries were still experiencing shortfalls. For a study that investigates this topic, see J. Stern, *The Russian Ukrainian Gas Crisis of January 2006*, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, January, 2006.

¹⁰⁶ BP, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy*, London, BP p.l.c, 2019, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ Eurostat, *EU Imports of Energy Products—Recent Developments*, Brussels, European Commission, May, 2021, accessed 11 December, 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_imports_of_energy_products_-_recent_developments#Overview.

¹⁰⁸ “Die Beschlüsse des Bundestages am 30. Juni und 1. Juli”, *Deutscher Bundestag*, July 1, 2011, accessed December 19, 2022, https://www.bundestag.de/webarchiv/textarchiv/2011/34915890_kw26_angenommen_abgelehnt-205788.

¹⁰⁹ V. Bartuska, P. Lang, and A. Nosko, “The Geopolitics of Energy Security in Europe,” in T. Valášek (ed.), *New Perspectives on Shared Security: NATO'S NEXT 70 years*, Brussels, Carnegie Europe, 2019, pp. 41-44.

¹¹⁰ A. Monaghan, *Energy Security*, p. 3.

this way, a weapon to destroy national economies, raised concerns over resorting to the highest international security actor.¹¹¹

As Poland, the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), the Czech Republic, Romania, and Bulgaria are still compelled to rely on energy supply systems developed during the Soviet era and Russian gas coming via them, they were affected the most. After this unpleasant experience, the Central and Eastern European NATO Members became deeply concerned of external risks to energy supply, their implications on national security (and, more generally, on national sovereignty) and of another vital question: if the mission of the Atlantic Alliance to ensure the security of its member states should also include an energy dimension?

2. Poland Driving the Discourse

The Central and Eastern Europe members of the Alliance indeed became the main proponents of the idea of incorporation of energy security into NATO's mandate. Due to their historical experience, infrastructural links, geopolitical neighborhood, and economic systems they perceive threats differently from the “old” members. NATO members, such as Germany, Italy or France, are in a position of a stronger purchasing power and often were able to negotiate on energy supplies directly with Russia. For the “new” NATO members, however, which are at the same time often much more dependent on Russian gas imports than the Western EU members, but have less buying power, energy security constituted a considerable element of foreign and security policies. As a result, they became the driving forces for expanding NATO’s duties also to this sphere.

The Polish government was leading the discussion for an active role for NATO in protecting energy supply security of the Alliance. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, the then prime-minister of Poland, speaking to energy security experts at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2006, warned of the dangers of politically motivated supply cuts and dependence on gas imports from a single source. He put forward an initiative providing for a unified policy towards gas producers, a greater diversification of supplies and the creation of an anti-crisis response mechanism in the spirit of "one for all and all for

¹¹¹ V. Bartuska et al, “The Geopolitics of Energy Security in Europe,” pp. 41–44.

one."¹¹² In the Financial Times article published on 10 February 2006, Martsinkevich elaborated on this initiative and strongly criticized the EU's limited emphasis on market activity for energy security.¹¹³ He announced a proposal for an "energy security pact," containing "a clearly and firmly stated guarantee clause based on the 'musketeer principle' uniting the parties to act in solidarity in the face of an energy threat provoked by natural disasters, disruption of supply systems or political decisions by suppliers."¹¹⁴ In March 2006, the Polish Foreign Minister went further and proposed an "energy Article V" - a document, similar to the mutual defense clause (Article 5 of the Washington Treaty), that would oblige members to help each other in face of an energy crisis, as they would in the event of a military crisis.¹¹⁵ The idea - the reference to NATO's founding charter, the unspoken target of that initiative (Russia) - was actually proffered by some officials of older NATO member states, including United States Senator: "We should recognize that there is little ultimate difference between a member being forced to submit to coercion because of an energy cutoff and a member facing a military blockade or other military demonstration on its borders," said Richard Lugar.¹¹⁶

The support for Poland's proposal among NATO members was never broad - it was seen as an extreme one in a range of options, and even those states who advocated for a firmer line towards Russia were unwilling to hold such a stance.¹¹⁷ Yet, this moment helped kick off debate within NATO.

After November 2006 the Summit held in Riga there is no doubt that energy security is a hot topic for NATO: all heads of state unanimously agreed that disruptions of the flow of energy resources pose a threat to the security of NATO members and are an

¹¹² Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz's speech at a Forum on Energy Security during the World Economic Forum, Davos, January 26, 2006, accessed January 25, 2022, <https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja>.

¹¹³ K. Marcinkiewicz, "Europe's energy musketeers must stand together," *Financial Times*, February 9, 2006, <https://www.ft.com/content/fec8768c-999c-11da-a8c3-0000779e2340>.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ J. Dempsey, "EU Urges an Energy Pact with Russians", *New York Times*, March 8, 2006, accessed December 24, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/08/world/europe/eu-urges-an-energy-pact-with-russians.html>.

¹¹⁶ J. Dempsey, "U.S. senator urges use of NATO defense clause for energy - Europe - International Herald Tribune," *New York Times*, November 28, 2006, accessed December 28, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/28/world/europe/28iht-nato.3702073.html>.

¹¹⁷ P. Cornell, *Regional and International Energy Security Dynamics: Consequences for NATO's Search for an Energy Security Role*, Geneva, Center for Security Policy, 2012, p. 30.

issue of vital importance that the Alliance must address.¹¹⁸ It was for the first time in its history that the Alliance openly raised the problem of energy security.

3. Settling a Coherent Agenda

Energy security was not new to NATO's agenda, the institution had been dealing with energy supplies long before the 2005 gas crisis. During the Cold War, NATO built a complex network of pipelines in Western Europe to provide fuel for allied forces. The 1999 Strategic Concept, a common strategic document of NATO's activities, became the first document to explicitly mention “disruption of the flow of vital resources” as a threat to regional security.¹¹⁹ In addition, numerous internal NATO documents (the Comprehensive Political Guidance, for instance)¹²⁰ referred to energy sources. But a rather vague definition introduced in the 1999 Strategic Concept put further challenge to elaborate on what “disruption” would mean precisely.

As the Allies struggled to define NATO's role in an area that was largely non-military, included many institutional actors, and, most importantly, remained largely a national responsibility, NATO did not come up with a specific mandate to work on energy security. The gap in consensus over the definition of the “disruption” term - between opinions whether it should refer more to military threats to vital resources or to political ones, resulted in a pretty broad spectrum of NATO's activities in energy sphere: the regular exchange of intelligence and information on energy security between Member states (in particular at the Economic Committee and the International Military Staff); series of activities (for example, on overseeing and protecting energy infrastructure) associated to the supply of military fuel, which remained an integral component of the Alliance's defense planning, organized through NATO partnerships; as well did NATO conduct activities

¹¹⁸ Clause 45 of the 2006 Riga Declaration stated: “As underscored in NATO's Strategic Concept, Alliance security interests can also be affected by the disruption of the flow of vital resources. We support a coordinated, international effort to assess risks to energy infrastructures and to promote energy infrastructure security.”

¹¹⁹ NATO, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, Washington, April 24, 1999, paragraph 24. Full text available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm.

¹²⁰ NATO, *Comprehensive Political Guidance*, July 13, 2009, full text available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_56425.htm.

related to energy security in areas such as industrial planning, counteraction to terrorism and civil emergency planning.¹²¹

The 2006 Riga Summit brought some clarity to the Alliance's interests and defined the infrastructural aspect, rather than other dimensions of energy security, as the area to contribute to: “We support a coordinated, international effort to assess risks to energy infrastructures and to promote energy infrastructure security.”¹²²

The more concrete agenda set out in the Declaration accelerated discussions among NATO officials; they began to seriously consider how the institution can contribute to an issue that has such a large political and security impact. Jamie Shea, then the director of NATO’s domestic policy think tank, proposed in November 2006 a number of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at NATO, including Article IV assistance to Allies, maritime surveillance, and even possible interdiction operations.¹²³ In 2007, former Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) James Jones¹²⁴ mentioned NATO's possible contribution to stability in the Niger Delta, where the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) seeks to increase oil production with forcible actions. Others pointed out that through NATO, Europe could exert US political pressure on Russia. Engagement with producer countries on energy issues through the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) were discussed. Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection Assistance (CEIP) through communications, surveillance and training support led to the greatest consensus.¹²⁵

The attempts to refine NATO’s approach through 2007, partially as a logical continuation of indications from the Riga Summit, partially because of continued pressure from Allies such as Poland¹²⁶ and concerns about rising prices for the energy around the world,¹²⁷ resulted in the April 2008 Bucharest summit. There, the Alliance agreed on the confidential report on "NATO's Role in Energy Security." Even if the Summit had a modest

¹²¹ For the full list of NATO’s activities, see: A. Ganz, “Energy Security Issues: Is NATO Becoming a (Pivotal) Actor?”, September, 201, accessed January 4, 2022, <https://www.sciencespo.fr/cei/en/content/energy-security-issues-nato-becoming-pivotal-actor>.

¹²² Clause 45 of the 2006 Riga Summit Declaration.

¹²³ J. Shea, “Energy Security: NATO’s Potential Role”, *NATO Review*, September 1, 2006, accessed January 3, 2022, <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2006/09/01/energy-security-nato-s-potential-role/index.html>.

¹²⁴ Later became US President Obama’s National Security Advisor.

¹²⁵ P. Cornell, *Regional and International Energy Security Dynamics*, p. 31.

¹²⁶ NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer’s keynote speech “Poland Has Been Instrumental in Putting another Emerging Challenge on NATO’s Agenda, which is Energy Security” at the conference on “NATO’s Bucharest Summit – transformation of the Alliance and Polish and regional perspectives,” Warsaw, March 13, 2008, accessed December 30, 2021, www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080313a.html.

¹²⁷ Jeremy W. Peters, “Rising Energy Prices Push Up March Inflation,” *New York Times*, April 18, 2007, accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/18/business/18econ.web.html>.

remit - the Allies were to continue their practice of sharing information on energy-related developments, hold political consultations, engage in cooperation with interested partner countries, and use NATO as a forum for sharing best practices on the security of critical energy infrastructure - it nevertheless became the first document to define NATO's role in energy security, and formally empowered NATO to work in this area.¹²⁸ The Alliance identified three main priorities in this sphere. First, augmenting strategic awareness among allies about the security implications of energy development. The second priority is the protection of critical energy infrastructure, including oil tankers and offshore power plants, which is highly accessible to attacks from hostile states. Finally, NATO has set a goal of improving energy efficiency in the military.

A number of international events in the following months and the evolution of the global energy landscape became the most important driving force that made the NATO Members strengthen the role of the Alliance in energy security.

Russia had continued to use energy as political leverage in its relations with Ukraine; every such manipulation of gas flows consequently affected the European countries. The August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia was another event that affected energy supplies to Europe.¹²⁹ Two months after the armed conflict, the NATO Secretary General emphasized that since the conflict put at risk the Caucasus's complex pipelines network, the military conflict "was also partly about energy security."¹³⁰

The Alliance's counter-piracy operation off the Horn of Africa - an issue that has gained increasing eminence in 2008 and is not losing its relevance - showed the role of naval forces in protecting energy shipments.¹³¹ The risk of piracy attacks to energy security was highlighted again in 2009 when pirates hijacked the MV Sirius Star, a supertanker that

¹²⁸ Full text of the Declaration of the NATO's 2008 Bucharest Summit is available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm.

¹²⁹ In early August 2008, after Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili sent troops into the rebellious province of South Ossetia, Russia came to its defense, beginning a five-day-long conflict that ended with Russian troops within striking distance of Tbilisi, the Georgian capital. The conflict between Russia and Georgia threatened existing and planned Caucasus energy routes seen by the West as vital supply corridors that avoid Russian territory: the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline, which pumped nearly 1 million barrels of oil per day from Azerbaijan to Turkey's Mediterranean coast, where most of the supply is then shipped to Europe. Russian forces destroyed one key bridge on a Georgian railway line, disrupting oil exports to Georgia's Black Sea ports, leading to the temporary closure of the Baku-Supsa pipeline. See also "Conflict further disrupts energy supplies to West," *France24*, August 12, 2008, accessed January 6, 2022, <https://www.france24.com/en/20080812-georgia-energy-oil-gas-ossetia-conflict-caspian-russia>.

¹³⁰ Keynote speech by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, October 23, 2008, <https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s081023b.html>.

¹³¹ To deter pirate attacks NATO deployed Operation Allied Provider from October 24 to December 12, 2008 and coordinated the redeployment of the Operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta from UE. In 2009 two other Abul Kalam Azad and Kriti Episkopi tankers were attacked in the Horn of Africa coast.

was bearing a load of crude valued at \$100 million, about 25% of Saudi Arabia's daily oil production.¹³²

Repeated terrorist seizures of the energy infrastructure and tankers, notably in Northern Africa and the Middle East, highlighted the operational dimensions of energy. A well-illustrative example is Nigeria, a major oil producer for NATO member countries, and the MEND, which conducted sporadic attacks that consistently kept national production 20% lower than full production levels.

Finally, the rise of “unconventional” energy – shale oil and gas – also contributed to redrawing the global energy landscape. Strengthening maritime security became especially relevant in the context of oil and LNG shipments increasing steadily. The volumes of oil and gas being transported over long distances via continental, or even intercontinental pipeline systems, and by tankers through oceans are growing.¹³³ While states have the ultimate responsibility for protecting their territorial waters, maritime communications and transit routes in the high seas are more blurry and therefore need to be addressed specifically.

A civilian defense (neutralizing consequences after natural disasters and accidents) dimension of energy security, for sure, will be always relevant. But an undeniable fact is also that there is a clear military dimension of the issue.¹³⁴ Regional internal wars and upheavals in energy producing countries, international terrorism and piracy, or resorting by some countries to energy as a political leverage - these all are the imminent risks underrupting security of energy supply to the EU. Energy assets, lines of communication and transportation exposed to vulnerable environments affect the overall stability of the member states. Said this, NATO was pushed to adjust its agenda and to comprise energy security in the list of its responsibilities.

The aforementioned international circumstances influenced NATO’s approach to energy security in several ways. First, they reaffirmed the focus of the new Strategic Concept, adopted in 2010 at the Lisbon Summit, on energy security and threats to infrastructure and supplies. Second, they extended the discussion on energy security far beyond the European gas dispute and the related debate on the use of energy by individual suppliers as a policy tool. Third, they showed that providing energy for military operations

¹³² Abdi Sheikh, “Somali pirates want \$15 million for Saudi ship,” *Reuters*, November 24, 2008, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-piracy-idUSTRE4AN11420081124>.

¹³³ Statista, *Liquefied natural gas trade volume worldwide from 1970 to 2020*, July 29, 2021, available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264000/global-lng-trade-volume-since-1970/>.

