

# Promising, or Problematic Pipeline Partnerships?

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On Russia, Turkey and the EU's quest for improving its  
energy security

Arthur Thijmen van 't Spijker

S1575457

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First reader: dr. M.E.L. David

Second reader: dr. D.M. Oude Nijhuis



Universiteit  
Leiden

## Abstract

The European Union has identified a lack of energy supply security. In terms of importing natural gas, the EU is highly dependent on Russia, an energy partner deemed as unreliable by the EU due to multiple reasons. Therefore, the EU has stated the objective of improving its energy security, most notably through diversification of energy supply. As a solution, the EU is looking at Turkey as an energy transit partner to reduce dependency on Russia. But is Turkey a viable solution to the EU's objective of gaining energy security through diversification of energy supply? The literature has yet to pay sufficient attention to the basis political principles which have to be met by the EU's new energy partner. This thesis uses securitization theory and a discourse analysis focused on 'frames' to demonstrate that the EU acknowledges its threat related to energy security and pushes Turkey forward as their new energy partner. Consequently, this research fills the gap in the literature by predominantly focusing on political arguments related to Turkey's (un)stability and (un)reliability to conclude that by hailing Turkey as their new energy partner, the EU risks falling into the trap of not learning lessons from the past: Turkey's reliability might be (come) just as problematic as Russia's.

# Table of Contents

Abstract ..... 2

Introduction ..... 4

Chapter 1 Literature Review: On the EU’s search for energy security ..... 7

Chapter 2 Foundations: Theory, Methodology & Methods ..... 12

Chapter 3 EU energy security strategy: diversification of energy supply ..... 18

Chapter 4 EU energy partners: an analysis of Russia and Turkey ..... 21

Chapter 5 Framing Russia, framing Turkey ..... 28

Chapter 6 Turkey: a stable and reliable energy partner? ..... 36

Conclusion ..... 41

Bibliography ..... 44

## Introduction

Energy is key for our security. We face today in Europe the urgent need to strengthen our resilience to supply disruptions. The situation in Ukraine has highlighted our vulnerabilities and the need to improve security of supply. Diversification of routes and suppliers is key in order not to be at the mercy of individual suppliers. Let us not forget that there is no security without energy security.”  
Miguel Arias Cañete, 17 November 2014<sup>1</sup>

The availability of energy is crucial for any society to function. Assuring that supply and distribution of energy resources are safeguarded forms a top priority for any country. As the last sentence of the above statement of European Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Cañete suggests, a suspension of energy supply is seen as an existential threat by the European Commission, especially if the main artery for energy supply is controlled by a foreign country whose reliability for supply is at least questionable. How is this undesirable dependency to be overcome? This is the puzzle the European Union is trying to solve and this forms the subject of this thesis: the overarching research area is about energy security for the European Union; the research topic is the (un)reliability of Russia and the strategy of diversification of energy supply and, lastly, the research question focuses on the viability of Turkey as the EU’s new energy partner through diversification.

In the *European Energy Security Strategy*, drafted in May 2014, the European Commission raised their concern about the European energy mix and therefore, its energy security. Research showed that 53% of the energy resources consumed in the European Union are imported, with crude oil (almost 90%) on top, followed by natural gas (66%) and solid fuels (42%).<sup>2</sup> Russia stands out as the EU’s main supplier for all three of them, with the level of 39% for natural gas being the highest. Moreover, six member states rely solely on Russia for their imports of natural gas, while for half of these countries natural gas forms a quarter of their total energy mix.<sup>3</sup> In other words, natural gas forms a crucial part of the total energy mix of the European Union and the majority of it is being imported from Russia.

The risks of relying heavily on a single energy supplier are obvious: to some extent, the supplier has leverage over the consumer. Intentional and unintentional disruptions may have detrimental effects for the consumer, which leads to the conclusion that the supplier is able to exert political leverage. The European Union experienced two episodes of unintentional gas disruptions due to disputes between Russia and Ukraine in 2006 and 2009, while the possibility of intentional gas disruptions – energy being used as a political weapon - may have increased due to the recent deterioration in EU-Russian relations, most notably due to confrontational approaches towards the Ukraine crisis, which started in 2014. In sum, from the EU’s point of view, Russia lacks reliability.

Since the two episodes of gas disruptions therefore, the issue of energy security has figured more prominently on the EU’s agenda and it was designated as one of the top priorities for the Juncker Commission

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<sup>1</sup> Cañete, M.A., Speech at ‘Conference on EU Energy Policy and Competitiveness’, as found on: European Commission Press Release Database. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-1920\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-1920_en.htm), accessed 16 March 2016.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) 2.

<sup>3</sup> European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) 2-3.

which took office in 2014. The European Commission has taken the lead in the creation of an Energy Union, with the primary goal of ‘giving EU consumers – households and businesses – secure, sustainable, competitive and affordable energy’, and relying on each other instead of on external partners, based on ‘solidarity and trust’.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the EU has stated the objective of solving the problematic lack of energy security. Therefore, the EU wishes to mitigate its energy dependency on Russia through various ways, one of which is the topic of this thesis: the diversification of energy supply.

Diversification of energy supply essentially means that other ‘energy partners’ than Russia should be sought and other routes should be explored, in order to secure Europe’s energy supply. Entering into partnerships with reliable transit states, as much as with reliable energy suppliers, forms an important part of this diversification strategy. In this research, the main focus is on natural gas, as it is consumed in large amounts in the EU, dependency levels on Russia are highest, while diversification is rather difficult, given the fact that expensive, long term projects for pipeline infrastructure are necessary to facilitate supply. In other words, the problem of a lack of energy security is, in the context of natural gas particularly, very much alive.

Having established diversification of energy as an important topic within the wider area of EU energy security, this thesis focuses on one of the means employed by the EU to increase its security of energy supply: Turkey. Turkey has the potential of functioning as the ideal energy transit hub, as it is situated between the EU (consumers) and the Caspian countries holding large volumes of natural gas resources, such as Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan (producers). Despite this geographical advantage and other reasons to believe that Turkey would constitute a suitable energy partner for the European Union, there are also numerous drawbacks to consider. As the EU initiated the diversification strategy due to the fact that it deemed Russia to be politically unreliable as an energy supplier, this begs the question whether a partnership with Turkey would be undermined by the same reliability issues the EU is currently experiencing with Russia.

Turkey witnesses the increasingly authoritarian and capricious leadership of President Erdoğan and the deteriorating state of democratic principles with regard to press freedom. Moreover, this is combined with political and societal polarization and increasing violence between the Turkish state and several groups on Turkish territory. Additionally, creating a viable framework for EU-Turkey cooperation might be more difficult than it seems, as they share a long legacy of fruitless negotiations with regard to Turkey’s candidacy for membership of the EU. Also, the so-called ‘refugee-deal’ which was struck between the European Union and Turkey, in order to stem the influx of Syrian refugees entering the Schengen-area, revealed that the Turkish leadership is capable and willing of using the political leverage it obtained through the deal to pressurize the EU to the benefit of their own interests. In sum, there certainly are some arguments in favour of an EU-Turkey partnership in energy affairs, but certain negative aspects are not to be neglected, if the EU does not wish to invite new problems to their energy agenda.

Within the context of the wider research area of the EU’s energy security and the narrower topic of the diversification of energy supply, the specific research question of this thesis is as follows: is Turkey a viable solution to the EU’s objective of gaining energy security through diversification of energy supply? The underlying assumptions are based upon the academic literature on EU energy security, Russia and diversification, which suggests that the perceived unreliability of Russia is mainly based on political issues.<sup>5</sup> For the EU, the reliability

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<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, 2.

<sup>5</sup> This will be further elaborated upon in the literature review. See for example: Neuman, M., ‘EU-Russian Energy Relations after the 2004-2007 EU Enlargement: An EU perspective’, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 18:3 (2010); Feklyunina V., ‘The Great

of new energy partners should therefore be considered a top priority. Despite this clear notion, the academic debate on Turkey as a reliable partner to the benefit of EU's energy security has yet to receive sufficient attention, as much of the literature focuses on capacity issues and/or issues concerning Turkey's pending accession process. This thesis intends to fill this academic gap by focusing mainly on the (potential) reliability of Turkey as the EU's new energy partner.

In order to answer the research question, the following outline for analysis will be maintained. In the first chapter after the introduction, the literature review will a) review the debate on EU energy security; b) the strategy of diversification; c) and on Turkey's role in this respect. Most importantly, it will present the gap this thesis intends to fill. The theoretical foundation, methodological considerations and the research method of choice will be outlined in the second chapter. The social-constructivist theory of securitization will serve as the theoretical basis. Securitization theory was created by the 'Copenhagen School' and can be explained as the process of an escalation of an often already politicized issue to an existential threat through discourse. A specific type of discourse analysis, 'framing', serves as the primary research method and will be executed in the empirical analyses in the fifth and sixth chapter.

The third chapter gives an introduction to the rationale behind current developments in the EU's strategy for improving its energy security and elaborates on diversification as one of its central components. In the fourth chapter, an overview will be given of EU energy relations with the two EU energy partners in focus in this thesis: Russia and Turkey. Essential elements within this chapter include the reasons why the EU seeks to diversify its natural gas supply away from Russia and why the EU instead looks at Turkey as a new energy partner. In this respect, the EU is not seeking to replace Russia with Turkey, which is virtually impossible given the current trade volumes and infrastructure, but instead focuses on attracting energy supply through alternative energy partners, like Turkey.

In the fifth chapter, a 'framing' analysis is conducted in order to establish how the European Commission constructs images of the energy relations between the EU and Russia on the one hand, and between the EU and Turkey on the other. Documentation published by the Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER) between 2006 and 2016 will be analysed, in order to discern similarities and differences between Russia and Turkey in the use of four frames – security, economic, environmental and political – by the European Commission and to analyse whether and how the European Commission puts forward Turkey as an energy security partner. In the final and sixth chapter, the desirability of a proposed energy partnership between the EU and Turkey is tested against the recent internal occurrences in Turkey and the external developments in EU-Turkey relations.

In the conclusion, an overview of the main findings and a definitive answer to the research question based upon the findings of this research will be given. It will be argued that the stated objective of gaining energy security through diversification of energy supply and the solution, which is an energy partnership with Turkey, do not align, mainly due to the fact that evidence from Turkey suggests it may well suffer from the same reliability issues towards the EU as Russia.

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Diversification Game: Russia's Vision of the European Union's Energy Projects in the Shared Neighbourhood', *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 4:2 (2008) 130-148; 130-1.

## Chapter 1 Literature Review: On the EU's search for energy security

The introduction outlined what the subject and scope of this research is, identifying the key debates and the contribution of this thesis in respects of those debates. This literature review identifies the existing gap in the literature on the strategy of diversification within the EU's objective to improve its energy security. First, an overview of the debate on EU energy security will be given. In the second part, the literature on the strategy of diversification within EU energy security and the role Turkey could play in this respect is analysed. In this section, I will argue that while many scholars have aptly shaped the debate and many valuable insights have been provided, lacunae still exist. Therefore, I will lastly outline why this research adds to the existing literature on EU energy security, Turkey and the diversification strategy.

### 1.1 Debates on EU energy security

What is meant by 'EU energy security?' For the EU, energy security revolves around the notion that member states have secured sufficient levels of energy sources for the benefit of their own prosperity. The EU's long search for energy security has resulted in a wide array of academic contributions on this topic. This world of literature can be categorised into several areas, depending on the issue focused upon. Dyer & Trombetta have aptly argued in this respect that discourse on 'energy security' itself consists of a multitude of political, economic, environmental and human security considerations.<sup>6</sup>

Broadly speaking, there are two schools in the literature to distinguish: those who focus on the EU's internal issues - the member states maintaining varying interests and concerns - and those who aim at the EU's external issues on energy security, meaning its relations with energy partners. In this research, the literature on both aspects is valuable. A review of the scholarly work has revealed that the majority of scholars focus on political aspects and argue, in broad terms, that both internally and externally the politics of securing energy have proved to be the major obstacle for the EU in achieving progress – internally with regard to trying to bring together the various interests of the 28 member states, externally with regard to the difficulty of establishing sustainable partnerships with external suppliers, mainly Russia, to guarantee a secure supply of energy. This will be demonstrated underneath.

The difficulties between the EU member states to align their interests and concerns on energy policy has been elaborated upon by Correljé & van der Linde, Braun and Neuman, amongst others. The “internal dichotomy” between the member states consists of a divide between the Western (old) and Eastern (new) European countries, as Correljé & van der Linde and Braun argued.<sup>7</sup> Although energy policy acquired a legal position through the Lisbon Treaty, energy remained 'business as usual', according to Braun, meaning that EU-coordinated action on energy security would not materialize soon.<sup>8</sup> These internal differences have led to differing preferences with regard to the external dimension of energy security as well, especially with regard to the choice of energy partners. Diverging views on (energy) relations with the EU's most important energy partner, Russia, form the biggest stumbling block for any common energy policy, since for some countries, economic consequences stand lower in hierarchy than political (geostrategic) considerations, meaning that especially the former Soviet satellite states are

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<sup>6</sup> Dyer, H., & Trombetta, M.J., *International Handbook of Energy Security* (Cheltenham 2013) 13.

<sup>7</sup> Neuman, M., 'EU-Russian Energy Relations after the 2004-2007 EU Enlargement: An EU perspective', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 18:3 (2010) 341-6; Correljé, A., van der Linde, C., 'Energy Supply Security and geopolitics: a European perspective', *Energy Policy* 34 (2006) 532-543.

<sup>8</sup> Braun, 'EU Energy Policy under the Treaty of Lisbon Rules: Between a new policy and business as usual', *EPIN Working Paper No.31* (2011) 8-9.

willing to sacrifice some economic interests in return for less dependence on Russia, while others prefer to continue their business as usual.<sup>9</sup> An important addition to this side of the debate has been the analysis of Russia using energy as “the instrument of an effective *Realpolitik*”, which has been argued for instance by Wood and relates to Russia’s use of energy as a political weapon.<sup>10</sup> In combination with the episodes of gas supply disruptions, Russia has been deemed an unreliable energy partner and a threat to EU energy security - in turn, this has had its effect on the EU’s energy security strategy. These conclusions are of great importance for this research, since they underline that politics and geo-strategy indeed form crucial components in the EU’s internal and external policy on energy security. This research builds upon these primary notions, which will be further explained below.

Next to the scholarly work mainly directed to political arguments, economic arguments in energy security are brought forward in the debate as well, for example by scholars who wish to adopt a more ‘comprehensive’ approach. These accounts reject overemphasizing political arguments and point to the importance of economic cooperation between the EU and Russia as favourable to energy security. This is demonstrated for instance by Nikolaj Kaveshnikov<sup>11</sup>, but the importance of balancing various (political and economic) arguments in energy security research has also been argued by the already mentioned Dyer & Trombetta.<sup>12</sup> In the current research, the framing analysis in chapter 3 of energy agreements between the EU and Russia supports the importance of economic cooperation on energy and therefore underlines a comprehensive approach. However, my research points out that political arguments play a much more important role in the EU’s *strategy* on energy security than the economic arguments.

