

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEW RUSSIAN ENERGY POLICY AFTER THE CRIMEAN CRISIS: A CASE STUDY ON TURKSTREAM, POWER OF SIBERIA, AND NORD STREAM 2 NATURAL GAS PROJECTS

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**Abstract:** Between 1991 and 2000, Russia has experienced the negative consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union internally and externally. However, thanks to the centralist policies pursued by Vladimir Putin, accompanied by a positive international atmosphere and increasing energy prices, Russia has again become a noteworthy global power since the 2000s. Moscow has been exporting natural gas and oil to European markets mostly via Ukraine. However, Russia has used gas disruptions to punish Ukraine's rapprochement with the Euro-Atlantic bloc since the Orange Revolution (2004). The Kremlin seeks to control Ukraine because of its global significance to Russia — geostrategically, geopolitically, geoeconomically, and geoculturally. The rejection of the EU Association Agreement in November 2013 by the then-Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich resulted in the Maidan Events, the downfall of Yanukovich, pro-Europeans coming into power in Ukraine, and the annexation of Crimea by Russia. After that, the Euro-Atlantic bloc began to heavily sanction Moscow. Despite those sanctions, Russia has not altered its Ukraine policy. Russia has attached great importance to completing the TurkStream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2 projects. This paper will elaborate on the main parameters of Russia's new foreign energy policy after the Crimean crisis by focusing on these three natural gas pipeline projects.

**Keywords:** *Russia, Crimea, TurkStream, Power of Siberia, Nord Stream 2.*

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## KIRIM KRİZİ SONRASINDA RUSYA’NIN YENİ ENERJİ POLİTİKASINI ANLAMAK: TÜRK AKIMI, SİBİRYA’NIN GÜCÜ VE KIZYAKIM 2 DOĞALGAZ PROJELERİ HAKKINDA VAKA ANALİZİ

**Öz:** 1991 ve 2000 yılları arasında, Rusya, Sovyetler Birliği’nin dağılmasının olumsuz sonuçlarını içeride ve dışarıda tecrübe etmiştir. Ancak Vladimir Putin tarafından izlenen merkezîyetçi politikaların olumlu uluslararası atmosfer ve yükselen enerji fiyatlarıyla birleşmesi sayesinde, Rusya, 2000’li yıllardan bu yana yeniden önemli bir küresel güç haline gelmiştir. Rusya, Avrupa piyasasına petrol ve doğalgazı çoğunlukla Ukrayna üzerinden ihraç etmektedir. Fakat 2004 yılında Turuncu Devrim ile başlayan süreçte Ukrayna’nın Avro-Atlantik blok ile yakınlaşması, Rusya tarafından gaz kesintileri ile cezalandırılmıştır. Kremlin açısından Ukrayna, jeostratejik, jeopolitik, jeoekonomik ve jeokültürel açıdan önemli bir ülke olmasından ötürü kontrol altında tutulmalıdır. Kasım 2013’te Ukrayna’nın o zamanki Devlet Başkanı Viktor Yanukoviç tarafından AB ile Ortaklık Anlaşması’nın imzalanmasından ulusal güvenlik sebepleri ile vazgeçmesi, Maidan Olayları ile sonuçlanmıştır. Ayrıca, bu durum, Viktor Yanukoviç’in görevinden ayrılması, Avrupa yanlılarının Ukrayna’da başa geçmesi ve Kırım’ın Rusya tarafından ilhakına yol açmıştır. Bundan sonra, Avro-Atlantik blok tarafından Rusya’ya yönelik olarak ağır yaptırımlar uygulanmaya başlanmıştır. Fakat Rusya, yaptırımlara rağmen Ukrayna politikasından geri adım atmamakta ve o dönemden beri Türk Akımı, Sibirya’nın Gücü ve Kuzey Akım-2 projelerinin geliştirilmesine özel bir önem atfetmektedir. Bu çalışmada, Rusya’nın Kırım krizinden bu yana uyguladığı yeni dış enerji politikasının ana parametreleri, söz konusu üç boru hattı projesine yoğunlaşmak suretiyle ele alınacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Rusya, Kırım, Türk Akımı, Sibirya’nın Gücü, Kuzey Akım 2.*

## **Introduction**

From 1991 to 2000, Russia experienced the internal and external ramifications of the Soviet Union's collapse. Russia's situation began to improve under the administration of Vladimir Putin, an ex-KGB officer, since March 2000. Once again, Russia has become a notable global power because of the Putin administration's centralist policies, supplemented by an encouraging international atmosphere and growing energy prices.

Since the early days of the Putin administration, the Kremlin has preferred proactive foreign energy policies to amalgamate Moscow's internal and external power. Moscow has been shipping natural gas and oil to European markets primarily through Ukraine. However, beginning with the 2004 Orange Revolution, Ukraine has become an area of conflict between Russia and the Euro-Atlantic bloc. Russia has penalized Ukraine's gradual rapprochement with the Euro-Atlantic bloc by disrupting these natural gas supplies. Control of Ukraine is still significant to the Kremlin geostrategically, geopolitically, geoeconomically, and geoculturally; and Western control over Ukraine must be disallowed by using all hard and soft power tools.

The refusal of the EU Association Agreement in November 2013 by then-Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich brought about mass demonstrations known as the "Maidan Events". Eventually, demonstrations ended with the collapse of Yanukovich's government, pro-Europeans' coming into power in Ukraine, and the annexation of Crimea by Russia. After that, the Euro-Atlantic bloc (the United States and the European Union) implemented heavy sanctions against Russia.

Despite these sanctions, Russia has not stepped back from its Ukraine policy. Moreover, Moscow has been establishing new transportation projects for natural gas with Turkey, China, and several European countries to counter these sanctions. Within this frame, Russia has attached great importance to completing the TurkStream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2 projects since the Crimean crisis.

In this paper we analyze the chief considerations of new Russian energy policies since 2014, concentrating on the TurkStream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipelines. The first part highlights the significant components of Russian energy policy during the 1990s and 2000s. Second, we examine the important aspects of the 2013–2014 Ukraine (Crimean) Crisis. The third part describes the noteworthy natural gas projects developed by Russia since

2014, namely TurkStream, Power of Siberia, and Nord Stream 2. Finally, we conclude with our evaluations and projections.

### **1. The Fundamental Parameters of Russian Energy Strategy in the 1990s and 2000s**

The disintegration of the Soviet Union destabilized the Russian economy. Through privatizations and incorporation with international markets, instituting a free-market economy became the favored plan to rebuild the Russian economy. However, this caused an economic crisis in Russia in the 1990s due to low oil prices and few completed energy projects.<sup>3</sup> Russia's post-Cold War energy policy was designed to make Moscow an energy monopoly, benefitting from increasing oil and gas prices. Rosneftgaz, founded by the conversion of the Fuel and Oil Ministry into a firm, will likely perform an active part in this process. With government support, Rosneftgaz grew by working together with the Western companies in new fields (e.g., Sakhalin Island and Northern Siberia). However, due to disagreements between the Duma (Russian parliament) and the government, contracted agreements could not be realized, and new contracts could not occur. The 1998 economic depression also negatively affected the Russian energy policy in the 1990s. An upsurge in the Russian foreign trade deficit and depreciation of the Russian ruble accompanied this impact. Responding to these negative economic indicators, Moscow developed and implemented new energy projects. Consequently, in this way, the Russian economic system has recovered.

The renaissance in the energy field, predisposed by this recovery, has prompted oil and directed hydrocarbon exports to reach the projected points.<sup>4</sup> Net oil exports were around 3 million barrels per day in 1994 and rose to 4 million barrels in 2000. This increase has continued and reached 7 million barrels in 2008 and 7,250 million barrels in 2013. Due to this progress, the Russian economy maintained an average of 4.4 % growth between 2002 and 2014, with half of the export originating from energy sales. Therefore, there was significant growth in the country's GDP and GDP per capita. The GDP per capita was approximately \$3,000 in Russia in 2000; this increased to \$7,000 in 2014. Indisputably, this success was the result of energy strategies implemented by Vladimir Putin. Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin and became the Russian President in 2000.

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<sup>3</sup> Anna Andrianova & Dina Khrennikova (2016), "How Cheap Oil Is Squeezing Russia's Economy – It's expanding the deficit and spurring inflation", *Bloomberg*, 26.01.2016, Date of Accession: 09.08.2016 from <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-01-26/how-cheap-oil-is-squeezing-russia-s-economy>.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Russell (2015), "The Russian economy: Will Russia ever catch up?", European Parliamentary Research Service, March 2015, Date of Accession: 09.08.2016 from [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2015/551320/EPRS\\_IDA\(2015\)551320\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2015/551320/EPRS_IDA(2015)551320_EN.pdf), p. 5.

Meanwhile, the Russian state was gaining control over the Russian energy sector through expropriations, owing to Putin’s assessment of energy reserves in the context of national security. Two academicians from Pittsburgh University first suggested this policy in a paper titled “*Strategic Planning and Politics*”, written in 1978. Putin used six pages of this study in his Ph.D. Dissertation in the St. Petersburg Mining Institute.<sup>5</sup> The study’s principal hypothesis was that the state should direct national champion industries, and the income from them should be reserved and used for the sake of the public.<sup>6</sup> Thus, it is unsurprising that the Russian government controls approximately 50 % of Gazprom’s shares, and Rosneftgaz has control over other energy companies. Implementing this strategy began with Viktor Chernomyrdin’s dismissal from Gazprom, a former nomenclature, in 2000 and the elimination of Russian oligarchs including Vladimir Gusinsky, Boris Berezovsky, and Mikhail Khodorovsky—from the energy sector by numerous allegations and detentions.<sup>7</sup>

**Graphic I: The Importance of Energy Companies for the Russian Federation<sup>8</sup>**



<sup>5</sup> The name of this dissertation is “Mineral and Raw Materials and The Development Strategy of Russian Economy (Mineral ve Hammadde Kaynakları ve Rus Ekonomisinin Gelişme Stratejisi)”. Cited from Cenk Başlamış & Okay Deprem (2018), *Vladimir Vladimiroviç Putin: Rusya'yı Ayağa Kaldıran Lider*, İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, p.184, Azime Telli (2015), “Rusya Federasyonu’nun Enerji Kaynakları”, in *Putin’in Ülkesi: Yeni Yüzyıl Eşiğinde Rusya Federasyonu Analizi*, (ed. by İrfan Kaya Ülger), Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık, p. 189.

<sup>6</sup> Sezin İba Gürsoy & Adnan Seyaz (2015), “Rusya’nın Enerji Politikaları: Dar Etkiden Geniş Etkiye Geçiş”, in *Enerji Diplomasisi*, (eds. by Hasret Çomak & Caner Sancaktar & Zafer Yıldırım), İstanbul: Beta Basım Yayım Dağıtım, pp. 200-201.

<sup>7</sup> Cenk Başlamış & Okay Deprem (2018), *Vladimir Vladimiroviç Putin: Rusya'yı Ayağa Kaldıran Lider*, pp. 147-161, 184-185.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Bierman & Elena Mazneva (2016), “Rosneft May Top Gazprom as Kremlin's Crown Jewel of Energy”, *Bloomberg*, 14.03.2016, Date of Accession: 30.01.2021 from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-14/rosneft-may-top-gazprom-as-kremlin-s-crown-jewel-of-energy>.

Since Russia's independence, a combined and officially developed "Foreign Energy Policy" has held a central place within the Russian economic system. The year 2000 was a turning point for Russia due to Putin's presidency and his dynamic contribution to Russia's new foreign policy<sup>9</sup> and energy strategy.<sup>10</sup> Russia has seen extensive alterations within the framework of domestic and foreign policy, especially after the transition into the Putin era in 2000. Putin has underscored, "Unless Russia is socially and economically developed, one cannot mention the possibility of being a superpower again and if this is not done, it will be wiped out".<sup>11</sup> Putin established order within the country through centrist policies, positively affecting Moscow's prestige and power in the international arena. As the Kremlin acquired power and provided order within Russia, it improved the proficiency of its foreign policy.<sup>12</sup> Within this perspective, Putin has successfully amalgamated Russian foreign policy with the Russian energy strategy. Nevertheless, the revival of Putin's Russia is also indebted to a constructive international atmosphere. In the first term of Putin's presidency, the Russian economy benefited from high hydrocarbon prices in the international market.

Timely increases in energy demands of countries like China and India, and uncertainties in countries with energy resources, have increased energy prices. Russia holds one of the world's most significant hydrocarbon reserves and enjoys increased status within the energy sector's milieu under current conditions.<sup>13</sup> Moscow currently controls just about 25 % of the world's gas reserves and 10 % of oil resources. Oil production is anticipated to continue for 22 more years based on existing reserves. The estimate for gas production is 80 more years.<sup>14</sup> The Russian hydrocarbon sector holds to a common theme: despite 25 years of reform initiatives, its structure and decisions are still principally regulated by the central planning mechanism and the staff of the former USSR. Chief features of this are:

<sup>9</sup> "National Security Concept of the Russian Federation - Approved by Presidential Decree No. 24 of 10 January 2000", Date of Accession: 08.11.2016 from [http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/official\\_documents/-/asset\\_publisher/CptICk6B6BZ29/content/id/589768](http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6B6BZ29/content/id/589768).

<sup>10</sup> Mesut Hakkı Caşın (2015), *Novgorod Knezliği'nden XXI. Yüzyıla Rus İmparatorluk Stratejisi*, Ankara: Atlas Kitap, pp. 363-365.

<sup>11</sup> Tuğçe Varol-Sevim (2014), "Rus Dış Enerji Politikası ve Yeni Hedef Kuzey Doğu Asya", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 11, No.41, Date of Accession: 12.02.2021 from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/694316>, p. 91.

<sup>12</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Türkiye-Rusya Federasyonu Arasındaki Mevcut Gerginliğin Avrupa Enerji Güvenliğine Olası Yansımaları Hakkında Bir Değerlendirme", in *Mavi Elma: Türkiye-Avrupa İlişkileri*, (eds. by Ozan Örmeci & Hüseyin Işıksal), Ankara: Gazi Kitabevi, pp. 95-96.

<sup>13</sup> Valeriy Kryukov (2014), "Mix of Russian Liquid Hydrocarbons: Reasons/Sources for Change and Further Prospects", *Perceptions*, Vol. XIX, No: 3, pp. 61-63.

<sup>14</sup> Ainur Nogayeva (2011), *Orta Asya'da ABD, Rusya ve Çin: Stratejik Denge Arayışları*, Ankara: USAK Yayınları, pp.55-56. Cited by Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Yeditepe University Social Institute Department of English Political Science and International Relations, p. 156.