¹³⁴ A. Monaghan, *Energy Security*, 2006, p. 4.

was more than just a logistical question. Fourth, they also demonstrated the close relationship between energy security and other emerging issues such as terrorism, piracy. The new document not only reflected the main objective of expanding the Alliance's role in energy, but also tasked NATO to contribute to energy security, including through contingency planning.¹³⁵ The Lisbon Summit Declaration reinforced the idea of the Strategic Concept by charging NATO to integrate energy security considerations into NATO's policies and activities.¹³⁶ Together, the 2010 Strategic Concept and the Lisbon Summit Declaration opened a new chapter in the evolution of energy security as a legitimate item on NATO's agenda.¹³⁷

The Chicago Summit moved the issue of energy security to concrete implementation steps. Underlining the increasing energy needs of states, growing dependence of NATO military structures on energy, and environmental and resource constraints, the Members committed "to work towards significantly improving the energy efficiency of our military forces; develop our competence in supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure; and further develop our outreach activities in consultation with partners, on a case-by-case basis."¹³⁸

4. From Debate to Implementation

With the Bucharest Report, remaining the overall guide to NATO's role in energy security, and the 2010 Strategic Concept, the Alliance outlined its way forward dividing its role into three areas where NATO should contribute. Accordingly, the following steps have been completed so far.

To work on the first priority - to raise awareness among the Member states, including the exchange of the information on energy developments, political consultations among Allies and between Allies and partners, and exchanges of views with external experts, - NATO established an energy security section within the Emerging Security

¹³⁵ NATO, *Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security "Active Engagement, Modern Defence,"* Lisbon, November 19, 2010, paragraph 19. Full text available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_68580.htm.

¹³⁶ NATO, *The Lisbon Summit Declaration*, Lisbon, November 10, 2010, paragraph 41. Full text available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm.

¹³⁷ M. Rühle and J. Grubliauskas, "NATO and energy security: infrastructure protection and beyond," *Turkish Policy*, vol. 11 (3), Fall, 2012, p. 67.

¹³⁸ NATO, *The Chicago Summit Declaration*, Chicago, May, 20, 2012, paragraph 52. Full text available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm#energy_security.

Challenges Division (ESCD) at NATO Headquarters in Brussels in 2010. Energy issues being included in NATO's agenda, hence, had an impact on its internal structural adjustment. Additionally to consulting on decision-making and implementation mechanisms, the new structural units began elaborating on new visions of NATO's response to future security challenges and related documents needed. Moreover, the aforementioned division became the one that articulates the essential needs of NATO's energy security training. The goal was that virtually no military exercise at the NATO level would be conducted without including energy factors in the exercise scenario.¹³⁹

The Energy Security Center of Excellence (COE) in Vilnius, Lithuania, established in 2012 became another important institution to support NATO's work on energy security. The COE was founded to provide strategic analysis and research and training across the full spectrum of NATO's energy security agenda. Some work in this area started immediately, most notably NATO members were collaborating to exchange smart energy solutions to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels in their respective militaries, and reduce the threat to the environment.¹⁴⁰ Likewise, the COE became engaged in numerous studies on operational energy issues, and, in partnership with ACT (Allied Command Transformation), into development of the operational energy concept, and training programs on it. Both ESCD and COE are aimed to help member states maintain a deep understanding of how energy and security are interrelated and intertwined. Through these means, the allies consult and share the experiences with each other and with partner states, and receive advisory support from relevant international organizations of the field.

The second priority area became the protection of critical energy infrastructure. While stipulating that this is primarily a national responsibility,¹⁴¹ NATO forces are still dependent on civilian energy infrastructure, so for this reason NATO has sought to increase the competence of its Members and to reflect energy security developments through education, sharing best practices among experts, training and exercises on scenarios of protection of critical energy infrastructure. In 2014, the North Atlantic Council (NAC), featuring representatives of the IEA, the European Commission and the US State Department, gathered for an informal meeting with energy experts. These discussions turned out to be so instructive that already one year later the first Energy Security Strategic

¹³⁹ A. Molis and T. Vaišnoras, "Energy Security Through Membership in Nato and the Eu: Interests and Achievements of Lithuania," *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, January 2014, n. 32, pp. 13-32.

¹⁴⁰ "NATO seminar highlights smart energy projects," *NATO news*, March 5, 2012, accessed January 16, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_84927.htm.

¹⁴¹ "NATO's role in energy security," *NATO official website*, accessed January 13, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49208.htm.

Awareness Course was held at the NATO School in Oberammergau. The Allies agreed to assemble the “Energy NAC” on a yearly basis.

In addition, NATO organized various expert seminars with partner countries, many of which are important energy producers or transit countries, as well as with other international organizations and the private sector. Since February 2018, the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) Regional Center has been running training courses on the protection of critical energy infrastructure.

Finally, the third goal NATO has outlined was of improving energy efficiency in the military. To facilitate information sharing and advance interoperability in the area of energy efficiency NATO set up the ‘Smart Energy Team’ (SENT), consisting of representatives from six NATO allies (Canada, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States) and two partner nations (Australia and Sweden).¹⁴² SENT became co-managed by the Lithuania-based COE and by the Joint Environment Department of the Swedish Armed Forces. Funded by the NATO Science Programme, this team in effect is a group of best practice experts whose purpose is to review emerging technologies and formulate standardization agreements to advance energy efficiency in the military. To make the energy sector more resilient and sustainable, the allies have pledged to reduce the energy consumption of military vehicles and camps and minimize the environmental impact of their operations. To achieve these goals, NATO set common military standards for energy efficient technologies at the Wales Summit in September 2014.¹⁴³ The same year the Alliance adopted “the Green Defense Framework” which looks at reducing the environmental footprint of military operations.¹⁴⁴ In addition, Allies are revisiting the fuel supply chain, which includes the Central European pipeline system, to ensure reliable power supplies for NATO forces throughout the Alliance in a modern difficult security environment.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² In 2012, NATO’s Emerging Security Challenges Division (ESCD) submitted a proposal for the establishment of a Smart Energy Team (SENT). The SENT Concept was approved by all 28 Allied nations through the Political and Partnerships Committee (PPC) in October 2012.

¹⁴³ Full Wales Summit Declaration is available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm.

¹⁴⁴ V. Bartuska et al, “The Geopolitics of Energy Security in Europe,” p. 43.

¹⁴⁵ The Central Europe(an) Pipeline System (CEPS), is one of several NATO Pipeline Systems and is used to deliver fuel for air and ground vehicles around Europe. It was to aid in safe and quick distribution of fuel for military purposes around Europe. The system runs through Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, and is also used by the United States military. For CEPS mission and activities, see: <https://www.nspa.nato.int/about/ceps>.

5. Obstacles and a Cautious Approach

Essentially, the two initiatives of ESCD and COE became the primary success so far and the major milestones in the EU-NATO cooperation process. The reason for this largely lies in the fact that both fit more closely into the traditional goal of NATO, which is the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the armed forces of the member states of the alliance.¹⁴⁶ The 2010 Strategic Concept formally gave more legitimacy for NATO to act in the energy field. Yet, it was not easy to move beyond conceptual discussions.

The principal reason hindering progress was ever present divergence of national attitudes and priorities. This is a challenge for both the institutions of NATO and the EU. In spite of the European Commission's efforts to develop visionary energy policies, Member States have continuously inclined to pursue their individual interests. As a result, their energy security situation differs considerably. This thereafter turned out the process of defining the role for NATO in the sphere to be painful.¹⁴⁷

The contentious debate among Members during the preparation of the report highlighted the ongoing structural and political difficulties associated with firmly anchoring the topic on NATO's agenda. In terms of energy security countries still tend to take care of themselves and many are reluctant to discuss this topic in multinational forums.¹⁴⁸

France was the country most skeptical of NATO's work on energy security. It was openly opposing the expansion of NATO's mandate in this area, limiting its role to military affairs. Germany was supporting French skepticism as well, arguing that energy security work should be left to national governments and the private sector.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, Germany viewed Russia as a generally reliable energy supplier and argued that NATO's Eastern flank's fears of supply disruptions were not well reasoned.

When in 2008 Germany and France made concessions to the EEC countries and agreed to include energy security in NATO's Strategy, this was more a gesture to support the overall spirit of cooperation in the Alliance and to benefit France and Germany when they need the support of the EEC countries on other issues.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ J. R. Deni, "An Intergovernmental Approach to Energy Security: The Role of NATO," in J. R. Deni (ed.) *New Realities: Energy Security in the 2010s and Implications for the U.S. Military*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2014, pp. 31-32.

¹⁴⁷ M. Rühle and J. Grubliauskas, "NATO and energy security," p. 66.

¹⁴⁸ A. Monaghan, *Energy Security - What Role for NATO?*, p. 4.

¹⁴⁹ A. Bocse, "NATO, energy security and institutional change," *European Security*, vol. 29 (4), June 2, 2020, p. 444.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*

The second reason for NATO's prudent approach to energy security was that the topic of Russia is not considered equally either among the UE members. Russia occupies a key place in the energy supply of Europe. Discussions about the relevance of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty to energy security have created the impression that the inclusion of energy security in the NATO mandate was primarily conceived by Russia, which has drawn the enmity of many allies.¹⁵¹ The 'new' members of NATO are firmly advocating for energy security on the Alliance's agenda. However, France, Germany and Italy do not support robust measures against Russia. As Allied views on Russian foreign policy, security policy, and energy highly diverge, in part due to varying degrees of energy dependence on Russia, the hesitation remains on how to lead a discussion that could turn into a fruitless debate about Russia.¹⁵²

The third reason for NATO's caution became the fact that a significant number of actors are already dealing with energy issues, from the EU to the International Energy Agency and from the OECD to the private sector. Not to duplicate efforts of other institutions, NATO's role hence was defined as a complementary one, "adding value" rather than leading the process: "We will ensure that NATO's endeavors add value and are fully coordinated and embedded within those of the international community, which features a number of organizations that are specialized in energy security."¹⁵³ To maintain its primacy as the world's leading security organization, NATO had to evolve into a highly flexible, multi-tasking instrument, that operates in non-traditional area without duplicating actions of other participants but coordinating and embedding its efforts "within those of the international community."¹⁵⁴

Another detail must be mentioned: among the wide spectrum of institutions dealing with energy security issues, NATO is a unique player of a purely military one. The nature of the Alliance made many Members hold the opinion that NATO's overly visible role unnecessarily "militarizes" what was fundamentally an economic issue.¹⁵⁵ The arguments against ramifications of the Alliance's mandate were that potential negative effects on markets, discouraging investment in capacity expansion at a time when it is needed, souring relations with producer countries by adding an apparently arguable

¹⁵¹ M. Rühle, "NATO and energy security: from philosophy to implementation," *Journal of transatlantic studies*, n. 10 (4), 2012, pp. 388–395.

¹⁵² A. Bocse, "NATO, energy security and institutional change," p. 445.

¹⁵³ NATO, *The Bucharest Summit Declaration*, Bucharest, April 3, 2008, paragraph 48, accessed January 14, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ M. Rühle, "NATO and Energy Security," *NATO Review*, February 8, 2011, accessed December 14, 2022, <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2011/02/08/nato-and-energy-security/index.html>.

dimension, further politicizing energy trade and at the same time casting a shadow over other political issues, would make NATO's leading role counterproductive to the ultimate goal of reducing political and security risks.

One more crucial question - who will pay for the new initiatives and projects - became especially evident when the US presidency changed. As NATO in core is the US leading bloc, the shifts in power of the state, obviously, affected the institution. The Obama administration, which was actively encouraging inclusion of NATO as a platform into energy security affairs (and transatlantic cooperation in general), in 2017 was replaced by the Trump cabinet, much less oriented to multilateralism. Donald Trump called NATO "obsolete" yet shortly before taking the office. After he took the position, there have been many instances where the United States has shown contempt for the wishes and concerns of its European partners.¹⁵⁶ Threats to withdraw the US from the transatlantic alliance among them.¹⁵⁷ Trump regularly criticised NATO members in Europe for not spending enough to support the Alliance, relying on the fact that the United States will bear this burden. The claims for the agreement by NATO members to increase spending on their own defense - the 2% of GDP minimum requirement - forged in 2014, two years before Trump took office, have been repeated multiple times.¹⁵⁸

The above named dissents on the role of NATO in strengthening the EU energy security within the European Members and with the patron of the institution have been impeding more solid steps to progress. However, to enhance transatlantic partnership there is also a bilateral way to cooperate with the United States, instead of working under the of a military alliance.

¹⁵⁶ Washington withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in September 2019 and in December 2020 from the Open Skies Treaty. See: S. Bugos, "U.S. Completes INF Treaty Withdrawal," September, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2019-09/news/us-completes-inf-treaty-withdrawal> and R. Kingston and S. Bugos, "U.S. Completes Open Skies Treaty Withdrawal," December, 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-12/news/us-completes-open-skies-treaty-withdrawal>.

¹⁵⁷ V. Stracqualursi and J. Acosta, "New York Times: Trump raised withdrawing the US from NATO several times in 2018," *CNN*, January 16, 2019, accessed January 20, 2022, <https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2019/01/15/politics/trump-nato-us-withdraw/index.html>.

¹⁵⁸ See: "Trump Confirms He Threatened to Withdraw from NATO," *Atlantic Council*, August 23, 2018, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/trump-confirms-he-threatened-to-withdraw-from-nato/> and L. Shane, "Trump vows to continue military rebuild, halt endless wars in convention finale," *Military Times*, August 28, 2020, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2020/08/27/trump-vows-to-continue-military-rebuild-halt-endless-wars-in-convention-finale/>.

CHAPTER THREE

1. EU-US Energy Council as a Leading Forum for Bilateral Cooperation

The European Union and the United States represent the world's greatest energy markets and the trade and investment relationship between the two is the largest in the world. Having such strong ties and sharing common interests in flexible market policies, energy efficiency, and security, they have been cooperating on these concerns for a long time. To promote strong economic growth and improve energy security, the two partners were operating both through multilateral mechanisms (such as the International Energy Agency, the G-8 initiatives and the Bonn “Renewables 2004” Action Plan) and bilaterally, through EU-US annual summits.¹⁵⁹

Built on past achievements and to continue working on sustainable energy systems to diversify supply chains and decarbonise the energy system, the EU-US Summit in November 2009 decided to establish the EU-US Energy Council to “provide a new framework for deepening the transatlantic dialogue on strategic energy issues such as security of supply or policies to move towards low carbon energy sources while strengthening the ongoing scientific collaboration on energy technologies.”¹⁶⁰ The first meeting of the Council was held as part of the 2009 Summit.¹⁶¹

Through time the EU-US Energy Council became a pinnacle of the two sides of the Atlantic making the bilateral cooperation more structured. The working process of the Council was framed into three main groups: Energy Security Working Group (addressing energy security and new markets to help secure new natural gas resources), Energy Policy Working Group (working on standards and policies to harmonize the work on smart grids

¹⁵⁹ To name some other successful steps completed, in 2000 the initialling of a Energy Star EU-US Agreement on the coordination of energy efficient labelling programmes for office equipment; in 2003 the leaders announced in a joint statement at the EU-US Summit in Washington to cooperate in accelerating the development of the hydrogen economy; at the 2004 Summit, a commitment to further transatlantic economic integration was adopted; at the 2005 EU-US Summit, leaders launched an initiative to Enhance Transatlantic Economic Integration and Growth which included a statement on cooperation on energy. To discuss transatlantic economic integration and shared economic challenges, the 2005 summit was followed up by the first informal EU-US economic ministerial meeting on the 30th of November 2005.