Within the area of EU energy security, as already underlined, a prime topic of existing research is the EU’s strategy of diversification of energy supply. This strategy is aimed towards mitigating dependency on Russia, by constructing energy partnership with alternative partners to secure alternative supply of energy. In terms of research design, this thesis fits with the political discourse analysis of Kratochvíl & Tichý on ‘dominant interpretations of the EU-Russian energy relations’. They identify three key concepts within which discussions on the question of energy security takes place: integration, liberalization and diversification. They conclude first that although both parties use the same ‘themes’ in their discourses, their interpretation differs greatly, most notably on diversification: the EU maintains that diversification should take place vis-à-vis the country of origin, while Russia upholds that not the supplier state but certain transit countries pose the problem.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the authors found that the discourse on integration of EU and Russian energy policies is dominant, instead of diversification and liberalization. Therefore, they also conclude that the alleged securitization of energy policy is ‘highly exaggerated’, since security is not the dominant ‘frame’ within which discourse on energy relations with Russia is being conveyed.<sup>14</sup> Kratochvíl and Tichý’s research shows the suitability of using discourse analysis and securitization theory together to assess the communication of relations between the EU and an external energy partner. Although my research has a different focus, as is it directed to both Russia and Turkey, it builds upon the same connection of theory and methods to identify how, in a politicized/securitized issue such as energy security,

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<sup>9</sup> De Jong J., & Van der Linde, C., ‘EU Energy Policy in a supply-constrained world’, *European Policy Analysis* 11 (2008) 1-9; 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> Wood, S., ‘Europe’s Energy Politics’, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 18:3 (2010) 307-322; 313-4.

<sup>11</sup> Kaveshnikov, N., ‘The Issue of Energy Security in Relations between Russia and the European Union’, *European Security* 19:4 (2010) 585-605; 601-2.

<sup>12</sup> Dyer, H., & Trombetta, M.J., *International Handbook of Energy Security* (Cheltenham 2013) 13.

<sup>13</sup> Kratochvíl P., & Tichý L., ‘EU and Russian discourse on energy relations’, *Energy Policy* 56 (2013) 391-406; 394-6.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, 391, 395-6.



the discourse used by the central actors is crucial in identifying how constructed images of energy partners come to life and how discourse can reveal the intentions and preoccupations of policy makers.

In the previous section, an overview was given of the academic debate on EU energy security, which showed the dominance of political arguments and from which several arguments were discerned as useful principles and guidelines for this research. This thesis now turns to the EU's objective to reduce its vulnerability in energy supply due to its heavy reliance on Russia, by engaging in energy relations with *other* energy partners, such as Turkey.

### 1.2 Turkey's role in EU energy policy

The previous section showed the challenges associated with the EU's reliance on Russia for its energy supply, including the concerns of certain (central and eastern) European member states about Russia's unreliability. The insights of that literature, along with the EU's own diversification strategy, have seen the emergence of more scholarly work and debate about Turkey's role in the EU energy security domain. Sources here are scarcer, yet the debate is lively.

A review of the debate reveals that the majority of the scholars engaged in this subject point to the two-sided nature of an EU-Turkey partnership in the context of the EU's diversification strategy: on the one hand, they underline the potential of the partnership, on the other they foresee considerable obstacles as well. The various academic works of Barysch, Müftüler-Baç & Başkan, Koranyi & Sartori and Tekin & Williams serve as examples of this notion. Barysch vividly advocated Turkey's potential as an energy corridor in 2007. She reckoned it to be beneficial for both sides: Europe would fulfil its objective for diversification of energy supply, while Turkey would not only benefit financially through transit fees, but would also "be able to prove that it is an indispensable partner for, and eventually part of, the European Union".<sup>15</sup> Müftüler-Baç & Başkan followed this line of reasoning and added that a critical element in this respect is Russia: as long as energy dependency on Russia is high and its unreliability is still felt in the EU, there will be arguments in favour of Turkey and the EU forming a partnership in the context of diversification of energy supply routes for the EU.<sup>16</sup> An important element in the debate on EU-Turkey energy cooperation is the problematic connection between setting up a new partnership and Turkey's pending accession process. For instance, Koranyi & Sartori and Tekin & Williams have pointed to this adequately, with a slightly different focus between them. The former concluded that as long as Turkey maintains its stance of negotiating an energy partnership only within the difficult context of accession and not, as proposed by the EU, within the context of the Energy Community, progress on energy cooperation will be hard to achieve<sup>17</sup>, while the latter assessed that energy cooperation and the accession process hold each other hostage: as long as energy cooperation is being connected to the accession process, Turkish opportunism is confronted with European reluctance.<sup>18</sup>

The previous section showed that a driving force behind the EU's strategy on energy security is the need to reduce dependency on Russia due to issues of reliability. The debate therefore focuses predominantly on political

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<sup>15</sup> Barysch, K., 'Turkey's role in European energy security', *Centre for European Reform Essays* (2007) 1-8; 1; Barysch, K., 'Can Turkey combine EU accession and regional leadership?', *Centre for European Reform Essays* (2010) 1-11; 8-11.

<sup>16</sup> Müftüler-Baç & Başkan, 'The Future of Energy Security for Europe: Turkey's Role as an Energy Corridor', *Middle Eastern Studies* 47:2 (2011) 361-378; 375-6.

<sup>17</sup> Koranyi, D., & Sartori, N., 'EU-Turkey Relations in the Context of EU Accession Negotiations: Focus on Natural Gas', *Working Paper 05* by Atlantic Council Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center & Istituto Affari Internazionali (December 2013) 2-7.

<sup>18</sup> Tekin A., & Williams P.A., *Geo-politics of the Euro-Asia Energy Nexus. The European Union, Russia and Turkey* (Palgrave Macmillan 2011) 186.

issues. The strategy of diversification of energy supply is intrinsically connected to the EU's choice of another energy partner and it is here where the opportunities and obstacles to Turkey as an energy partner come into play. While the academic debate on Turkey's potentially important role in the EU's strategy for diversification has provided several valuable insights, it has also left certain gaps to fill. Many scholars focus on the political difficulties on constructing the energy partnership in relation to Turkey's pending accession process. This thesis argues that, besides this veritable argument, there are other and more important political arguments to give why engaging in an energy partnership with Turkey will not fully solve the EU's objective of enhancing its energy security through diversification away from Russia. The academic gap to be filled by this thesis becomes more apparent if compared with the excellent research conducted by Simone Tagliapietra.

Tagliapietra has published several accounts on Turkey's prospect of becoming the EU's new energy partner in recent years. In "Myth or Reality?", he analysed Turkey's potential as an energy hub from a resource-based perspective.<sup>19</sup> By focusing on the (potential of the) gas markets around Turkey, Tagliapietra concludes that in the medium to long term (up to 2020-2025) Turkey will most probably not become an energy hub, while in the long-term (after 2025-2030) this is still "highly uncertain".<sup>20</sup> Here, however, the political arguments for diversification, i.e. reducing dependency on the unreliable energy partner Russia, are largely absent. In another contribution Tagliapietra did focus on political arguments and the political undesirability of Russia as an energy partner and the potential of Turkey, but here directed her research predominantly towards the "end-game" in EU-Turkey energy cooperation, arguing in favour of a new "EU-Turkey Natural Gas Initiative" to break the policy deadlock between them, instead of focusing on the ground rules for cooperation.<sup>21</sup> In essence, Tagliapietra raises an important concern but then invests little time in investigating it. The political argument thus remains under-researched, a gap which this thesis seeks to fill.

This thesis argues that past experience with Russia shows that before the EU is to think about problems considering gas capacity and infrastructure, and frameworks for cooperation, it should focus on the basic political arguments regarding its strategy of diversification and which political criteria should be met by the new energy partner. It furthermore shows that despite the veritable arguments of following a strategy of diversification in energy supply with Turkey, the EU risks becoming engaged in another hazardous partnership, with a partner whose political unreliability might be similar to that attributed to Russia.

### 1.3 Concluding remarks

Concluding, a review of the literature on EU energy security and its strategy for diversification has shown that in broad terms, the politics of energy security has proved to be the major obstacle in achieving progress. This is related to both internal arguments, dealing with the various interests and concern of the 28 member states, as well as external arguments, mainly dealing with various views on the EU's overreliance on awkward partner Russia. Within this field of research, the topic of this thesis is one of the possible solutions to reducing energy dependency on Russia opted by the European Commission: the diversification of energy supply. Here, the debate has proved to be varied and many insights, such as Tagliapietra's, have shaped the debate and prove to be valuable. However, the review also exposed that there still are gaps to be filled. This thesis analyses why an energy partnership with

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<sup>19</sup> Tagliapietra, S., 'Turkey as a Regional Natural Gas Hub: Myth or Reality', *Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei* (2014) 2-32; 3-8.

<sup>20</sup> Tagliapietra, S., 'Turkey as a Regional Natural Gas Hub: Myth or Reality', 29.

<sup>21</sup> Tagliapietra, S., 'The EU-Turkey Energy Relations After the 2014 Ukraine Crisis', *Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei* (2014) 2-17; 11-16.

Turkey can indeed have a positive effect on reducing dependency on Russian energy, while simultaneously the EU is at risk of becoming entangled in the same set of desirability and reliability issues with Turkey as it is currently experiencing with Russia.

In the next chapter, the theoretical and methodological foundations and the choice of method of this research will be outlined, before we proceed to the core of this analysis.

## Chapter 2 Foundations: Theory, Methodology & Methods

The subject, scope and structure of this research were outlined in the introduction. Following upon this prelude, a review of the scholarly work on EU energy security, the strategy of diversification and Turkey's role in this respect was provided. Also, the gap within the academic debate this analysis intends to fill was presented. Before the analysis of EU energy security with regard to Russia and Turkey can take place, it is necessary to establish the theoretical and methodological frameworks. The two are intertwined: certain research methods enhance the underlying theoretical argument, while a theoretical framework may beg for the use of particular research methods. It is up to the researcher to define his theoretical position and to find supporting and complementary research methods. In this short chapter, the chosen theory, the complementing methodological direction and choice of method will be elaborated upon.

### 2.1 Securitization theory

As the introduction and the literature review highlighted, the research area of this thesis is energy security. Therefore, theorising on security is essential as it sets the theoretical framework within which this research is conducted. For this thesis, the theory of securitization forms the theoretical backbone. Securitization adheres to security studies within the wider framework of international relations research. It was developed by Buzan, Waever and De Wilde of the so-called 'Copenhagen School' in the early 1990s and belongs to the school of social-constructivism, the central premise of which is that any given reality is subject to interpretation and thus constructed.<sup>22</sup> As opposed to traditional views on security studies, social-constructivists argue that "institutions and organisations must be understood in a non-linear manner, by revealing their multi-faceted and permanently changing nature" and, most importantly, they conclude that reality is not a given, but constructed through particular understanding and interpretation by an individual or a group.<sup>23</sup>

Securitization theorists have argued for revisiting and broadening the scope of security studies. In their view, not only the military sector, but also the political, economic, environmental and societal sectors can be subjects of research on security.<sup>24</sup> What 'security' actually means in their research context, is clarified in the introduction to *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1998):

Security is about survival. It is when an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object [e.g. the state, or society]. The special nature of security threats justifies the use of extraordinary measures to handle them.<sup>25</sup>

So, what is securitization? First of all, securitization is a social process. A commonly used definition holds that the process of securitization is initiated by a 'securitizing actor', an actor with authority over its audience, who "uses a rhetoric of existential threat and thereby takes an issue out of what under those conditions is 'normal politics'".<sup>26</sup> What constitutes 'an existential threat' obviously differs per sector: in the political sector and related to the EU, it might be a threat towards the integration process as a whole.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Bobulesen, R., 'Critical Realism versus Social Constructivism in International Relations', *The Journal of Philosophical Economics* 4:2, 37-64, 38-9.

<sup>23</sup> Bobulesen, R., 'Critical Realism versus Social Constructivism in International Relations' 58-9.

<sup>24</sup> Buzan, B., Waever., O. & De Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London 1998) preface, vii.

<sup>25</sup> Buzan, B., Waever., O. & De Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* 21.

<sup>26</sup> Balzacq, T., Léonard, S. & Ruzicka J., "Securitization' revisited: Theory and cases', *International Relations* (2015) 1-38, 2.

<sup>27</sup> Buzan, B., Waever., O. & De Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* 22.

Buzan, Waever and De Wilde argue that securitization is a step further than politicization – a step in which a certain issue is made into public policy and decisions are made by the government. It is an escalation, in which the given issue is taken “beyond the established rules of the game” and “is framed as a special kind of politics”.<sup>28</sup> Its constructivist disposition lies in the central importance of the so-called ‘securitization speech-acts’: the expressions of securitizing actors with authority towards the audience, which highlight the threat and prioritize the threatened issue, or ‘referent object’, at stake.<sup>29</sup> The issue is as such constructed and represented as a threat. The speech-act must be transferred by the securitizing actor and, moreover, must be accepted by the audience of the speech-act: “a successful speech-act is a combination of language and society, of both intrinsic features of speech and the group that authorizes and recognizes that speech”.<sup>30</sup>

Despite its importance in discussing security threats in a new perspective, the theory of securitization has also been confronted with criticism: according to Skidmore, language is being overemphasized with regard to capacity for action and the supposed difference between ‘the realms of politics and security’ is not clear enough and hard to use in practice<sup>31</sup>, while McDonald argued that the securitization framework is too narrow in three different ways (the form, the context and the nature of the act), which results in “a conceptualisation of security politics as inherently negative and reactionary.”<sup>32</sup> These are fair reservations, for they highlight one of the main challenges of using securitization as a theoretical basis: how to assess meticulously when, how or why an issue has been securitized, is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to conclude objectively. It is very much open for the interpretation of the researcher. Due to this reason, this research does not aim to assess how or why energy security has been securitized, but instead focuses on the implications of securitization: the escalation of energy security becoming one of the top policy priorities for the European Commission.

In securitization studies, the researcher’s goal is to establish who performs the securitization (speech-) act, for whom and why.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the researcher is tasked with determining whether the ‘referent object’ indeed has been prioritized on the national or, in the case of the EU, communal policy agenda. Turning to the subject of this research, the social-constructivist theory of securitization forms a useful starting point for analysis of EU energy security and the particular roles of Russia and Turkey, since energy security has recently moved up the EU policy agenda. However, it is not the purpose of this analysis to scrutinize speech acts and provide a definitive answer to the question of securitization. This research is mainly focused on the implications of this process of securitization: the issue of energy security is prioritized as a ‘threat’ by the European Commission, which in turn has resulted in significant policy changes in the EU, one of which is the topic of this thesis: diversification of energy supply. This thesis therefore focuses mainly on the politics of energy security, and not on economics or the technical aspects related to energy security, since the mentioned ‘threat’ to energy security is mainly caused by political issues on Russia’s reliability. The insights of securitization theory remain relevant in this political approach, especially the central concept of an ‘existential threat’ and its construction through specific discourse. Russia is considered to constitute an ‘existential threat’ to the EU, evidenced by the priority given to improving the EU’s energy security.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibidem, 23-4.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, 26; Williams, M., ‘Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics’, *International Studies Quarterly* 47 (2003) 511-531, 513.