1. A pledge to the alteration from one oil and gas deposit to another (firstly it represented the Volga-Ural Petroleum Field, then the Western Siberia and the Far East, and the Arctic Shelf Area and Far Eastern Seas),
2. A principal emphasis on retaining and swiftly developing known or large fields (a highlight on economies of scale),
3. Creation of operations for producing hydrocarbons intended for domestic consumption, as well as export to other countries,
4. The composition of a single and strictly merged infrastructure to the conveyance, handing out, and shipping of hydrocarbon resources.

Thus, the six essential targets of Russian energy policy are put forward by Nikolai Kaveshnikov as:<sup>15</sup>

1. The realization of energy exports to the Commonwealth of Independent States, which prefers the cheap pricing of the older market-centered model,
2. Prioritizing of EU countries in terms of export and the guaranteeing of branching out in energy supply—Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean Line, Russian-Chinese Natural Gas Pipeline, starting the construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Sakhalin Island, and LNG export to the United States,
3. Taking energy contracts with EU countries into account and making them as long-term as possible,
4. Facilitating steadier and more cost-effective energy transportation with EU countries by creating direct energy transportation lines as far as possible,
5. Ascribing proper worth to Central Asian countries. In that context, growing energy investments in the region and the continuing of the region's pricing regime. Furthermore, establishing supply continuity via energy transportation lines passing from the Caspian region to the Russian Federation,
6. Developing electricity, petroleum products, construction services, and nuclear energy exports instead of crude oil to diversify energy exports.

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<sup>15</sup> Nikolay Kaveshnikov (2010), "The issue of energy security in relations between Russia and the European Union", *European Security*, Vol. 19, No: 4, pp. 596-597. Cited by Mesut Hakkı Caşın & Giray Saynur Derman (2016), *Rus Dış Politikasındaki Değişim ve Kremlin Penceresinden Yeni Ufuklar*, Ankara: SRT Yayınları, pp. 384-385.

Moscow holds the largest share of the world's verified gas resources. It represents the second largest oil producer in the world and the third principal energy consumer. Energy resources compose 65 % of Russian exports.<sup>16</sup> The prominence of energy resources has increased steadily within Russian foreign policy. Gazprom, however, is the most vital establishment to Moscow's energy policy. Gazprom, instituted in 1989 as one of the most influential energy firms of the world, fundamentally works on the heating, electricity power, geological exploration, production, transportation, storage, processing, and marketing activities of hydrocarbons.<sup>17</sup> The company holds 17 % of the world's gas reserves, representing 60 % in the country. Gazprom intends to retain its leadership among global energy firms by increasing new markets, differentiating its business activities, and ensuring the security of supplies. The Kremlin accounts for 22.5 % of the world's gas production. Gazprom exclusively contributes 25 % of Russia's tax income.<sup>18</sup> Natural gas became dominant in Russia's energy economy long ago. In 2030, gas will constitute 55 % of Russia's primary energy consumption. Gazprom's recognition as the world's prevalent gas company comes from the dominance of natural gas within the Russian economy. After his Gazprom presidency, Dmitry Medvedev became the President of the Russian Federation between 2008 and 2012 and later worked as Putin's closest ally. Gazprom produces 65 % of Russian gas and obtains more than half of the gas that it drills from vast gas basins, specifically Urengoy, Yamburg, and Medvejye. Additionally, due to decreasing reserves in these basins, Gazprom has explored technological innovations to expand operations in new basins.<sup>19</sup>

Gazprom sells its natural gas to central and Western Europe through long-term agreements. Within the EU, considered the primary buyer, Germany, Italy, Turkey<sup>20</sup>, France, and Hungary are the primary importers of Russian gas in bulk. Gazprom supplies natural gas acquired from independent producers via mid and long-term contracts along with the gas it produces.<sup>21</sup> Gazprom provides this gas to consumers and profits from exportation. Moscow sells 65 % of its gas to the EU. Predictions estimate that this rate will increase in the future. The Kremlin

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<sup>16</sup> Ainur Nogayeva (2011), *Orta Asya'da ABD, Rusya ve Çin: Stratejik Denge Arayışları*, pp. 56-58.

<sup>17</sup> Gazprom, "About Gazprom", Date of Accession: 09.08.2016 from <http://www.gazprom.com/about/>.

<sup>18</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Türkiye-Rusya Federasyonu Arasındaki Mevcut Gerginliğin Avrupa Enerji Güvenliğine Olası Yansımaları Hakkında Bir Değerlendirme", pp. 96-97.

<sup>19</sup> Valeriy Kryukov (2014), "Mix of Russian Liquid Hydrocarbons: Reasons/Sources for Change and Further Prospects", p. 78. Cited by Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", pp. 160-161.

<sup>20</sup> Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Yeditepe University Social Institute Department of English Political Science and International Relations, p. 161.

<sup>21</sup> Mesut Hakkı Caşın & Giray Saynur Derman (2016), *Rus Dış Politikasındaki Değişim ve Kremlin Penceresinden Yeni Ufuklar*, pp. 390-392.

seeks to carefully institute its supremacy in Eurasia by countering color revolutions in the region. Russia attaches greater importance to opportunist bilateral connections and issue-based many-sided links afore being principal position in the region. To that end, energy is Moscow's most effective tool.<sup>22</sup> The Kremlin's economic goal remains reinforcing its energy position in the world markets via coordinating activities with other energy producers, expanding pipelines in new geographical directions, increasing energy prices for its neighbors, and controlling former USSR territories' transportation systems.

Moscow's efforts in Ukraine are focused on controlling Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Moscow has established a parallel system to decrease reliance on Kyiv for gas transport to Europe.<sup>23</sup> The Kremlin has sought authorizations from Turkey and Southern European states to build a pipeline transporting its energy to Europe under the Black Sea with the objective of bypassing Kyiv. Moscow has forced Kyiv to share possession of Naftogaz, a state-controlled energy firm of Ukraine. Moscow has acquired shares of Naftogaz as a means to avoid escalating new energy conflicts and prevent natural gas crises like those in 2005 and 2006. As accentuated by Konstantin Kosachyev, the then-President of Foreign Affairs Committee of State Duma, the central issue has been to create a distinct transit zone among European, Chinese, and Asian markets for Ukraine and Russia. In Central Asia and Caucasia, the Kremlin has endeavored to bring hydrocarbon-rich states namely Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan to sell their resources less competitively to Europe and China through the negotiation of pricing deals with these three states to secure the valued assets. Along with remarkable prices and an operative transportation network, Caspian states remain uncertain about building new pipelines proposed by the non-Russian states.<sup>24</sup>

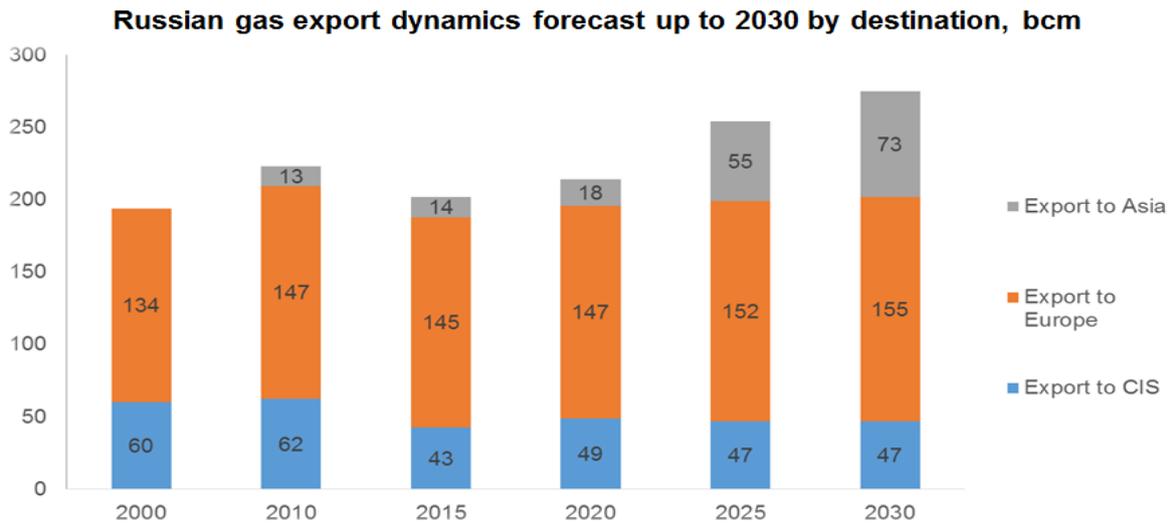
**Graphic II:** *Russian gas export dynamics forecast up to 2030 by destination, bcm*<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Habibe Özdal (2015), "Rusya'nın Eski SSCB Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri", in *Putin'in Ülkesi: Yeni Yüzyıl Eşiğinde Rusya Federasyonu Analizi Siyasal Sistem, Ekonomi, Güvenlik, Dış Politika* (ed. by İrfan Kaya Ülger), Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık, pp. 438-439.

<sup>23</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Türkiye-Rusya Federasyonu Arasındaki Mevcut Gerginliğin Avrupa Enerji Güvenliğine Olası Yansımaları Hakkında Bir Değerlendirme", pp. 98-99.

<sup>24</sup> Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", pp. 162-163.

<sup>25</sup> Tatiana Mitrova & Gergely Molnar (2015), "Russian Gas Market: Entering New Era", Cedigaz Insights: Country Reports, 09.03.2015, Date of Accession: 18.02.2021 from <https://www.cedigaz.org/russian-gas-market-entering-new-era/>.



Source: Authors, ERI RAS

## 2. The Ongoing Ukraine Crisis (Annexation of Crimea by Russia)

After the formal collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, Ukraine became an independent state. However, during its post-independence era, Ukraine has always remained a battleground between Russia and the Euro-Atlantic bloc due to its geopolitical, geostrategic, geoeconomic, and geocultural standing. Ukraine has felt consistent pressure from both Moscow and the West. In November 2013, the then-President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich refused to approve the Association Agreement with the EU—citing national security concerns—and suspended the preparation committee working on this deal. Subsequently, he inked a deal including \$15 billion in financial support and similar reductions on gas prices with Moscow. However, pro-Westerners in Ukraine opposed this decision and prepared demonstrations against him. As the result of numerous events, Yanukovich had to step down from the presidency. Moreover, the crisis spread to other regions of Ukraine, such as Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. Since then, disagreements between the Kremlin and the Western bloc have continued escalating with reciprocal limitations and strong statements.<sup>26</sup>

However, there is a context for Crimea's criticism of Russian Eurasianism. The Kremlin's interest in Crimea is grounded in its sustained push to claim the Black Sea region during Catherine the Great's administration (1762-1796). That goal was achieved with the 1774 Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. Then, Crimea became a territory of Tsarist Russia in 1783.<sup>27</sup> For

<sup>26</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Russian Eurasianism versus American Eurasianism within the Perspectives of Brzezinski and Dugin: A Case Study on the Recent Ukrainian Crisis", *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, Vol. 9, No: 2, p. 174; Cenk Başlamış & Okay Deprem (2018), *Vladimir Vladimiroviç Putin: Rusya'yı Ayağa Kaldıran Lider*, pp. 243-251.

<sup>27</sup> Nazım Cafersoy (2014), "Rusya'nın Deniz Stratejisi ve Karadeniz", in *Hazar'dan Karadeniz'e Stratejik Bakış*, (ed. by Okan Yeşilot), İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, pp. 139-141.

centuries, the Black Sea region has represented a substantial geographical interest for Moscow because it is the base to the Straits, Dardanelles, and the Mediterranean. These have been closely associated with Moscow's centuries-long strategy of accessing warm seas. At Vladimir Putin's direction, the Kremlin has placed considerable focus on naval power through countless national security, foreign policy, and military doctrines in recent years. Among the many strategic doctrines established by Moscow, the Russian Maritime Doctrine 2020, published on July 27, 2001, has been one of the most significant. This doctrine stresses that Moscow remains a dominant naval power due to its historical and geographical locations and its ability to reach the world's three oceans.<sup>28</sup> The document concentrates on the country's exceptional naval power, the endorsement of measures to continue Russian supremacy, and the Russian naval fleets' global portability. It also establishes Sevastopol as a critical military base within the framework of the Black Sea Fleet. In an agreement between Vladimir Putin and Viktor Yanukovich in 2010, Russia has safeguarded naval access to Sevastopol until 2042.<sup>29</sup>

On May 11, 2013, Alexander Fedotenkov, the deputy admiral of the Black Sea Fleet, has stressed the Kremlin's determination to continue basing in Sevastopol after 2042. Additionally, the Kremlin now controls new bases in Abkhazia and South Ossetia following the 2008 Russian-Georgian War. These bases are being used for strengthening its domination in the Black Sea region as well. Furthermore, Ankara, the Russian base in the Mediterranean/Black Sea has become a much more distressing question when considered with Moscow's policies to launch naval fleets in Crimea and Georgia. The 2020 Russian Naval Doctrine proposed a new focus: sea lines used for Russia's transfer of energy resources to outside markets. Therefore, the Nord Stream in the Baltics, and the South Stream and Blue Stream in the Black Sea, prove the concrete applications of Russian naval doctrine.<sup>30</sup> After the 1991 August Coup and the breakdown of Republics, the USSR has slowly deteriorated, and Crimea has become an independent republic in Ukraine. Ethnic Russians residing within the peninsula have started to increase efforts to free Crimea and re-integration with Russia. At the

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<sup>28</sup> For more information please see, "Maritime Doctrine of Russian Federation 2020: APPROVED President Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, Pr-1387", 27.07.2001, Date of Accession: 14.02.2017 from [http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Russian\\_Maritime\\_Policy\\_2020.pdf](http://www.oceanlaw.org/downloads/arctic/Russian_Maritime_Policy_2020.pdf); President of Russia (2015), "Russian Federation Marine Doctrine: Vladimir Putin held a meeting to discuss the new draft of Russia's Marine Doctrine", 26.07.2015, Date of Accession: 14.02.2017 from <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/50060>.

<sup>29</sup> Sławomir Matuszak & Anna Górska (2010), "Ukraine and Russia: a hindered rapprochement", Centre for Eastern Studies, Issue: 44, 15.12.2010, Date of Accession: 14.01.2017 from [https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/commentary\\_44\\_0.pdf](https://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/commentary_44_0.pdf), pp. 1-2.