¹⁶⁰ EU-US Energy Council, Joint Statement of the First Summit, Brussels, November 4, 2009.

¹⁶¹ “EU-US Summit in Washington puts global challenges at centre of discussion,” *European Commission*, November 3, 2009, accessed December 10, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_09_1664.

and other technologies), and Energy Technology Working Group (to cooperate on research for carbon capture and storage, rare earths and renewable technologies).

Cooperation with the United States through the EU-US Energy Council and its three working groups continued on a yearly basis. Regular meetings covered topics such as global oil and gas markets, infrastructural developments in the EU's neighboring countries including the Southern gas corridor, energy efficiency and climate change mitigation, smart grids and offshore security. The Council was commending close US-EU partnerships on the global promotion of nuclear safety and the nuclear research cooperation agreements existing since 1995 between the European Atomic Energy Community and the United States Department of Energy (DOE).¹⁶² Priority areas of the Energy Technology Working Group additionally to smart grids and storage, included hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. Concrete steps were taken to improve interlaboratory collaboration between the Joint Programmes for the European Research Alliances, the Joint Research Center and related US energy programs, laboratories and agencies.¹⁶³

The Energy Council was an important instrument feeding into general US-EU regular summits. For example, at the US-EU general summit in 2010 a new form of collaboration was agreed - the Atlantic Energy Efficiency Project.¹⁶⁴ Another project born during one of the US-EU summits was a Trilateral Critical Materials Initiative.¹⁶⁵ Launched in 2011 together with Japan, later it was supposed to involve other international partners in

¹⁶² P. Schwalbach, M. Boella, P. Chare, K. Luetzenkirchen, K. Mayer, J. Goncalves, W. Janssens, P. Peerani, Y. Aregbe, P. Frigola, S. Abousahl, G. Baldwin, A. Sunshine, *Euratom and the US Department of Energy- 15 Years of Successful Cooperation for better Nuclear Safeguards Technology*, Palm Desert, CA, Institute of Nuclear Materials Management, July 17-21, 2011, p. 1-10.

¹⁶³ See: "Clean energy and energy efficiency - JRC and the US Department of Energy step up scientific cooperation", June 3, 2016, <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/news/clean-energy-and-energy-efficiency-jrc-and-us-department-energy-step-scientific-cooperation> and EC JRC – US DOE Joint Report on "Assessing Smart Grid Benefits and Impacts: EU and U.S. Initiatives", Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2012, https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/default/files/eu-us_smart_grid_assessment_-_final_report_-_online_version.pdf.

¹⁶⁴ The project was a joint effort of the European Commission, the University College Dublin, in partnership with the University of California Berkeley, the Centre for European Policy Studies and the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland, to draw together both sides of the Atlantic (politicians as well as academics and businesses) to foster the dialogue on the most effective ways to achieve energy efficiency globally. The first workshop, hosted by CEPS, took place in Brussels on 23 September 2010, and then two more within the next two years, in Berkeley and Paris, organized by the University of California and the International Energy Agency respectively. On 10 November 2011, the European Union External Action Service and the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments organized a conference in Charlemagne to elaborate on opportunities of strengthening transatlantic bonds in the areas of cooperation covered by the Atlantic Energy Efficiency Project. Politicians from the European institutions, Member States and representatives of the US Mission to the EU were present.

¹⁶⁵ The Trilateral EU-US-Japan Initiative on Critical Materials was established in response to such circumstances as soaring prices of some critical materials, especially rare earth elements, from 2010. The conference was programmed to be held annually and to exchange information on policies for critical materials, R&D, and other efforts under the framework of trilateral cooperation between Japan, the U.S. and the EU.

the future and aimed to "co-operating on the sustainable separation, extraction and processing of critical materials, their substitution and more efficient use."¹⁶⁶ The Energy Council, whether like in 2010 preceding the latter and informing its agenda, or assembling some months later, was committed to review the work done by these smaller and more specific endeavors, to accelerate exchanges of information and scientific personnel, to form alliances among premier energy technology research bodies, and to facilitate participation by qualified researchers in each other's energy research.

The EU-US Energy Council became also a prominent forum for the dialogue on energy and its role in mitigating the threat of climate change. In the light of the upcoming United Nations Climate Conference in Paris (2015), the Council named global climate change as "the defining challenge of our generation"¹⁶⁷ and reaffirmed the strong determination of both parties, the United States and the EU to work towards the adoption of the protocol.

Later, to advance common climate change goals and to promote innovative technologies to meet the commitments signed in the Paris, in addition to three working groups determined in 2009, by Joint Statement of the year 2016 the Energy Council established the fourth, a Climate Change (CC) Working Group, tasked "to increase and improve transatlantic cooperation bilaterally, as well as within multilateral and global settings, with a view to catalyzing and accelerating international efforts for the attainment of climate-related goals."¹⁶⁸ The Energy Council thus turned into a platform for transatlantic dialogue on implementation of a new legal instrument for acceleration of the transition to clean energy, in line with the plan to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels. This new chapter, opened in 2016, was short and did not receive a proper advancement, however. "We're getting out," Trump said at a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden on 1 June 2017, announcing the U.S. would cease all participation in the 2015 Paris Agreement.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ EU-U.S. Energy Council, *Joint Statement of the Third Summit*, Washington, 28 November 2011.

¹⁶⁷ EU-US Energy Council, *Joint Statement of the Sixth Summit*, Brussels, December 3, 2014.

¹⁶⁸ Three Seas Initiative (TSI). *Joint Declaration of the First TSI Summit*, Dubrovnik, August, 26, 2016. Accessed December 12, 2021.

¹⁶⁹ Donald Trump's Statement on the Paris Climate Accord, June 1, 2017. Accessed January 18, 2022, <https://it.usembassy.gov/statement-president-trump-paris-climate-accord/>.

2. Tenuous Links Since 2017

The American elections of 2017 have rolled back transatlantic ties in a number of spheres, let alone energy security. For about four years relations between the United States and Europe, its historical ally, were frozen under the Trump administration. The last EU-US summit took place in 2014 and the last visit by a US President to the EU institutions in 2017.¹⁷⁰ Since Trump took office, the dissents between the two sides continued to grow. Among a range of confrontational questions, dramatic controversies on climate issues and the Paris Agreement became a stumbling block between the European Commission and the US administration.

On 22 September 2016, Jonathan Pershing, a former US climate envoy, attended the first EU-US Energy Council Climate Working Group meeting. It was 47 days before Donald Trump, who made many climate-skeptical remarks before he became president, took his position. In June 2017 he announced the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement.¹⁷¹ Since then, the EU-US dialogue on climate issues appeared to have reached an impasse. The CC Working group, that was supposed to gather annually, has vanished into obscurity. "I have not heard that it was [abolished]. I have not heard that it has met," said Pershing in his interview.¹⁷² The US Department of Energy even deleted from its official website the mention of the EU-US Cooperation Group on Climate Change created under the previous administration of Barack Obama.¹⁷³ Pershing stepped down as climate envoy in January 2017, a week before the White House handover from Obama to Trump took place. And after his departure, the post of climate envoy to the United States was abolished.

With its "The America First Energy Plan" the Trump administration put industry first, environment last. The cornerstone of Donald Trump's energy policy was expanding domestic production of fossil fuels - oil, gas, and coal.¹⁷⁴ The plan also included expanding renewable energy systems. One of the much publicized alternative energy sources that the

¹⁷⁰ On 25 May 2017 in Brussels the meeting brought together the previous President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, the previous President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump.

¹⁷¹ According to UN regulations the decision only took effect on 4 November 2020.

¹⁷² Jonathan Pershing in the interview to Euobserver, P. Teffer, "US in denial on EU climate forum", *Euobserver*, Brussels, June 5, 2018, <https://euobserver.com/environment/141984>.

¹⁷³ The Energy Department of the United States official website, International Affairs Initiatives, accessed January 19, 2022, <https://www.energy.gov/ia/international-affairs-initiatives/us-eu-energy-council>.

¹⁷⁴ Anderson, Scot, et al., "The America first energy policy of the Trump administration," *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law*, May 25, 2017, vol. 35 (3), pp. 221-270.

administration proposed to increase was offshore wind power and solar installations. Previously, in December 2014, the Production Tax Credit (PTC) for wind technologies was extended until December 2019.¹⁷⁵ The Investment Tax Credit (ITC) for solar technologies was extended too from December 2016 to December 2021.¹⁷⁶ Both extensions passed with bipartisan support. These two incentive mechanisms, approving licences for offshore wind parks and growing installed wind and solar capacities, consequently encouraged a substantial growth of wind and solar industries.¹⁷⁷

Europe, in turn, is at the forefront of wind technology development. The coastal regions of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea were the world's pioneers in offshore wind energy - Denmark was the first country to install an offshore wind farm (OWF). These countries have not only built significant renewable energy potential and a strong supply chain over the years, but continue to be world leaders in offshore wind technology today.¹⁷⁸

Since 2014, European-backed companies have won all eight US government offshore wind farm rental auctions.¹⁷⁹ As a part of its America First policy to increase power generation and domestic jobs, the Trump administration by streamlining permits and leasing large areas off the coasts spurred the development of offshore wind power in the US.¹⁸⁰ This drive attracted Europe's biggest renewable energy companies, who saw the US East Coast as a new opportunity after years of successful Atlantic crossings.¹⁸¹ In May 2018 they scored another victory when a partnership between the Copenhagen Infrastructure Fund and Avangrid, the US arm of Spain's Iberdrola, won the largest ever US offshore wind power contract in Massachusetts.¹⁸² By 2018, out of the 12 offshore wind farm leases

¹⁷⁵ For more information on these two incentives, see: Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency (DSIRE), Renewable Electricity Production Tax Credit (PTC), <http://programs.dsireusa.org/system/program/detail/734> and Business Energy Investment Tax Credit (ITC), <https://programs.dsireusa.org/system/program/detail/658>.

¹⁷⁶ "President Signs Extender Package for PTC and ITC - Renewable Energy Tax Credits", *McGuireWoods*, December 28, 2015, accessed January 23, 2022, <https://www.mcguirewoods.com/client-resources/Alerts/2015/12/President-Signs-Extender-Package-for-PTC-and-ITC-Renewable-Energy-Tax-Credits>.

¹⁷⁷ From 2010 the share of wind and solar in the power mix of the US grew from 2% to 9% in 2020 (of which, 7% is wind). For detailed statistics see: U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Renewables became the second-most prevalent U.S. electricity source in 2020", July, 28, 2021, accessed January 20, 2022, <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=48896>.

¹⁷⁸ Offshore Wind Outlook 2019, International Energy Agency.

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities>, accessed January 18, 2022.

¹⁸⁰ J. Gillis and N. Popovich, "In Trump Country, Renewable Energy Is Thriving," *New York Times*, June 6, 2017, accessed January 18, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/climate/renewable-energy-push-is-strongest-in-the-reddest-states.html>.

¹⁸¹ "Trump effort to lift U.S. offshore wind sector sparks interest - from Europe," *Reuters*, 5 July 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-wind-idUSKBN1JV1VV>.

¹⁸² "CIP project wins first large scale offshore wind tender in the US," May 24, 2018, accessed January 18, 2022, <https://cippartners.dk/2018/05/24/cip-project-wins-first-large-scale-offshore-wind-tender-us/>.

entered into by the federal government, seven were owned by European firms, according to Bureau of Ocean Energy Management reports.¹⁸³

Another commitment of the Trump administration was “to energy policies that lower costs for hard working Americans.”¹⁸⁴ To this purpose, the Clean Power Plan, which aimed at cutting carbon emissions from power generation, likewise other Obama era energy and environmental rules, was reversed in 2019 by the Affordable Clean Energy rule that substituted the objective of cutting national emissions with guidelines to increase power plant efficiency instead.¹⁸⁵ Standards for energy efficiency are indeed one of the best tools for cutting energy bills. With a huge cost-saving potential, federal efficiency standards stayed in the US energy agenda even through the Trump era.

Energy conservation and the principle of "Energy Efficiency First" are common priorities both in Europe and the United States.¹⁸⁶ It is one of the smartest ways to improve the competitiveness of businesses, reduce energy costs for consumers, and reduce carbon emissions. Apparently this became the way how the EU could discuss climate change with the government that had little interest or even was hostile towards climate action - to frame the dialogue in an energy technologies context. The Trump administration was not interested in climate talks, but it was still interested in talking about energy.

The Cooperation Group on Climate Change, as has been said, did not gather anymore. The dialogue between the United States and the European Union took a different direction and was rather focused on innovation technologies and energy infrastructure. The Technology Working Group met on 30 November 2018, following the first, and the last, meeting of the EU-US Energy Council with the Administration of President Donald J. Trump (Brussels, on 12 July 2018). A week after, the Energy Policy Working Group convened on 7 December 2018, “with a particular focus on LNG.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities>, accessed January 18, 2022. See also the graphic tmsnrt.rs/2No7GtL.

¹⁸⁴ B. Magill, “Decoding Trump’s White House Energy Plan,” *Climate Central*, January 20, 2017, accessed January 21, 2022, <https://www.climatecentral.org/news/decoding-trumps-white-house-energy-plan-21097>.

¹⁸⁵ U. Irfan, “Trump’s EPA just replaced Obama’s signature climate policy with a much weaker rule”, *Vox*, June 19, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/2019/6/19/18684054/climate-change-clean-power-plan-repeal-affordable-emissions>.

¹⁸⁶ See: “Energy efficiency first: Commission welcomes agreement on energy efficiency,” European Commission, June 19, 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_18_3997. For US energy efficiency strategy and programs see: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/energy-efficiency>.