<sup>30</sup> Buzan, B., Waever., O. & De Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* 32.

<sup>31</sup> Skidmore, D., ‘Review of *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1998)’, *The American Political Science Review* 93:4 (1999) 1010-1011, 1011.

<sup>32</sup> McDonald, M., ‘Securitization and the Construction of Security’, *European Journal of International Relations* 14:4 (2008) 563-587, 563-4.

<sup>33</sup> Buzan, B., Waever., O. & De Wilde, J., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* 32.

This thesis uses elements of social constructivism and securitization theory, in combination with discourse analysis and ‘framing’, to examine the construction of the images of both Russia and Turkey as energy partners of the European Union. The ‘securitizing actor’ is represented by the European Commission and the ‘referent object’, the threat, is European security of energy supply. An energy partnership with Turkey is being presented as a means to diminish the threat coming from Russia. This thesis evaluates this notion by comparing what is said in the Russia case with what is said in the Turkish case, looking for evidence of whether the EU’s objective (securing energy supply by diversifying energy supply) is consistent with its proposed solution (building an energy partnership with Turkey). This requires an examination not only of what the EU says in relation to Turkey as a reliable energy partner but also to what other evidence points us to in this regard.

In this section I have elaborated on what securitization is and emphasized the fact that it is not to be seen objectively: the ‘speech act’, for instance, is a discursive, social-constructivist notion and securitization is a conscious and intentional act. In the context of this research, this is a crucial notion. This research investigates the presence of intentional and conscious acts of framing by the EU through their policy documents on energy: vis-à-vis Russia in a more malign fashion, as it is deemed to constitute the core problem, and vis-à-vis Turkey in a more benign fashion, since it is considered to be part of the solution. It is to be expected that Turkey will be presented as a more reliable and stable partner for energy security, since it forms a crucial part of the EU’s strategy for diversification. Whether this strategy towards Turkey evaluates the reliability issues towards Russia and Turkey on a equal level and is therefore fit to serve as a viable solution to the problem of energy security is the topic of this research. However, research aimed at EU framing towards Russia and Turkey has to be executed, before conclusions on these issues can be drawn, which will be dealt with in chapter 5.

The theory of securitization leads to the use of certain methodological approaches, more specifically discourse analysis. The next section will therefore explain the basic principles of discourse analysis, before proceeding to the precise method of choice in relation to discourse analysis: framing.

## 2.2 Discourse analysis and methodological considerations

Discourse analysis focuses on the particular manner language is used and what the purpose of this use is, within a particular social context. It is social-constructivist in nature since it deems that the language we use does not “neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations but, rather, play[s] an active role in creating and changing them.”<sup>34</sup> Discourse itself is therefore an immensely broad term which refers to “all aspects of communication – not only its content, but its author (who says it?), its authority (on what grounds?), its audience (to whom?) [and] its objective (in order to achieve what?)”.<sup>35</sup> Because of its intrinsic relationship with the particular social setting in which discourse is being used, the same language can mean different things in different social environments.<sup>36</sup> Also, discourse analysis can be utilized in a wide variety of disciplines and in many varying approaches, both on macro- and micro-levels. For example, Glynos et al. identified six different approaches, ranging from political discourse theory, related to Foucault’s ideas on relations between power and discourse; to

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<sup>34</sup> Jørgensen, M. & Phillips, L.J., *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (London 2002) 1-2.

<sup>35</sup> Punch, K., *Introduction to Social Research. Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches* (London 1998) 226.

<sup>36</sup> Punch, *Introduction to Social Research*, 227.

discursive psychology, related to phenomena nominating formerly “inner mental processes” as discursive processes; and interpretive policy analysis<sup>37</sup>, aimed at revealing:

the importance of notions like narratives, storylines, frames, discourse coalitions, interpretation, argumentation and meaning to critically explain (...) public policies in various contexts and settings.<sup>38</sup>

This thesis is related to this last approach, as it is focused on interpreting public policy in the context of EU energy security and the EU’s strategy of diversification. In the next section, I will elaborate about *framing* in public policy, the research method of choice for this thesis.

### 2.3 Discovering frames in EU official discourse

Thus far, it was explained that securitization theory links to discourse analysis through its social-constructivist nature and the importance of language used (“speech acts”). Within the broad church that discourse analysis constitutes, I have chosen ‘framing’ as an appropriate research method to discern which elements, or ‘frames’ are dominant in EU official discourse on energy security with regard to Russia and Turkey. The literature review showed that energy security can be talked about in different ways and there are different ‘frames’ being used. For a definition of what the method of framing entails, I resort to the explanation of Entman:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.<sup>39</sup>

Studies on ‘frames’ focus on how a certain issue is being communicated by an actor to an audience and how thus an image of the issue is constructed in a particular way, predominantly by looking at the discourse used. Yet, it is less focused on certain very specific words and more on general frameworks: through which particular ‘pair of glasses’ is the issue to be seen? Research on framing is used regularly in media studies, where researchers attempt to detect how the process of framing works in mass media: how do they influence public opinion through their ‘construction’ of their information through particular frames? Naturally, media frames can vary according to the topic. For example, in her study on international media coverage on the war in Kosovo in the ‘90s, Camaj distinguished between the ‘conflict’ news frame, the ‘human interest’ frame, the ‘attribution of responsibility’ frame, the ‘economic consequences’ frame and the ‘morality’ frame, of which the first one proved to be most dominant in western media.<sup>40</sup>

This study, however, does not deal with media framing, but instead focuses on politics and policy. Similar to how particular news frames have an influence as to how a certain issue is portrayed in the media and thus conveyed to the public, a framing analysis of policy documents can reveal which message a policy maker is trying

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<sup>37</sup> Glynos et al., ‘Discourse analysis: varieties and methods’, *Review paper ESRC National Centre for Research Methods NCRM/014* (2009) 1-41.

<sup>38</sup> Glynos et al., ‘Discourse analysis: varieties and methods’ 20-1.

<sup>39</sup> Entman, R., ‘Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm’, *Journal of Communication* 43:4 (1993) 51-58, 51-2.

<sup>40</sup> Camaj, L., ‘Media framing through stages of a political discourse: International news agencies’ coverage of Kosovo’s status negotiations’, *The International Communications Gazette* 72:7 (2010) 635-653, 642-6.

to convey and which frames are dominant in this perspective.<sup>41</sup> How things are framed is relevant in understanding the hierarchy of priorities for the policy maker. While performing discourse and specifically framing analysis, however, the writer has to be aware of certain obvious pitfalls, of which in my case bias towards one of the two countries is the most dangerous one. As it was not possible to use computer programmes for digitalized discourse and/or content analysis, I resorted to manual analysis of a reasonable sample of carefully selected sources, focusing on multiple facets influencing the frame, such as the specific discourse used, the placing, which indicates hierarchy of the different frames used in the same document, and the share of specific discourse in light of the whole document.

The central actor constructing the image is the European Commission. I resorted solely to documents published by the European Commission due to their policy competence in energy affairs, which became a shared competence between the EU and the member states through the Treaty of Lisbon. Documents by DG ENER on energy security strategy, published in between around 2006 and the present day, form the primary sources for analysis, such as 'A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy' (2006), the 'Second Strategic Energy Review (2008)', 'EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners Beyond Our Borders' (2011), the 'European Energy Security Strategy' (2014) and the 'Energy Union Framework Strategy' (2015). As I wished to discern similarities and differences between EU discourse on both Russia and Turkey as energy partners, I scrutinized EU documentation specifically related to both countries as well and selected all the documents related to energy security published over the course of the last ten years to which I had (online) access, which has resulted in a comprehensive account. For Russia, I resorted to reports on Commission documents such as the EU Russia Energy Dialogue (2006-2011), the EU Russia Strategic Review Forecast (2011) and the Roadmap for EU Russia energy cooperation until 2050 (2013). In the case of Turkey, sources were scarcer as, unlike the EU and Russia, cooperation in energy affairs between the EU and Turkey is still a fresh field of policy. This fact constraint the choice of documentation. In the case of Turkey, I therefore resorted to the European Commission's Turkey Progress Reports on Turkey's accession (2006-2015), the 'EU Turkey Energy Action Document' (2015) and documentation on the Positive Agenda (2012), the Southern Gas Corridor (2015) and the High Level Energy Dialogue (2016). Given that the aim is to examine the EU's construction of its discourse and policy in relation to achieving diversification of energy supply and therefore security of energy supply, in the selection for documents language barriers with regard to Russian or Turkish sources did not function as constraints. The current selection of documents consists of all web-based, English sources accessible through official EU websites.

The central aim of the analysis is to detect how the partnerships with each of the countries are established by the EU and correspond with or differs from the other. The framing analysis is a key element in the pursuit of answering the research question, as it attempts to show how the European Commission, in their attempt to reduce dependency on Russia through diversification of energy supply, is stressing the suitability of Turkey as a beneficial actor for the EU's energy security. In order to approach the analysis of documents related to both countries systematically, four possible frames were established. On the one hand, they are based on the evidence stemming from the literature review that in energy security debates arguments dealing with politics and economics are most

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<sup>41</sup> For example, Baumgartner & Mahoney analysed the 'two faces of framing' in policy-making in the European Union, arguing that for effective framing analysis, both framing at the individual level and the process of collective issue definition should be considered as they are inter-related. Baumgartner, F. & Mahoney, C., 'The Two Faces of Framing. Individual-Level Framing and Collective Issue Definition in the European Union', *European Union Politics* 9:3 (2008) 435-449.



dominant. On the other hand, I have based the frames on a first 'scan' of the used documentation. In that respect, a combination of deduction and induction was employed.

First of all, the *security* frame entails that partnership with the given country is based upon considerations of security (e.g. of energy supply); secondly, the *economic* frame entails that cooperation is viewed through an economic scope, dealing with efficiency, cost- and benefit-driven arguments for partnership and thirdly, the partnership may be viewed through an *environmental* scope, which entails that environmental considerations link the two countries. The fourth one, the *political* frame, is a more generic one than the three frames already mentioned and deals with intergovernmental relations and balances of power between countries. Decisions based on security, economic or environmental considerations are in the end political decisions and therefore, the political frame is very often present underneath a more evident use of a security, economic or environmental frame. Connecting this notion to securitization theory brings forward the difficulty of establishing the difference between politicization and securitization: what constitutes the difference is not only open to interpretation, but the political statements themselves are also not always that clearly apparent in the analysed texts. The outcome of these premises on frames will be presented in chapter 3.

## Chapter 3 EU energy security strategy: diversification of energy supply

The introduction elaborated on the research area, topic and question of this research, and provided insight into the outline. Then, the literature review identified the key debates in energy security, the diversification of energy supply and the different roles Russia and Turkey play in this respect and, most importantly, identified the gap in the literature this research intends to fill. This was followed by an elaboration on securitization theory, as well as on methodological considerations regarding discourse analysis. Finally, the use of ‘framing’ was introduced as the research method of choice. In sum, the stage is set for this thesis.

This chapter offers the necessary context to the identified research area and topic: it briefly outlines the rise of energy security within EU energy policy and highlights the primary position of diversification of energy supply as part of EU energy security strategy.

### 3.1 EU energy security as part of EU energy policy

Energy security is a central component of EU energy policy, which has evolved over decades into one of the top priorities for the European Commission. Cooperation in energy affairs on the EU level started as early as the 1950s, with the creation of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) alongside the European Economic Community (EEC), in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. In the preamble of the treaty establishing Euratom, the Six (the then-member states) recognised the positive effect on both industrial development and the prime goal of upholding peace that the coupling and development of atomic energy could have.<sup>42</sup> Despite several energy crises in the 1960s and 1970s, energy policy for decades remained largely a national affair.<sup>43</sup>

These energy crises, however, did unlock the concept of ‘energy security’ within the realm of energy policy, related to stable and secure supply of energy. Worries on energy security can be summarized by two fears amongst European policy-makers: the first one being that the supply of energy resources is affected by regional tensions and/or domestic turmoil in producer countries, with a disruption of the flow of energy as an ‘unintended’ consequence. The second fear stems from foreign policy considerations by producer countries, in cases where energy supply is being used as a political weapon, which happened in the oil crisis of 1973/4.<sup>44</sup>

European initiatives stemming both from national governments and the European institutions to combat these fears slowly materialized into results. The end of the Cold War resulted in new opportunities for cooperation between Western and Eastern European countries in a new, multilateral framework on a multitude of topics, including energy.<sup>45</sup> Within the EU, the European Commission proved to be the driving force behind new initiatives for energy cooperation between the member states and formulated three fundamental pillars for an EU energy policy: sustainability, competitiveness (on an internal and external market) and security of supply.<sup>46</sup>

Quintessential to the recent rise of energy security as a central component within energy policy were the two episodes of gas supply disruptions from Russia to the EU in 2006 and 2009, due to price disputes on gas

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<sup>42</sup> European Union (Publications Office), *Preamble, Consolidated Version of the Treaty Establishing the European Atomic Energy Community 1957* (2010) 5.

<sup>43</sup> Turner, L., ‘The Politics of the Energy Crisis’, *International Affairs* 50:3 (1974) 404-415; 404, 407-9, 413-5.

<sup>44</sup> Hoogeveen F. & Perlot W., ‘The EU’s Policies on Security of Energy Supply Towards the Middle East and Caspian Region: Major Power Politics?’, 485-8.

<sup>45</sup> An example in this respect was the creation of the Energy Charter Treaty. For a detailed discussion, see: Tekin & Williams, *Geo-politics of the Euro-Asia Energy Nexus. The European Union, Russia and Turkey* (London 2010) 21-2. See also: *The International Energy Charter and Consolidated Energy Charter Treaty with related documents* (January 2016), as found on: <http://www.energycharter.org/fileadmin/DocumentsMedia/Legal/ECTC-en.pdf>, accessed 8 April 2016.

<sup>46</sup> Tekin & Williams, *Geo-politics of the Euro-Asia Energy Nexus*, 18. Or, as Hoogeveen & Perlot argued, ‘Secure’, ‘environmentally sound’ and ‘economically affordable’. Hoogeveen & Perlot, ‘The EU’s Policies on Security of Energy Supply Towards the Middle East and Caspian Region: Major Power Politics?’ 487.

between Russia and Ukraine. Not only did these gas shocks result in an “an outcry all over Europe”<sup>47</sup>, they also resulted in recognition within the EU of their energy vulnerability and proved to be detrimental to the image of Russia as a reliable supplier of energy, as Pirani, Stern and Yafimava aptly noted:

it does not matter very much to Europe which side was at fault for this crisis. The issue for the future is that since Russian gas supplies through Ukraine have been cut off once, they could be cut off again. Thus the problem for both sides is one of credibility in relation to future supplies and transit.<sup>48</sup>

Through the two supply crises surfaced the uncomfortable relationship between, on the one hand, dependency on Russia and, on the other, its increasingly unreliable energy profile. Not only did the question of whether an energy supply crisis could or would happen again become rather urgent, the supply crises also touched upon the more fundamental question of how the EU would be able to reduce its dependency on Russia. The strategy to combat these challenges has been outlined through several strategic papers on energy security published by the European Commission since 2006. A core component within all of these proposals is the diversification of energy supply: by resorting to other partners than Russia for the supply of natural gas, the threat of high dependency on the energy partner, perceived as unreliable, could be reduced. In the next section, it will be explained that just as energy security forms a central component of EU energy policy, the diversification of energy supply is one of the pillars of the EU’s strategy to improve its energy security.