<sup>30</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Russian Eurasianism versus American Eurasianism within the Perspectives of Brzezinski and Dugin: A Case Study on the Recent Ukrainian Crisis", p. 176.

same time, Moscow's nationalist forces have stated their sponsorships to the Russian community in Crimea. The enduring existence of the former USSR's primary naval base in Sevastopol has reintroduced Crimea's status as a principal point of conflict between Moscow and Kyiv.<sup>31</sup>

Russia's policies toward the peninsula focused on the idea that the peninsula belonged to Moscow. This explains the Kremlin's strategy of supporting the ethnic Russian minority in the region and, also, its assessment that Crimea related matters are an internal situation. The anti-government demonstrations starting at the end of November 2013 have inverted as a result of violent protests against the January 16th laws. Russia, the major neighbor of Ukraine, was quiet on the way to these events, which shocked everybody.<sup>32</sup> The \$50 billion-Sochi Winter Olympic Games were regarded as the central reason for this silence. Given that the boycotts of the organization were viewed as a precise plan in terms of revealing new Kremlin, Putin had favored remaining silent to avoid damaging it. However, after the creation of Ukraine's new government, Yatsenyuk's Prime Ministry, and the cessation of the Russian language as the official language, as well as the invalidation of the Law on Minority Languages, pro-Russian marches in the Crimea Autonomous Republic have increased. This has caused the issue to spread to other cities of North Ukraine. The Kremlin's military responded to these marches. Most importantly, the Kremlin downplayed the fact that these activities had been planned before the events in Ukraine. On February 28, 2014, the Kremlin organized a four-day military exercise, which involved 150,000 soldiers.<sup>33</sup> For some experts working on this issue, the Kremlin has revealed its goal to consolidate its position within this region via large-scale military operations. Within this framework, this action of the Kremlin ought to be evaluated as Russian severe cautions in the direction of Ukraine for not using force in Crimea. When we look at Crimea's current status, such as their 60 % Russian population and its protective nature regarding its independence from Russia, it's understandable that they see a pro-active policy and military action (direct or indirect) as normal.<sup>34</sup> To understand this situation better, we must understand the Kremlin's reaction to the Western perception of their actions regarding Ukraine, exemplified by the remarks of

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<sup>31</sup> Atilla Sandıklı & Elnur İsmayıl (2016), "Ukrayna Krizi'nin Bölgesel Güvenliğe Etkileri ve Türkiye", in *Bölgesel Sorunlar ve Türkiye*, (eds. by Atilla Sandıklı & Erdem Kaya), İstanbul: BİLGESAM Yayınları, pp. 358-362.

<sup>32</sup> Mesut Hakkı Çaşın (2015), *Novgorod Knezliği'nden XXI. Yüzyıla Rus İmparatorluk Stratejisi*, pp. 411-416.

<sup>33</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Russian Eurasianism versus American Eurasianism within the Perspectives of Brzezinski and Dugin: A Case Study on the Recent Ukrainian Crisis", p. 177.

<sup>34</sup> Cenk Başlamış & Okay Deprem (2018), *Vladimir Vladimiroviç Putin: Rusya'yı Ayağa Kaldıran Lider*, pp. 258-269.

Mikhail Margelov: “*Since the beginning of the Ukraine Crisis, the West has failed to forsake the principle according to which only Western interests are legitimate. Nor has it learned the lesson of the events of August 2008, when Russia intervened in the war unleashed by the regime of Mikheil Saakashvili, in order to enforce peace in the region. The Georgian Crisis should have made clear to everyone that Russia is not only ready to make its voice heard, but is also prepared to use force when its national interests are at stake.*”<sup>35</sup>

On March 16, 2014, pro-Russian groups organized an unfair and predetermined vote on Crimea’s status. The independence referendum that was denied by 99 % of Crimean Turks has now ended up with 97 % approval for Crimea’s re-integration with Russia.<sup>36</sup> This was regarded as illegal by several Western governments, accompanied by the United States, as well as Turkey and the EU. But, on March 18, 2014, Putin announced the signing of a draft law, predicting the occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol and the formation of federal regions in the renowned Ekaterininsky Saloon in the Kremlin Palace. Between March 20 and March 21 of 2014, this decision was successively approved by State Duma and the Russian Federation Council.<sup>37</sup> The Western world has been incompetent in counteracting this initiative, and they have issued many unproductive sanctions aimed at Russian interests. Limitations on the traveling of Russian currency and Russians, the exclusion of Moscow’s involvement from future G-8 meetings, and the deferral of military and civilian relations with the Russian government are among the suggested sanctions. These efforts by Western governments are unlikely to deter the Kremlin from advancing its geopolitical interests. To place it plainly, Moscow has been effective in controlling the circumstances to accomplish a victory in Crimea. Russian President Vladimir Putin did pay an official visit to Crimea in order to participate in the remembrance ceremonies of the Soviets’ victory against Nazis (Victory Day) on May 9, 2014. Putin’s speech about the reintegration of Crimea with the Russian Federation as a historic event has underscored that the year 2014 will be remembered in Crimea as the year of reuniting with Russia and their pledge to historic legitimacy. On May 11, 2014, a referendum for the consecutive formation and confirmation of independence of Lugansk and the Donestk People’s Republics from the Ukraine was organized by the pro-Russian groups in these two regions. Following this referendum, the newly formed People’s

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<sup>35</sup> Richard Sakwa (2016), *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*, New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> *Russian Times* (2014), “95.7 % of Crimeans in referendum voted to join Russia - preliminary results”, 16.03.2014, Date of Accession: 14.02.2017 from <https://www.rt.com/news/crimea-vote-join-russia-210/>.

<sup>37</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), “Rusya Federasyonu’nun Yakın Çevre Doktrini Kapsamında Dağlık Karabağ ve Ukrayna Politikaları Anlamak”, in *VIII. Uluslararası Uludağ Uluslararası İlişkiler Kongresi Küresel ve Bölgesel Sistemde Devlet ve Devlet dışı Aktörler* (eds. by Tayyar Arı & Ferhat Pirinççi), Bursa: DORA Basım-Yayın Dağıtım, pp.76-77.

Republic of Donetsk has accepted its unification with Russia. On May 24, 2014, the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk united in a ceremony with numerous Russian officials present and now label themselves as Novorossiya (New Russia).<sup>38</sup>

**Map I: Russian influence in Europe**<sup>39</sup>



As of November 25, 2018, Russia's Federal Security Service took hold of three Ukrainian Navy ships after the vessels trespassed through Russian territorial waters in the Kerch Strait and continued to take part in risky maneuvers while traveling from the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov port of Mariupol. The Russian Foreign Ministry has stated that the three Ukrainian vessels they arrested during the Kerch Strait incident have since been returned. The Russian Foreign Ministry has stated that the return of these vessels has been possible ever since Moscow concluded its inquiry and that the ships were not needed anymore. Also, Russia will continue to pledge to defeat instigations at its border. Similarly, Ukrainian Navy Commander Ihor Voronchenko has mentioned that *"the procedure of Russia's return of the three Ukrainian vessels, detained last November in the Kerch Strait for illegally crossing Russia's maritime border, is being completed, and the vessels will be soon hauled to Odessa. The acceptance and transfer is being finalized, and we are starting the haulage."* The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) began the first trials concerning the vessels from November 21-22, 2019. Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister for European

<sup>38</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "Russian Eurasianism versus American Eurasianism within the Perspectives of Brzezinski and Dugin: A Case Study on the Recent Ukrainian Crisis", pp. 179-180.

<sup>39</sup> Oksana Grytsenko & Oleg Sukhov (2016), "Kremlin influence rises in Europe", *Kyiv Post*, 17.11.2016, Date of Accession: 01.02.2021 from <https://www.kyivpost.com/world/kremlin-influence-rises-europe.html>.

Integration, Olena Zerkal, has mentioned that Kiev will not discard its policies to bring Russia to justice within the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) even subsequently the giving back of the Ukrainian vessels. However, Moscow has pointed out that it will not participate in the trials, as the ITLOS is unauthorized to deal with the case.<sup>40</sup> Dmitry Peskov, spokesman for the Kremlin, has put forward Russia's official stance on this issue: "*Russia's decision to return to Ukraine the vessels, detained in 2018 in the Kerch Strait for illegally crossing Russia's border, has nothing to do with the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS). As for vessel transfer, you know that on board of these vessels the violation of the state border of the Russian Federation was conducted. So, our border guards and the Federal Security Service deal with this, and we ask you to address them for comment.*"<sup>41</sup>

The act of returning the Ukrainian ships is intended to be an additional confidence-building initiative between Moscow and Kyiv. For example, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy hopes for a top-level meeting in the Normandy Format with French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. These will remain the highest-level talks carried out since 2016. While the relationship between Moscow and Kyiv remains uncertain, Zelenskiy's unanticipated win in April 2019 has demonstrated a transformation in the long-standing clash.<sup>42</sup>

### **3. Moscow's Important Pipeline Projects in Post-2014 Crimean Crisis Period**

As of July 16, 2014, Washington has imposed new sanctions on the financial, defense, and energy sectors of Moscow. Here it would be uncertain that the Europeans which would remain more directly influenced economically would participate these sanctioning policies. However, on July 17, 2014, a shocking incident occurred. The separatists, believing that they were targeting a Ukrainian troop plane, and using a Russian-made ground to air missile, shot down a Malaysian airliner in Eastern Ukraine. All of the 298 passengers perished; two-thirds of them were Dutch, but other European nations participated in the new sanctions. In this context, then-U.S. President Obama's Treasury Secretary, Jacob Lew, emphasized that the sanctions would turn out to be "the centerpiece of the international reaction to Russia's hostile engagements within the Ukraine". The war has drawn on since then and seen at least 14,000

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<sup>40</sup> *Sputnik International* (2019), "Russia Transfers to Kiev Three Ukrainian Vessels Detained during Kerch Strait Incident", 18.11.2019, Date of Accession: 24.04.2020 from <https://sputniknews.com/world/201911181077338505-russia-transfers-to-kiev-three-ukrainian-vessels-detained-during-kerch-strait-incident/>.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Deutsche Welle* (2019), "Russia returns navy vessels seized from Ukraine", 18.11.2019, Date of Accession: 24.04.2020 from <https://www.dw.com/en/russia-returns-navy-vessels-seized-from-ukraine/a-51286196>.

deaths, broadening the gap between Russia and Ukraine, and also between Russia and the West. One group of sanctions have targeted specific individuals and organizations deemed close to Putin or taking active positions in Crimea and the Donbas. A second group of sanctions included limiting Moscow's access to the global financial system and its capability to advance money within the international markets, simultaneously preventing foreign investment toward Russia.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to these punishments, the economic factors of the politically driven Ukrainian Crisis have been an important issue.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the Russian economy has experienced a severe halt as a result of taking out foreign investments, as well as the implication of speculations. For instance, on March 10, 2014, the Russian stock exchange market experienced a 12 % loss, the lowest level in the last six years. Subsequently, the Russian Central Bank increased the interest rates from 5.5 % to 7 % to avoid the devaluation. The sanctions were implemented instantaneously by Western states after the Russia's annexation of Crimea. Sanctions continued in 2015 and 2016. These sanctions have overwhelmingly damaged Russia-EU relations because the most powerful component of these two foreign policy actors' mutual economic connection has been their energy-intensive commercial activities.<sup>45</sup> While the trade volume between Germany and Russia in 2012 remained more than 76 billion Euros, the trade volume between Moscow and the EU occurred at the level of 335 billion dollars. As of 2013, Russia was listed as the foremost energy supplier of Germany, importing 71 % of the country's energy. Furthermore, Moscow supplied Germany with 35 % of its oil, 38 % of its gas and 25 % of its coal. As one of the primary gas suppliers of the world, Russia supplies a third of Europe's gas demand, 40 % of Germany's requirements (the leading economy of Europe), and all of the Baltic States' gas consumptions.<sup>46</sup>

Moscow and Brussels embrace a mutually supportive economic association. The European states need Russian natural gas, and Russia needs the European market and its technological progress. While a win-win situation exists, the relationship between the EU and Russia can be

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<sup>43</sup> Daniel Yergin (2020), *The New Map: Energy, Climate, and The Clash of Nations*, Great Britain: Allan Lane-An Imprint of Penguin Books, pp. 95-96.

<sup>44</sup> Maria Domańska & Szymon Kardaś (2016), "The consequences of the Western financial sanctions on the Russian economy", Centre for Eastern Studies, 23.03.2016, Date of Accession: 16.09.2016 from [http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/commentary\\_203.pdf](http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/commentary_203.pdf), pp.2-5.

<sup>45</sup> "Economic impact on the EU of sanctions over Ukraine conflict", European Parliament Briefing, October 2015, Date of Accession: 16.09.2016 from [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/569020/EPRS\\_BRI\(2015\)569020\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/569020/EPRS_BRI(2015)569020_EN.pdf); Andrew Rettman (2016), "Sanctions to have little impact on Russia in 2016, US says", *EU Observer*, 13.01.2016, Date of Accession: 16.09.2016 from <https://euobserver.com/foreign/131812>.

<sup>46</sup> Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of The Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", pp. 293-294.

described as “interdependence.”<sup>47</sup> As a result, the sanctions carried out against Russia after Crimean Invasion had two effects. Both Karl-Thomas Neumann, the Chairman of Board of Directors of OPEL, and Martin Sonnenschein, the Central Europe director of A.T. Kearney (an international consultancy firm) have emphasized that “*those advocating the implementation of sanctions toward Moscow plays with the fire in which these will have impacts on European countries.*”<sup>48</sup> The circumstances in which the EU adopts a collective policy towards the Kremlin are yet to be seen. Therefore, it is understandable to look at the sanctions as an exceptional achievement. Similarly, when experts stress that the European countries cannot successfully pursue a cohesive policy on Moscow, they also assert that Moscow is successful in splitting the European countries on energy policies. The reason why the ongoing Ukrainian Crisis favors an energy feature which includes Russia, Ukraine, and EU, and holds the likelihood of an energy crisis- is because 66 % of Russian gas enters Europe through Ukraine. In considering the former 2006 and 2009 gas crises between Moscow and Kyiv, it is not surprising that the Ukrainian Crisis has impacts on energy as well. It ought to be emphasized that the third group of sanctions is intended to limit Moscow’s energy tools. Care has been exercised in building sanctions that will not affect Moscow’s existing oil production, considering the concern of raising the price of oil at a time when it is already high. Conversely, it has become increasingly obvious that new growth fields have necessitated Western technology and partners. For instance, Western involvement offshore in the Arctic has not been allowed. Though little of Moscow’s Arctic shelf has been explored, the enormous area is said to possess abundant hydrocarbons. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the extensive Arctic continental shelf forms are possibly the largest unexplored prospective field for oil left on earth. Nonetheless, even more is at stake for Moscow. Moscow’s major goal in the Arctic remains consolidation of its supremacy within the area, opening it up to trade and political rivalry, to which the Kremlin attaches huge strategic prominence. In order to make this goal clear, two Russian mini submarines even planted a titanium version of Russia’s flag in the seabed, fourteen thousand feet below the North Pole. In response, the then foreign minister of Canada, another Arctic power, has stated

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<sup>47</sup> Lilia Shevtsova (2016), “How the West Misjudged Russia Part 11 -The Sanctions on Russia: How Hard Do They Bite?”, *The American Interest*, 04.04.2016, Date of Accession: 16.09.2016 from <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/04/04/the-sanctions-on-russia-how-hard-do-they-bite/>.