¹⁸⁷ Council of the European Union, "Recent developments in the field of external energy relations," Brussels, December 14, 2018, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14973-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

3. LNG - a Persisting Constant

Taxes, climate change, or international trade in general - it is hard to name a policy area which did not undergo fundamental changes in the transition from President Obama to President Trump. LNG was an exception.

In the last decade this topic has become particularly dear to the European Union for several reasons. The EU-US Energy Council since its commencement has been highlighting the importance of cooperation on the economic aspects of shale gas.¹⁸⁸ It encouraged participation of US experts in the EU's Gas Coordination Group Conference and was constantly underscoring the necessity of close US-EU LNG cooperation: not deviating from its “green” goals, the EU was considering the unconventional gas as a mean “to implement the commitments made at COP 21 in Paris.”¹⁸⁹ The interest in LNG supplies became, in fact, the major common ground of EU-US energy relations during the Trump presidency.

On 25 July 2018 the former European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker met with Donald Trump in Washington to talk on improvement of transatlantic trade and economic partnership.¹⁹⁰ Some fruitful outcomes in terms of the energy, or better LNG, sector were reached. Juncker at his speech at CSIS after the meeting said that the EU and the United States “share the same concerns” and “have common opportunities” to capitalize on, and that energy is one of them.¹⁹¹ He agreed to increase US LNG imports and said the EU will encourage building LNG infrastructure to facilitate US exports:

“We are ready to invest in infrastructure and new terminals which could welcome imports of LNG from the United States and elsewhere, but mainly from the United States – if the conditions were right and price is competitive. This is part of our today’s agreement, to increase the import of liquified gas, because already now the European Union is importing 35 percent of its gas from the U.S. This has to be brought to a more ambitious level.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ EU-US Energy Council, *Joint Statement of the Fourth Summit*, Brussels, December 5, 2012.

¹⁸⁹ EU-US Energy Council, *Joint Statement of the Seventh Summit*, Washington, May 4, 2016.

¹⁹⁰ “Donald Trump and Jean-Claude Juncker had 'a good meeting' ,” *BBC News*, 28.07.2018, accessed January 15, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-us-canada-44961781>.

¹⁹¹ Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), “Transatlantic Relations at a Crossroads: A Conversation with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker,” , July 25, 2018, p. 5.

¹⁹² *ibid.*

Donald Trump since the time of his presidential campaign had been underlining the US's role as a gas exporter and proclaiming moving towards "energy dominance."¹⁹³ "We have real independence. But what we want now is not independence; we want American energy dominance," Trump declared speaking to workers at the Shell Pennsylvania Petrochemicals Complex in Monaca, Pennsylvania.¹⁹⁴ In 2016, the US rose to the position of the world's third oil producer,¹⁹⁵ and the first in natural gas and began exporting liquefied natural gas (LNG). An increase in both natural gas production and LPG exports helped the United States become a net exporter of natural gas to international energy markets in 2017 for the first time in six decades.¹⁹⁶ Washington has been celebrating "energy independence," sought since the 1970s.¹⁹⁷ The new Juncker-Trump agreement of July 2018 suited perfectly into this utilitarian approach:

"The European Union wants to import more liquefied natural gas—LNG—from the United States, and they're going to be a very, very big buyer. We're going to make it much easier for them, but they're going to be a massive buyer of LNG, so they'll be able to diversify their energy supply, which they want very much to do. And we have plenty of it."¹⁹⁸

The US LNG gas exports, apart from fitting into European plans for energy transition and "greener" future, gained a strategic importance for EU energy security. As has been explained in the previous chapters of this thesis, the perspective of excluding Russian gas from the European energy portfolio for many reasons is highly improbable in the short term vision. Rather than looking for a replacement for Russian gas, the EU focused on exploring additional sources to secure its energy future and lessen the Gazprom grip. To compensate for the decline of local production, the stable and diversified import

¹⁹³ T. Cama and D. Henry, "Trump outlines 'America First' energy plan," *The Hill*, 26.05.2016, accessed January 17, 2022,

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/281430-trump-outlines-america-first-energy-plan>

¹⁹⁴ Remarks by President Trump During Tour of the Shell Pennsylvania Petrochemicals Complex, Monaca, Pennsylvania, August 13, 2019,

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-tour-shell-pennsylvania-petrochemicals-complex-monaco-pa/>

¹⁹⁵ International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2017*, IEA Publications, Paris, 2017, accessed January 20, 2022, <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2017>.

¹⁹⁶ U.S. Department of energy, "U.S. LNG Exports continue record growth," accessed January 15, 2022, <https://www.energy.gov/maps/map-us-natural-gas-exports-continue-record-growth>.

¹⁹⁷ Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, *Report "Stronger Together. A Strategy to Revitalize Transatlantic Power"*, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, December 2020, p. 53, accessed January 18, 2022, <https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/Transatlantic/StrongerTogether.pdf>.

¹⁹⁸ T. Di Christopher, "Trump and Juncker agree to take steps to boost US LNG exports to Europe," *CNBC*, 25.07.2018, accessed January 13, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/25/europe-will-import-more-us-natural-gas-trump-and-juncker-say.html>.

routes became increasingly important. In this respect, a huge role was assigned to liquefied natural gas as a key source to diversify the energy mix of the Union.

4. American gas to Redraw European Energy Landscape

An outstanding shift in energy markets started since 2005. Horizontal drilling techniques bounced in the United States made it possible for the first time to economically extract oil and gas from scattered shale formations throughout the country.¹⁹⁹ The US natural gas production was growing for 10 consecutive years and has beaten the previous historical record of 1973 - production volumes rose 50% from 2005 to 2015.²⁰⁰ As a result, the US has become the world's largest producer of natural gas. And that could not be overlooked by Europe.

The gas revolution has eroded the profits of Gazprom and benefited European consumers even before US shipments reached the EU coast. The shale boom in the United States and its sharply increased supply capacity coincided with a drastic contraction in gas demand in Europe due to the severe recession of 2009 and the following Euro crisis of 2010.²⁰¹ Oil prices recovered rapidly from the crisis, but it is natural that gas prices in Europe remained low. This was important because most European long-term gas contracts still work in the system that emerged in the 1960s - gas prices are due to be indexed to oil prices. The discrepancy between oil-indexed prices and spot natural gas prices in Europe put significant pressure on traditional European gas suppliers, notably Russian Gazprom, to change their pricing formulas and approach.²⁰²

Statoil, Norwegian gas company, one of the main gas suppliers to the EU, was the first to react by introducing spot gas indexing in most of its European contracts. European long-term gas supply contracts typically contain clauses for the periodic revision of contract terms. These price review clauses allow the contracting parties to adjust the base prices and

¹⁹⁹ R. Rapier, "How The Shale Boom Turned The World Upside Down," Forbes, April 21, 2017, accessed January 12, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rrapier/2017/04/21/how-the-shale-boom-turned-the-world-upside-down/?sh=48aed14e77d2>

²⁰⁰ BP, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy*, London, BP p.l.c, June 11, 2019, <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-full-report.pdf>

²⁰¹ International Energy Agency, *Medium-Term Gas Market Report 2012*, IEA Publications, Paris, June, 2012, p. 31, <https://www.iea.org/reports/medium-term-gas-market-report-2012>.

²⁰² J. Bordoff and T. Houser, *American Gas to the Rescue? The impact of US LNG Exports on European Security and Russian Foreign Policy*, New York, Columbia University, 2014, p. 16.

indexation formulas every three years if market conditions changed considerably during the last review period.²⁰³ Gazprom at the beginning was less flexible in renegotiating contracts. Indeed, the bargaining process went not always consensual and even resorted to arbitration courts.²⁰⁴ Eventually, most of Gazprom's large European customers have been granted significant gas discounts. Since 2009, the company has accepted significant price concessions in its long-term gas supply contracts with European consumers. For three of its largest customers, E.On, GDF Suez and Eni, Gazprom allowed it to link 15% of contractual gas volumes to spot gas prices for a period of 3 years.²⁰⁵ Other European energy companies soon followed suit and began the renegotiating process on existing gas contracts with Gazprom. From 2011 to 2014, Gazprom admitted to revise pricing formulas and reduce prices for most of its European customers (initially for a period of three years).²⁰⁶

With establishing the Energy Union in 2015 Europe has made meaningful progress for opening freer flows of natural gas and electricity across the continent and raising the attractiveness of the European market for US LNG industry.²⁰⁷ And as the world's second largest single gas market, the EU is a lucrative option for the U.S. The parties indeed have been proliferating the topic of possibilities LNG could bring. The EU-US Energy Council since its inception has been lobbying rapid exploration and trade patterns of unconventional gas.²⁰⁸ Later with its 2014 Joint Statement the Energy Council positively estimated the prospects for future US LNG exports, while the European Energy Union in its Strategy 2015 underscored that the EU “will explore the full potential of liquefied natural gas

²⁰³ J. Stern and H. Rogers, *The Transition to Hub Based Gas Pricing in Continental Europe*, Oxford, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2011, p. 5.

²⁰⁴ T. Andresen, “RWE Sees End Of Europe’s 40-Year-Old Gas Pricing for Gazprom,” *Bloomberg News*, 09.07.2013, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-07-08/rwe-expects-torid-gazprom-deals-of-oil-price-after-arbitration.html>.

²⁰⁵ C. Belton and E. Crooks, “Gazprom in Contract Shake-up,” *Financial Times*, February 25, 2010, accessed January 16, 2022, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/53068c2c-2254-11df-9a72-00144feab49a.html?siteedition=intl#axzz3AzzAGJRm>.

²⁰⁶ Some of these contracts were subsequently amended. See: A. Shiryayevskaya, “Eni Seeks Third Revision To Gazprom Natural Gas Supply Contract,” *Bloomberg News*, February 20, 2013, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-02-20/eni-seeksthird-revision-to-gazprom-natural-gas-supply-contract.html>.

²⁰⁷ Launched in 2015, the EU’s Energy Union is a five-pronged strategy that mandates EU countries develop integrated national energy and climate plans for 2021–2030 that cover five dimensions: security, solidarity, and trust; a fully integrated internal energy market; energy efficiency; decarbonizing the economy; and research, technology, and innovation. For the full list of the Energy Union’s adopted policies see <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/energy-union/>.

²⁰⁸ Council of The European Union, “Joint Statement of the Second Summit,” Lisbon, November 19, 2010, accessed January 11, 2022, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2015-08/2010.11.19%25202nd%2520Press%2520statement%2520final_0.pdf.

(LNG), including as a back-up in crisis situations when insufficient gas is coming into Europe through the existing pipeline system.”²⁰⁹ It did not take long to wait - in April 2016 the first cargo from the Gulf Coast reached Europe. Recognized as “important milestones for global energy markets,” LNG exports from the US were expected to grow stably next years.²¹⁰

The meeting between Trump and Juncker on 25 July 2018 was a pivotal event: “The European Union wants to import more liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the United States to diversify its energy supply,” said Juncker in the Statement following the meeting.²¹¹ Two following-up LNG export orders were signed by the US energy secretary Rick Perry on 2 May 2019.²¹² Since that moment EU imports of “freedom gas”²¹³ from the US have jumped by 181% by early March 2019. In three years, since the first US LNG delivery to Portugal in April 2016, the US share in total EU LNG imports rose from 2.3% to 16% by the end of 2019.²¹⁴

It is important to say that such a surge took place even despite some market barriers coming from the U.S. side. According to the current US law, applications for LNG exports to countries that do not have free-trade agreements with the US must go through a multilevel verification process to prove that such exports are in the national interest. Under the Obama administration, the Energy Department changed the way it conducts federal audits to speed up the whole process. In 2014, the Energy Department simplified the process, which also involves the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, from three to two steps.²¹⁵ Driven by commercial considerations, the Energy Department continued to use its

²⁰⁹Communication from the Commission, “Energy Union Package. A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy,” Brussels, February 25, 2015, p. 5, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2015:80:FIN>.

²¹⁰ EU-US Energy Council, *Joint Statement of the Seventh Summit*, Washington, May 4, 2016.

²¹¹ Joint U.S.-EU Statement following President Juncker's visit to the White House, Washington, 25 July 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_18_4687.

²¹² F. Simon, “‘Freedom gas’: US opens LNG floodgates to Europe,” *Euractive*, May 2, 2019, accessed January 14, 2022,

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/freedom-gas-us-opens-lng-floodgates-to-europe/>.

²¹³ U.S. Under Secretary of Energy Mark W. Menezes referred to American LNG as “freedom gas.” See: “U.S. Department of Energy, Department of Energy Authorizes Additional LNG Exports from Freeport LNG,” Press Release, May 28, 2019, accessed January 13, 2022, <https://www.energy.gov/articles/department-energy-authorizes-additional-lng-exports-freeport-lng>.

²¹⁴ European Commission, *Report on EU-U.S. LNG Trade*, Brussels, January 8, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/eu-us_lng_trade_folder.pdf.

²¹⁵ H. Terhune, “DOE Proposes New Procedures for LNG Export Authorizations,” *JDSupra*, May 30, 2014, accessed January 23, 2022

<https://www.jdsupra.com/post/contentViewerEmbed.aspx?fid=b6ac30ee-ee66-4618-869f-98fc1dae6a2f> and D. L. Goldwyn, “DOE’s New Procedure for Approving LNG Export Permits: A More Sensible Approach”,

Brookings, June 10, 2014, accessed January 23, 2022, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/does-new-procedure-for-approving-lng-export-permits-a-more-sensible-approach/>.

legal authority and was smoothly approving additional LNG export applications under Trump.

After the presidential transition in the United States and a striking LNG production boom in the U.S., the question of European energy security took on a much different context. The Obama-era joint institutions, if not perished, then turned into purely business means. The Energy Council had not convened since 2018. Instead, to stimulate trade contacts and to promote further development of US LNG at competitive prices in the EU a B2B energy forum was designed on 2 May 2019 in Brussels. A ministerial-level event brought together around 400 stakeholders - the U.S. and European decision-makers and companies from the LNG sector.

The event was organized by the US-EU Energy Council in collaboration with Central Europe Energy Partners (CEEP), Polskie LNG and LNG Allies. The CE countries were represented by speakers from Poland, Lithuania, Croatia, Hungary and Romania, and were particularly proactive in expressing their interest in increasing EU LNG imports. “LNG as a reliable source of supply, with flexible terms of trade and delivery options, as well as competitive pricing, will improve the security of supply for Central Europe and it will also strengthen the transatlantic relations which will be beneficial for our continents,” claimed the chairman of the board of directors of CEEP, prof. Leszek Jesień.²¹⁶ Each of the CE countries stressed that LNG imports to Central and South Eastern Europe have a prominent role to diversify European gas market and to increase the level of energy security of Europe as a whole. Piotr Naimski, Commissioner for Poland's Strategic Energy Infrastructure, reported on Poland's future diversification plans which include expanding the Swinoujscie LNG terminal and installing a 4 billion cubic meter floating plant in Gdansk by 2024.²¹⁷

In the last five years, the LNG trade became apparently the only common ground in transatlantic dialogues on strengthening European energy security. While for the U.S. the partnership acquired mostly a commercial interest, the European Union was trying to incorporate this new unconventional gas into its general energy security agenda.