### 3.2 Diversification of energy supply as part of improving EU energy security

Energy diversification can be achieved in several ways. As it simply means ‘variation’, a goal related to energy diversification could be met by making alterations in the ‘energy mix’, through investing in domestic, renewable energy instead of foreign fossil fuels for example. In this thesis however, the emphasis is on the diversification of energy supply through relating to other supply partners.

From the first comprehensive document on ‘energy security strategy’ published in 2006 onwards, this method of diversification, related to choice of energy partners, has been a central component to achieving the goal of reducing natural gas dependency on the single largest supplier, Russia. In the 2006 Green Paper on the mentioned ‘energy pillars’, the Commission champions the formulation of a “coherent external energy policy”, in order to boost EU energy security and to tackle “common problems with energy partners worldwide”.<sup>49</sup> The “diversifying [of] sources and routes of supply of imported energy” is part of the “integrated approach”, together with reducing demand and the diversification of the energy mix through renewable sources.<sup>50</sup>

In succeeding strategic documents on EU energy security, diversification of energy supply has remained a core element. In the Second Strategic Energy Review (2008), the Commission revisited the need for increased attention towards energy infrastructure and several diversification strategies. The Southern Gas Corridor (SGC) – which entails the connection of Caspian and Middle Eastern gas resources to Europe - was here introduced as “one of the EU’s highest energy security priorities”, with Turkey stated as a prominent transit partner with whom

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<sup>47</sup> Stern, J. ‘The Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis of January 2006’, *Published by the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies* (January 16, 2006) 1.

<sup>48</sup> Pirani, S., Stern, J. & Yafimava, K., ‘The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment’, *Published by the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies* (February 2009) 62-3.

<sup>49</sup> European Commission, *A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy* (2006) 14.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, 18.

agreements on transit should be made.<sup>51</sup> However, the SGC is not the only trump card the EU is aiming to play: the Baltic Interconnection Plan, establishing the “missing infrastructure” between the EU and Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Mediterranean Ring, linking the EU with the Mediterranean countries in North-Africa, are two important examples of this. However, the SGC is stipulated as the most important infrastructure project.<sup>52</sup> In the 2014 European Energy Security Strategy, the diversification of energy supply is mentioned as the 7<sup>th</sup> of 8 key components formulated to “promote closer cooperation beneficial to all member states” and is discussed in much more detail, with regard to the SGC, the possible natural gas capacity in the Caucasus region and the choice of energy partners – not only Turkey, but also Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Iran.<sup>53</sup> These strategic documents on energy security and the method of diversification of energy supply will be examined more closely as part of the framing analysis in chapter 5, in which the focus will lie on Commission communication towards Russia and Turkey.

### 3.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter serves as a concise and necessary starting element in the analysis of EU energy security, the strategy of diversification of energy supply and Turkey as a viable energy partner. It introduced energy security as part of EU energy policy, fuelled by the experiences of past energy crises in the 1960s and 1970s. Unintentional and intentional supply disruptions by producing countries were identified as two fears fuelling the need for EU energy security. Diversification of energy supply, by resorting to other energy suppliers and transit states for importing natural gas, has been a core component of the EU’s energy security strategy for over 10 years.

The next chapter brings us to a review of Russia and Turkey as energy partners: the EU-Russian energy relation will be elaborated, as well as the reasons why the EU wishes to diversify. The second section will discuss why the EU is looking at Turkey as a means to achieve diversification of energy supply and thus brings us closer to answering the research question of whether Turkey constitutes a viable solution to the EU’s objective of improving energy security through diversification.

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<sup>51</sup> European Commission, *Second Strategic Energy Review* (2008) 4-5.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, 4-5.

<sup>53</sup> European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) 3, 15-6.

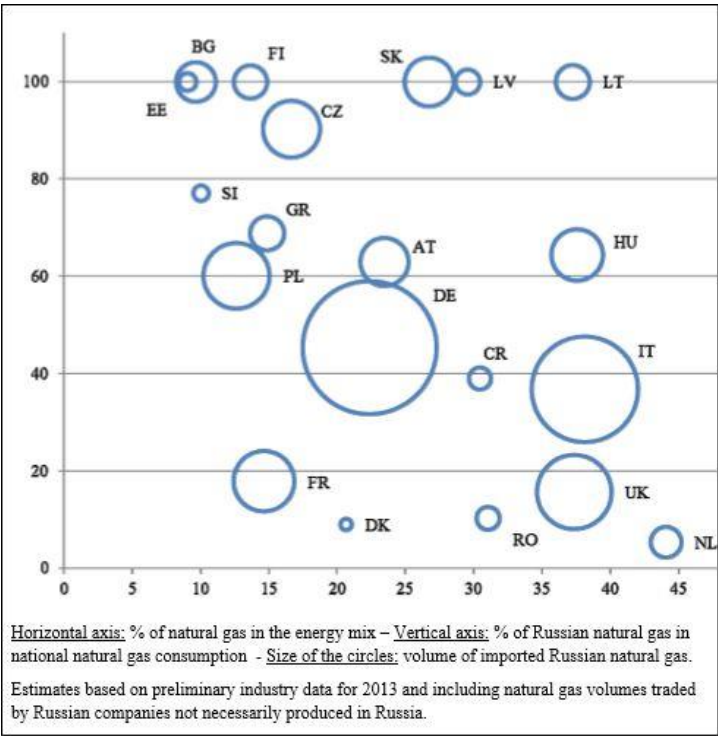
# Chapter 4 EU energy partners: an analysis of Russia and Turkey

The previous chapter explained that energy security is a central component to EU energy policy and that, consequently, diversification of energy supply has been formulated as one of the pillars of EU energy security. These explanations were necessary to serve as a contextual basis upon which the analysis of Turkey as a viable energy partner can be built. This has been brought up due to the EU’s recognition that it is very dependent on an energy partner whose reliability is at stake: Russia. This chapter provides the reasons why the EU is seeking to diversify from Russia, both energy-related and non-energy related; why Turkey seems attractive to the EU as a possible energy partner; and why a possible EU-Turkey partnership in energy is set against the complicated background of Turkey’s thus far failed accession process.

## 4.1 Russia: the EU’s energy (re)liability?

Russia is the European Union’s main trading partner for energy.<sup>54</sup> Graph 1 shows that the levels of dependency of natural gas supplies from Russia range in some cases as high as 100%. This data moreover shows that in countries such as Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania, natural gas accounts for more than 25% of their energy mix, while Russia provides 100% of this gas supply. Overall, the EU imports around 53% of its total energy demand, 66% of its total natural gas demand, with Russia accounting for 39% of natural gas imports.<sup>55</sup>

Graph 1  
Dependency on natural gas supplies from Russia  
European Commission: European Energy Security Strategy (Annex 1) (2014)



<sup>54</sup> Eurostat, table: *Main origin of primary energy imports, EU-28, 2003-2013*. As found on: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Main\\_origin\\_of\\_primary\\_energy\\_imports,\\_EU-28,\\_2003%E2%80%932013\\_\(%25\\_of\\_extra\\_EU-28\\_imports\)\\_YB15.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Main_origin_of_primary_energy_imports,_EU-28,_2003%E2%80%932013_(%25_of_extra_EU-28_imports)_YB15.png), accessed 18 April 2016.

<sup>55</sup> European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (May 28, 2014) 2.

This rate of overdependence creates a certain risk: if gas delivery fails, the consequences may be dire. Moreover, if the reputation of the energy partner – Russia - is questionable, a potentially fatal combination arises. The arguments why Russia is perceived by the EU as an unreliable (energy) partner can roughly be divided into two categories: directly energy-related arguments and indirectly energy-related, geo-political arguments.

The energy-related arguments are connected to the fear of a ‘non-intentional’ energy crisis as presented in chapter 3.<sup>56</sup> The two energy supply crises of 2006 and 2009 showed that it does not require involvement of an EU energy partner for damage to be inflicted to European recipients of Russian gas. The crisis of January 2006 was the result of a “disastrous deterioration in Russian-Ukrainian [energy] relations” and was not that unexpected.<sup>57</sup> However, according to experts, no serious harm was done to multilateral energy relations.<sup>58</sup> January 2009 brought about a new price and transit disagreement between Russia and Ukraine, which led to a new disruption of gas flows, this time impacting the EU more severely. The disruption lasted for multiple days, with neither Russia nor Ukraine eager to quickly come to resolution of the conflict.<sup>59</sup> The same experts who reviewed the 2006 incident argued that the political consequences were more dramatic this time: Russia’s reputation as a reliable energy supplier was damaged, maybe even beyond repair.<sup>60</sup> Rightly so, experts moreover pointed to the fact that for European citizens and politicians, it did not matter who was to blame: the image of Russia and Ukraine as unreliable energy suppliers is what lasted.

As Pirani et al. noted in the aftermath of the incident of 2009, there is no reason to believe that Russia used energy against the EU as a political weapon in the 2006 and 2009 cases.<sup>61</sup> However, the deterioration of the relations between the European Union and Russia in recent years adds an extra dimension to Europe’s image of Russia as its prime, yet at times unreliable energy supplier: can Russia, headed by Putin, be trusted not to use energy as economic and/or geopolitical leverage at some point? Here, the second fear, or the intentional use of energy as a political weapon becomes significant.

Currently, Russia and the EU are closer towards alienation than to rapprochement. Confrontational approaches towards the crisis in Ukraine from 2014 onwards attest to this, but the roots for EU-Russian estrangement lie deeper. According to Haukkala, there are three reasons to identify for the divergence between the EU and Russia, since Putin rose to power at the turn of the millennium: first, close cooperation resulted in the “accentuation” of “diverging views” on the way the EU and Russia think about power relations and their spheres of influence; secondly, the EU and Russia have “largely incompatible interests”; and third, the EU’s ‘Eastern Partnership’ enlargement strategies at its eastern borders, have had increasingly negative effects on EU-Russian relations.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, Schmidt-Felzmann has argued that the unequal nature of the 1994 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which was the original framework agreement for EU-Russia cooperation after the collapse of the Soviet Union, from the onset contributed to the divergence. The relationship was never set on equal

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<sup>56</sup> Hoogeveen & Perlot, ‘The EU’s Policies on Security of Energy Supply Towards the Middle East and Caspian Region: Major Power Politics?’ 486-7.

<sup>57</sup> For a detailed discussion on the 2006 gas disruption incident, see: Stern, ‘The Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis of January 2006’, *Published by the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies* (January 2006) 5-7.

<sup>58</sup> Stern, ‘The Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis of January 2006’, 14-16.

<sup>59</sup> Pirani, S., Stern J., & Yafimava K., ‘The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment’, *Published by the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies* (February 2009) 5-7, 21-3, 54-5; Kovacevic, ‘The Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Gas Crisis in South Eastern Europe’, *Published by the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies* (March 2009) 2-3.

<sup>60</sup> Pirani, S., Stern J., & Yafimava K., ‘The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment’, 57-9.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, 60.

<sup>62</sup> Haukkala, H., ‘From Cooperative to Contested Europe? The Conflict in Ukraine as a Culmination of a Long-Term Crisis in EU-Russia Relations’, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23:1 (2015) 25-40, 31-3.

footing, since the EU wanted to follow its own liberal principles towards Russia. While Russia needed the EU more than vice versa, the EU dictated, instead of equally cooperated with Russia. Meanwhile, Russia was not willing to fulfil all the requirements the EU had set and as a consequence of both stances, only “lip service” was paid to the strategic partnership. Due to these “structural asymmetries”, eventually mistrust replaced trust and the desired ‘strategic partnership’ collapsed.<sup>63</sup>

Although it is difficult to argue when this strategic partnership exactly collapsed, alienation between the EU and Russia was not only fed by the 2006 and 2009 gas disruptions, but also through the Russian-Georgian territorial conflicts in South-Ossetia and Abkhazia in the summer of 2008, after which the foreign ministers of NATO members suspended military and political collaboration and deemed Russia’s actions to be “disproportionate and inconsistent with its peacekeeping role.”<sup>64</sup> However, the present conflict in Ukraine serves as the clearest example of the deterioration, with the EU and Russia at opposite ends of the table.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the incidents in Ukraine were actively linked with the risks of EU dependency on Russia in energy affairs by several European leaders, for example by the then prime minister of Poland, Donald Tusk:

Regardless of how the stand-off over Ukraine develops, one lesson is clear: excessive dependence on Russia makes Europe weak. And Russia does not sell its resources cheap – at least, not to everyone.<sup>66</sup>

José Manuel Barroso, in the last months of his European Commission presidency, reinforced Tusk’s viewpoint in a speech held at the Energy Security Strategy Conference of May 2014, acknowledging the EU’s dependence on Russian energy supplies and calling for a European Energy Policy to be developed. In his opening remarks, he faced the issue straightforwardly:

Today’s conference could not be more topical. With the events in Ukraine, Europe is facing a threat to its peace, stability and security the likes of which we have not seen since the fall of the Iron Curtain.

The ‘Great Game’ of geopolitics has made an unwelcome return and this is being particularly felt in the realm of energy.<sup>67</sup>

Clearly, Barroso links the issue of energy with EU-Russian alienation. Although it is rarely mentioned in official European Commission documents, as we shall see in chapter 5, the underlying assumption between the described long- and short-term political divergence and energy policy is the possibility that in a case of extreme deterioration of the relations, Russia uses its energy leverage as a political weapon. Some have argued that Russia indeed has used energy as a foreign policy tool, for example in the case of Poland<sup>68</sup> in the late 1990s and with regard to

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<sup>63</sup> Schmidt-Felzmann, A, ‘The breakdown of the EU’s strategic partnership with Russia: from strategic patience towards a strategic failure’, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* (2016) 1-23; 3-5, 21-2.

<sup>64</sup> Haas, M. de, ‘NATO-Russia Relations after the Georgian Conflict’, *Clingendael* 7 (2009) 5-6.

<sup>65</sup> For a detailed discussion on the Crisis in Ukraine, the EU and Russia, see: Pridham, ‘EU/Ukraine Relations and the Crisis with Russia, 2013-14: A Turning Point’, *The International Spectator* 49:4 (2014) 53-61, 53-58; Haukkala, H., ‘From Cooperative to Contested Europe? The Conflict in Ukraine as a Culmination of a Long-Term Crisis in EU-Russia Relations’ 34.

<sup>66</sup> Tusk, D., ‘A United Europe can end Russia’s energy stranglehold’, *Financial Times* (April 21, 2014).

<sup>67</sup> José Manuel Barroso, Speech delivered at the Energy Security Strategy Conference (21 May 2014). *European Commission Speech 14/400*, as found on: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-14-400\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-400_en.htm?locale=en), accessed 19 April 2016.