<sup>48</sup> Alexey Khlebnikov (2016), “Two years of Russia-West sanction war: Things won’t be the same again”, *Russia Direct*, 06.08.2016, Date of Accession: 16.09.2016 from <http://www.russia-direct.org/debates/two-years-russia-west-sanction-war-things-wont-be-same-again>.

*“This isn’t the fifteen century. You can’t go around the world and just plant flags and say, ‘we are claiming this territory.’”* However, Russia has attempted to do just this.<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, shale oil has been targeted, as well as Moscow’s vast non-conventional reserves, which include the enormous Bazherov Basin, beneath the West Siberian Basin. For a long time, there was no way to successfully run production in that complicated geological area, despite its potential. However, the shale revolution in the U.S. is a plausible solution to the issue of Bazherov-horizontal wells and multilevel hydraulic fracturing. It should be noted that this idea was not developed solely by Russia. In 2013, the U.S. Energy Information Administration projected that Moscow’s unproven, yet technically recoverable, shale oil reserves could be potentially larger in comparison with the U.S. Western partners, with their combined technology and experience, may assist in a huge deal. Discovering and advancing the “fragrant plugs” involves questioning the perseverance, abilities, statistics, and test and fault. As said by a Russian petroleum engineer in Siberia, “We have to gradually, bit by bit, discover the keys.” Therefore, Russian firm have recruited Western partners and technology. Nonetheless, under new sanctions, the Western firms withdrew. A Russian observer has mentioned that “the Western firms have been frightened to touch the Bazhenov as if it remained a fire. Therefore, Russian firms continue to enhance and develop their skills by themselves. Eventually, Moscow will be able to replace what they couldn’t purchase from the West with Russian-made equipment, affirming Secretary of State George Schultz’s statement from the 1980s that Soviet natural gas sanctions cannot work. Also, the sanctions have feasibly delayed the Bazhenov advancement by half a decade or more. However, within the age of supply surplus and wide-ranging conventional prospects for Russia, Moscow doesn’t see this postponement as a negative.<sup>50</sup>

As of February 12, 2021, Russia-EU relations have been diminished even more over Aleksei Navalny’s detention. The most obvious political opponent of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Navalny was detained on January 17, 2021 upon his arrival from Germany, where he spent five months recovering from the effects of a nerve agent that he had been exposed to. He accused the Kremlin for the attempted assassination. Russian authorities have renounced the accusations. Before that, a court in Moscow imprisoned Navalny for two years and eight months for the violating the terms of his probation while recovering in Germany. The probation been reduced from a 2014 fraud verdict that Navalny has denied as fake, and which

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<sup>49</sup> Daniel Yergin (2020), *The New Map: Energy, Climate, and The Clash of Nations*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 98.

has remained illegitimate, as per the European Court of Human Rights. Navalny returned to court on Friday, regarding an accusation of insulting a World War II veteran who performed in a video last year promoting constitutional adjustments that permitted an extension of Putin's rule. Navalny has described the people in the video as “corrupt stooges,” “people without conscience” and “traitors.” He has countered the defamation concerns as part of the Kremlin’s initiatives to ridicule him, and if convicted, he might be penalized or sentenced to community service. Following his visit to Russia last week, European Union Foreign Policy Chief, Josep Borrell, has mentioned that the EU needs to uphold strong policies in terms of its relationships with Russia and consider new sanctions within the context of Navalny’s imprisonment. Although Borrell did meet with Lavrov, Moscow has disregarded diplomats from Germany, Poland, and Sweden for attending demonstrations in support of Navalny. These three EU countries have all responded in kind Monday, each firing a Russian diplomat. Borrell has also said that he is considering presenting offers for probable engagements, contrary to Russia, while he leads the summit of the bloc’s foreign ministers on February 22, 2021.<sup>51</sup>

On February 12, 2021, the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov responded to these initiatives: *“We don’t want to be isolated from international life, but we must be ready for that. If you want peace, you must prepare for war. We proceed from the assumption that we are ready for a split with the European Union. We recognize the importance of economic ties with the 27 EU nations. Russia would continue engaging in mutually beneficial cooperation. At the same time, Russia must prepare for the worst and increasingly rely on its own resources. We must achieve that in the economic sphere, if we see again, as we have felt more than once that sanctions imposed in some areas create risks to our economy, including in the most sensitive spheres, such as supplies of parts and components.”*<sup>52</sup>

Simultaneously, Dmitry Peskov, spokesman for the Kremlin, expressed the following facts: *“If we face a destructive course that will hurt our infrastructure, our interests, Russia must be ready in advance for such unfriendly steps. We must be self-reliant. We must ensure our security in the most sensitive strategic areas and be prepared to replace everything we could*

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<sup>51</sup> Vladimir Isachenkov (2021), “Russia says it's ready for split if EU imposes new sanctions”, *ABC News*, 12.02.2021, Date of Accession: 12.02.2021 from <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-ready-cut-ties-eu-ops-sanctions-diplomat-75847191>.

<sup>52</sup> *Interfax* (2021), “Russia ready to break off relations with EU – Lavrov”, 12.02.2021, Date of Accession: 12.02.2021 from <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/71077/>; Ben Aris (2021), “Russia’s Lavrov threatens to break off diplomatic relations with EU if sanctioned”, *BNE IntelliNews*, 12.02.2021, Date of Accession: 12.02.2021 from <https://www.intellinews.com/russia-s-lavrov-threatens-to-break-off-diplomatic-relations-with-eu-if-sanctioned-202809/>.

*be deprived of with national infrastructure in case madness prevails and such unfriendly actions take place.”<sup>53</sup>*

European Commission spokesman Peter Stano has mentioned that “*the EU welcomes mutually beneficial cooperation whenever the other side is ready for such cooperation and for such a dialogue.*” He added that Russia has “*indicated that they are not really willing to go in this direction.*” German Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Andrea Sasse has defined Lavrov’s explanations as “*really disconcerting and completely incomprehensible to us. We are interested in cooperation with Russia.*”<sup>54</sup>

### **3.1. Turkish Stream Natural Gas Pipeline with Turkey**

The implementation of the EU’s Third Energy Package (TEP) in 2011<sup>55</sup> has damaged Gazprom. The TEP has given third party access to the pipeline based on stated tariffs or the methods taken by national regulatory authorities, as well as splitting transmission assets and marking transmission network operators. However, immunity from these requirements is set by the National Regulatory Authority, which also needs to be confirmed by the European Commission.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, this by-law has created fundamental difficulties regarding Moscow’s gas exportations to the EU, such as abiding by the regulatory sphere in terms of new pipeline capacities. For Gazprom, it has not been able to employ the full capacity of the Nord Stream Pipelines, OPAL and NEL. Despite the fact that the German partner of the project arranged for an exclusion allowing Gazprom to operate OPAL at 100 %, the EC Competition Authority fixed it at 50 %. Gazprom and the European Commission (EC) discussed the issue for almost a year and came to an agreement to allow 100 % operational capacity by Gazprom. Demands for access were established by independent parties and determined by holding auctions.<sup>57</sup> Not surprisingly, the EC supported this release in March of

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<sup>53</sup> Vladimir Isachenkov (2021), “Russia says it's ready for split if EU imposes new sanctions”, *ABC News*, 12.02.2021, Date of Accession: 12.02.2021 from <https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-ready-cut-ties-eu-ops-sanctions-diplomat-75847191>.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> European Commission Energy, “Market Legislation”, Date of Accession: 23.09.2016 from <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/markets-and-consumers/market-legislation>.

<sup>56</sup> European Commission (2010), “Commission Staff Working Paper Interpretative Note on Directive 2009/72/EC Concerning Common Rules for the Internal Market in Electricity and Directive 2009/73/EC Concerning Common Rules for the Internal Market in Natural Gas- The Regulatory Authorities”, Brussels, 22.01.2010, Date of Accession: 22.09.2016 from [https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2010\\_01\\_21\\_the\\_regulatory\\_authorities.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2010_01_21_the_regulatory_authorities.pdf).

<sup>57</sup> Jonathan Stern & Simon Pirani & Katja Yafimava (2015), “Does the cancellation of South Stream signal a fundamental reorientation of Russian gas export policy?”, *The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies*, January 2015, Date of Accession: 10.03.2017 from <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Does-cancellation-of-South-Stream-signal-a-fundamental-reorientation-of-Russian-gas-export-policy-GPC-5.pdf>, pp. 3-4.

2014. Nevertheless, it would reverse that decision, revealing the technical matters and concerning the issue with the worsening of Brussels-Moscow liaison in Kyiv. Even so, the OPAL indemnity evaluation procedure was concluded by the EC in December 2014. Gazprom's failure in the postponement of the deadline in its reimbursement deal over the indemnity caused the German parties interpretation to be void of the substantial exceptions that the EC was considering. Aleksandr Novak, the Energy Minister of Russia, indicated that Gazprom hopes to be an exception and operate at 100 percent capacity in the OPAL pipeline, as requested by the Kremlin.<sup>58</sup>

Due to the adverse developments regarding OPAL, Gazprom would prefer to not file an exception for South Stream. Instead, Gazprom would prefer to sign deals with the countries directly involved with its development. Nevertheless, these agreements would be judged by the EC as a violation of Third Energy Package. The EC would also request a negotiation or rejection, if not for the other member countries possibly being intimidated by the breach of standard procedures under EU law.<sup>59</sup> It would also begin discussions under the rules of World Trade Organization with the hopes of repealing TEP's discriminatory feature. Also, the countries supposed to host South Stream would be tested: their refusal of intergovernmental settlements would make these countries accountable for the punishments applied by Moscow, or the detainment of these settlements would make the concerned countries lawfully liable to fines applied by the EC.<sup>60</sup> Within that background, the EC would begin a breach process against Sofia – one related to the contradiction of the Third Energy Package and another associated with the legality of pipeline's procurement. This breach process ended with the pipeline's construction being stopped by Sofia in August 2014.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, after the Ukraine Crisis and the takeover of Crimea, the connection between the European Union and Russian Federation would be suspended. This created a great problem when organizing dialogues between Brussels and Moscow. It has caused the faltering of the Moscow-Brussels working group regarding South Stream, as well as deferral within the setting of EU decision-

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<sup>58</sup> "Gas markets: Commission reinforces market conditions in revised exemption decision on OPAL pipeline", 28.10.2016, Date of Accession: 28.02.2017 from [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-3562\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3562_en.htm).

<sup>59</sup> Katja Yafimava (2013), "European Regulatory Challenges for South Stream: The Way Forward", 04.12.2013, Date of Accession: 22.09.2016 from <https://www.naturalgaseurope.com/pdfs/gas-dialogues/Yafimava%20Presentation.pdf>, pp. 17-18; *Euractiv* (2013), "South Stream bilateral deals breach EU law, Commission says", 04.12.2013, Date of Accession: 22.09.2016 from <https://www.euractiv.com/section/competition/news/south-stream-bilateral-deals-breach-eu-law-commission-says/>.

<sup>60</sup> Jonathan Stern & Simon Pirani & Katja Yafimava (2015), "Does the cancellation of South Stream signal a fundamental reorientation of Russian gas export policy?", p.4.

<sup>61</sup> Nina Byalkova (2014), "Brussels opens infringement procedure against Bulgaria over South Stream – media", *See News*, 03.06.2014, Date of Accession: 22.09.2016 from <https://seenews.com/news/brussels-opens-infringement-procedure-against-bulgaria-over-south-stream-media-423705>.

making processes. This also includes other numerous gas linked matters with Kremlin including DG COMP Procedures. The lack of discussion by both sides, and lack of agreement on regulatory matters, would end with the invalidation of South Stream.<sup>62</sup>

Given the on-going political watershed between Russia and Ukraine, the EU has suspended the authorization process for the South Stream. As an alternative, they have proposed to uphold the pipeline projects transporting gas from Baku. On December 1, 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin, along with 10 ministers, paid a visit to Ankara, Turkey. Moscow and Ankara made significant decisions regarding energy issues during Putin's official visit. Among those decisions, the annulment of the South Stream Gas Pipeline Project by the Kremlin was the most noteworthy due to the discontent from the Union. After South Stream's invalidation, the energy monopolies of Russia, Turkey, Gazprom, and Botaş would settle on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This agreement covered the assembly of an offshore gas pipeline through the Black Sea on the way to Turkey.<sup>63</sup> Ankara and Moscow's good relationship was damaged by the Syrian Crisis which has been on-going since 2011. The Syrian Civil War appears to be well-defined as a "proxy war" surrounded by Ankara and Moscow.<sup>64</sup> Because of this, Moscow can be characterized as the essential power and one of the five permanent members of UN Security Council, which powerfully underwrite the Bashar Assad regime till the outbreak of war. On the other hand, Ankara is the major regional player that has backed the Syrian opposition. Their patronage is not merely rhetorical or diplomatic; in fact, Moscow and Ankara have provided logistical and military support to both sides in the Syrian Civil War. Yet, Arab Spring has symbolized one of the most important incidents to have occurred in the region, virtually rearranging its social and political structure to a new regional order. In the scope of this article, Russia has determined new political tactics within the region.<sup>65</sup>

The initial disturbances in Syria have threatened Moscow's Mediterranean policies, and it has led to advanced precautions for guarding its national interests over Tartus and Lazkia.

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<sup>62</sup> Jonathan Stern & Simon Pirani & Katja Yafimava (2015), "Does the cancellation of South Stream signal a fundamental reorientation of Russian gas export policy?", p.5.