American LNG cannot be a substitution of Russian gas on the European market. However, boosted US natural gas exports became seen as an instrument to reduce Russia's long-term influence in Europe, to increase bargaining power of the Union, and to

²¹⁶ “U.S. LNG to Europe: 1st EU-U.S. Energy Council B2B Energy Forum,” *CEEP*, May 7, 2019, <https://www.ceep.be/u-s-lng-to-europe-1st-eu-u-s-energy-council-b2b-energy-forum/>.

²¹⁷ *ibid.*

significantly reduce European natural gas spending through increased competition, and supply diversification. Broadened supply diversity implicitly raises Europe's ability to withstand temporary supply disruptions. Yet, reaping the benefits of US LNG required European action as well. To meet the US exports the European Union had to boost its natural gas infrastructure projects development and increase physical gas storage. Such an endeavor was born and has actively matured through recent years - the Three Seas Initiative. The Chapter Four of this thesis will be fully devoted to this the most ambitious European energy venture.

5. The Transatlantic Green Deal: Cooperation, Not Another Trade Row

The power transition has happened in the European Union too, with shuffling of priorities entailed. Under the presidency of Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission has reinforced the agenda of the “green” Union and the urgency of energy policies to be in a strict compliance with climate change mitigation goals.²¹⁸

The milestone of the European climate policy program became the Green Deal (GD). The GD has been proposed by the Commission as the blueprint for European growth and economic restructuring coherent with the climate change mitigation plan. The Commission defined the GD as “a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society with a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use.”²¹⁹ All 27 EU Member States endorsed this set of proposals to make the EU the first climate neutral bloc by 2050 by fitting climate, energy, transport and taxation policies to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. To get there, the Commission intended to use all policy levers in a coherent way which can promote a clean circular economy, in particular, regulation and standardization, investment, industrial strategy, low-carbon transport infrastructure and the greening of the common agricultural policy.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Ursula von der Leyen has taken the position of President of the European Commission since 1 December 2019.

²¹⁹ European Commission, “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, The European Green Deal,” Brussels, December 11, 2019, p. 2.

²²⁰ European Commission, Annex 2 to The Green Deal, “Road Map. Key Actions,” Brussels, December 11, 2019.

To incentivise internally the implementation of the GD and to attract domestic investments by EU Member States, the European Green Deal Investment Plan (EGDIE) committed to mobilize EU funding and to provide an enabling framework to move towards a carbon-free economy. Yet, as the European Commission has clearly stated that these ambitious plans for the better future cannot be achieved by Europe alone, and in order to approach the emerging energy and climate challenges, the EU needs to export its “green” policy beyond its borders: “The EU can use its influence, expertise, and financial resources to mobilize its neighbors and partners to join it on a sustainable path. The EU will continue to lead international efforts and it hopes to build alliances with the likeminded.”²²¹

The entire section 3 of the document stipulated possible partner-countries and a geostrategic roadmap for cooperation with third countries and international forums on climate and environmental issues. However, it did not contain a single mention of the United States. This silence on the United States could be interpreted in several ways: “wait and see” tactics, in hopes of changing US administration or policy; or as “strategic patience”, that is, to involve other players and thus increase the pressure on the United States to join;²²² or viewed as a “strategic absence.”²²³ But even without being clearly mentioned, the US could not disregard the EU's green energy strategy as it implicitly involves any possible partner country to obey the newly established rules.

For instance, as one of the key components of the Green Deal the EU proposed a carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM), to mitigate the risk of “carbon leakage.”²²⁴ This is due to companies that move production to other countries with less stringent emission restrictions in order to reduce costs. Benefiting the EU companies and protecting them from unfair international competition, a cross-border carbon tax, at the same time, will have important implications for US-EU trade relations as the EU moves towards imposing a tax on imported goods based on their carbon emissions. This implies coordinated close discussions with the US on the implementation of the CBAM to develop

²²¹ European Commission, “The European Green Deal,” p. 2.

²²² For example, the scheduled 2020 EU-China summits in Beijing and Leipzig are considered in the GD roadmap as an opportunity to reinforce the partnership between the EU and China on climate and environmental issues, notably ahead of the next Biodiversity Conference and Conference of Parties. Similarly, the EU’s forthcoming Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, and the 2020 summit between the African Union and the EU, as well as the G20 presidency under Saudi Arabia are venues that the EU should use to promote the GD

²²³ J. Braunstein, Á. Renedo, “Transatlantic Dialogue: The Missing Link in Europe’s Post-Covid-19 Green Deal?”, *Belfer Center*, April 2020, accessed January 16, 2022, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/transatlantic-dialogue-missing-link-europes-post-covid-19-green-dea> l#footnote-036.

²²⁴ European Commission, Annex 2 to The Green Deal, “Road Map. Key Actions,” Brussels, December 11, 2019, p. 3.

standards for measuring and verifying carbon emissions, first of all, from the production and transportation of natural gas.

Another important fact is that all of the most recent EU trade agreements include a binding commitment by the parties to ratify and effectively implement the Paris Agreement. Furthermore, the Commission firmly stated that it “will propose to make the respect of the Paris Agreement an essential element for all future comprehensive trade agreements.”²²⁵ As the Green Deal has revealed to have a long-term impact, the United States, deeply integrated with European markets, in 2019 got to the point of rethinking its energy and trade relations in compliance with the EU policies.

With the Green Deal adopted, the EU has committed itself to sustainable modernization and the achievement of new climate targets - in the coming decades, transport, buildings, waste, industry and agriculture are going to be decarbonised. But, as the fight against climate change and multilateralism go hand in hand, the level of success of the ambitious transition plan depends on the vigorous cooperation between the EU and its international strategic counterparts. A weak likelihood of a success when the main (ex)partner continues to drive “friends in Europe” to embrace more US energy imports to “achieve true energy security” and insists that technological innovation is the solution to climate challenges: “With US companies and researchers leading the way we are on the threshold of virtually unlimited reserves of energy including from traditional fuels, LNG, clean coal, next-generation nuclear power and gas hydrate technologies.”²²⁶

The year 2020 in the light of the upcoming presidential elections in the United States, raised hopes among European decision-makers of repairing transatlantic relations and reducing the number of dissents between the US and EU states. Especially climate and energy programs were seen at the top of the agenda, as Biden was expected to be much more proactive on these issues, creating more potential synergies between the US and the EU.²²⁷

President Biden and Vice President Harris have proposed a socially and environmentally sustainable economic growth strategy to implement through multilateral institutions and negotiations - to end the spread of economic protectionism and nationalism

²²⁵ European Commission, “The European Green Deal,” p. 21.

²²⁶ Remarks by President Trump at the World Economic Forum, Davos, January 21, 2020, accessed January 25, 2022,

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-world-economic-forum-davos-switzerland/>.

²²⁷ “The Biden Plan to Build a Modern, Sustainable Infrastructure and An Equitable Clean Energy Future”, accessed January 23, 2022, <https://joebiden.com/climate-plan/>.

in the United States and abroad. The strategy applied especially to economic and climate policy. The Green New Deal, an ecological spending program devised by congressional Democrats and endorsed by Joe Biden, overlaps significantly with the European Green Deal.²²⁸

These promising aspirations have sparked a wave of talks on reopening EU-US relations. In the wake of Joe Biden's election, the European Commission has put forward a launch of "a comprehensive transatlantic green agenda." A broad proposal to rebuild EU-US relations, after having them strained for four years under Donald Trump, included the new "transatlantic green trade agenda" based on "a shared transatlantic commitment to a net-zero emissions pathway by 2050." "Together with our partners, the EU and the US can lead the world towards a green, circular, competitive and inclusive economy," the Commission said.²²⁹ In particular the EU's upcoming Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism was underscored as a key area of future transatlantic cooperation. Other priorities from the list included a "green technology alliance," and a global regulatory framework for sustainable finance.

The victory of Joe Biden lifted European spirits. To enable a structured political dialogue and a more inclusive preparatory process, the growing need for a multilateral scheme emerged again. A revival of the EU-US Energy Council has come into the focus of both European and US politicians and experts.²³⁰ The main bilateral overarching platform on energy cooperation that had been underutilized in recent years, a reinvigorated US-EU Energy Council has again become seen as the most effective forum for energy and climate issues discussions, an instrument to forge a more ambitious work agenda for the coming years: to review the output of its three working groups and to expanded US-EU cooperation in accordance to Green Deals on both sides of the Atlantic.

²²⁸ *Green New Deal Resolution*, 116th Congress 1st Session, Washington, February 7, 2019, <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hres/109/BILLS-116hres109ih.pdf>.

²²⁹ European Commission, Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, and the Council, "A new EU-US agenda for global change," Brussels, 2 December 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/joint-communication-eu-us-agenda_en.pdf.

²³⁰ P. Hockenos, "Forging a Transatlantic Green Deal", *International Politik*, August, 11, 2020 <https://internationalepolitik.de/en/forging-transatlantic-green-deal> and R. L. Morningstar, A. Simonyi, O. Khakova, and J. T. Gordon, *European Energy Security and the Critical Role of Transatlantic Energy Cooperation*, Final Report and Recommendations, Atlantic Council, Washington, 2020, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Europe-Final-PDF.pdf>.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. 12 Countries & 3 Seas. Overview of the Initiative

The Three Seas Initiative (TSI) is a European program that was created in 2015 bringing together twelve EU countries bordering the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Sea: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The TSI was established to be a “flexible platform” for regional political and economic dialogue with a focus on projects for energy and infrastructure, covering all Central and Eastern European states.

The coverage of such a diverse group of countries is largely the result of the assumption that most of them, except from Austria, have a common historical denominator: the area encompasses EU Member states mostly from “post-1989 Europe.”²³¹ The period of shared historical experience of being subjects to Soviet influence paradoxically did not intensify the level of regional integration. Furthermore, nine of twelve TSI countries for a half of a century were not simply divided from Western Europe by the Iron Curtain but also faced strong control from Moscow. The political domination by the Soviet Union prevented the formation of regional infrastructure connectivity, and, as a consequence, tenuous cooperation and weak economic and social interactions led to economic mis-development of these countries. The main goal of the Initiative therefore is to overcome the Soviet occupation legacy of the Cold War period and to facilitate convergence among EU Member States and strengthen the European Union as a whole.²³²

The expansion of EU membership to Central and Eastern Europe was an important achievement of the recent decades. The single economic and market grids of the EU were intended to facilitate the economic development of new Members and of the Union as a whole. However, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe continue to differ from their Western colleagues in their economic inequality and aged infrastructure. The integration process did not improve the situation much, since investments have been focused on east-west rather than on north-south link. This continuing investment gap in infrastructure, energy and digital technologies bolstered economic division between the two sides of the

²³¹ The year 1989 became an important referring point in European history, standing for such events as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, and the upcoming collapse of the Soviet Union.

²³² Joint Declaration of the Third Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, Bucharest, September 18, 2018, p. 1.

EU. The result is that while the countries of Western Europe are connected by transportation roads and oil and gas pipelines, the Members of Central and Eastern Europe, especially on the north-south axis region, are still much less communicated.²³³ This is clearly seen if you take a satellite look at the European continent: the Western side has a network of cross-border connections of highways, roads, railways, and oil pipelines, meanwhile Central and Eastern Europe has a much more desolate landscape with a limited set of east-west communication lines, consisting of several highways, one or two gas pipelines, and little or no north-south connection. Or even to put it simpler, the time for traveling in Central Europe is double than it would be for the same distance in Western Europe.²³⁴

The development gap between Western and Eastern European countries has yet to be bridged. And that's what the Three Seas Initiative is aiming for - it is about bringing Europe closer, creating a truly united European market space, and using the potential of infrastructure not only for the benefit of the Three Seas Initiative region, but also for the entire Union.

In 2014, the American think tank Atlantic Council issued a report "The Completing Europe," drawing attention to "a considerable disparity in quality and availability of infrastructure between and within the Member States."²³⁵ The report represented an in-depth study on shortages across Central-Eastern Europe in energy, transport, and telecommunication sectors. Inspired with the insights it has brought, the then presidents of Croatia and Poland, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic and Andrzej Duda, launched an initiative that attracted many other dignitaries and main actors from the world of business and politics. The first Summit in Dubrovnik in 2016 initiated a dialogue under the auspices of the Three Seas Initiative, being held then on a yearly basis and at the presidential level.²³⁶

Every year a new chapter opens in the history of the Three Seas: what began as a platform for the exchange of views between the presidents of the participating countries has given birth to some other projects. With the 2017 Warsaw Joint Declaration of the Second Summit, the participating presidents and their representatives decided to create a Business

²³³ G. Soroka and T. Stepniowski, *The Three Seas Initiative: Geopolitical Determinants and Polish Interests*, Lublin, Institute of East-Central Europe, 2019.

²³⁴ R. Le Quiniou, "2020: A successful year for the Three Seas Initiative", *Euro Creative*, January 18, 2021, accessed November, 30, 2021, <http://eurocreative.fr/2020-a-successful-year-for-the-three-seas-initiative/>.

²³⁵ J. L. Jones, Jr, P. Olechnowicz, F. Kempe, J. Kulczyk, J. Luks, I. Brzezinski, D. Korányi, K. Bárdos, P. Belényesi, J. Roberts, M. Q. Watson, *Completing Europe. From the North-South Corridor to Energy, Transportation, and Telecommunications Union*, Joint-Report, Atlantic Council, 2014, p. 40.

²³⁶ "Three Seas initiative countries sign joint declaration," August 26, 2016, accessed December 19, 2022, <https://www.president.pl/news/three-seas-initiative-countries-sign-joint-declaration.36211>.

Forum. The first edition took place a year after as part of the 2018 Summit in Romania and facilitated a direct meeting of various business representatives of the region with relevant government officials and other economic entities interested in business cooperation.