<sup>68</sup> This argument was made by participants to a seminar dedicated to energy independence in Eastern Europe, organised by the Centre for European Policy Analysis in 2013. Source: <http://cepa.org/index/?id=de936e36f25bb91acaae7593959af3c1>, accessed on 9 July 2016.

(former) vassal states Belarus and Ukraine.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, research conducted by the Swedish Defense Research Agency outlined that there were multiple cases of energy used as a political weapon, mainly in order to pressurize neighbouring countries.<sup>70</sup> At the same time, energy experts such as Karen Smith Stegen and Pirani, Stern & Yafimava, have persuasively argued that energy as a political weapon might have been used, but has not been effective in obtaining political leverage for Russia.<sup>71</sup>

Despite the arguments in favour or against, the element of *perception* of insecurity in policy-making must not be overlooked: following Pointvogl's arguments, perception in policy-making is important, because it is psychological in nature and thus "subject to changes not necessarily based on empirical assessments".<sup>72</sup> Moreover, including perceptions of a threat leads to considering worst case scenarios: as these scenarios would have a significant impact on several member states, important decisions on policy – e.g. whether to diversify or not – might certainly be influenced by them.

In sum, both energy-related and geopolitical arguments have contributed to the EU's perception of Russia as a liability in EU energy security. Turkey has been designated as a potentially important energy partner and transit state and fits in the EU's diversification strategy. In the next section, multiple reasons will be brought forward as to why the EU is looking at Turkey for solving their energy question. However, building an EU-Turkey energy partnership is not as straightforward as it seems considering Turkey's difficult accession process.

#### 4.2 Turkey: the perpetual candidate for accession turned energy partner?

Why would the European Union now turn to Turkey, when trying to reduce their gas dependency on Russia? There are several, rather straightforward reasons to mention in this respect.

First, Turkey is geographically perfectly positioned between the 'Caspian' countries which have an abundance of natural gas resources and serve as energy exports, and countries which are lacking sufficient resources – the majority of EU member states – and are energy importers. In terms of natural gas, Turkey's neighbour Iran has the single largest proven reserves in the world, more than Russia, while countries in Turkey's vicinity have far less, but still considerable reserves (see table 1).

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<sup>69</sup> Goodrich, L., & Lanthemann, M., 'Past, present and future of Russian Energy Strategy', *Stratfor Geopolitical Weekly* (2013), as found on: <https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/past-present-and-future-russian-energy-strategy>, accessed on 9 July 2016.

<sup>70</sup> FOI Swedish Defense Research Agency, 'Russia's Energy Policy: Security Dimensions and Russia's Reliability as an energy supplier' (2006) 1-365, 1-5.

<sup>71</sup> Smith Stegen, K., 'Deconstructing the "energy weapon": Russia's threat to Europe as a case study', *Energy Policy* 39 (2011) 6505-6513, 6510-12; Pirani, S., Stern J., & Yafimava K., 'The Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of January 2009: a comprehensive assessment', *Published by the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies* (February 2009) 60.

<sup>72</sup> Pointvogl, A., 'Perceptions, realities, concession – What is driving the integration of European energy policies?', *Energy Policy* 37 (2009) 5704-5716; 5710.



	Proven reserves (trillion cubic metres) <sup>1</sup>	Share in world's total proven reserves (%)
Iran	34	18,2
Russia	32,6	17,4
Turkmenistan	17,4	9,3
Iraq	3,6	1,9
Azerbaijan	1,2	0,6

Table 1. Proven Natural Gas Reserves (end of 2014). BP Statistical Review of World Energy (2015).

Additionally, as Table 1 shows, Iran harbours an enormous amount of natural gas reserves, which could find its way to the EU eventually. In this case, Turkey's status as a crucial transit state would be reinforced. Currently, however, the lack of required infrastructure impedes significant short term results.<sup>73</sup>

Secondly, Turkey and the EU share the same goal of diversifying its gas supplies from Russia. In fact, natural gas forms more than one-third of Turkey's total primary energy supply, with Russia accounting for 58% of total natural gas imports.<sup>74</sup> After the downing of the Russian fighter jet SU-22 in November 2015, relations between Turkey and Russia deteriorated rapidly. This led to numerous economic sanctions towards Turkey, including the suspension of negotiations on a natural gas pipeline to be constructed underneath the Black Sea.<sup>75</sup> Although the situation with Russia has slowly improved since the beginning of August 2016, their energy relations remain fragile. Turkey is looking at the same alternative suppliers for energy as the EU, meaning the Caspian region, and by bundling their forces the EU and Turkey could reinforce each other's efforts.

A crucial element in this diversification strategy has already been initiated: the construction of the necessary pipeline infrastructure from Azerbaijan, through Turkey, to Greece. Natural gas is most commonly transported through pipelines, other than liquefied natural gas, which can also be transported on ships, railway tankers and tanker trucks. The whole route from the gas-fields of Azerbaijan to the Adriatic shores of Italy consists of several separate infrastructural projects, displayed underneath (image 1). First gas flows from Azerbaijan to Georgia and Turkey and later through TAP are expected at the beginning of 2018.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>74</sup> International Energy Agency (IEA), *Turkey. Oil and Gas Security. Emergency Response of IEA Countries* (2013) 3.

<sup>75</sup> Foreign Policy, 'Russia, Turkey Fight Spreads to Energy Sector' (9 December 2015), as found on: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/09/russia-turkey-fight-spreads-to-energy-sector-putin-erdogan-turkish-stream-akkuyu/>, accessed on 20 April 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Trans-Adriatic Pipeline AG, *TAP Project Timeline*, as found on: <http://www.tap-ag.com/the-pipeline/project-timeline#21> (accessed on 20-04-2016).



Image 1. The pipeline infrastructure of the Southern Gas Corridor. Source: [www.tap-ag.org](http://www.tap-ag.org)

These conditions rightly appear to be favourable. By relying more on alternative suppliers through the Southern Gas Corridor (SGC), the EU will be able to rely less on Russia and thus reduce the risk of overdependence. For the EU, however, durable relations with Turkey are paramount in making this energy partnership work. Turkey’s cumbersome accession process however shows that a partnership between the EU and Turkey is not as straightforward as it may seem.

Turkey applied for associate membership of the European Economic Communities in 1959, which eventually resulted in the Ankara Agreement in 1963. In this document, Turkey’s eventual membership of the EEC was already mentioned, albeit somewhat tentatively.<sup>77</sup> Throughout the subsequent decades, the EU and Turkey failed to compose a coherent path towards Turkey’s entrance to the EEC/EU due to multiple reasons, related for example to the military coups in Turkey in the 1970s and 1980s, to the question of the division of Cyprus and to Turkey’s ‘general political and economic progress’, as the European Commission stated in their Progress Report on Turkey in 1989.<sup>78</sup> Finally, at the Helsinki Summit of the European Council in 1999, Turkey was accepted as an official candidate. Although during the first years the prospects for Turkey entering the EU looked promising, largely due to reforms initiated by the newly elected Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, negotiations on the so-called ‘chapters’ stalled around 2005. Despite the initiation of the so-called Positive Agenda in 2012 to bring “fresh dynamics into the EU-Turkey relations”, thus far negotiations on only 14 of a possible 35 chapters were opened and only one was successfully closed.<sup>79</sup> In sum, Turkey’s accession process to the EU has been running for 33 years, without significant results.<sup>80</sup> This complicates the construction of a new energy partnership as part of the EU’s diversifications strategy as well, for example as to how this partnership is to be seen: as part of, or separate from the accession process?

Surprisingly, the refugee crisis related to the war in Syria has brought Turkey’s accession process back to life: in return for Turkey’s aid in controlling the flow of illegal refugees from Syria to Europe, the EU awarded Turkey with substantial financial aid, the re-opening of talks on visa-liberalisation and, more fundamentally, the

<sup>77</sup> “As soon as the operation of this Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the Contracting Parties shall examine the possibility of the accession of Turkey to the Community”, Article 28, Agreement establishing an Association between the European Economic Community and Turkey and the Additional Protocol. Official Journal of the European Communities, Publication of the Ankara Agreement (1963) and the Additional Protocol (1970) (December 24, 1973), as found on: [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/association\\_agreement\\_1964\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/association_agreement_1964_en.pdf), accessed 22 April 2016.

<sup>78</sup> European Commission, *Opinion on Turkey’s request for accession to the community SEC (89) 2290* (December 20, 1989) 1-10.

<sup>79</sup> European Commission, ‘Positive Agenda launched in Ankara’ (May 17, 2012), as found on: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-12-359\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-359_en.htm), accessed on 21 April 2016; European Commission, *Progress Report on Turkey 2015* (10 November 2015) 4.

<sup>80</sup> For a detailed discussion on Turkey’s accession process to the EU, see for example: Yeşilada, B., *EU-Turkey Relations in the 21st Century* (New York 2013) and Martin, N., *Security and the Turkey-EU Accession Process. Norms, reforms and the Cyprus Issue* (London 2015).

re-energizing of talks on Turkey's accession process, meaning that new 'chapters' were to be opened.<sup>81</sup> Although the deal indeed resulted in a dramatic decrease of the amount of refugees travelling to Europe through Turkey, the deal has had particularly negative repercussions as well. For the benefit of the structure of this thesis, this will be further outlined in chapter 6. In this chapter, following upon the framing analysis in chapter 5, it will be elaborated why a particular set of factors contributes to the fact that a partnership with Turkey in energy affairs might not be as desirable as the EU deems it to be.

### 3.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, Russia's role in EU energy policy and the reasons for an alternative energy strategy have been elaborated upon. Russian gas supply is deemed not to be fully reliable, considering not only the recent regional conflicts with Ukraine, but also the recent deterioration in relations between the EU and Russia. It is therefore logical that the EU is looking to alter its energy strategy. In this quest for diversification, Turkey constitutes a crucial factor in the development of the SGC. This could result in a new partnership between the EU and Turkey. This chapter showed also, however, that a partnership between the EU and Turkey has not proved to be successful in the past, which still resonates today. The question of whether Turkey's accession process also forms a negative component to Turkey's desirability as an energy partner is one of the core questions to be answered in chapter 6.

In the following chapter 5, a framing analysis will be conducted on EU documents with regard to energy security, the diversification of energy supply, and the roles of Russia and Turkey in this respect. This thesis has thus far shown that due to Russia's reliability issues, the EU is looking at alternative energy suppliers and transit states, of which Turkey is a prominent one. The next chapter analyses whether and how the EU frames Russia as one of their most important energy partner – yet one with a reliability issue - and how they push forward Turkey as their new energy partner. Whether this solution to the objective of improving EU energy security through diversification is a viable one, will be analysed in chapter 6.

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<sup>81</sup> European Commission, 'EU and Turkey agree European response to refugee crisis' (March 19, 2016), as found on: [http://ec.europa.eu/news/2016/03/20160319\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/news/2016/03/20160319_en.htm), accessed on 20 April 2016.

Thus far, several steps were taken to come closer to answering the research question formulated in the introduction. The literature review and the elaboration on choices for using theory, methodology and methods served as foundations and identified how this thesis can contribute to the academic debate on EU energy security by focusing on political arguments for the EU to diversify its energy supply away from Russia, towards Turkey. Chapter 3 outlined the prominent position energy security has gained in EU energy policy and moreover introduced the diversification of energy supply as a core element in EU energy security strategy. The previous chapter argued that Russia's reliability is at stake, with fear of new episodes of (un)intentional disruptions of gas supply as a driving force. Secondly, Turkey was introduced as a potential energy partner for the EU, while focusing on the upsides and simultaneously highlighting Turkey's difficult accession partnership as an unfavourable predecessor. The current chapter continues on the path set out by these previous chapters.

In this chapter numerous documents drafted by the European Commission (DG ENER) on energy matters after 2006 are analysed in order to conclude how the European Commission 'frames' their energy relations with both Russia and Turkey. It revolves around several important questions: how does the European Commission *frame* and *construct* these two different energy relationships? Which kind of frames for analysis are being used and which are dominant? Are the same frames being used towards both Russia and Turkey? And, finally, what do the answers to these questions say about how the European Commission evaluates and communicates their energy relations with these two countries? The first section will focus on Russia-related documents and the second section will focus on the Commission's dealing with Turkey.

### 5.1 Russia: the EU's energy (re)liability?

While analysing the policy documents drafted by DG ENER, a distinction should be made between documents drafted *with* and *without* Russia. This distinction is important, since this creates two different perspectives for analysis: one in which Russia maintains the role of a partner and is part of the writing process of the documents, the other in which DG ENER is the only contributor, without Russian consent being necessary. Since both are important for the framing of Russia by the EU, both will be part of the analysis.

The sources analysed with regard to the first category relate to the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. This energy platform was initiated in 2000 and was constructed to develop EU-Russia energy relations on issues such as energy trade, sustainability, infrastructure, investment, technology.<sup>82</sup>

In the Progress Report of 2006, energy security is presented as a "key challenge that will remain a central issue in the energy cooperation between Russia and the European Union", while economic issues ("great mutual interest") receives equal attention.<sup>83</sup> In the 2007 edition, "the Parties note that ensuring the long-term security and safety of energy demand and supplies is becoming the priority issue in the framework of the EU-Russian Energy Dialogue" and here, the balance favours the *security* frame.<sup>84</sup>

The Progress Reports of 2008 and 2009 lean more towards the *economic frame*: in the edition of 2008, statements on security as the key factor of the energy relationship are less strong than in previous editions and the majority of the text is aimed at the economic strategic forecasts, the development of energy markets and

<sup>82</sup> European Commission, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue. The first ten years: 2000-2010* (2011) 6-7.

<sup>83</sup> European Commission, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue Seventh Progress Report* (2006) 2-7.

<sup>84</sup> European Commission, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue Eighth Progress Report* (2007) 2.

infrastructure.<sup>85</sup> In the 2009 edition, the majority of the text is dedicated to infrastructure and market development. On the gas supply disruption of 2009, the EU and Russia state explicitly that they “highly appreciate the Technical Terms for Monitoring the Supply of Natural Gas through Ukraine on 10 January 2009 by the Russian Party, the European Commission and the Ukrainian side”<sup>86</sup>, hereby emphasizing partnership and not divergence.

Lastly, the EU-Russia Strategic Review Forecast (2011) and the Roadmap for EU Russian Energy Cooperation until 2050 (2013) are useful for analysis, because they focus on the suitability and sustainability of partnership of the EU and Russia on energy in the near and far future. The former continues the pattern of the Progress Reports of the Energy Dialogue: the dominant frame is economic, with environmental issues on second place. Both the introduction and the concluding chapter predominantly focus on developing economic ties and trade, supported by the majority of the chapters being economic in character. There is no evident *security* or *political* agenda being presented.<sup>87</sup> The 2006 and 2009 gas crises are rarely mentioned, yet, the reality of diversification of supply and demand between Russia and the EU is acknowledged.<sup>88</sup> The ambitious ‘roadmap towards 2050’ (2013) is exemplary of the overall conclusion to be drawn from the analysed documents: in joint EU-Russia documents, the focus lies on the *economic frame* and, more importantly, on the potential, instead of the risk of the EU-Russia energy partnership. In the elaborate introduction to the roadmap, this energy potential is carefully crafted by both parties:

The strategic target by 2050 should be to achieve a Pan-European Energy Space (...) making the necessary contribution to ensuring energy security and reaching the sustainable development goals of the EU and Russia. (...) Such a Pan-European energy space would need to ensure a level playing field and a high level of transparency and safety.<sup>89</sup>

It becomes evident here as well that the discourse dedicated to security or political elements is far from controversial, for obvious reasons. These jointly written documents are exercises in diplomacy: their main goal is to cause no controversy. In this sense, it is obvious why a confrontational *political frame* is completely absent in these reports and the *security frame* only comes forward as a common responsibility.