<sup>63</sup> Sina Kısacık (2014), "A Farewell to South Stream: A Win-Win Situation for Russia and Turkey or A Zero-Sum Game for Russia and EU?", Uluslararası Politika Akademisi, 17.12.2014, Date of Accession: 11.03.2017 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2014/12/17/a-farewell-to-south-stream-a-win-win-situation-for-russia-and-turkey-or-a-zero-sum-game-for-russia-and-eu/>.

<sup>64</sup> Şener Aktürk (2014), "Toward A Turkish-Russian Axis? Conflicts in Georgia, Syria, and Ukraine, and Cooperation over Nuclear Energy", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.16, No: 4, p. 19.

<sup>65</sup> Sina Kısacık & Furkan Kaya (2016), "An Assessment on the Future of Ongoing Turkish-Russian Relations: "Clash of Interests or Convergence of Interests", *International Multilingual Academic Journal*, Vol. 3, No: 2, pp. 183-184.

Kremlin believes that if the Assad Regime falls, it might result with the consolidation of jihadist forces, and also cause the dispersal of insecurity to the Caucasia and Southern Russia. Putin has indicated that he will disburse power in Syria to Western powers. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has publicized that Syria's territorial integrity must not fall apart.<sup>66</sup> After a short period of time, Russia started to send its air, navy and land forces to Syrian territories and execute widespread, active military operations against ISIS. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan countered this initiative and Turkey's opposition to this operation because of its national interest in the Middle East. Turkey has also stated that if Moscow carries on with its illegitimate routine and denounces Ankara for the dropping of a Russian plane over Syria, Russians must also overlook numerous national advantages regarding Turkey. Likewise, the Turkish-Russian Crisis is caused by the latter's military interventions in Georgia<sup>67</sup> and Crimea, all impacting the Syrian Question. On the other side of the coin, Putin has stated that his country has delivered military aid and logistics to Damascus, officially approving Moscow's patronage to Assad.<sup>68</sup> Moscow and Damascus have been significant partners, and the Russian navy keeps a reparation base in Tartus.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, Moscow continuously provided arms to Damascus, until the eruption of the Syrian Civil War. Because Moscow has reflected on its position to not participate against ISIS terrorism, Damascus and Kurds should be armed to fight against ISIL.<sup>70</sup>

On November 24, 2015, a Russian SU-24 war plane flying over the Turkish-Syrian border entered the Turkish airspace for 17 seconds. Although it was warned by Turkish jets 10 times in five minutes, the Russian plane ignored the warnings and was downed by Turkish war planes. This fueled tension between Ankara and Moscow. Ankara has claimed that the Russian aircraft entered Turkish airspace and was shot by Turkish war planes within the rules of engagement. Afterwards, the Kremlin blamed Ankara for this incident and would pursue policies against Turkey, including numerous embargoes in multiple fields and the

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<sup>66</sup> Suman Varandani (2015), "Russia's Fight against ISIS: Moscow Won't Stop Targeting Islamic State Group in Syria after Ceasefire", *International Business Times*, 24.12.2015, Date of Accession: 04.10.2016 from <http://www.ibtimes.com/russias-fight-against-isis-moscow-wont-stop-targeting-islamic-state-group-syria-after-2239301>.

<sup>67</sup> Cenk Başlamış & Okay Deprem (2018), *Vladimir Vladimiroviç Putin: Rusya'yı Ayağa Kaldıran Lider*, pp. 252-257.

<sup>68</sup> Mesut Hakkı Caşın & Giray Saynur Derman (2016), *Rus Dış Politikasındaki Değişim ve Kremlin Penceresinden Yeni Ufuklar*, p. 457.

<sup>69</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2020), "Cutting the Gordian Knot: Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Cyprus During AK Party Era (2002–2020)", *STUDIA IANALIZY NAUK O POLITYCE (Studies and Analyses of Political Science)*, Vol. 1, pp. 51-53.

<sup>70</sup> Volkan Özdemir (2015), "Downing of Russian jet: Another test for Russia-Turkey relations", *Russia Direct*, 26.11.2015, Date of Accession: 05.10.2016 from <http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/downing-russian-su-24-jet-another-test-russia-turkey-relations>.

postponement of energy projects, specifically the Turkish Stream and the Akkuyu Power Plant. When the crisis between Ankara and Moscow was happening, along with reciprocal harsh accusations and Russian embargoes toward Turkey, a central initiative would come from Turkey with the goal of resolving this problem on June 24, 2016. Turkish President Erdoğan would express regret for downing the Russian jet on November 24, 2015, and announce Turkey's enthusiasm for the restoration of its relationship with Russia which were both recognized by the Kremlin.<sup>71</sup> Erdoğan's statements concerning this issue were: *"As the President of Republic of Turkey, I would like to inform the family of the deceased Russian pilot that I share their pain and to offer my condolences to them. May they excuse us. We had no wish or intention to down a plane of the Russian Federation. I share their pain with my whole heart. Russia and Turkey have agreed to take necessary steps without delay to improve bilateral relations, specifically noting regional crises and the fight against terrorism"*.<sup>72</sup>

As relations between Turkey and the Russia have improved after Ankara's public apology to Moscow, the Presidents of Turkey and the Russian Federation have met together multiple times. Within the framework of making TurkStream operational, Gazprom got permission from Ankara for the construction of the project's undersea section on September 14, 2016. On October 10, 2016, the energy ministers of Turkey and the Russian Federation, Berat Albayrak and Aleksandr Novak respectively, signed the agreement regarding the operation of the TurkStream. This project means that more Russian gas will be transferred to Turkey under the Black Sea. The project's delivery of 31.5 billion cubic meters (bcm) per annum means that it will practically hold two times more than Blue Stream.. During the signing ceremony, President Erdoğan indicated that *"this agreement will be helpful for the normalization of these two countries' strategic relationship and added that negotiations for the finalization of this project will be made between two countries' energy ministries"*.<sup>73</sup>

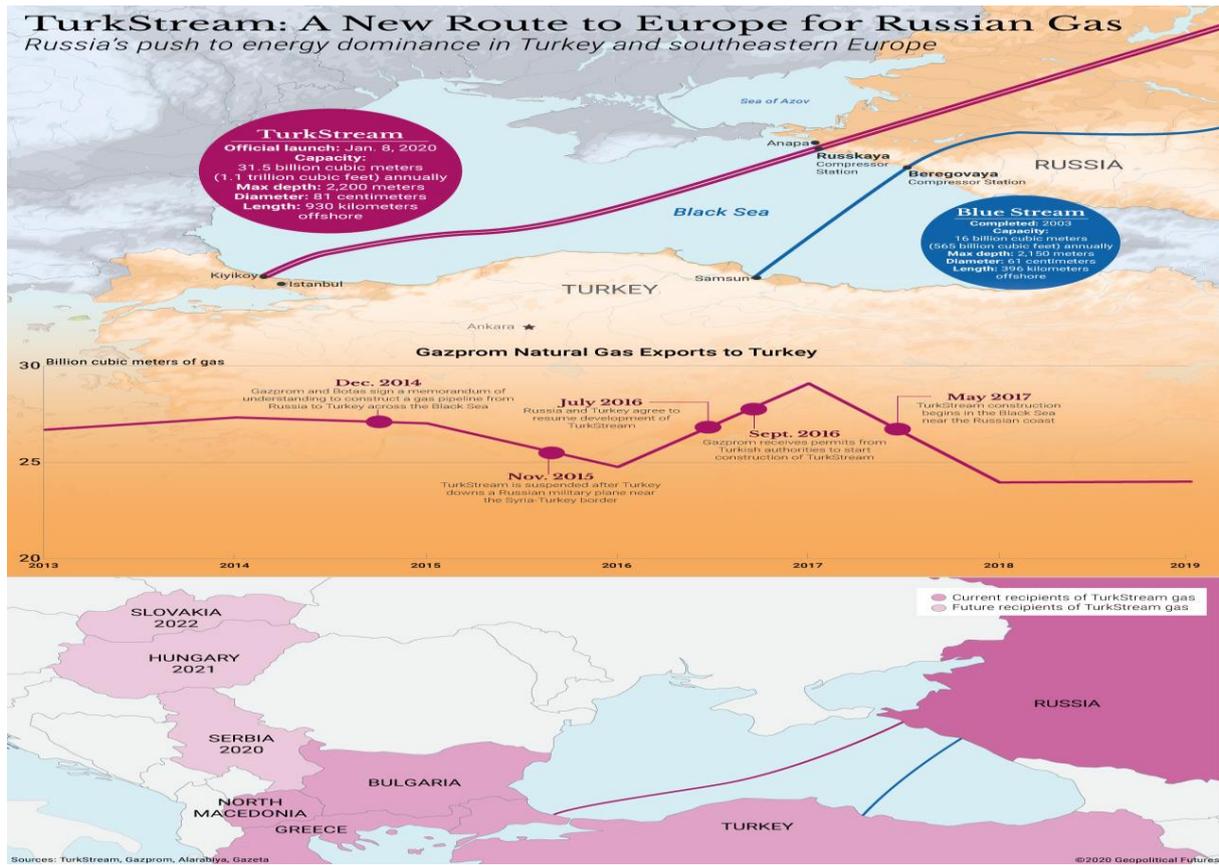
### Map II: Turkish Stream routes<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Pınar Özden-Cankara (2020), "2000'li Yıllarda Türkiye-Rusya İlişkileri", in *Türk Dış Politikası (2000'li Yıllar): Cilt III: 2000'den 2018'e kadar Alanlar ve Konular* (eds. by Serkan Kekevi & Ömer Kurtbağ), Ankara: Berikan Yayınevi, Second Edition, pp. 479-489.

<sup>72</sup> *Hürriyet Daily News* (2016), "Putin says Turkey 'apologized' for downing of Russian jet", 30.06.2016, Date of Accession: 12.10.2016 from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/putin-says-turkey-apologized-for-downing-of-russian-jet-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=101107&NewsCatID=353>; *The Moscow Times* (2016), "Turkish President Apologizes For Downing Russian Bomber", 27.06.2016, Date of Accession: 12.10.2016 from <https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/turkish-president-apologizes-for-downing-russian-bomber-53457>.

<sup>73</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2018), *Rusya Siyaseti ve Rus Dış Politikası: Teorik Çerçeve-Tarihsel Arka Plan-Örnek Olaylar*, Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık, pp. 384-385, 431-433.

<sup>74</sup> Geopolitical Futures (2020), "TurkStream: A New Route to Europe for Russian Gas", 10.01.2020, Date of Accession: 02.02.2021 from <https://geopoliticalfutures.com/turkstream-a-new-route-to-europe-for-russian-gas/>.



This project will be comprised of two parallel lines; each line able to carry 15.75 bcm per annum and travelling 900 kilometers all through the Black Sea from Russia's Anapa Port. It will surface at Kiyıköy, positioned at Turkish Thrace, and then carry on as a subsea pipeline to Ipsala, contiguous with Greece. This pipeline will be linked to the existing Trans-Balkan Pipeline, bringing Russian gas through Ukraine and the Eastern Balkans to İstanbul at Lüleburgaz. At Ipsala, which stands to be placed opposite of Kippoi, a Greek town, this line will hold the opportunity to connect with the envisioned TANAP and TAP's junction in Ipsala-Kippoi. Here the closing links stand the main constituents of SGC to carry roughly 10 bcm of Baku's gas to Europe through western Turkey and onwards. The reason why Ipsala stands to be selected as the terminal point of the Turkish Stream is that Gazprom, a Russian energy giant, may well consider participating in TAP within the upcoming terms, wherein TAP is envisioned to possess an additional 10 bcm-capacity that will be used by third parties in the post-2020 period.<sup>75</sup> In that regard, Alexander Medvedev, the deputy chairman of Gazprom, identified the Russian objective of this subject at the European Gas Conference held in Vienna on January 24, 2017 as: "Russia has sufficient installed capacity upstream to deliver more than 100bn m<sup>3</sup>/yr of extra gas to Europe but that it faces an infrastructure

<sup>75</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2018), *Rusya Siyaseti ve Rus Dış Politikası: Teorik Çerçeve-Tarihsel Arka Plan-Örnek Olaylar*, pp. 433-434.

*problem. In order to bring this gas to Europe we need additional infrastructure, which we are working on with our European partners – Nord Stream 2 and Turkish Stream. This capacity will not be sufficient to bring all this to Europe. So this is why we are talking to use available capacity on the Poseidon project that will be ready soon, or maybe TAP.*”<sup>76</sup>

As of November 26, 2020, in an interview made by Ceenergynews, Dr Erich Jurdik, Deputy CEO of construction of TurkStream, has underlined the following issues on the importance of this project as; *“TurkStream is fully operational and ready to increase gas shipments to Turkey and countries in South-Eastern Europe. Each of the countries who would like to be involved in the project is responsible for their own extension of the pipeline. Bulgaria has already begun importing Russian gas via TurkStream at the beginning of the year. The next step is to deliver gas flow to Serbia by enabling physical reverse flow operations. The construction of the Bulgarian section of Balkan Stream has been completed in combination with the Balkan Stream; TurkStream is all about energy security...”*<sup>77</sup>

Based on the high-level declarations coming from Russia it is understood that Russia has notified the European countries that Russian gas will go through Turkey in the future. Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Serbia, and Italy remain watchful of over this project, with plans to circumvent the Ukraine option for the gas transference to European markets since late December 2019. On January 8, 2020, the TurkStream Natural Gas Pipeline Project has officially become operational with Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to Turkey. Consequently, a new natural gas flow from Russia to Turkey has started.<sup>78</sup> As of December 3, 2020, Russian deliveries to Europe through Nord Stream have occurred at 158 million cu m/d from November, amounting to 4.74 Bcm over the previous month. Supplies within the Yamal-Europe corridor by Belarus into Poland have plunged somewhat to 3.05 Bcm in November from 3.08 Bcm in October. In November, the largest change in deliveries has been in the TurkStream pipeline, where streams have risen to their highest level. One of the 15.75 Bcm/year legs on TurkStream which activated in January- is intended to transport Russian gas

<sup>76</sup> John Roberts & William Powell (2017), “Gazprom Eyes TAP for Russian Gas”, *Natural Gas World*, 24.01.2017, Date of Accession: 28.02.2017 from <http://www.naturalgasworld.com/gazprom-eyes-tap-for-russian-gas-355480>.

<sup>77</sup> Evelin Szöke (2020), “European gas puzzle: the TurkStream project – interview with Deputy CEO of construction, Erich Jurdik”, *Ceenergy News*, 26.11.2020, Date of Accession: 02.02.2021 from <https://ceenergynews.com/interviews/european-gas-puzzle-the-turkstream-project-interview-with-deputy-ceo-of-construction-erich-jurdik/>.