Emerged as a joint effort to fully integrate into a Wider Europe, the Three Seas Initiative has defined driving economic growth, security and a stronger and more united Europe as the priorities. To this end, six objectives are determined. The first one is boosting economic growth and prosperity of the region and implies increasing trade activity and service provision within the region and neighbouring countries. The second is stimulating interest from investors. As already said, the countries participating in the Three Seas Initiative have enjoyed strong economic growth over the years. Hence, working together they can significantly improve their image and become more attractive to the global investors. The third objective is strengthening energy security. Admitting that energy has become not only an economic, but also a strategic and security issue, a question of a cohesive energy market, and availability of choice among suppliers becomes crucial. The fourth aim of cooperation on protecting geopolitical interest of the Three Seas region and Europe as a whole complements that. In terms of new investments, there is also the fifth goal, which is to maximize the potential of the region to implement digital solutions for infrastructure and smart modern instruments for facilitating the exchange of data and its more effective use. Finally, the 12 countries of the TSI bloc support the general climate goals and pursue to commit by developing a modern sustainable infrastructure. Cooperation on the development of undervalued infrastructure and diversification of energy sources along the north-south regional axis in Central and Eastern Europe potentially allows the region to compensate for development delays caused by historical events, and give the input into a stronger, “more united and more internationally competitive Europe.”²³⁷

Geographically, the countries of the Three Seas constitute nearly a third of the European Union. Lagging behind the average European GDP per capita by 22% (according to the data for 2018), the economies of the members of the TSI are among the fastest-growing in Europe: the average economic growth in 12 countries from 2015 to 2019 was 1,4% higher compared to the EU as a whole, and is expected to be increasing further. In the opinion of the TSI Member States, making a leap to improve regional infrastructure shortages “would give an enormous boost to development in the region and make Europe

²³⁷ <https://3seas.eu/about/objectives>, accessed November 29, 2021.

stronger and more united as a whole.”²³⁸ To unleash the previously underestimated potential and seize opportunities the summit of the Three Seas and the International Business Forum convene annually at the presidential level.

Should be noted that from the very beginning, the Three Seas was a pro-European project and was created to complement, not compete with the European Union. This has been confirmed by the statements of successive summits and proved in the close involvement and participation of the Commission, of German (as of a country with one of the highest bargaining power across the Union) government, and the most important European joint institutions’ representatives in all of the summits:

“[The TSI Members] Welcome the involvement, support and interest from partner states and institutions, namely the Governments of the United States and Germany, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank Group including through their high-level participation to the 3rd TSI Summit, and agree to continue to invite them and other interested actors, pending the consensual decision of the participating States, to the future TSI Summits, as well as to the future editions of the TSI Business Forum.”²³⁹

Through integration of the territories that have been lacking connections, the TSI is rather supposed to make a serious contribution to the development of the EU than to be the "Union within the Union" or an alliance towards key international adversaries. From the point of view of the participants the project is predominantly economic in nature - the consolidation of infrastructure along the North-South corridor is the fundamental for creating a single European market. The Members define the forum works as a platform for pragmatic cooperation on energy, transport, and infrastructure development initiatives, seeking in these fields an added value for a range of Central and Eastern European countries.²⁴⁰ As the Croatian ex-President Grabar-Kitarović said at the 2018 Bucharest Summit, the initiative aims to “make Central Europe the backbone of European resilience,”

²³⁸ G. Soroka and T. Stepniewski, *The Three Seas Initiative: Geopolitical Determinants and Polish Interests*, Lublin, Institute of East-Central Europe, 2019.

²³⁹ Joint Declaration of the Third Summit of the Three Seas Initiative, Bucharest, September 18, 2018, p. 3.

²⁴⁰ P. Musialek, “The Three Seas Initiative: Natural Gas in Central European Foreign Policy”, *Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale*, February 21, 2020, accessed December 1, 2021, <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/three-seas-initiative-natural-gas-central-european-foreign-policy-25128>.

and will bring the ‘new’ member states of the European Union closer to economic rapprochement with their western neighbors.²⁴¹

Nevertheless, geopolitical implications of the connecting projects envisaged under the Initiative exist. Increased integration naturally implies overlapping of the interests of the states. Ultimately this can solidify the voice of the entire region and strengthen its position in the EU. Including the goal of bolstering transatlantic ties in the subsequent statements of the summits is another geopolitically important aspect: in the time of tense EU-US relations, Central Eastern Europe demonstrates a greater openness of the Three Seas for cooperation with the United States and appears to be a region declaring to be closer to Washington than Western European countries. As Ian Brzezinski, Senior Fellow at the Council’s Europe Center, emphasized in one of his latest interviews, “ [...] the US wants to support those allies who are most robust in their commitments to the transatlantic community. And many of these allies are to be found in Central Europe.”²⁴² The US administration indeed has praised the role of the Three Seas as a format for transatlantic cooperation and so far has become the main patron of the program out of the Three Seas region.

2. The US as the Patron of the Three Seas Initiative

The Three Seas Initiative was launched and is led by Central European Union Members. It was not the first effort to enhance the connectivity of East-Central European countries, but the Washington-based Atlantic Council played a role of a prominent booster of the creation of that bond.²⁴³

The aforementioned report “Completing Europe” of 2014 was led by former US National Security Advisor Gen. James L. Jones, Jr. and expressed a strong US imperative for improving the North-South Corridor, energy, transportation, and digital links spanning from the Baltic to the Adriatic and Black Seas. The document has voiced the US position on the crucial importance to enhance European intra-regional integration. The

²⁴¹ M. Thomas, “Three Seas Initiative”, *Baltic Security Foundation*, March 16, 2020, accessed December 1, 2021, https://balticsecurity.eu/three_seas_initiative/.

²⁴² R. Le Quiniou, “2020: A successful year for the Three Seas Initiative”, *Euro Creative*, January 18, 2021, accessed November 30, 2021, <http://eurocreative.fr/2020-a-successful-year-for-the-three-seas-initiative/>.

²⁴³ for detailed study on previous attempts of integration see G. Soroka and T. Stępniewski, *The Three Seas Initiative: Geopolitical Determinants and Polish Interests*, Institute of East-Central Europe, 2019. Available at academia.edu.

infrastructural networks of the countries which joined the Union seventeen years ago are still patchy, and such a landscape is weakening both European and Transatlantic community resilience. To put it in words of Frederick Kempe, the Atlantic Council President and CEO: “Robust cross-border infrastructure is not only essential to the economic well-being of the Three Seas region, it is vital to the economic resilience of the transatlantic community and the completion of undivided Europe.”²⁴⁴ The North-South Corridor project would form an infrastructural foundation for binding together Central Europe with Western Europe, contributing to a single and coherent European market, stated the document.²⁴⁵

The Atlantic Council’s thorough 2014 Report was elaborated and the Three Seas initiative was born out of it. Advocating for acceleration of European interconnectivity in the Report of 2014, former US National Security Advisor Gen. James L. Jones Jr. in his further speeches has much encouraged the establishment of the Initiative. On the eve of the second TSI Summit (2017) where the then president Trump was invited, the Atlantic Council held its own forum, where Gen. James L. Jones Jr. has again praised the new ambitious European program: “This is a truly transatlantic project that has enormous geopolitical, geostrategic, and geo-economic ramifications.” The new American administration’s interest in strengthening the Three Seas region should be cultivated, he said, because the initiative will not only “truly connect and complete Europe” but have important implications on strengthening the entire transatlantic community.²⁴⁶

In July 2017 during the second TSI Summit, Donald Trump has declared a strong US support and interest in the Three Seas as a mediating format for reinforcement of transatlantic cooperation:

“On behalf of the American people, let me say that we stand with the Three Seas nations. [...] We welcome this historic opportunity to deepen our economic partnership with your region. [...] The United States also strongly supports the creation of the Three Seas Business Forum so that your countries can build cutting-edge projects with the best talent in the energy industry, and do so under budget and ahead of schedule.”²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Frederick Kempe’s speech at the Atlantic Council meeting, February 18, 2021, accessed December 3, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/news/press-releases/atlantic-council-announces-three-seas-chairs/>.

²⁴⁵ D. Koranyi and I. Brzezinski, “Completing Europe: The North-South Corridor,” *Atlantic Council*, April 20, 2015, accessed December 4, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/completing-europe-the-north-south-corridor/>.

²⁴⁶ R. Ansley, “Making the Three Seas Initiative a Priority for Trump,” *Atlantic Council*, May 3, 2017, accessed December 4, 2021,

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/making-the-three-seas-initiative-a-priority-for-trump/>.

²⁴⁷ Donald Trump’s Remarks at the Three Seas Initiative Summit in Poland, July 6, 2017, accessed December 8, 2021, <https://time.com/4846780/read-donald-trump-speech-warsaw-poland-transcript/>.

The next Summit of the Three Seas initiative took place in Bucharest in September, 2018; Donald Trump has again pledged the US to remain “a strong ally and partner” of the Initiative and to work together on investment and business projects for diversification of energy sources and infrastructure:

“The United States remains a proud partner in these efforts through liquefied natural gas exports to this strategically important region and the participation of American companies in the Three Seas Initiative Business Forum. At many levels, our country remains committed to working with the 12 member nations to continue expanding energy, transportation, and digital infrastructure.”²⁴⁸

The twelve countries, in turn, solidified their opinion on the strategic importance of the US as a key ally of the Initiative in their Joint Declaration: “the economic presence of the United States in the TSI region can contribute to the strengthening of the transatlantic link and provide an additional catalyst for an enhanced transatlantic partnership.”

The fourth Summit and second Business Forum (both in June, 2019) in Slovenia anchored “enriching transatlantic ties” along with accelerating economic development, and strengthening EU cohesion, as three fundamental goals of TSI and repeated the language of the previous Declaration on the value of the economic support of the US as “an additional catalyst for an enhanced transatlantic partnership, opening new business opportunities, including mutually beneficial investment in infrastructure.”²⁴⁹

Therefore, being born from the American concerns over European security, the TSI since its inception is continuing to enjoy commitment from the United States, who plays a key role in the energy sphere policies for the Central Eastern European states. The energy section of the Summit of the year 2018 was hosted by the Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, leading the American Delegation. Stating that energy security is “basically tantamount to national security” the Secretary expressed the concern about the Central and Eastern European countries’ strong dependence on a single supplier, Russia, and underlined the position of the U.S. that a variety of energy sources, types and routes is the key factor for a greater safety. The United States considers energy diversification as the main pillar of the TSI on the way to completing Europe and eliminating the risk of using energy as a

²⁴⁸ Donald Trump’s speech at the Three Seas Initiative Summit, Bucharest, September 18, 2018, accessed December 8, 2021, <https://ro.usembassy.gov/president-donald-j-trump-on-the-2018-three-seas-initiative/>

²⁴⁹ Joint Declaration of the Fourth TSI Summit, Ljubljana, June (2019): 1-2, accessed December 4, 2021, <https://media.voog.com/0000/0046/4166/files/LJUBLJANAJoint%20Declaration%202019.pdf>

coercive instrument by third nations. Thus, the pipeline projects that hamper this objective and will expand Russia's ability to supply gas in Europe, namely the Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream pipelines, were highly opposed. Instead, a call for the alternative of expanding specific infrastructure projects to increase diversification, lower barriers and encourage easier access to energy trade was raised.²⁵⁰

Bridging of the CEE region with its Western neighbors has another reason to be endorsed by the United States. Not only Russia plays a role in the region, but recently another world's major power has tried to augment its economic presence in the CEE. China reacted promptly and considered the Initiative as a new promising investment opportunity for Chinese infrastructure construction and tech firms.²⁵¹ It has created its own '16 + 1' platform to strengthen ties between China and Central and Eastern Europe. Hence apart from the pragmatic possibility of further increased trade benefits, for the U.S., embroiled in a strategic rivalry with China, the political side of the question has become one more motive to come into the TSI proactively. The Three Seas Initiative represents a chance for the U.S. to counter the influence of other great powers in the region and to reduce Russian and Chinese presence in Europe thus fostering a strong and coherent Europe as a stable ally of the United States in a rapidly evolving global dynamic.²⁵²

So, despite its "America First" policy and a general penchant for reneging on foreign commitments, the Trump administration took the opportunity to help this international venture to reduce the dependence of the bloc on Russian money and energy supplies.²⁵³ Worth saying is that views opposing expanding pipelines for Russian gas coming to Europe have been shared for a long time among the U.S. authorities of both political parties. In July 2018, Trump issued a sharp public attack on Germany for supporting the Baltic Sea pipeline agreement with Russia, claiming Berlin is "a captive of

²⁵⁰ U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry's speech at the Three Seas Initiative Business Forum, Bucharest, September 18, 2018, accessed December 6, 2021,

<https://ro.usembassy.gov/secretary-of-energy-rick-perry-at-the-three-seas-initiative-business-forum/>.

²⁵¹ While China has no interest (or capability) to export energy to Central Europe, it does have substantial interests in two other pillars of the TSI, transportation infrastructure and the digitisation agenda. See: D. Morris, "The Three Seas Initiative: A European answer to China's Belt and Road?", *The Interpreter*, October 26, 2020, available at

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/three-seas-initiative-european-answer-china-s-belt-and-road>.

²⁵² Z. Bajnai, "Three Seas leaders must overcome external influence and internal disunity to achieve prosperity," *Atlantic Council*, September 14, 2018, accessed December 8, 2021,

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/three-seas-leaders-must-overcome-external-influence-and-internal-disunity-to-achieve-prosperity/>.

²⁵³ J. de Franceschi, "Eastern EU Initiative Possible Salve for Strained US-NATO Ties," *VOA News*, April 3, 2019, accessed December 10, 2021,

<https://www.voanews.com/a/eastern-eu-initiative-possible-salve-for-strained-us-nato-ties/4861284.html>.

Russia" and criticizing it for not increasing defense spending.²⁵⁴ His predecessors were of the same view: former president George W. Bush's administration representatives ardently argued against the construction of the Nord Stream line.²⁵⁵ Barack Obama too had been questioning the reliability of Russia as the energy partner and has been urging Europe to mitigate its dependence on Russian energy.²⁵⁶ Further US bipartisan support has been provided recently in November 2020, when the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution "expressing support of the Three Seas Initiative in its efforts to increase energy independence and infrastructure connectivity thereby strengthening the United States and European national security."²⁵⁷ The bill thus confirmed a robust Congressional support for the Initiative and for the transatlantic alliance "to accelerate the development of cross border infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe" and to counter "Russian and Chinese malign influence."²⁵⁸

3. Entering a Critical Operational Phase

The fragmented infrastructure along the North-South axis disrupts the economic competitiveness and energy security of the region and hence of Europe as a whole. Croatia, as one of two main proponents of the TSI, has been particularly active in promoting greater interconnectivity of twelve countries. The then President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović at the second Summit in 2017 presented a list of more than 150 infrastructure projects. The total cost resulted in more than 45 billion euros. This is, as Bulgarian President Rumen Radev noted, a challenging sum to find resources for and the number of projects presented by

²⁵⁴ J. Mason, "Trump lashes Germany over gas pipeline deal, calls it Russia's 'captive'," *Reuters*, July 11, 2018, accessed December 10, 2021,

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-summit-pipeline-idUSKBN1K10VI>.