Do the documents published by the DG ENER, independently from Russia, show a different pattern? Judging by the first analysed document, a short yet in-depth analysis of EU-Russian relations as a run-up to the EU-Russian summit to be held later that year, it appears to be so. The document was published in November 2008, three months after the Russian-Georgian conflict took place, in which Russia and Georgia clashed in the Georgian territories of South-Ossetia and Abkhazia. As Fawn & Nalbandov persuasively noted, European leaders however diplomatically refrained from attributing guilt to one of the parties.<sup>90</sup> In this document, the question of guilt is circumvented, yet

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<sup>85</sup> While in the seventh and eighth report the security frame proved to be the key factor of the introduction, economics dominated over security issues in this report. European Commission, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue Ninth Progress Report* (2008) 2.

<sup>86</sup> European Commission, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue Tenth Progress Report* (2009) 10.

<sup>87</sup> European Commission, Russian Ministry for Energy, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue 2000-2010: Opportunities for our future Energy Partnership* (2010) 2-13.

<sup>88</sup> European Commission, Russian Ministry for Energy, *EU-Russia Energy Dialogue 2000-2010*, 2.

<sup>89</sup> European Commission, Russian Ministry for Energy, *EU-Russia Energy Cooperation until 2050* (2013) 4-5.

<sup>90</sup> Fawn, R., Nalbandov, R., ‘The difficulties of knowing the start of war in the information age: Russia, Georgia and the War over South Ossetia, August 2008’, *European Security* 21:1 (2012) 57-89.

the EU's worries are indeed stipulated: the EU states that the Russian-Georgian territorial conflicts and Russia's statements on 'spheres of influence' have cast a 'serious shadow' over the EU Russia relationship.<sup>91</sup> This *political* frame is also used in a context in which Russia's dependence on the EU is emphasized, which is different from the conclusion of the combined documents analysed above:

The EU can approach its relationship with Russia with a certain confidence. Economically, Russia needs the EU. The EU is an important market for its exports of raw materials, notably energy, and Russia would like to improve the conditions for trade in nuclear materials. (...) The aim of this review is (...) to make a sober assessment of where the EU's *own* interests now lie.<sup>92</sup>

While this introduction is more direct than any other document analysed above, the subsection on energy is more moderate in wording. In this section, the *security frame* is dominant. The EU once more nominates energy as a core element of the relationship and stresses the interdependence between the two parties, as opposed to Russian dependence towards the EU as stated above. Also, the EU raises its concern about the different interpretations on energy security and 'reciprocal market access', as well as Russia's quarrels with transit states, concluding that cooperation should be built upon "transparency, reciprocity and non-discrimination".<sup>93</sup> Overall, the *political* and *security* frames are dominant in this document. While not all relates to energy, the EU conveys that in the fragile political relations with Russia, energy is a major component to reckon with.

The 2008 Second Strategic Energy Review, published by DG ENER also after the South-Ossetia War, follows the pattern of the previous document, albeit in generic terms. The subtitle of the energy review, 'An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan', already reveals that articulating a *security policy* on energy affairs is the main aim and is therefore the dominant frame. Moreover, it nominates energy as a vital component in international relations and *politics* in the section on external energy relations:

Worldwide, countries are becoming increasingly interdependent in energy matters. (...) Energy must be given the political priority it merits in the EU's international relations (...). The widely-varying interests of countries in the energy field, in a context of increasing energy interdependence, point to the need for more robust international legal frameworks based on a balance of commitments and benefits, within energy and across economic sectors.<sup>94</sup>

It is obvious that the majority of this quote relates predominantly (but not only) to Russia: energy is a subject for the highest political dialogues. In the text, the EU portrays Russia once more as a partner of utmost importance and emphasizes the importance of trust:

Russia will remain the EU's main energy partner far into the future and more needs to be done to ensure that this relationship is based on trust; each would benefit from consolidating the main principles on which this partnership is based into law.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> European Commission, *Review of EU-Russia relations* (2008) 2.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, 2.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibidem*, 2-3.

<sup>94</sup> European Commission, *Second Strategic Energy Review. An EU Security and Solidarity Plan* (2008) 2, 7.

<sup>95</sup> European Commission, *Second Strategic Energy Review* (2008) 8-9.

However, the report is not solely fixed upon the security/political dimension of energy policy, but highlights five action points (dealing with environmental issues too, for example) for improving EU energy security. This leads to the conclusion that the overall dominant frame is *security/political*, with a secondary role for the *environmental* frame. As explained in the chapter on methodology, the *political* frame is lying underneath: in the security frame, the political frame of power balances between Russia and the EU forms the foundation upon which questions on security are founded.

Two Commission communications on security of energy supply published in 2011 and 2013 contrast with the reports of 2008, as these two reports are predominantly dedicated to the economic aspects of EU external energy policy and highlight the importance of equal cooperation between Russia and the EU:

The EU, instead, must build on the strength of its market, expanding links between the European network and neighbouring countries and creating a wider regulatory area, beneficial for all. (...) This Communication proposes concrete ways to extend energy cooperation beyond the mere physical security of imports.<sup>96</sup>

The specific attention paid to Russia in section 1.4 focuses on the integration of the different energy markets and regulatory and legal frameworks for cooperation and it makes the use of the *economic* frame clear.<sup>97</sup> The 2013 report focuses primarily on economic aspects, while additional elements include the negotiations on future cooperation in the EU Russia Energy Roadmap 2050 and the necessity of constructing a solid legal framework.<sup>98</sup>

In the past two years, much has happened in the realm of energy policy and security, as was showed in chapter 3 and 4. One report of great importance in this respect is the European Energy Security Strategy, published in 2014. Not too surprisingly considering its title, the use of the *security* frame is clear: “The Strategy sets out areas where decisions need to be taken or concrete actions implemented in the short, medium and longer term to respond to energy security concerns.”<sup>99</sup> Although Russia is mentioned as the EU’s main supplier for oil and gas and the risk of overdependence is stated, relations with Russia are barely elaborated upon, as the European Energy Security Strategy is much more aimed at aligning the energy policies of the member states and letting a common voice be heard in international energy affairs.<sup>100</sup> Although the Russo-Ukrainian conflict was already raging at the beginning of 2014, there is no connection made between the political divergence of the EU and Russia and the EU’s external energy policy.

However, the report certainly holds practical elements of crisis and security management as well: short term measures to prevent a new gas disruption to the EU during the 2014-2015 winter are recommended, which is further elaborated upon in a technical stress-test report on the security of energy supply published late 2014. In this report, the risk of a new gas cut-off due to the Russo-Ukrainian territorial conflict is considered to be a realistic

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<sup>96</sup> European Commission, ‘On Security of energy supply and international cooperation – “The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders” (2011) 1-3.

<sup>97</sup> European Commission, *On Security of energy supply and international cooperation* (2011) 8-9.

<sup>98</sup> European Commission, *Implementation of the Communication on Security of Energy Supply and International Cooperation and of the Energy Council Conclusions of November 2011* (2013) 2, 3, 7-9.

<sup>99</sup> European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) 3.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibidem*, 2-20.

possibility, based upon which multiple scenarios are laid out, most notably a six-month disruption of gas supply.<sup>101</sup> Considering that it has been suggested that Russia has used energy as a political weapon before (see chapter 2) and the incidents of 2006 and 2009, these types of measures go beyond ordinary risk management.

The last document analysed with regard to energy policy and security is the Energy Union Framework Strategy (2015). In this document, the European Commission presents its vision on the future of the EU as a single actor in energy affairs. In the first section on ‘energy security, solidarity and trust’, the first of five dimensions of the Strategy mentioned, the European Commission clearly communicates the connection between political turmoil and energy security: “the political challenges over the last months have shown that diversification of energy sources, supplies and routes is crucial for ensuring secure and resilient energy supplies to European citizens and companies (...)”.<sup>102</sup> The European Commission directly refers to the Ukrainian conflict and its consequences for EU-Russia relations. The image of altered relations between Russia and the EU is being reinforced by the only sentence specifically dedicated to Russia in the Strategy:

When the conditions are right, the EU will consider reframing the energy relationship with Russia based on a level playing field in terms of market opening, fair competition, environmental protection and safety, for the mutual benefit of both sides.<sup>103</sup>

In other words, at the moment the conditions are not right: Russia and the EU are too far removed from each other to reconsider their energy relationship in a positive manner. Although it is only a very short element in the Framework Strategy, it is nonetheless an important illustration of how the Commission describes their energy relations with Russia: avoiding compromising language, while acknowledging the potential risk.

Summarizing, politics is connected to security aspects of energy, but Russia is handled with care. Overall, the *security* and the *economic* frame appear to be the dominant frame used, while the *political* frame is less clearly present but simultaneously functions as a basis for security or economic arguments: whether to cooperate with Russia to gain economic benefits, is essentially a political choice. The understandable aim of the Commission seems to be not to confront Russia with polemic language. Energy matters are either discussed in technical terms or, if security and politics are elements included, by describing relations with Russia rather delicately, as we saw in the second section of documents. Russia is not outspokenly being framed by DG ENER as its political adversary, but the possibility of new (un)intentional gas supply disruptions (or cut-offs) caused by Russia is still part of the scope of security analyses and it is presented as the prime reason for diversification of supply routes.<sup>104</sup> Russia is thus presented as a partner and, between the lines, as the root cause for the need for diversification.

Here, the connection with the second section of analysis can be made: the EU’s view on Turkey as a transit state through which the aim of diversification of gas supply can be accomplished. Is Turkey being portrayed as the EU’s new reliable partner, where Russia has failed to do so?

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<sup>101</sup> European Commission, ‘Communication (...) on the short term resilience of the European gas system. Preparedness for a possible disruption of supplies from the East during the fall and winter of 2014-2015’ (2014) 2-3.

<sup>102</sup> European Commission, *Energy Union Framework Strategy. Energy Union Package* (2015) 4.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.

<sup>104</sup> As presented for example in the most recent documents analysed here: European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) 7-8; European Commission, *Energy Union Framework Strategy. Energy Union Package* (2015) 4-5.



## 5.2. Turkey: the new energy partner?

Source analysis of DG ENER material on Turkey is rather different from the analysis on Russia-related material. Most importantly, sources are far more scarce. Cooperation on energy affairs between the EU and Turkey has a much shorter history than that of the EU and Russia and therefore less has been produced. Moreover, Turkey plays a different role: it is a transit state for energy and not an actual supplier and therefore figures less prominently in DG ENER reporting than suppliers, such as Norway, Algeria or Russia. In this analysis, I mainly resorted to joint declarations of ambitions, the Commission Progress Reports and the general DG ENER documentation which were also analysed above.

Energy has figured more prominently in EU-Turkey affairs for around four years. In 2012, the Positive Agenda (PA) was launched to reinvigorate the Turkish accession process, with energy as one of its major components. In the joint statement on the energy aspects of the PA, the ‘common challenges’ regarding security of supply and competitive markets are mentioned, as is the image of Turkey as an ‘energy bridge and potential energy hub’ for the EU.<sup>105</sup> The *economic* frame receives the most attention (market integration and the construction of infrastructure), while *environmental* issues finish second. The *security* frame is not absent, but is used minimally: only the “shared long term priorities as regards security of supply” is mentioned in this respect.<sup>106</sup> On the foundations of the Positive Agenda, the High Level Energy Dialogue (HLED) for ‘strategic energy cooperation’ was constructed. In contrast to the previous setting however, the HLED is communicated as predominantly revolving around Turkey’s role in the EU’s strategy of diversification, with ‘ensuring competitive energy markets’ mentioned second.<sup>107</sup> At the first evaluation on the HLED in 2016, the *security* frame is pronounced even more outspoken:

Both sides underlined the importance of Turkey as a key country for EU’s energy security and as a regional energy hub, and they re-affirmed their joint commitment to the successful implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor.<sup>108</sup>

Moreover, Turkey commits itself to “fulfil its responsibilities in terms of contributing to EU’s security of supply through various pipelines and interconnection projects”.<sup>109</sup> Besides the dominant *security* frame, there is also room for politics: in both the 2015 and 2016 HLED communications, enhanced energy cooperation is linked with Turkey’s accession process and the chapter on energy. This is most evident in the 2015 edition. Here, it is emphasized that the HLED “is not a substitute to [sic], but a complement and support of Turkey’s accession process”, which indicates that while Turkey accepts its important role in EU security of energy supply through the HLED, this process should not interfere with the key framework of EU-Turkey cooperation: the accession process of Turkey to the EU.<sup>110</sup> Although the EU apparently complies with Turkey in this declaration, there is a dilemma lingering for the member states here: if the EU wants to pursue a strong and durable energy relationship with Turkey on their side, it should use the accession process as the only framework. Turkey’s accession, however, is

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<sup>105</sup> European Commission, *Turkey-EU Positive Agenda. Enhanced EU-Turkey Energy Cooperation* (2012) 1.

<sup>106</sup> European Commission, *Turkey-EU Positive Agenda* (2012) 1-3.

<sup>107</sup> European Commission, *Turkey-EU High Level Energy Dialogue. EU-Turkey Strategic Energy Cooperation* (2015) 1.

<sup>108</sup> European Commission, *Turkey-EU High Level Energy Dialogue* (2016) 1.

<sup>109</sup> European Commission, *Turkey-EU High Level Energy Dialogue* (2016) 1.

<sup>110</sup> European Commission, *Turkey-EU High Level Energy Dialogue. EU-Turkey Strategic Energy Cooperation* (2015) 1.

still highly contested within the EU and opening chapter 15 of the accession framework is not an issue taken lightly.

Overall, in these few recent joint declarations, the *security* frame is leading, while there is less room for the *economic* frame. Below, documents drafted by DG ENER alone will be analysed, to weigh whether these resemble the picture painted by the joint documents.

As mentioned in the methodology, source material by the Commission on Turkey is scarcer and mostly related to Turkey's accession process. In this analysis, the Progress Reports (2006-2009-2012-2015) on Turkish EU accession will be discussed. Additionally, similar to the analysis on Russia, Turkey's role in the Second Strategic Energy Review (2008), European Energy Security Strategy (2014) and the Energy Union Framework Strategy (2015) will be analysed.