<sup>78</sup> Sina Kısacık (2020), “The Rising Importance of Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a New Player in the Eurasian Energy Security: A Special Focus on Selected Oil and Natural Gas Pipeline Projects”, in *Yeni Dünya Ekonomi ve Güvenlik Mimarisi / New World Architecture of Economy and Security (5. İstanbul Güvenlik Konferansı Tam Metin Bildiriler Kitabı)* (eds. By Rüştü Salim Savaş Biçer & Ahmet Yıldız), İstanbul: TASAM Yayınları, p. 564.

to the Turkish market unswervingly, whereas the other 15.75 Bcm/year legs stream gas out of Turkey into Bulgaria. Both have replaced deliveries formerly transported through Ukraine over the Trans-Balkan pipeline. In November, deliveries by TurkStream into Bulgaria remained at 0.6 Bcm, or an average of 20 million cu m/d, certainly the highest everyday average of streams. Along with serving the Bulgarian market, TurkStream also serves Greece and North Macedonia. It is expected that the extra extension of TurkStream via Bulgaria and Serbia into Hungary might be prepared to stream gas by beginning of 2021. However, experts have assumed that Serbia may stay somewhat behind because of a compressor station, which means that the first transports may simply come about within the spring 2021.<sup>79</sup> On January 8, 2021, Aleksei Miller, Chief Executive Officer of the Russian gas producer Gazprom, highlighted the latest situation of TurkStream as follows; *“Today marks one year since the grand ceremony of opening of the TurkStream offshore gas pipeline. It safely transports the Russian gas via the Black Sea for consumers in Turkey and as many as six European states: Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Gazprom has increased utilization of the gas pipeline since commissioning 2.2-fold, particularly for European consumers - 2.5-fold. In 2020, Turkey, Greece and North Macedonia increased gas purchases from Gazprom.”*<sup>80</sup>

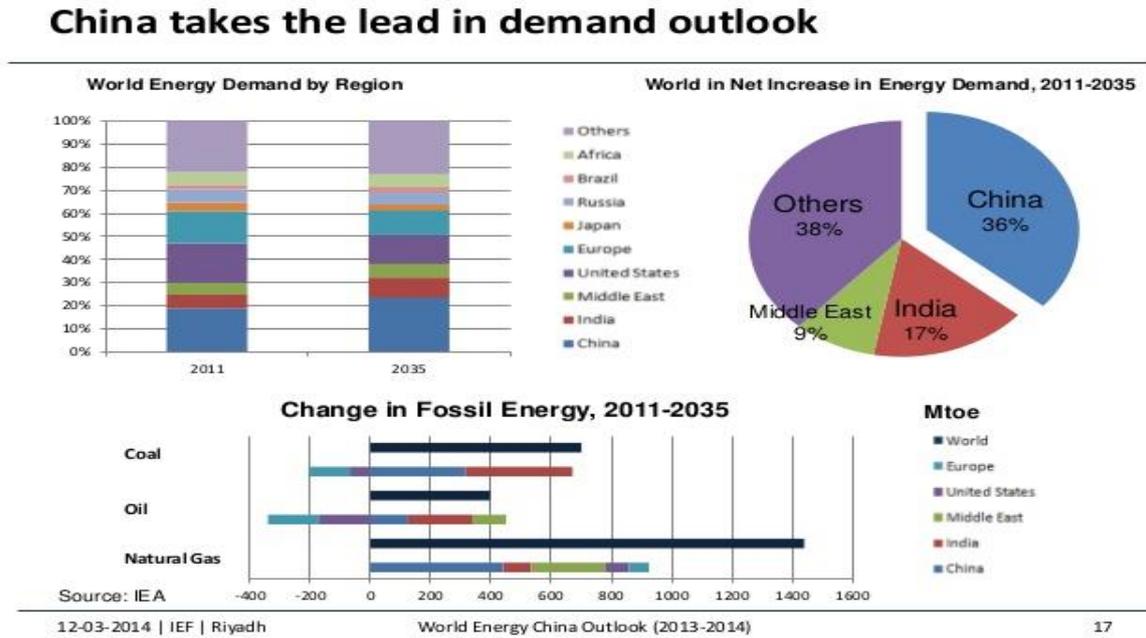
### 3.2. Power of Siberia Natural Gas Pipeline with China

Another consequence of the 2013 Ukraine Crisis with Eurasian energy security has been growing energy relations between Moscow and Beijing. For the Oil and Gas Journal, China holds 3 trillion cubic meters of proven gas reserves. Nevertheless, China National Petroleum Company (CNPC), a state company, states that the country possesses 6 tcm of proven gas reserves. As a result of growing demand, China would become a gas importing country for the first time in the history after the 20 years in 2007. For the International Energy Agency, China unavoidably has a determining factor within the global energy market. IEA envisions that as of 2035, China will consume more energy than the United States, following China, with 77 %.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Stuart Elliott (2020), “Russian gas flows to Europe remain at 2020 highs in November”, *S&P Global Platts*, 03.12.2020, Date of Accession: 29.01.2021 from <https://www.spglobal.com/platts/en/market-insights/latest-news/natural-gas/120320-russian-gas-flows-to-europe-remain-at-2020-highs-in-november>.

<sup>80</sup> TASS: *Russian News Agency* (2021), “Utilization of TurkStream up 2.2-fold in one year, 2.5-fold for Europe, says Gazprom CEO”, 08.01.2021, Date of Accession: 02.02 2021 from <https://tass.com/economy/1242911>.

<sup>81</sup> Mesut Hakkı Caşın & Sina Kısacık (2018), *Avrupa Birliği Enerji Hukuku ve Güvenlik Algılamaları*, İstanbul: Çağlayan Kitap & Yayıncılık & Eğitim, pp. 265-266.

**Graphic III: World Energy Demand By Region and in China as of 2011 and 2035<sup>82</sup>**

When looked at from the Russian point of view, the Western European markets stand 6,000 kilometers far away, while the Chinese market is situated 2,000-3,000 kilometers away from Moscow's resources in Eastern Siberia. For the Kremlin, the energy exportations to China remain centralized. To Moscow, the new markets have become much more essential due to the structure and problematic situations of the European market. This includes Europe's initiatives for decreasing the volume coming from the Russia within the context of energy security. From Beijing's point of view, the country's energy demand in its emerging economy increases everyday. For Beijing, the principal supplier will remain Moscow for this growth and energy demand. For Beijing, it is a central goal to further Russian-Chinese collaboration in part due to Iran's standing in the international community, Iran being one of China's central oil suppliers.<sup>83</sup>

Russian energy policy has concentrated on realizing long term and constant energy exportation, along with safeguarding the future of the world energy market at the globalization and regionalization stages.<sup>84</sup> After the "Shale Gas Reform" in the U.S. , Qatar has become a challenger for Moscow in the European market and has paved the way for the

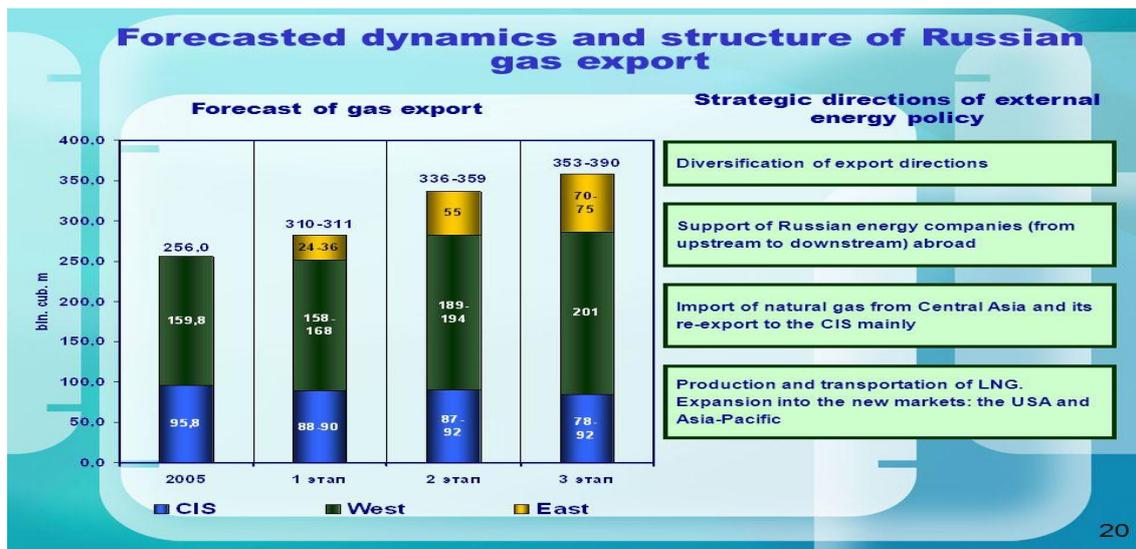
<sup>82</sup> Xiaojie Xu (2014), "World Energy China Outlook (2013-2014)", 12.03.2014, Date of Accession: 02.02.2021 from <https://www.slideshare.net/wyakab/china-energy-outlook>.

<sup>83</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2021), "Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü'nün Enerji Güvenliği Politikaları Çerçevesinde Çin-Rusya İlişkilerini Anlamak", *İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Dergisi*, Vol. 2, No: 1, p. 17.

<sup>84</sup> Mesut Hakkı Çaşın & Giray Saynur Derman (2016), *Rus Dış Politikasındaki Değişim ve Kremlin Penceresinden Yeni Ufuklar*, pp. 430-431.

Kremlin to front a severe competition. Consequently, Russia has begun to pursue an “Eastern Oriented Policy” in order to better its market and downsize its risks. “*The Russian Energy Policy till 2020*” published in 2003 and “*The Russian Energy Policy till 2030*” in 2009<sup>85</sup>, has made changes in that manner. These alterations have been focused on the collaboration of Russia with Asia-Pacific countries in energy exports. Because of this, the Kremlin has started to progress regional energy partnerships. Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul and New Delhi are viewed by Moscow as important partners in the energy field. Consequently, Moscow wishes to offset its reliance on the European market. In that sense, it has been developing eastern energy politics. Moscow plans to export energy to the region by creating a comprehensive oil and gas refinery, a carry and supply mechanism between Eastern Siberia and Far East countries. Russia’s Eastern Energy Policy backs up the foreign direct investments of Chinese state energy companies. Chinese and Russian energy policies facilitate these two countries’ collaboration in energy.<sup>86</sup>

**Graphic IV: Forecasted dynamics and structure of Russian gas export<sup>87</sup>**



<sup>85</sup> For more info please see, *Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation* (2010), “Energy Strategy of Russia for Period up to 2030 - Approved by Decree N° 1715-р of the Government of the Russian Federation dated 13 November 2009”, Date of Accession: 21.10.2016 from [http://www.energystrategy.ru/projects/docs/ES-2030\\_\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.energystrategy.ru/projects/docs/ES-2030_(Eng).pdf); Alexey M. Mastepanov (2014), “On the development of the new Energy Strategy of Russia (ESR-2035)”, 30.10.2014, Date of Accession: 21.10.2016 from [http://www.energystrategy.ru/ab\\_ins/source/Mastepanov\\_30.10.14.pdf](http://www.energystrategy.ru/ab_ins/source/Mastepanov_30.10.14.pdf).

<sup>86</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2021), “Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü’nün Enerji Güvenliği Politikaları Çerçevesinde Çin-Rusya İlişkilerini Anlamak”, pp. 12-14.

<sup>87</sup> Alexey Gromov (2009), “Energy Strategy of Russia for the Year 2030: Approaches, Priorities and Reference Points”, 23.10.2009, Date of Accession: 02.02.2021 from <http://slideplayer.com/slide/8403192/26/images/20/Forecasted+dynamics+and+structure+of+Russian+gas+export.t>.

After that, a framework agreement was made between Gazprom and CNPC on how the gas supply will be realized in December 2009. Despite the total number of contracts, including the initial contracts signed in September 2010 outlining overall principles, the agreement was not concluded and Beijing was credited with pulling down gas prices. Despite this, Moscow and Beijing would settle on the final agreement concerning the gas during Chinese President Jinping's visit to Moscow in March 2013.<sup>88</sup> The general subject of this contract would be drawn in September 2013. In the final stage, the price negotiations would become most important. Russia would retract its preliminary price of \$400 for 1,000 cubic meters and China would raise its proposal from \$300 per 1,000 cubic meters to around \$350 per 1,000 cubic meters. Then, the agreement would be made between Moscow and Beijing.<sup>89</sup> On May 21, 2014, Gazprom and CNPC would finalize the agreement on building this pipeline that will transfer 38 bcm of Russian gas annually to China.<sup>90</sup> The importance of this agreement would be assessed by Alexei Miller, the president of Board of Directors of Gazprom, stating, *"This deal is the greatest deal in the history of Russian Federation and Gazprom. During the 25 year-period of this deal, more than 1 trillion cubic meters of natural gas will be exported. The Russian gas will have been transported to a completely new market. Only within the Russian Federation, an investment of \$55 billion will be made ranging from production to transportation."* On the other hand, China's use of a high percentage of coal in its energy mix, 67.5 %, attempts to poise this situation with the growing use of gas and also to lessen dependence on coal. So, the Chinese government has stated that it foresees its country's gas demand rising from 170 bcm in 2013 to 400-420 bcm in 2020. Russia has long worked on finishing this project. Nonetheless, the parties did not decide on economic standings involving the gas price.<sup>91</sup> Moscow did not wish to trade gas to China below the price that it exported to Europe, but Moscow has been in severe conflict with Europe, due to the fight between Ukraine and Russia surrounding the annexation of Crimea, and would concede to Beijing. However when the Kremlin overcomes European bans with a new option, it sets up an

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<sup>88</sup> Melissa Akin (2013), "Russia, China find compromise on gas deal after 15 year standoff", *Reuters*, 25.03.2013, Date of Accession: 21.10.2016 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/russia-china-gas-idUSL5N0CH1IH20130325>.

<sup>89</sup> Gazprom (2013), "Gazprom and CNPC sign Agreement on major terms and conditions of pipeline gas supply from Russia to China via eastern route", 05.09.2013, Date of Accession: 21.10.2016 from <http://www.gazprom.com/press/news/2013/september/article170593/>.

<sup>90</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2021), "Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü'nün Enerji Güvenliği Politikaları Çerçevesinde Çin-Rusya İlişkilerini Anlamak", p. 18.