²⁵⁵ For Bush Administration officials' criticism over the Nord Stream see the Testimony before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe of Gregory Manuel, Special Advisor to the Secretary of State and International Energy Coordinator, Matthew Bryza, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European Affairs, and Steven Mann, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, June 25, 2007, available at <https://www.csce.gov/international-impact/events/pipeline-politics-achieving-energy-security-osce-region?page=66>.

²⁵⁶ R. Emmott and J. Strupczewski, "Obama tells EU to do more to cut reliance on Russian gas," *Reuters*, March 26, 2014, accessed December 11, 2021,

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-eu-summit-idUSBREA2P0W220140326>.

²⁵⁷ Full text available at [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov).

²⁵⁸ Representatives Marcy Kaptur and Adam Kinzinger's statement following the 116th Congress meeting, November 18, 2020, accessed December 19, 2022,

<https://kaptur.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/kaptur-kinzinger-resolution-supporting-three-seas-initiative>

Grabar-Kitarović far exceeds the financial opportunities of the twelve Members of the Initiative.²⁵⁹

A year after at the third Summit of the Initiative (September 2018) a momentous achievement was reached: twelve countries signed a joint agreement on 48 priority interconnection projects, 14 of the list are those on improving infrastructure and security in the energy sector.²⁶⁰ Should be noted that many of the identified projects were prioritized by the twelve countries even before 2015 when the TSI was established. The main reason for the poor progress in expansion of infrastructure arteries and facilities was not a lack of political consensus or will, but a lack of financing. James L. Jones, Jr., interim chairman of the Atlantic Council, endorsed this list of priorities as a step forward towards “operationalizing one of this century’s most important strategic concepts,” saying that it will help, in particular, to safeguard investment interests, EU structural funds, private financing and accelerated approval of specific projects.²⁶¹

To pass from rethorics to implementation of ambitious projects, stable and credible funding is critical. The European Commission plays an important role in the economic development of Europe, especially with regard to investments in communications and infrastructure, but to attract foreign direct investments six participating countries (Croatia, Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) during the same Summit in September 2018 signed a letter of intent to create the Three Seas Investment Fund (TSF). The TSF should have become a financial vehicle of the community with a purely commercial purpose to help to attract foreign direct investments into Central Europe.²⁶² The overall infrastructure deficit of Central Europe was estimated at \$500 billion, and the role of private investors is vital for completing the goals. The TSF establishment was a momentous achievement in creating a supportive ecosystem of financial instruments. By acting as a group, the TSI Member States are overcoming the constraints they face when trying to raise capital individually and have presented themselves in a very attractive way for international private capital markets. Having their own money invested they demonstrated “determination, self-confidence and self-initiative and ingenuity to fulfill a

²⁵⁹ A. Kumar Sen, “Private sector support sought for Three Seas Initiative,” *Atlantic Council*, July 7, 2017, accessed December 16, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/private-sector-support-sought-for-three-seas-initiative/>.

²⁶⁰ For the full list of projects see: <https://projects.3seas.eu/report>.

²⁶¹ D. A. Wemer, “Rick Perry to Europe: energy security tantamount to national security,” *Atlantic Council*, September 18, 2018, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/rick-perry-to-europe-energy-security-tantamount-to-national-security>.

²⁶² The Fund began operating in 2019.

long-standing vision of an undivided Europe,”²⁶³ and the Three Seas Investment Fund appears to be an investment opportunity that will bring positive economic returns and make Europe and the Transatlantic Community further prosperous.

Common efforts of twelve European democracies and their view on their own deep potential is fairly commendable. But the TS Members alone will not be able to financially cover all of their development needs. Combining EU cohesion funds with capital of third countries is the key to bring new ventures to another level. And the U.S. is allegedly seen by Central Europe not just as a partner of the TSI but as a major financial participant too. Grabar-Kitarović, for example, at the Atlantic Council’s Global Forum on 7 July 2017, which followed the second TSI Summit, praised Donald Trump for his words of support to the program, however noted that he could more resolutely encourage American businesses to participate financially.²⁶⁴ In that way, the American government, while playing a role in the proliferation of a good image of the Initiative, could also get involved with its own capital more boldly.²⁶⁵

The United States seemingly is trying to meet expectations and to bring a greater level of support. At the first ever Business Forum (September 2018) a new US initiative was announced by the U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, the Partnership for Transatlantic Energy Cooperation (P-TEC). The new endeavor was tasked to create favorable conditions for investments in critical infrastructure with the participation of the European Commission and TSI countries, and seeking to attract US capital flows to cover financial gaps. As James L. Jones, Jr. said, US commitment, investment and energy leadership, and technology knowledge can leverage the Three Seas Initiative from theory to practice.²⁶⁶ Launching or bringing to the completion energy projects like the trans-Adriatic pipeline, the Krk LNG terminal, interconnectors Greece and Bulgaria, the

²⁶³ Michael R. Pompeo’s speech at Munich Security Conference, “The West is winning,” Munich, February 15, 2020, accessed December 12, 2021, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/the-west-is-winning/index.html>.

²⁶⁴ A. Kumar Sen, “Private sector support sought for Three Seas Initiative,” Atlantic Council, July 7, 2017, accessed December 16, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/private-sector-support-sought-for-three-seas-initiative/>.

²⁶⁵ F. Virág, “The Three Seas Initiative: The way forward”, *Atlantic Council*, November 7, 2018, accessed December 10, 2021,

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/energysource/the-three-seas-initiative-the-way-forward/>.

²⁶⁶ D. A. Wemer, “Rick Perry to Europe: energy security tantamount to national security,” *Atlantic Council*, September 18, 2018, accessed December 9, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/rick-perry-to-europe-energy-security-tantamount-to-national-security>.

Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary interconnector, and a number of offshore oil and gas projects, defined in the priorities list, will indicate the success of the closer US-CEE cooperation.²⁶⁷

Advancing energy infrastructure of the region has long-term economically beneficial implications for the United States, solidifying in the meantime its role in Central Europe. Not limiting the engagement of the U.S. into pipeline politics solely, Perry stipulated plans on “reawakening of nuclear energy in Europe,” specifically relaunch of nuclear power program in Poland and the Czech Republic, and underlined the focus of the P-TEC on placing renewable energy projects on the top of the agenda. In that way making projects more visible and attractive is supposed to create a confident and open environment for potential private investments as well as for large-scale multinational corporations’ capital.²⁶⁸

A year later the first P-TEC ministerial meeting in March 2019 was held in Houston, the U.S. Then in 2020 the second meeting took place in Lithuania and as previous one was chaired by the US Department of Energy and ambassadors of the Atlantic Council. That year became a turning point for turning discussions into real solutions. Secretary Perry proclaimed two new means to speed up the accomplishment of the projects: four ministerial working groups and a new E-TEAM (the Europe Technical Expert Advisory Mission) initiative.²⁶⁹ The two new vehicles are focused on a more feasible implementation of the partnership. The US has pledged to share its best practices. The E-TEAM, for example, was designed to leverage the expertise of Argonne National Laboratory, the U.S. Department of Energy science and engineering research center, and to assist with technical expertise: American experts will help to conduct a vulnerability assessment of energy systems, helping the policy makers and private sector to be better aware of what to prioritize. Having a more clear picture of the environment will open more business opportunities for all stakeholders and will create favorable conditions to catalyze investments.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry speech at the Three Seas Initiative Business Forum, Bucharest, September 18, 2018, accessed December 6, 2021, <https://ro.usembassy.gov/secretary-of-energy-rick-perry-at-the-three-seas-initiative-business-forum/>.

²⁶⁸ A. Konicki, “Partnership for Transatlantic Energy Cooperation (P-TEC),” *Polish American Congress*, July 31, 2019, accessed December 21, 2021, <http://www.pac1944.org/featured-stories/partnership-for-transatlantic-energy-cooperation-p-tec/>.

²⁶⁹ U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry speech at the 2nd P-TEC Meeting, Vilnius, October 7, 2019, accessed December 10, 2021, <https://lt.usembassy.gov/secretary-of-energy-rick-perrys-keynote-address-at-the-2nd-partnership-for-transatlantic-energy-cooperation-p-tec/>.

²⁷⁰ O. Khakova, “Transatlantic energy cooperation gains momentum at the second P-TEC ministerial,” *Atlantic Council*, October 10, 2019, accessed December 17, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/transatlantic-energy-cooperation-gains-momentum-at-the-second-p-tec-ministerial/>.

One important event preceded the 2020 Summit in Tallinn - the first major financial commitment was announced. At the Munich Security Conference (MSC) in February 2020 the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declared up to one billion dollars of financial support for the Initiative: “And as a brand new statement today of our support for sovereignty, prosperity, and energy independence of our European friends, today I want to announce that [...] we intend to provide up to \$1 billion in financing to Central and Eastern European countries of the Three Seas Initiative.”²⁷¹ The Three Seas Investment Fund was started with Poland’s contribution of € 200 million and much smaller donations from most of the other members. Thus, when the US money starts coming in, it will substantially accelerate the projects’ implementation process.²⁷² Stating its aim to intensify private sector interest in the energy field “to protect freedom and democracy around the world” the United States became the first country out of the Three Seas region to commit the financial assistance.

4. Building the North-South Energy Corridor

The released in 2018 48 priority interconnection projects had as a final goal the formation of the North-South infrastructure corridor in the region. It was divided according to three spheres of action, so they cover the energy, transport, and digital sectors. The energy sector so far has received the greatest attention: the inherited predominance of east-west gas pipelines across Europe and very limited alternatives contribute significantly to the continuous dependence of the Central and Eastern Member States on Russia. TSI countries have frequently expressed concerns about the Russian dominant supply position in the region, and so did the US. As the “Completing Europe” Report put it, the dependence of Central Europe not only jeopardizes the security of supply but insufficiently diversified gas markets and monopoly pricing pushes gas prices up compared to the western European market, which is more diversified and flexible. The critical want of overcoming a supply monopoly to reinforce Europe’s energy resilience came at the top of the agenda.

²⁷¹ Michael R. Pompeo’s speech at Munich Security Conference, “The West is winning”, Munich, February 15, 2020, accessed December 12, 2021, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/the-west-is-winning/index.html>.

²⁷² D. Morris, “The Three Seas Initiative: A European answer to China’s Belt and Road?”, *The Interpreter*, October 26, 2020, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/three-seas-initiative-european-answer-china-s-belt-and-road>.

Eight strategically important multilateral gas projects were defined by the TSI in 2018: GIPL gas pipeline (Poland-Lithuania), BRUA (Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria) and Eastring (Slovakia-Hungary-Romania-Bulgaria) gas pipelines, Romania-Hungary interconnector, Baltic Pipe (Norway-Denmark-Poland, Poland-Slovakia, and Poland-Ukraine gas interconnections), IAP gas pipeline (Croatia, Montenegro, Albania), and finally LNG terminal on the island of KRK (Croatia). These projects fit into the general European vision of integrating gas markets, but at the same time are difficult to evaluate from an economic point of view. Central and Eastern Europe are less densely populated than the Western, thereby low gas consumption in the region poses a highly probable risk that pipelines under construction will not be fully loaded and worn out. This risk in turn poses the difficulty of finding investment funding. On the other hand, the new connections make gas more available thus increasing the demand for it. Much like the EU energy and climate policies on ditching coal will raise the demand for gas as a cleaner alternative. In market terms, the new connections will allow the gas to move freely, which will improve the cohesion of the European energy market, reduce prices in Central and Eastern Europe, and minimize the difference in gas prices in individual countries. Additionally, in security terms, the implementation of the planned gas pipelines will enable the countries of the TSI to achieve a decent level of supply diversification.²⁷³

Yet, from a geopolitical perspective, things are not straightforward. The fact that the Three Seas Initiative was created shortly after the annexation of Crimea by Russia suggests that the TSI member states not only seek to overcome the legacy of the communist era and “catch up” the rest of Europe economically, but also that many of them are driven to become an alternative trading block that could reduce dependence on Russia. However, even within this “union in a union” some governments of individual member countries have different attitudes towards the Russian Federation.

For instance, Hungary under the ministry of Viktor Orbán is much less hostile to Moscow than is Poland under Andrzej Duda. And while on paper the TSI aims to develop the entire geographic area of its member states, key players such as Poland have tried to

²⁷³ P. Musialek, “The Three Seas Initiative: Natural Gas in Central European Foreign Policy”, *Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale*, February 21, 2020, accessed December 1, 2021, <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/three-seas-initiative-natural-gas-central-european-foreign-policy-25128>.

turn a solo favoring local projects, as, for example, the agreement to tie the Baltics region into Poland's electrical grid so that they will no longer rely on Russian grid.²⁷⁴

With other local initiatives such as the LNG terminal in Świnoujście and the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline Poland attempts to play a role of a gas hub and a gas exporter to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, rigorously opposing the growing share of Russian gas in Europe. The status of a transit state indeed entails numerous advantages, revenues of the transmission network operator among them. That is why the Czech Republic, in contrast, sees no problems in cooperation with Gazprom and as the most beneficial gas corridor considers the one that crosses Germany through the Republic to other European countries.

As many other projects of the list, those on gas cooperation have been prioritized long before 2015 when the Initiative was established. The liquefied natural gas (LNG) infrastructure projects have mostly been in the focus: the new gas corridor between the LNG terminal in Świnoujście, Poland, and the LNG terminal of Krk Island, Croatia, was supposed to ensure a North-South energy route. Duplication of most of the previously defined projects is not strange though. As has already been said, countries acting alone have been struggling to raise the status of projects and to find investments that could unlock the stalemate of the construction process. Secure energy systems are the driving force of dynamic and integrated Europe. Said this, the differentiated assessment of imported volumes of Russian gas and of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline did not become severe enough to slow down cooperation in the gas sector, which is one of the most promising fields where the Three Seas can contribute positively.

Built on the local governments' efforts, The Initiative aims to expand them and to reduce the strategic risks of Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2, likewise similar risks associated with more southern Russian gas pipelines. Fortunately, the governments of some of the Three Seas countries (especially Lithuania, Poland, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria) have been already working on their own to mitigate their underdeveloped gas infrastructure.²⁷⁵ To boost imports from Arab States, Scandinavia, and the US, the marine LNG terminal in Poland was completed in 2016 (and is currently growing in its capacity). Also a new gas pipeline from Norway to Poland (Baltic Pipe, that enjoyed EU backing, due

²⁷⁴ S. Morgan, "EU, Baltics, Poland target Russia grid separation by 2025," *Euractiv*, January 1, 2021, accessed December 12, 2021,

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/electricity/news/eu-baltics-poland-target-russia-grid-separation-by-2025/>.