The Progress reports touch upon a multitude of subjects on Turkish accession. In the chapter on energy, Turkish alignment with the *acquis* is discussed. The analysis of the Progress Reports shows that in the period of time between 2006 and 2015, energy gained a more prominent position and more emphasis was placed on security of supply. In the reports of 2006 and 2009, the Commission communicates that Turkey's progress on energy and the security of supply is minimal. The reports focus mainly on internal energy market, energy efficiency and nuclear energy reforms and conclude that overall, "alignment [with the *acquis*] is uneven".<sup>111</sup> Here, the cooperation on energy issues is mainly framed as *economic* and *environmental*.

A different description arises from the reports of 2012 and 2015. While absent in the previous two reports, the mentioning of energy cooperation in the introductory summaries to both reports indicates that the subject gained in importance. In 2012, energy is communicated as a 'common challenge' and an 'area of common interest', while in 2015 the launch of the High Level Energy Dialogue is mentioned.<sup>112</sup> Moreover, the content of chapter 15 on energy is much more aimed towards security of supply as its main element: the report of 2012 describes the birth of the TANAP project between Azerbaijan and Turkey and repeats that "Turkey has the potential to play a pivotal role in diversifying resources and routes for oil and gas transit (...)".<sup>113</sup> The 2015 report mentions underlines the 'major role' Turkey may fulfil as a gas transit country in terms of security of supply, if a "fair and transparent gas transit regime" is set up in line with the EU *acquis*.<sup>114</sup> Overall, the switch from the *economic* frame (2006, 2009) to the *security* (of energy supply) frame (2012, 2015) in this period of time is evident.

After having analysed the Progress Reports, the analysis now turns to the general DG ENER energy strategy documentation. Turkey's role in the Second Strategic Energy Review (2008) aligns with the conclusion of the 2006 and 2009 Progress Reports: Turkey is only mentioned in rather generic terms and does not play a pivotal role in the documentation.<sup>115</sup> While this changed in the Progress Reports towards 2015, analysis of the 2014 European Energy Security Strategy (2014) shows that Turkey is still only mentioned briefly as an important country in terms of gas infrastructure (TANAP) and is not framed in any particular way.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> European Commission, *Turkey 2006 Progress Report* (2006) 50-1; European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (2009) 60-1.

<sup>112</sup> European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (2012) 4-5; European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (2015) 4.

<sup>113</sup> European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (2012) 60-1.

<sup>114</sup> European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (2015) 47-8.

<sup>115</sup> Turkey is mentioned twice: once as a transit country with which basic principles for gas transit cooperation should be set and the second time because of its observer status to the Energy Community. European Commission, *Second Strategic Energy Review. An EU Security and Solidarity Plan* (2008) 5, 7.

<sup>116</sup> European Commission, *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) 16.

As for the 2015 Energy Union Framework Strategy, the previous analysis on Russia already showed that political reality is being connected with the subject of energy security. The Commission elaborates on this in another section of the same document, related to diversification of supply routes and thus Turkey:

Energy policy is often used as a foreign policy tool, in particular in major energy producing and transit countries. This reality has to be taken into account when discussing Europe's external energy policy. (...) As part of a revitalised European energy and climate diplomacy, the EU will use all its foreign policy instruments to establish strategic energy partnerships with increasingly important producing and transit countries or regions such as (...) Turkey.<sup>117</sup>

In this quote, Turkey, energy security and foreign and security policy are openly being connected: the picture which the Commission is trying to paint of Turkey is that of an indispensable partner in their quest for diversification. Economic and environmental aspects are secondary in this respect.

### 5.3 Concluding remarks

What is there to be concluded from the analyses of all of these reports? The analysis showed that in the case of Russia, especially in recent accounts, the Commission considers new (un)intentional gas disruptions as a possibility, partly because of the turmoil between Russia and Ukraine and the recent deterioration between the EU and Russia. However, in the documents analysed, Russia is being handled with care: much more emphasis is being placed upon the *partnership* with Russia, instead of the *risk*. In these documents, it is clear that the EU seeks to avoid any confrontation.

Simultaneously, the documents show that the European Commission pursues a diversification strategy, with Turkey as one of the pivotal players. Thus, two different faces of the Commission appear: one showing diplomatic language and a diplomatic image of Russia, while the other face shows the development of relying less on Russia through diversification and new partnerships. Using only official documentation has both benefits and drawbacks: an 'official image' of a subject can be distilled, but whether this represents what 'Brussels' truly thinks is less clear. Future research based on complementary research methods, such as conducting interviews, could provide us with a more precise answer to this question.

In documents related to Turkey, especially after 2012, Turkey is framed mainly as a *security* partner. If, as the joint declarations by Turkey and the EU state, cooperation on energy is to take place within the framework of accession, there is still ample work to be done. One important aspect is the fact that the chapter on energy is still closed, while another is that the current political circumstances in and between Turkey and the EU paint a troublesome picture regarding Turkey's own political stability and reliability. In the next and final chapter, the question will be answered of whether the image of Turkey as a key to the EU's energy security, makes sense considering these internal and external political circumstances.

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<sup>117</sup> European Commission, *Energy Union Framework Strategy. Energy Union Package* (2015) 6.

## Chapter 6 Turkey: a stable and reliable energy partner?

In this sixth chapter, the focus is on Turkey. The previous chapter showed that in documentation on energy affairs the Commission puts forward Turkey as a quintessential energy security partner. Before proceeding towards stating the aim of this chapter, it is worth reiterating what the EU is trying to achieve with respect to diversification of energy supply. In the introduction, it was shown that the EU has established a problem related to its energy security: it is highly dependent on Russia, but simultaneously does not fully trust Russia as an energy supplier and fears that Russia might use energy as a political weapon. As a solution, the EU is looking at Turkey and this analysis, therefore, is about whether the EU is likely to achieve its goal of improving its energy security through Turkey.

As has been established, the EU's problems with regard to Russia have to do with political reliability. In order to assess accurately whether Turkey would form a better alternative than Russia, the same questions should be asked: do the internal and external political circumstances in Turkey give rise to the notion that Turkey's political reliability is (un)questionable? In other words, is it to be concluded that Turkey indeed is the reliable and stable energy security partner the EU has nominated it to be, as seen in the previous chapter? These questions will be answered in two sections: one related to Turkey's current internal developments, the other related to Turkey's recent developments in external affairs.

### *6.1 Internal chaos: Political polarization, the coup d'état and multiple factors of violence*

The domestic political situation in Turkey is one of deep polarization, with three political factions competing over power: the Justice and Development Party (AKP), a conservative, religious party with an even more dominant head figure, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; the Republican People's Party (CHP), a social-democratic party following the republican ideal of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk; and the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), which upholds a strong Kurdish identity and champions minority rights in general.

The AKP has been the dominant political power for over fourteen years, with the current president Erdoğan as its founder and champion. Ever since their first entry into Turkish parliament in 2002, the AKP had a comfortable majority in parliament and could rule autonomously, with CHP as its traditional, rather toothless political adversary. The Gezi-movement - which started in 2013 as a local protest by mostly young Turks against reconstruction plans on Taksim Square in Istanbul, later evolved into a large-scale anti-establishment and anti-Erdoğan movement and was answered with force by the Turkish authorities. The protest movement spreading across the country already showed the discontent and divisions in Turkish society, yet, these challenges towards the AKP leadership never reached the realm of political representation.

The rise of the pro-Kurdish HDP during the June 2015 elected meant that autonomous AKP rule in Turkey was contested for the first time in twelve years. However, a political coalition could not be formed, which led to new elections to be held in November 2015. The AKP regained their majority during these tumultuous, but as legitimate deemed elections, despite the verdict of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) that there were several impediments to a fair course of the elections to be noted, mainly to the detriment of the opposition party HDP.<sup>118</sup> Ever since, the AKP has pursued the creation of the executive presidency to strengthen Erdoğan's position and has sought confrontation primarily with its political adversaries, notably CHP

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<sup>118</sup> For a full analysis of the November 2015 election, see: OSCE/ODIHR, *Limited Election Observation Mission. Final Report* (January 2016) 1-3, as found on: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/turkey/219201?download=true>, accessed on 9 July 2016.

and HDP, while the Turkish economy has been performing worse and economic reconstruction is needed.<sup>119</sup> The continuing rule of Erdoğan and his AKP has created deep divisions in Turkish society: supporters claim his superiority and herald him as their saviour, while his opponents detest his ‘sultanesque’, authoritarian style of leadership, most vividly illustrated by the ‘Ak Saray’ (White Palace), the enormous presidential complex where Erdoğan resides.<sup>120</sup> Allegations of corruption are explained by his supporters as attempts to undermine his democratically vested power, while for his adversaries these allegations are signs of the corrupted nature of his leadership.<sup>121</sup> Furthermore, his tendency to prosecute various media organizations critical of the state leadership and thus Erdoğan himself<sup>122</sup> have resulted in rallies and protests in Turkey, but has been signalled and experienced abroad as well, as we shall see in the next section of this chapter.

However, the most worrisome element to the EU in the context of stability and political leadership must be the recent attempted coup d’état by the Turkish military to overthrow Erdoğan’s rule. The coup failed rather quickly, yet the consequences proved to be more far-reaching: thousands of (alleged) supporters of Fethullah Gülen, Erdoğan’s friend-turned-nemesis blamed for orchestrating the coup, were suspended and/or arrested, including military and police personnel, journalists, academics and diplomats<sup>123</sup>; and Erdoğan’s grip on Turkey fastened even more, with thousands of pro-Erdoğan protestors, following upon Erdoğan’s request, roaming the Istanbul streets in the ensuing days, stating their loyalty towards the Turkish leadership. Meanwhile, the EU and Turkey clashed on Erdoğan’s statement that re-introducing the death penalty should not be ruled out.<sup>124</sup> It is fair to argue that the introduction of the death penalty would mean a virtual end to Turkey’s accession process, as the abolition of capital punishment is a vital and non-negotiable component to EU agreements on human rights. On a more general level, the coup is an example of Turkey’s unpredictability and Erdoğan’s ferocious, yet carefully crafted way of responding to challenges, which on the whole sets him back as an ideal partner in any respect, including energy.

The attempted coup seems to be a culmination of the contested leadership of Erdoğan’s AKP. However, it provided Erdoğan with the opportunity to eliminate his opponents swiftly, hereby fastening his grip on Turkey and alienating Turkey from the EU. Societal and political polarization keep festering both in- and outside the Turkish parliamentary chambers. Added to these political problems, another great factor of Turkish instability lies in the increasing violence occurring on Turkish soil since the summer of 2015, carried out by three challengers towards the Turkish state: the PKK, the TAK and IS.

Multiple attacks by these three parties over the course of the last two years lead to the conclusion that security in Turkish society is under threat. The sense of insecurity due to the fact that ‘danger’ may come from one of these three (or perhaps even more) sides is being multiplied by its unpredictability: the next terrorist attack is to be expected, but is never announced. The attacks by IS - in Suruç in July 2015, resulting in the death of 32

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<sup>119</sup> Financial Times, ‘Turkey’s economic reforms come to a halt’ (15 May 2016), as found on: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/1686d146-190e-11e6-bb7d-ee563a5a1cc1.html#axzz4D60IIDnW>, accessed on 30 June 2016.

<sup>120</sup> BBC, ‘Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Turkey’s ruthless president’ (5 May 2016), as found on: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13746679>, accessed on 29 June 2016.

<sup>121</sup> Orucoğlu, B., ‘Why Turkey’s Mother of All Corruption Scandals Refuses to Go Away’, *Foreign Policy* (January 6, 2015), as found on: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/06/why-turkeys-mother-of-all-corruption-scandals-refuses-to-go-away/>, accessed on: 30 June 2016.

<sup>122</sup> Over the course of the last two years, many journalists have been detained due to various allegations, most notably related to ‘insulting the president’. A prominent example of this is the trial against the Cumhuriyet-editors-in-chief Gül and Dündar. Guardian, The., ‘Turkish journalists accuse Erdoğan of media witch-hunt’ (2 May 2016), as found on: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/02/turkish-journalists-accuse-erdogan-of-media-witch-hunt>, accessed on: 2 July 2016.

<sup>123</sup> Reuters, ‘Erdogan announces army overhaul in latest post-coup shakeup’ (23 July 2016), as found on: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-security-idUSKCN0ZX07S>, accessed on: 14 August 2016.

<sup>124</sup> Reuters, ‘EU condemns Turkey coup bid, warns Erdogan on death penalty’ (18 July 2016), as found on: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-security-eu-idUSKCN0ZX0XZ>, accessed on 14 August 2016.

youngsters protesting against the Syrian conflict; in Ankara in October 2015 killing 103 civilians during a march promoting peace and freedom; and very recently on Atatürk Airport in Istanbul, killing 41 citizens – proved to be the most violent episodes. Horrendous as they may be, these are incidents. The conflict with the PKK is a severe, structural conflict which divides the whole of Turkish society, which is embodied by the political polarization between the AKP. It is therefore far more destabilizing for Turkish society than the terrorist attacks and is yet another illustration to Turkey's current internal instability.<sup>125</sup>

### 6.2 External confrontations: 'refugees as bargaining chips' and 'sultan Erdoğan?'

The previous section focused upon the problems Turkey is facing internally. While this may raise the EU's concern as to the *stability* of its future partner, the factor of *reliability* is perhaps of even more importance: can Turkey be trusted to serve as a reliable energy transit partner, or will the EU end up with Turkey in a similar situation as it is in with Russia?

As was shown in chapter 4, the EU and Turkey share a troublesome history and are still entangled in a difficult accession process. In the last few years, Turkey-EU cooperation has also not been rather fruitful, while the EU has been critical towards Turkey on multiple occasions, notably in the annual Progress Reports. In these reports, which elaborate on Turkey's adherence towards the *acquis communautaire*, the section on 'political criteria' has most notably articulated the EU's worry about the internal state of political affairs in Turkey. In the 2014 and 2015 reports, the Commission expressively raised their concern towards the slow pace of reform in general, 'allegations of corruptions' related to high-level government officials, the 'independence of the judiciary and the rule of law', the 'deteriorating security situation' and the 'significant backsliding in the areas of freedom of expression and assembly' amongst others.<sup>126</sup> The mentioned coup d'état and its repercussions will certainly not help improve these verdicts. The Progress Reports on Turkey of the last few years show a downhill pattern with regard to Turkey's adherence to the EU's political criteria, which signals that EU values and Turkish values are only drifting more and more apart.

Despite these concerns, the outbreak of the refugee crisis has catapulted EU-Turkey cooperation right back into the spotlight and has tested the quality of the relationship. The large influx of Syrian immigrants, fleeing the Syrian civil war and travelling to Europe through Turkey, sparked heavy debates and has caused deep polarization in multiple EU-countries. In order to 'regulate' the stream of refugees, several European leaders, led by German Chancellor Merkel, resorted to the aid of Turkey in March 2016. The subsequent 'refugee-deal' struck between the EU and Turkey signified the elevation of Turkey as a crucial partner for Europe: in exchange for implementing a 'one-for-one'-principle - meaning that each illegal migrants arriving in the EU through Turkey would be exchanged for a legal migrant coming from one of the designated refugee camps - the EU guaranteed an increase in financial aid, the speeding up of the visa liberalisation process and 'new energy' to be put in the accession process.<sup>127</sup> Thus, EU-Turkey cooperation intensified. However, three worrying factors with regard to cooperation with Turkey surfaced recently.