<sup>91</sup> Necdet Pamir (2017), *Enerjinin İktidarı: Enerji Kaynaklarını Elinde Tutan, Dünyayı Elinde Tutar!*, İstanbul: Hayykitap, Third Edition, pp. 302-303.

additional affiliation with China, where Moscow supplies essential financial support that its energy sector needs.<sup>92</sup>

For this project, a combined complex production system is established by pooling the production systems in Chayandinskoye gas field in Yakutistan, with 1.2 tcm reserves, and Kovyktinskoye gas field in Irkutsk, holding 1.5 tcm reserves. The preliminary phase of this project plans for 38 bcm of gas to go to China. In May 2014, Alexei Miller, Gazprom Head, and Zhou Jiping, the President of CNPC, would conclude the deal concerning a 38 bcm-gas sale each year with 30 year-duration. This agreement holds more significance for both sides and was completed in the aftermath of discussions about Russia's desire to reduce its reliance on Europe for energy trades. Russia also strives to lessen China's endeavors to differentiate its resources separately with its country's increasing energy demand.<sup>93</sup>

It is anticipated that the price of transporting gas through this pipeline will remain lower than the gas price of the eastern route.<sup>94</sup> In the final analysis, by developing such a project to primarily benefit the Chinese market, Moscow aims to send a message to Europe that it holds another huge export market besides Europe. Other advantages, in terms of Moscow's relationship with China, are the relative proximity of Chinese markets compared to European markets and the exclusion of third-party countries (explicitly Ukraine and Poland) on the route. Another significant project that ought to be mentioned is the Altai Natural Gas Pipeline also known as Power of Siberia 2 that aims to supply gas from the western route too. During the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Pekin in November 2014, numerous mutual contracts were made among member states.<sup>95</sup> The most important one among these agreements was the Russian-Chinese deal and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) detailing the 30 bcm-gas export to China. Despite this, the MoU remains optional when it is assessed under the agreement regarding the annual transfer of 38 bcm of Russian gas to Beijing. That transfer began in 2018 and was settled in Putin's visit to Shanghai in May 2014. It stands clear that Russia and China mark conclusive steps for energy collaboration. Those agreements can be well-defined as "Win-Win" milestones by the significant benefits for both countries. When it is observed within the agenda of Moscow, it remains obvious to vary its hydrocarbons trade markets. Moscow's worsening relationship with the EU due to the

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<sup>92</sup> Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of The Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", pp. 325-326.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p.326.

<sup>94</sup> Necdet Pamir (2017), *Enerjinin İktidarı: Enerji Kaynaklarını Elinde Tutan, Dünyayı Elinde Tutar!*, p. 305.

<sup>95</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2021), "Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü'nün Enerji Güvenliği Politikaları Çerçevesinde Çin-Rusya İlişkilerini Anlamak", p. 18.

Ukraine Crisis, low hydrocarbon prices in the global markets, and devaluing the Ruble force the Kremlin to unsurprisingly think through such divergent projects.<sup>96</sup>

On December 2, 2019, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin inaugurated an enormous cross-border natural gas pipeline project called “Power of Siberia”.<sup>97</sup> At this inaugural ceremony, both Putin and Jinping underlined the importance of this pipeline project and called “Power of Siberia” a sign of their alliance. The “Power of Siberia” project will include a gas pipeline originating in the Chayandinskoye and Kovyktinskoye fields in eastern Russia spanning more than 3,000 kilometres (1,864 miles) to Liaoning in north-eastern China. President Putin has called it “the world’s biggest construction project,” and it is predicted to last for 30 years. The project is expected to introduce \$400 billion (€363 billion) into Russia’s economy. Kremlin officials expect the pipeline to ship 38 bcm of gas annually when it is completed in 2025. President Putin has assessed the formal inauguration of the Power of Siberia Natural Pipeline as “*a genuinely historical event. This step takes Russo-Chinese strategic cooperation in energy to a qualitative new level and brings us closer to fulfilling the task, set together with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, of taking bilateral trade to \$200 billion (€181 billion) by 2024.*” Chinese President Xi Jinping has also said that, “*China-Russia relations are entering a new era*” and that the pipeline is an “*example of deep integration and mutually beneficial cooperation.*”<sup>98</sup>

As of January 27, 2021, Gazprom has constructed 98 km of one natural gas pipeline (meaning 12 percent) that will connect the Kovyktinskoye and Chayandinskoye fields in Yakutia. When finished, the 803-km pipeline will be an extension of Gazprom’s Power of Siberia system, which presently transports gas from Chayandinskoye to China. The issue for Gazprom is ensuring the 1.8 trillion cubic meter Kovyktinskoye field operates on schedule: expanding by drilling new wells, maintaining active well clusters, and building two new gas usage facilities. Gazprom expects to begin sending gas from the field via Power of Siberia by late 2022.<sup>99</sup>

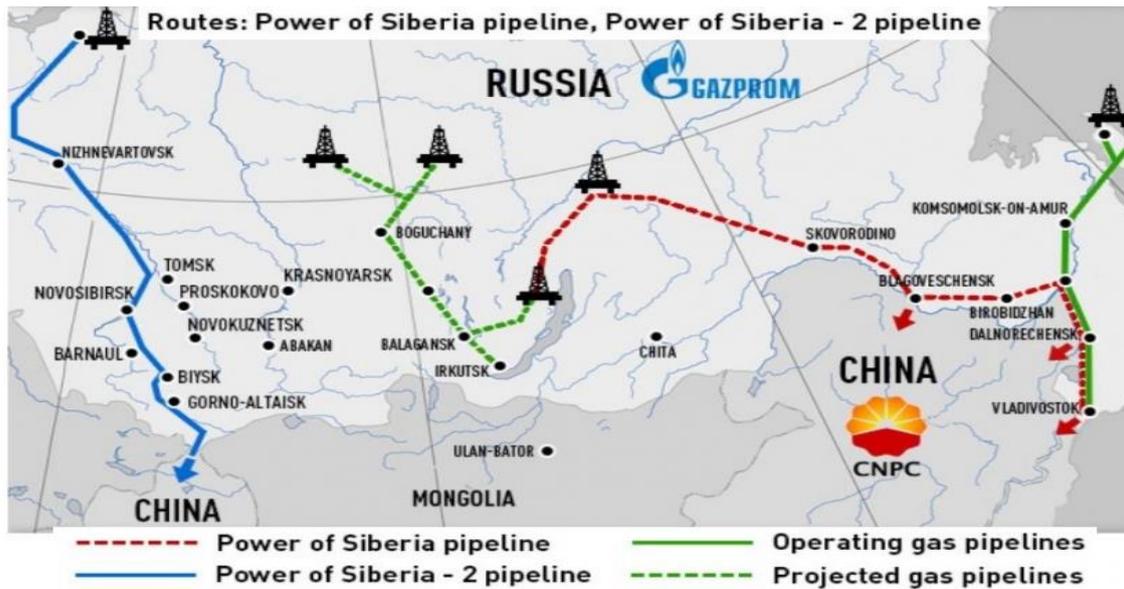
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<sup>96</sup> Sina Kısacık (2017), “The Ukraine Policy of The Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security”, p. 328.

<sup>97</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2021), “Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü’nün Enerji Güvenliği Politikaları Çerçevesinde Çin-Rusya İlişkilerini Anlamak”, p. 19.

<sup>98</sup> Sina Kısacık (2020), “The Rising Importance of Shanghai Cooperation Organization as A New Player in the Eurasian Energy Security: A Special Focus On Selected Oil and Natural Gas Pipeline Projects”, p. 556.

<sup>99</sup> *Oil & Gas Journal* (2021), “Power of Siberia extension 12 % complete”, 27.01.2021, Date of Accession: 29.01.2021 from <https://www.ogj.com/pipelines-transportation/pipelines/article/14196324/power-of-siberia-extension-12-complete>.

**Map III: Power of Siberia Pipeline, Power of Siberia – 2 Pipeline Routes<sup>100</sup>**

### 3.3. Nord Stream 2 Natural Gas Pipeline Project

Nord Stream is a project that will transport natural gas underneath the Baltic Sea between Russia's Vyborg province and Germany's Lubmin province. When both 1,224 kilometer pipelines are complete, gas will move between Germany and Russia. This makes the project sui generis. The Nord Stream pipeline is projected to carry 55 bcm of gas annually. While Gazprom is the principal shareholder in this project, with 51 % of shares, the German BASF Wintershall and E.ON Ruhrgas possess 15.5 % of shares each. The remaining 18 % of shares are split evenly between the Dutch N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie and the French GDF Suez, each holding 9 %. In this situation, the Russian, German, and French shareholders maintain control over 82 % of the total shares. The Baltic countries and Poland have opposed this project with valid reasons. Gazprom has selected former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder as the head of project, hoping to soften Northern European countries' reactions. It was planned that the project would be complete by quarter four of 2015, with both pipelines capable of providing 55 bcm Russian gas to the EU for at least 50 years.<sup>101</sup> The first line of Nord Stream began operation in November 2011 and reached its projected volume of 27.5 bcm.<sup>102</sup> The second line, planned to be the same capacity as the first line, was finished in April 2012 and began

<sup>100</sup> *Gas to Power Journal* (2020), "Gazprom starts pre-investment phase of 'Power of Siberia 2'", 30.03.2020, Date of Accession: 10.02.2021 from <https://www.gastopowerjournal.com/projectsafinance/item/10710-gazprom-starts-pre-investment-phase-of-power-of-siberia-2>.

<sup>101</sup> Ozan Örmeci & Sina Kısacık (2018), *Rusya Siyaseti ve Rus Dış Politikası: Teorik Çerçeve-Tarihsel Arka Plan-Örnek Olaylar*, pp. 322-323.

<sup>102</sup> *Offshore Engineer* (2020), "Timeline: Nord Stream 2 Gas Pipeline's Difficult Birth", 15.12.2020, Date of Accession: 03.02.2020 from <https://www.oedigital.com/news/483906-timeline-nord-stream-2-gas-pipeline-s-difficult-birth>.

operations in October 2012. Studies on the construction of third and fourth lines are ongoing. For this reason, Gazprom, E.ON, Shell and OMV would act on an MoU / Good Will Protocol for Nord Stream 3 and 4, maintaining the 55 bcm in the third and fourth lines plus the current 55 bcm on June 18, 2015. After the signing ceremony, top executives from Gazprom, BASF, E.ON, ENGIE, OMV and Royal Dutch Shell arranged a Shareholding Agreement on the enactment of the Nord Stream 2 Project. The executives arranged to increase gas supply to the EU market at the Eastern Economic Forum held in Vladivostok on September 4, 2015. The project would continue under a new company, New European Pipeline AG. Per the contracted document, Gazprom holds 51 % of shares in the project company. E.ON, Shell, OMV and BASF/Wintershall each have 10 % shares. The remaining 9 % of shares are controlled by ENGIE. Extending one of these pipelines to England is being discussed. This line could be used to provide gas to England, the Netherlands, France, Denmark and other EU members.<sup>103</sup>

It is clear that this project is extremely significant for the Kremlin's economic and strategic interests. Noting those interests, there is frequent debate when the EC approves countless decisions explicitly lessening reliance on Russia, differentiating resources, and ensuring the security of supply. The project that will increase Europe's dependency on Moscow for natural gas is being implemented under Berlin's leadership.<sup>104</sup> The EC recommends to the European Parliament that a non-EU member country should not possess more than 30 % of the shares, the security of energy supply, and resource diversification goals. It must be underscored that deliberation over this project should be a priority. Berlin and other capitals primarily consider their own interests and their particular circumstances. Under such conditions, the interests of countries and companies outweigh the Union's interests and policies. On June 9, 2016, Nord Stream 2 AG and Allseas companies signed a Good Will Protocol to organize laying the first line of the pipeline in the Baltic Sea. Nearly a year later, on April 24, 2017, Nord Stream 2 AG, ENGIE, OMV, Royal Dutch Shell, and Uniper and Wintershall signed the pipeline's financing agreement. These five European companies committed to finance half of the pipeline's total cost. A group of EU countries, led by Poland and the Czech Republic oppose the Nord Stream 2 Project for several reasons, including environment and increasing

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<sup>103</sup> Sina Kısacık (2017), "The Ukraine Policy of The Russian Federation and The Paradigms in European Energy Security", p. 285.

<sup>104</sup> Necdet Pamir (2017), *Enerjinin İktidarı: Enerji Kaynaklarını Elinde Tutan, Dünyayı Elinde Tutar!*, p. 301.

Gazprom's monopoly.<sup>105</sup> The European Union has demanded that member countries should make their own decisions and initiatives. One topic of conversation has been the project's accordance with the European Union's Third Energy Package. The Nord Stream 2 Company has underscored that these concerns are unnecessary and attests that this project does not affect the Third Energy Package. However, EU officials have claimed that the continental/land-based part of this pipeline has to be evaluated within the context of the package.<sup>106</sup>

As of December 30, 2020, Russia has been increasing work on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline before the U.S. tightens sanctions. These sanctions would affect the project's goal to supply extra natural gas to Germany. The project coordinator announced that the sections of the 1,230-kilometer (764-mile) pipeline within Germany's exclusive economic zone have been laid. The next phase of construction will continue in Denmark's part of the Baltic Sea, where most of the remaining 157-kilometer segment will be laid. Within this framework, experts envision that Nord Stream 2 may be fully operational by the end of 2021 if all goes well. Uniper SE's Chief Executive Officer, Andreas Schierenbeck, has said that *"I firmly believe the pipeline will be completed. People don't have to like the pipeline, but Europe needs it."* The German firm is one of the central sponsors of this project.<sup>107</sup> Mateusz Kubiak, a senior analyst at Warsaw-based energy consultant Esperis, has said, *"Should the Senate override Trump's veto on the defense bill, the new sanctions against Nord Stream 2 will turn into reality. It might be just another factor that will make it more difficult for the Russians to effectively and timely restart works in the Danish waters in January. All of the additional pipe-laying activities will now be sanctioned, including surveying, trenching and rock placement."*<sup>108</sup>

Washington has been adamant that Nord Stream 2 will give Moscow too much power. Officials from Europe and Washington are emphatic that American liquefied natural gas supplies a superior alternative. In response, President Putin has countered that *"Nord Stream 2 benefits the economies of Germany and Europe since the price of Russian pipeline gas is 20*

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<sup>105</sup> *Offshore Engineer* (2020), "Timeline: Nord Stream 2 Gas Pipeline's Difficult Birth", 15.12.2020, Date of Accession: 03.02.2020 from <https://www.oedigital.com/news/483906-timeline-nord-stream-2-gas-pipeline-s-difficult-birth>.