²⁷⁵ Also the Republic of Poland –Slovak Republic Interconnection, a part of North-South Gas Interconnections Corridor, has been designed and since 2019 is under the construction process.

to be completed in 2022).²⁷⁶ The Northern part of a new CEE gas corridor, hence, has been brought to a substantial operational level. Recently the Southern countries have joined the success too. The Krk terminal in Croatia was successfully implemented in December 2021.²⁷⁷

The LNG project on Krk Island in Croatia is highly meaningful in many respects. With North-South pipelines the terminal is planned to be connected to existing terminals in Lithuania and Poland. Moreover, the Croatian terminal is compatible with another significant multilateral gas project, the Ionic Adriatic pipeline (IAP) - the Krk terminal could provide a source of gas for the IAP.²⁷⁸ This new energy infrastructure would substantially weaken Russian political leverage in the region. In the same way, particularly important is the Polish-Lithuanian gas interconnector (GIPL) project. The Baltic grid is still under strong Russian control, and the GIPL would allow the integration of isolated Baltic gas markets into Continental Europe, linking them to North-South priority corridors and contributing to the regional and European security of gas supply.

The Krk and GIPL projects, determined in 2018 among the priority ones, so far are the only two in the framework of the TSI which have been finished since then.²⁷⁹ Another and the only relevant success to mention, is the BRUA gas pipeline. It was designed to bypass Ukraine and enhance the bidirectional Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria gas transmission corridor. The first phase - the development of the pipeline and gas compression stations on the territory of Romania - was successfully implemented in October 2020.

The other five gas projects are still under the planning phase. And under the investment search stage. Four years passed until the twelve countries with a new format as a common voice were able to truly engage the US in the partnership. In December 2020, two months after Secretary Pompeo's announcement of \$1 billion for the Three Seas Fund, the United States proved their commitment to the Initiative, and the first investment of 300 million dollars, approved by the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation

²⁷⁶ The Baltic Pipe Project includes Norway-Denmark-Poland, Poland-Slovakia, and Poland-Ukraine gas interconnections. It aims to connect Poland with the Norwegian Continental shelf. Project involves building of new infrastructure and upgrading of existing one and will be one of the key sources of natural gas for the Baltic Sea region markets.

²⁷⁷ "Croatia kicks off LNG terminal in north Adriatic", *Euractiv*, 01.01.2021, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/croatia-kicks-off-lng-terminal-in-north-adriatic/>.

²⁷⁸ The IAP project is supposed to connect Croatia's existing gas transmission system and the Republic of Albania. It should become a new energy corridor for the Western Balkans within the Southern Gas Corridor - a new route for natural gas supplies from the Middle East and Caspian region. Then from Croatia bidirectional energy flow will be also possible across the entire TSI region.

²⁷⁹ The GIPL line is ready and will be put into operation in May 2022.

(DFC), came. The investment was specifically addressed to operationalize “projects focused on energy security.”²⁸⁰

Besides the financial support that has arrived just recently, during these years the US has been active in supporting the CEE projects in terms of direct shipments of LNG to newly opened terminals. Thanks to a set of agreements between Poland and US companies, Poland increased its imports between 2017 and 2020 by over 1000%.²⁸¹ The US thus constituted the major LNG importer to Poland and to Europe as a whole.²⁸² In 2021, the Croatian newly inaugurated Krk terminal has actively started receiving US cargos too.²⁸³ Thanks to these supplies, Eastern European states are steadily reducing the volume of natural gas imports from Russia. Although Russian natural gas will remain part of the European energy portfolio, increasing the diversity of sources with US LNG is a net positive for the region.

²⁸⁰ “DFC Approves Over 2.1 Billion in New Investments for Global Development,” *U.S. International Development Finance Corporation*, December 10, 2020, accessed January 18, 2022, <https://www.dfc.gov/media/press-releases/dfc-approves-over-21-billion-new-investments-global-development>

²⁸¹ US Energy Information Administration, *U.S. Natural Gas Exports and Re-Exports by Country 2017-2020*, Washington, December 30, 2021, accessed January 20, 2022, https://www.eia.gov/dnav/ng/ng_move_expc_s1_a.htm.

²⁸² European Commission, *Quarterly Report on European Gas Markets*, Market Observatory for Energy, vol. 14 (2), Brussels, Summer 2021, accessed January 20, 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/default/files/quarterly_report_on_european_gas_markets_q2_2021_final.pdf.

²⁸³ P. Martin, “Croatia takes third LNG cargo from US’ Freeport,” *Argus Media*, May 14, 2021, accessed January 20, 2022, <https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news/2215197-croatia-takes-third-lng-cargo-from-us-freeport>.

CONCLUSION

The concept of energy security of supply has various interpretations and approaches, making its definition elusive. Some explain the security of supply from an economic point of view, others emphasize its political and strategic side. However, in an interconnected world economic and so-called political interpretation became two sides of the same coin, and both are necessary to explain the problems and solutions related to energy security in the EU. Likewise, due to new emerging global challenges energy security cannot be separated from environmental considerations.

Europe has discovered that there is no easy path to energy security. As the 27 Member States of the European Union have their own priorities and interests, progress towards a common approach to energy issues has been slow. Unfortunately, it took the gas crisis of 2006 and its severe consequences, to bring Member states of the EU to the negotiating table.

That year Russia's growing outward assertiveness became evident for the first time. Subsequently in the following years, in August 2008 after the Russian invasion of Georgia, a dispute with Ukraine over transit prices and taxes that arose in December 2008 - January 2009 and led to the suspension of supplies to several Eastern European countries, worsened the problem. Reliance on Russia as a dominant energy provider became highly questionable and reinvigorated European discussions on how to fulfill the states' energy needs and protect their sovereignty.

Energy sits at the nexus of security and economic development. Safe and uninterrupted access to energy is crucial to every aspect of the national economy and enables almost all military functions to be performed. Throughout history, energy has been an important driver of conflicts and a strategic factor in hostilities, but in the 21st century, the energy intensity of conflict increased. In recent years, as Russia deployed a number of hybrid threats to critical infrastructure and resources, it highlighted the effects of energy insecurity and NATO states' vulnerability to energy issues.

In recognition of this, several of the Alliance's Members have pushed NATO to reassess its role in relation to energy security. After some years of preceding debates, at the April 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, an agreement was reached that NATO should commit itself to maintain and protecting critical energy infrastructure, including maritime surveillance.

While the definition of compatible roles for NATO and the European Union is still under development, one aspect became obvious: military capabilities can be a valuable asset in addressing some individual and specific threats to energy supply, but they will have a limited capacity to deal with broader spectrum of problems relating to energy security. Thus, the discussions within NATO on energy security have refrained from referring to Article 5, which obliges members to provide military support to other members in the event of an attack, to a series of dialogues to establish a better understanding of the respective roles of the armed forces and the specific responsibilities of each in addressing energy security issues.

As the main path to strengthen its energy position Europe has defined the diversification of sources and suppliers. To this end, the process of internal market integration has been fostered, with relevantly successful results though. As Pierre Noel has acutely noted: “What emerges in Europe is a patchwork of tightly regulated, interconnected national gas systems governed by ever more detailed and complex rules that Brussels then wants to harmonize.”²⁸⁴ The efforts are still incomplete - natural gas cannot yet flow freely across the European pipeline system, even from Spain to France, gas commoditization and price pressure from spot prices have not yet reached the CEE countries, and the Member states still put at the first front their own interests: some have sought to extract themselves²⁸⁵ from long-term natural gas contracts with Russia, while others have deepened trade ties²⁸⁶ - blocking union-wide energy reform efforts and increasing exposure to market volatility. Further disagreements over EU climate policy²⁸⁷ and Gazprom’s Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline have deepened the complexity of addressing energy security and have undermined the long-term goals.

The European Commission has tried to help move the progress by strengthening the engagement of another major energy leading country, namely the United States, into the

²⁸⁴ P. Noel, *European Gas Supply Security: Unfinished Business*, Cambridge, University of Cambridge, 2013, p. 4.

²⁸⁵ “UPDATE 1-Poland's PGNiG tells Gazprom it plans to end gas supply deal in 2022,” *Reuters*, November 15, 2019, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/pgnig-gazprom/update-1-polands-pgnig-tells-gazprom-it-plans-to-end-gas-supply-deal-in-2022-idUSL8N27V469>.

²⁸⁶ S. Elliott, “Russia's Gazprom Export begins gas supply to OMV in Germany under long-term deal,” *Spg Global*, December 2, 2020, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.spglobal.com/platts/en/market-insights/latest-news/natural-gas/120220-russias-gazprom-export-begins-gas-supply-to-omv-in-germany-under-long-term-deal>.

²⁸⁷ J. Strupczewski and G. Baczynska, “EU leaves Poland out of 2050 climate deal after standoff,” *Reuters*, December 12, 2019, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-climate-change-eu/eu-leaves-poland-out-of-2050-climate-deal-after-standoff-idUSKBN1YG01I>.

process of building a more energy resilient EU. The EU-US Energy Council became the main diplomatic instrument established. But as soon as it began to gain force, the cooperation stalled. The shift in government of the U.S. entailed changes for EU - US relations in all spheres. Energy was not an exclusion. Cooperation took a different form and turned into a business approach, with direct gas sales from the US to another side of the Atlantic becoming a priority.

This tenuous link remained almost the only common ground for cooperation between the two parties due to a “green” reason. The European Union took a solid course on a decarbonized future and a huge role was assigned to LNG imports. As European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen once wrote, “Gas will have a role to play in the transition towards a carbon-neutral economy in particular making full use of the potential of affordable liquified natural gas.”²⁸⁸ This squared perfectly into the U.S. “energy dominance” vision of the former President Trump.

Few years before Trump’s “energy dominance” course but in the context of already rapidly escalating US LNG production, the Central and Eastern European states, who were the most active in opposing further Russian occupation of European gas markets, took initiative in their hands and united in the Three Seas project aimed to consolidate the region connectivity, with a particular focus on energy infrastructure and LNG assets.

The Three Seas Initiative has become a promising development for the CEE countries. Potentially, deployment of the projects prioritized by the twelve countries can meet the demand of these energy-intensive economies, realigning meanwhile prices for natural gas with the rest of Europe. However, after five years since the Initiative has been launched, the progress in the region is not monolithic yet.

While Poland became one of the success stories in the CEE region with its LNG terminal and investments to diversify pipelines, several CEE countries, Bulgaria for example, are still lacking alternative natural gas routes. Internal factors such as the regulatory environment are one of the biggest factors impeding the progress in the region. Romania is exemplifying precisely that. Unfavorable regulations - an offshore law and new taxes imposed by the Romanian government on the energy industry, - deprive potential investors of an energy incentive and can affect the development of oil and gas extraction in

²⁸⁸ The European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Letter to the Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson, Brussels, December 1, 2019, page 5, accessed February 5, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/sites/default/files/commissioner_mission_letters/mission-letter-kadri-simson_en.pdf.

the Black Sea. ExxonMobil is, for example, in the process of pulling out from the Neptun Deep offshore gas project in the Black Sea.²⁸⁹

The external terms are also having a strong influence on the twelve CEE countries. At the beginning of the TSI, the project faced heavy opposition from several other European members. Berlin took some time to get involved with the TSI. Just recently in 2019, *Deutsche Welle* described the country's initial stance as "disinterest verging on distrust."²⁹⁰ Berlin has its own energy ambitions and German partnership with Russia on a pipeline project, Nord Stream 2, which bypasses the CEE countries, does not correspond to the Eastern desired push for connectivity. Without the full support of the EU and its Member states, the Initiative does not have bright prospects.

The US interest in the CEE venture is also highly disputable and ambiguous. Although the Initiative provides a strong foundation for American LNG into the region and the United States has been moving the project forward, both signing contracts to ship LNG to new-built terminals and financially, the U.S. is hardly driven by generous intentions to make CEE and the Union more energy independent and prosperous.

The Initiative is a "catalyst for the cohesion and convergence of the EU and for the strengthening of the transatlantic link," declared the then president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, speaking at a TSI summit in 2018. The transatlantic link indeed has been strengthened during the TSI summits - this format remained the sole one to survive through years and government changes both in the U.S. and in Europe. The US delegation so far attended every TSI summit as an observer. But, as Ian Brzezinski and James Jay Carafano formulated writing in *The National Interest*, for the United States the TSI gives "an opportunity to tangibly help some of its closest allies help themselves, counter malign Russian and Chinese influence in Central Europe, and position the US Treasury for a healthy return on investment."²⁹¹ To put it differently, in exchange for its financial and political backing, America will be making the developing region more dependent on its own technologies and energy supply. Spreading its technology and supplying liquified natural gas (LNG) to allow CEE countries to diversify their energy

²⁸⁹ "Media: Exxon wants to pull out of Romanian offshore gas project," *Romania Insider*, July 15, 2019, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.romania-insider.com/exxon-pull-outromanian-offshore-gas-project>.

²⁹⁰ "Berlin takes a new approach to the Three Seas Initiative," *Deutsche Welle*, June 5, 2019, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/berlin-takes-a-new-approach-to-the-three-seas-initiative/a-49076663>.

²⁹¹ I. Brzezinski and J. J. Carafano, "America Can Unleash Central Europe's True Potential," *The National Interest*, January 5, 2020, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/america-can-unleash-central-europes-true-potential-110621>.

sources, the United States may hope to squeeze the region for its own needs, as well as make it more strategically predictable.

One more crucial detail worth noting is the price of the new alternative fuel. The US LNG is relatively more expensive compared to pipeline gas.²⁹² And while in the Three Seas Initiative the United States has an opportunity to build export markets for export, the recent shipments headed to Asia, as it outbided European buyers, leaving European import terminals empty and looming a new energy crisis at the continent.

Nearly two decades spent in attempts to mitigate Europe's rigidities, to diversify availability of sources and to boost its energy flexibility to meet supply shortfalls. Efforts have proved to be difficult - energy security remains a concern. The picture is mixed one, there are both positive and negative trends. On the one hand, the European Union has expanded the development of unconventional gas facilities and terminals to increase supply flexibility; plus, the growth in the use of renewable energy sources offers the EU the opportunity to develop its own clean energy sources in the long term. On the other hand, the decline in domestic oil and gas production means that in the short and medium term Europe will depend more than ever on fossil fuel imports, and this is currently being reflected with the new emergency situation.

The evolution of the energy situation of the EU bloc shows that this is a long-term approach and concrete measures are very difficult to implement - the fact that can be seen from the analysis of the energy situation of the EU between 2008 and 2020.

²⁹² "Trump Says Europe to Buy Boatloads of U.S. LNG. Don't Bet on it," *Bloomberg*, July 26, 2018, accessed February 5, 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-26/europe-is-likely-to-disappoint-trump-as-big-buyer-of-u-s-lng>.

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