First, over the course of the last months, Erdoğan has approached the refugee deal as fundamentally *quid pro quo* and he uses the leverage he acquired – control over Syrian refugees travelling over land from Syria through

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<sup>125</sup> Council on Foreign Relations, 'Kurdish Conflict' (Last update 7 July 2016), as found on: <http://www.cfr.org/global/global-conflict-tracker/p32137#!/conflict/kurdish-conflict>, accessed on 10 July 2016.

<sup>126</sup> European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (October 2014) 3; European Commission, *Turkey Progress Report* (November 2015) 4-5.

<sup>127</sup> European Commission, 'EU and Turkey agree European response to refugee crisis' (19 March 2016), as found on: [http://ec.europa.eu/news/2016/03/20160319\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/news/2016/03/20160319_en.htm), accessed on 2 July 2016.

Turkey to Europe – as the ultimate bargaining tool. This is to the great discomfort of critics towards the deal, such as Dutch MEP and Turkey-rapporteur Kati Piri. She argued that none of the so-called Copenhagen-criteria, which test fundamental requirements for joining the EU, such as democratic governance, respect for human rights and a market economy, can be part of a bargain, especially considering the above described Turkish backslide in corruption and fundamental freedoms.<sup>128</sup> Meanwhile, Erdoğan more than once threatened to terminate the refugee deal if the visa liberalisation process and the opening up of new accession chapters were not followed through.<sup>129</sup>

Through recent events, the EU must be well aware of the risk that Erdoğan might break the deal if his demands are not met. Erdoğan has realised that maintaining control on the influx of refugees through the deal with Turkey is of such importance to many EU-countries, that as a result his position of influence in the EU has increased considerably, a position which he uses to support his own agenda. One prime example of Erdoğan's 'long arm to Europe' is the escalation of the Böhmermann-case, in which Erdoğan continued to pursue his policy of not tolerating satire aimed at himself, this time in Germany.<sup>130</sup> German Chancellor Merkel reacted somewhat restrainedly to the incidents in order not to antagonize Erdoğan and upset the precarious refugee deal.<sup>131</sup>

Secondly, serious doubts have been cast over Turkey's compliance with the refugee deal. Based on testimonies gathered in Turkey's south-east border regions with Syria, Amnesty International and Dutch news agency NOS reported that Syrian refugees were sent back to Syria by Turkey in an attempt to curb the amounts of legal registrations in Turkish refugee camps.<sup>132</sup> In a subsequent interview broadcast on Dutch television, the Turkish ambassador in the Netherlands vehemently denied the allegations and stated that with terrorism at its border, it is obvious why Turkey performs strict border controls.<sup>133</sup> For foreign political authorities, the accusations are very difficult to examine. However, the possibility of Turkish violation of the deal can already have a negative effect on Turkey's image as a partner for the EU.

For the purpose of this thesis, the Turkish policy of using the refugee deal in order to force concessions by the EU is crucial. In chapter 4, it was shown that Russia using *energy* as a bargaining tool, or as a political weapon, is one of the reasons why the EU seeks to improve its energy security. Although the situations are not exactly the same, Turkish policy with regard to the refugee deal resembles this use of political leverage and therefore indicates the possibility that resorting to Turkey will result in another energy partnership for the EU with a partner whose reliability is at least questionable.

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<sup>128</sup> EU Observer, 'Refugees and Turkey accession 'are separate issues, interview with Kati Piri' (March 17, 2016), as found on: <https://euobserver.com/migration/132705>, accessed on 2 July 2016.

<sup>129</sup> For example: Guardian, The, 'EU-Turkey visa deal on brink as Erdoğan refuses to change terror laws' (6 May 2016), as found on: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/06/erdogan-turkey-not-alter-anti-terror-laws-visa-free-travel-eu>, accessed on 2 July 2016; EurActiv.com, 'Erdoğan says Turkish Parliament will block EU refugee deal if no visa-free travel' (25 May 2016), as found on: <http://www.euractiv.com/section/justice-home-affairs/news/erdogan-says-turkey-parliament-will-block-eu-refugee-deal-if-no-visa-free-travel/>, accessed on 2 July 2016.

<sup>130</sup> German comedian Jan Böhmermann recited an offensive poem on Erdoğan during his German television show "Neo-Magazin Royale", aimed at illustrating the right of freedom of expression in Germany.

<sup>131</sup> Washington Post, The, 'A German comedian read a lewd poem about Turkey's Erdogan. Now he could face jail time' (7 April 2016), as found on: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/04/07/a-german-comedian-read-a-lewd-poem-about-turkeys-erdogan-now-he-could-face-jail-time/>, accessed on 3 July 2016.

<sup>132</sup> Amnesty International, 'Turkey: illegal mass returns of Syrian refugees expose fatal flaws in EU-Turkey deal' (1 April 2016), as found on: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/press-releases/2016/04/turkey-illegal-mass-returns-of-syrian-refugees-expose-fatal-flaws-in-eu-turkey-deal/>, accessed on 3 July 2016; NOS, 'Turkije stuurt actief vluchtelingen terug naar Syrië' (12 April 2016), as found on: <http://nos.nl/nieuwsuur/artikel/2098741-turkije-stuurt-actief-vluchtelingen-terug-naar-syrie.html>, accessed on 3 July 2016.

<sup>133</sup> The interview between NOS and the Turkish ambassador in the Netherlands was held on 12 April 2016 and can be viewed here: [http://www.npo.nl/nieuwsuur/12-04-2016/VPWON\\_1248435](http://www.npo.nl/nieuwsuur/12-04-2016/VPWON_1248435).

### 6.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter showed that Turkey is not only politically polarized and that president Erdoğan's political primacy is both undeniable and controversial, but also clarified that domestic security is being heavily undermined by threats coming from multiple distinct parties. Turkey is momentarily rather unstable, most vividly illustrated by the recent attempted coup d'état, and there are few reasons to assume that Turkey's instability will improve in the short term. The resurgence of Turkish-Kurdish violence in the south-east and the subsequent political and societal polarization should be described as 'self-inflicted' chaos and a solution seems far away. The Turkish leadership seems to prefer confrontation over reconciliation.

Moreover, the second section illustrated that Turkey's relations with the EU have intensified immensely through the refugee deal, while it similarly revealed the uneasiness of having Turkey as a partner. Erdoğan exploited Turkey's elevated bargaining position by openly pressuring the EU to meet his demands and to counter political satire against him, beyond the Turkish border. His confrontational expressions towards the EU and his threats to end the refugee deal if his demands are not met, lead to the unpleasant possibility, from the EU's point of view, that in the case the energy partnership is constructed and Erdoğan's demands are not met or his position is undermined by his European partners, he might use his leverage on energy supply as well. In the case of energy, the use of political leverage by Russia was one of the prime reasons for the EU to seek to reduce its dependence on Russia. Effectively, this situation would mean that the EU's strategy of diversification in order to improve its security of energy supply, will have failed, since Turkey's reliability is at much at stake as Russia's.

The developments which were described above beg the question whether Turkey currently fits the EU as its new energy partner. When referring to the initial question of this chapter, it appears that the image of Turkey as the EU's new, reliable partner in diversification of energy supply is being compromised by both internal chaos and external confrontations. In the following conclusion, a balanced answer will be given to the central research question of this analysis: Is Turkey a viable solution to the EU's objective of improving energy security through diversification?



## Conclusion

Improving the EU's security of energy supply has been nominated as one of the top policy priorities by the European Commission, due to high dependency on an energy partner whose reliability has been contested: Russia. In order to find a solution to the objective of improving EU energy security, the EU has formulated an energy security strategy, within which diversification of energy supply is a significant factor. In this search for alternative energy partners, the EU is looking at Turkey to engage in a new energy (transit) partnership. This research focused on the question whether Turkey is a viable solution to the EU's objective of improving its energy security through diversification.

This thesis started with a review of the existing literature on energy security, diversification of energy supply and the role Turkey could play in this respect. It showed that although the emphasis in the majority of the scholarly work is placed on political arguments for the EU to diversify from Russia, academics who have worked on Turkey's role in the EU's energy security strategy have neglected to pay sufficient attention to the basic political principles which have to be met by the EU's new energy partner – if Russia's political unreliability is the main reason for diversification, avoiding the same unreliability issues with a new energy partner should be paramount for the EU. Therefore, this thesis intends to fill this gap in the literature by focusing on the question of whether the EU's conveyed image of Turkey as a crucial energy security partner, by the EU, matches with an independent analysis of Turkey's stability and reliability. Moreover, this research evidences that in future research on energy security and diversification strategies, it is worth comparing and contrasting EU discourse on both negatively and positively viewed energy partners, applying the same political principles to find inconsistencies and thus, to fill gaps in the existing energy security literature.

To provide this analysis with a solid foundation, the second chapter provided a suitable theoretical and methodological framework. Here, securitization theory was linked with discourse analysis and the method of 'framing'. Securitization theory was important to this research as it stipulates the importance of the use of specific discourse to indicate a 'threat', related to a specific partner like Russia, while it can also indicate a 'solution' – Turkey, in this case. In this research, therefore, a 'framing' analysis, which is a specific type of discourse analysis, was conducted on official EU documentation by the Commission towards both Russia and Turkey, to assess how the Commission conveys images of Russia and Turkey as the EU's (potential) energy partners, which frames are used and how these are similar or different. The second chapter set the stage for the rest of this research.

Chapter 3 and 4 provided the necessary context to the research question. It was explained that energy security is a crucial part of EU energy policy and that the strategy of diversification primarily relates to the Southern Gas Corridor, of which Turkey as a transit state is an essential part. The fourth chapter provided an analysis of the current state of energy affairs between Russia and the EU and explained what the biggest impediments to Russia's reliability as an energy supplier are. Also, it introduced the reasons why the EU is looking at Turkey as an energy partner, while it also narrated past EU-Turkey relations and the Turkey's cumbersome accession process, which revealed that an EU-Turkey partnership has already not been as straightforward to achieve as it might seem.

The framing analysis in chapter 5 on DG ENER documentation showed that Russia is being handled with care: the *security* and *economic* frames are dominant, but confrontational discourse or political influences in the documentation are largely absent. The EU evidently attempts to emphasize its (economic) ties with Russia, instead of presenting Russia as a liability. Given the deeply problematic EU-Russia relationship already outlined, it must

be concluded that a deliberately cautious approach was employed by the Commission, which would be consistent, of course, with its highly technocratic, and therefore non-political role. The framing analysis with regard to Turkey showed that the *security* frame was dominant in these documents and that Turkey is presented as being of high value to the EU's energy security, while economic or environmental issues play inferior roles. Turkey is presented as a key player in the EU's diversification strategy: no political objections to this notion are mentioned, which clashes with the findings of the sixth, and final chapter of this thesis.

Chapter 6 focused on the desirability of Turkey as the EU's new energy partner. Analysis of both recent internal developments in Turkey and current external developments in EU-Turkey relations revealed that Turkey is politically rather fragile: internally, Turkey suffers from deep political and societal polarization, culminating in the recently attempted coup d'état by the Turkish military, which was struck down the sitting president Erdoğan and his supporters. Turkish political instability is enhanced furthermore by the resurgence of violence between the Kurdish PKK and the Turkish state and by the recent terrorist attacks by IS and 'TAK'. Externally, the war in Syria caused a 'refugee crisis' in Europe, leading to the conclusion of a contested 'quid pro quo' refugee deal between Turkey and the EU. Erdoğan exploited Turkey's new elevated bargaining position thoroughly, not only by openly pressurizing the EU to rapidly follow up on promises made with regard to visa liberalisation and re-energizing the stalled accession process, but also by intervening in political satire directed towards him in Germany and the Netherlands. All this suggests that Turkey should, like Russia, be viewed with caution.

Concluding, is Turkey a viable solution to the EU's objective of gaining energy security through diversification of energy supply? While there certainly are some elements in favour of an EU-Turkey energy partnership, the answer to the question is dominated by negative aspects. Yes, Turkey has the geographical advantage of being situated in between resource-rich (Caspian region) and resource-poor regions (the EU) and yes, a successful partnership in energy affairs could set an example to other common policy areas, but it is questionable whether these pros weigh up to the cons.

An important objection to nominating Turkey as a viable and *better* alternative to Russian gas is embodied by the current Turkish leader, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Considering his statements to terminate the refugee deal if his demands on visa liberalisation were not met and Erdoğan's diplomatic interventions on foreign political satire aimed towards him, it is not unimaginable that, in an instance where the stakes are high enough, he would use his leverage on energy as a political strategy – energy as a political weapon. Effectively, this would result in a situation in which two, instead of one, undesirable partnerships would be in place. If improving their energy security entails that the reliability of its supplier and transit states should be high, it is questionable as to what extent the EU would be aided by relying on Turkey.

Although Erdoğan could indeed be labelled as a political liability for the EU, some of Turkey's problems are more structurally harmful for an intensive partnership. The resurgence of violence between the Turkish state and the Kurdish PKK has clarified that a solution for the conflict which has been raging for over three decades seems far away, even if Erdoğan would be replaced. The conflict not only destabilizes the south-eastern regions of Turkey, but causes polarization throughout Turkish society, including the highest political chambers. Moreover, the Progress Reports on Turkey by the European Commission have shown that especially on the political criteria, predominantly freedom of expression, media freedom and independence of the judiciary, Turkey is performing worse each year, which means that the gap between fundamental EU values and Turkish values, is widening.

Lastly, the most prominent indicator of Turkey's instability and a new rift between the EU and Turkey is the recent coup d'état and Erdoğan's harsh repercussions as a consequence, with the possible introduction of the death penalty as a possible "red-line" for the EU, in terms of Turkish accession to the EU and, in the context of this thesis, future Turkish partnerships.

The EU risks falling in the trap of not learning its lessons from the past: while it deems that Russia is politically unreliable and that therefore other energy partners should be sought, it risks choosing another partner whose reliability is questionable, Turkey. This potential energy partner is already using its political leverage on another subject, the refugee crisis, to force EU concessions, which harms its credibility and reliability in relation to a future energy partnership as well. In sum, despite the logic of the diversification strategy and resorting to Turkey as the key, Turkey constitutes in the best case an awkward partner. In the worst case, however, they are potentially a liability similar to Russia, leading the EU back to square one and keeping the necessity of improving its security of energy supply very much alive.

Future research in this context could be conducted in several directions. Clearly, this research evidenced that new academic work on EU energy security and possible energy partners needs to include political realities, likelihoods of reliability of energy partners and lessons learned from the past, especially related to the Russian case. Using other research methods, such as interviews with high-level EU officials, might elucidate more in terms of the used discourse in this context and the intentionality behind it. This research showed that importing natural gas, whether through Russia or Turkey, will remain problematic, predominantly due to political reasons. The EU should therefore prioritize and academics could examine the possibilities of altering the EU's energy mix to a concoction in which the chosen energy resources can be distributed securely to all EU citizens, while minimalizing the need to rely on (potentially) unreliable partners.

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