<sup>106</sup> Necdet Pamir (2017), *Enerjinin İktidarı: Enerji Kaynaklarını Elinde Tutan, Dünyayı Elinde Tutar!*, pp. 301-302.

<sup>107</sup> Vanessa Dezem & Daniel Flatley & Dina Khrennikova (2020), "Russia Accelerates Nord Stream 2 Project to Beat U.S. Sanctions", *World Oil*, 30.12.2020, Date of Accession: 30.01.2021 from <https://www.worldoil.com/news/2020/12/30/russia-accelerates-nord-stream-2-project-to-beat-us-sanctions>.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

*% lower than that of U.S. LNG.*” In the final week of 2020, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said that, *“U.S. sanctions can complicate the completion of Nord Stream 2.”* At the same time, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak has appeared on the state TV channel, Rossiya 24, to say that *“the pipeline will be completed because good for European business. It’s a commercial project, which is, in the first place, in the interests of our foreign partners.”*<sup>109</sup> As of January 27, 2021, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline remains the object of disapproval for decision-makers inside and outside the European Union. After the poisoning and detention of resistance figurehead Alexei Navalny, many Members of the European Parliament have supported a non-binding resolution<sup>110</sup> requesting instant termination of the nearly completed (95 %) infrastructure project. In a parliamentary discussion from January 20, 2021, regarding the arrest of Navalny<sup>111</sup>, MEPs from across the political spectrum were extremely vocal with their disapproval of the pipeline. Kati Piri, a Dutch MEP from the S&D group, stated, *“anyone who still believes that we should continue with Nord Stream 2 is blind to what kind of regime we are dealing with in Moscow.”* Sergey Lagodinsky, a German MEP from the Greens group, has said, *“the project undermines democracy and solidarity with Russian, Ukrainian and Polish society.”* Urmas Peat, an Estonian representative of the liberal group Renew Europe, has emphasized that the EU must be unified in its attitude toward Russia when creating its energy policy. The resolution of the European Parliament, culminating with 581 Yes votes and 50 No votes, showcases high admiration of Alexei Navalny and a robust denunciation of the Kremlin. After requesting the Nord Stream 2 route’s cessation, MEPs want to target one of Russia’s most valued possessions; its moneymaking gas ships.<sup>112</sup>

Markus Pieper, a German MEP from the EPP, remains among the minority sponsoring the pipeline. Peiper posits that *“If Germany wants to phase out nuclear power and coal at the same time, natural gas will be needed as a bridge into the hydrogen age. Seen in this way, the end of Nord Stream is the beginning of American liquefied gas. It’s a lot more expensive and*

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

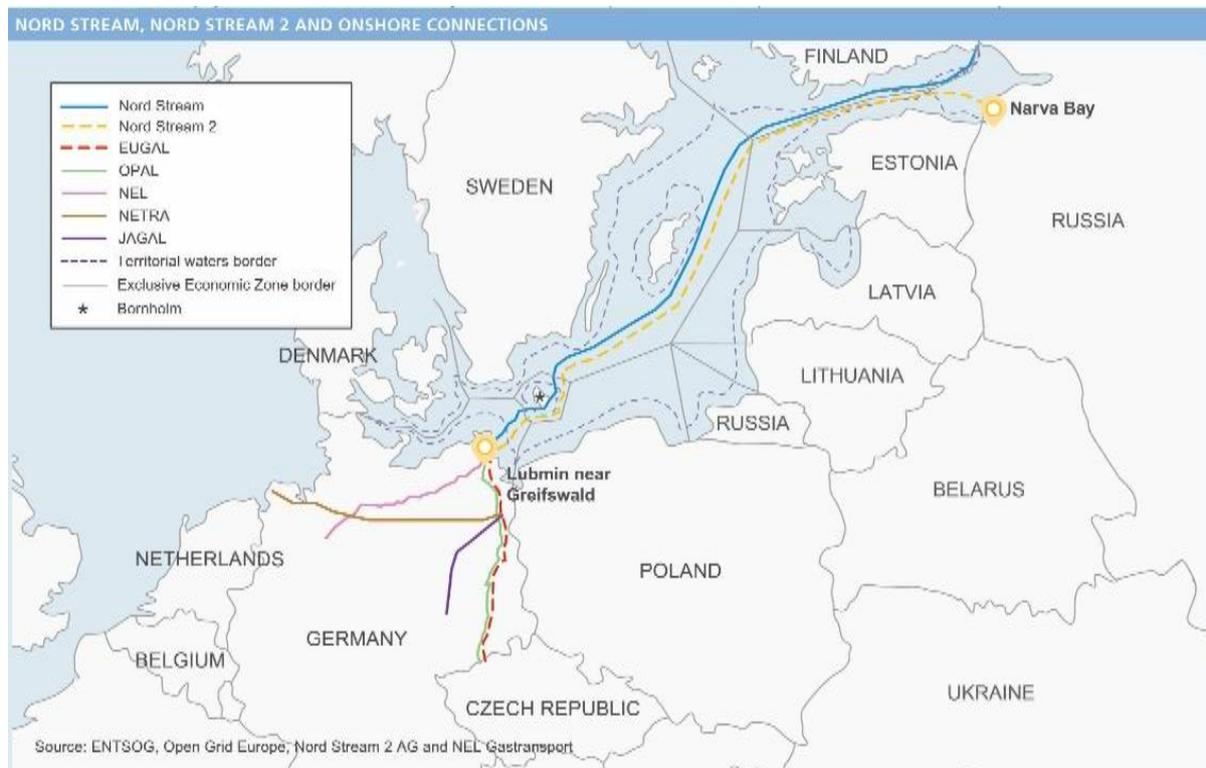
<sup>110</sup> European Parliament (2021), “2019-2024 Plenary sitting Joint Motion For A Resolution pursuant to Rule 132(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure replacing the following motions: B9-0090/2021 (S&D) B9-0092/2021 (ECR) B9-0093/2021 (Verts/ALE) B9-0094/2021 (Renew) B9-0095/2021 (PPE) on the arrest of Aleksei Navalny (2021/2513(RSP))”, 20.01.2021, Date of Accession: 10.02.2021 from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-9-2021-0090\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-9-2021-0090_EN.pdf).

<sup>111</sup> Sadık Arpacı (2021), “Navalny Cephesi: 23 Ocak-2 Şubat Döneminde Rusya’da Yaşananlar”, *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, 03.02.2021, Date of Accession: 10.02.2021 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2021/02/03/navalny-cephesi-23-ocak-2-subat-doneminde-rusyada-yasananlar/>.

<sup>112</sup> Jorge Liboreiro & Stefan Grobe (2021), “Nord Stream 2: MEPs and US pressure Germany to stop Russia pipeline”, *Euronews*, 27.01.2021, Date of Accession: 30.01.2021 from <https://www.euronews.com/2021/01/27/nord-stream-2-eu-parliament-and-biden-administration-pressure-germany-to-stop-russia-pipel>.

*polluting, but it's business for the U.S. So for the U.S., whether Trump or Biden, Nord Stream is not about security interests, it is about their own business with fracking - at the expense of the environment.*"<sup>113</sup>

**Map IV: Nord Stream, Nord Stream 2 and Onshore Connections**<sup>114</sup>



As of February 12, 2021, Senators Jim Risch (R-ID) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) have given a memo to U.S. President Joe Biden, advising President Biden to completely apply the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA)<sup>115</sup>, which blames Russia of exhausting its "energy export pipelines to form national and regional dependences over Russian energy supplies." The memo asserts that the pipeline running from Russia to Germany, will be a "potent new geopolitical tool for Russia, allowing it to deprive Ukraine, Slovakia, and other

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Diane Pallardy (2020), "Poland unlikely to prevent derogation for Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline", *Independent Commodity Intelligence Services (ICIS)*, 01.04.2020, Date of Accession: 10.02.2021 from <https://www.icis.com/explore/resources/news/2020/04/01/10488615/poland-unlikely-to-prevent-derogation-for-nord-stream-2-gas-pipeline>.

<sup>115</sup> U.S. Department of State Bureau of Energy Resources (2020), "Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA)", 20.10.2020, Date of Accession: 15.02.2021 from <https://www.state.gov/protecting-europes-energy-security-act-peesa/#:~:text=PEESA%20provides%20the%20United%20States,Europe's%20political%20and%20economic%20welfare>. Also see; U.S. Department of State Bureau of Energy Resources (2020), "Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act (PEESA) PEESA Public Guidance/FAQs", 20.10.2020, Date of Accession: 15.02.2021 from <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PEESA-Public-Guidance.pdf>; U.S. Congress (2019), "116th Congress 1st Session H. R. 3206 To impose sanctions with respect to the provision of certain vessels for the construction of Russian energy export pipelines, and for other purposes.", 11.06.2019, Date of Accession: 15.02.2021 from <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr3206/BILLS-116hr3206ih.pdf>.

nations of transit fees. It would tie Western Europe to Russian gas, and the political coercion that accompanies it, for the next 40 years,” marking the natural gas pipeline as a “risky project.” A U.S. State Department Spokesperson has highlighted that Washington will work with its allies to ensure that Europe maintains a trustworthy, differentiated energy supply system that does not destabilize their collective security. While Biden has called the pipeline a “bad deal for Europe”, German Environment Minister Svenja Schulze has previously stated that Germany will likely be dependent on gas until 2040. The U.S. lawmakers' letter to Biden comes with demands for the European Union to place new sanctions opposing Moscow and companies participating in Nord Stream 2. Andrea Picchielli, a member of Italy's Lega party, believes that the European Union ought to realize that, while sanctions cost Russia a lot, they also impact European economies. Picchielli has also emphasized that trade between Europe and Russia has decreased in recent years and that demanding new sanctions during the coronavirus pandemic is categorically irrational.<sup>116</sup>

On February 14, 2021, in an interview with Rossiya 1, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak evaluated the latest developments on Nord Stream 2 as follows, “*The Nord Stream 2 pipeline doesn't face the risk of being unused as EU countries are interested in it. The pipeline is in full compliance with European laws. It is simply a competition on the part of American partners who want to sell their LNG to Europe. So, in essence, we're witnessing non-market methods of competition on their part. I have no doubt that Nord Stream 2 will be completed despite attempts by the US to stop it. The pipeline is 95 % ready.*”<sup>117</sup>

## Conclusion

Between December 1991 and March 2000, Russia experienced the negative consequences of dissolving the Soviet Union both internally and externally. However, when Vladimir Putin came into power after the March 2000 Presidential Elections, this negative trend started to lessen. Within this context, Russia has benefited from positive international relations and increasing energy prices. It should also be noted that the Putin administration has enacted a number of centralist policies.

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<sup>116</sup> Evan Craighead (2021), “US Lawmakers Urge Biden Administration to Enforce Sanctions to Impede Nord Stream 2 Construction”, *Sputnik International*, 13.02.2021, Date of Accession: 15.02.2021 from <https://sputniknews.com/us/202102131082060184-us-lawmakers-urge-biden-administration-to-enforce-sanctions-to-impede-nord-stream-2-construction/>.

<sup>117</sup> Tim Korso (2021), “No Way Nord Stream 2 Won't be Used as Russia's Partners in EU Need Project, Official Says”, *Sputnik International*, 14.02.2021, Date of Accession: 15.02.2021 from <https://sputniknews.com/russia/202102141082073591-no-way-nord-stream-2-wont-be-used-as-russias-partners-in-eu-need-project-official-says/>.

Moscow has been proactively benefiting from its position as one of the most prominent energy reserves in the world and has used its energy production as an advantage in foreign relations. When considering the case of Ukraine, Russia has always known Ukraine's geostrategic, geopolitical, geoeconomic and geocultural significance for the Kremlin's foreign and security policies. As such, the Kremlin has tried to control Kyiv's pro-Euro-Atlantic tendencies by any means necessary. In this sense, Russia has strongly opposed Ukraine and Georgia becoming members of Euro-Atlantic institutions like the European Union and NATO. At the end of 2013, Victor Yanukovich, then President of Ukraine, suspended negotiations with the EU on signing a partnership agreement, citing national security reasons. This suspension fuelled pro-European demonstrations in Ukraine known as the Maidan Events. In these protests, the pro-Europeans in Ukraine demanded a signed partnership agreement with the EU. Yanukovich rejected signing an agreement with the EU, preferring to sign a comprehensive agreement with Russia instead. This increased tension in Ukraine, culminating with Yanukovich's resignation and pro-Europeans coming into power in the Ukraine. Protests have subsequently spread into Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, where many Russian-born people live. After the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia became intensely involved in increasing tension surrounding Crimea and Eastern Ukraine as of March 2014. Through Moscow's powerful intervention, Russia has annexed Crimea and further complicated the situation in Eastern Ukraine.

In the aftermath of Moscow establishing a new status quo within Eastern Ukraine and occupying Crimea, both the U.S. and the EU have implemented new, comprehensive sanctions toward Russia. Russian natural gas transportation projects in particular are monitored closely by Brussels and Washington. Additionally, the EU and the U.S. have pressured several countries not to pursue energy transportation projects with Russia. To enforce this, the U.S. has outlined sanctions for countries that intend to develop natural gas transportation projects with the Russian Federation. The European- and American-centered sanctions also seek to harm Moscow's position in the world energy market. Moscow has been pursuing a "differentiated markets policy" in order to overcome these sanctions. Therefore, the advancement of TurkStream with Turkey, Power of Siberia with China, and Nord Stream 2 with some European countries should be understood within this milieu of sanctions imposed by Washington and Brussels. Despite the threat of sanctions toward both Russia and its partner countries, Moscow and its partner capitals are determined to complete their energy transportation projects by prioritizing their national interests. It is easily argued, then, that the

updated sanctions and threat of further sanctions from the U.S. and the EU are not stopping Russian energy transportation projects. It can be expected that this condition will not change in the short, near, or long term. This is because Russia and its partner countries are/will be creating their energy security policies within the framework of their national interests.

In summary, even though the Vladimir Putin Administration has been deeply affected by Western sanctions since 2014, Moscow has continued to orchestrate huge natural gas transportation projects with Turkey, China, and some European countries under its “Diversified Energy Export” policy.” The development and completion of TurkStream and Power of Siberia, as well as the probable completion of Nord Stream 2, exemplify this issue. Additionally, the firm stance and supportive policies of partner countries that develop comprehensive energy relations with Russia strengthen Moscow’s position. Though we do not know when sanctions targeting Russia based on their relationship with Ukraine will end, Russia will certainly be able to advance new energy transportation projects with multiple countries in the coming years.

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