

the

best

Journal of Politics and Development

ISSN 2632-4911

Volume 14 ■ Number 1 ■ Winter 2024



# the rest: journal of politics and development

*Previously published as Journal of Global Analysis (JGA)*

## Editors-in-Chief:

**Ozgur TUFEKCI, Assoc. Prof.** | CESRAN International, UK

**Rahman DAG, Assoc. Prof.** | CESRAN International, UK

## Associate Editors:

**Alessia CHIRIATTI, Dr** | CESRAN International, UK

## Assistant Editors:

**Ekrem Ok** | CESRAN International, UK

## Editorial Board

**Sener AKTURK, Prof.** | Koç University, Turkey

**Enrique ALBEROLA, Prof.** | Banco de España, Spain

**Mustafa AYDIN, Prof.** | Kadir Has University, Turkey

**Ian BACHE, Prof.** | University of Sheffield, UK

**Kee-Hong BAE, Prof.** | York University, Canada

**Mark BASSIN, Prof.** | Sodertorn University, Sweden

**Alexander BELLAMY, Prof.** | Uni. of Queensland, Australia

**Richard BELLAMY, Prof.** | Uni. College London, UK

**Andreas BIELER, Prof.** | University of Nottingham, UK

**Pinar BILGIN, Prof.** | Bilkent University, Turkey

**Ken BOOTH, Prof.** | Aberystwyth University, UK

**Stephen CHAN, Prof.** | SOAS, University of London, UK

**Nazli CHOUCRI, Prof.** | MIT, USA

**Judith CLIFTON, Prof.** | Universidad de Cantabria, Spain

**John M. DUNN, Prof.** | University of Cambridge, UK

**Kevin DUNN, Prof.** | Hobart and William Smith Colleges, USA

**Can ERBIL, Assoc. Prof.** | Boston College, USA

**Stephen Van EVERA, Prof.** | MIT, USA

**Marc FLEURBAEY, Prof.** | Princeton University, USA

**Bulent GOKAY, Prof.** | Keele University, UK

**Ayla GOL, Prof.** | York St John University, UK

**Stefano GUZZINI, Prof.** | Uppsala Universitet, Sweden

**David HELD, Prof.** | London Sch. of Economics, LSE, UK

**Tony HERON, Prof.** | University of York, UK

**Raymond HINNEBUSCH, Prof.** | Uni. of St Andrews, UK

**John M. HOBSON, Prof.** | University of Sheffield, UK

**Michael KENNY, Prof.** | University of Sheffield, UK

**Cécile LABORDE, Prof.** | University College London, UK

**Scott LUCAS, Prof.** | University of Birmingham, UK

**Kalypso NICOLAIDIS, Prof.** | University of Oxford, UK

**Ziya ONIS, Prof.** | Koc University, Turkey

**Alp OZERDEM, Prof.** | George Mason University, USA

**Danny QUAH, Prof.** | London School of Economics, UK

**José Gabriel PALMA, Prof.** | Cambridge University, UK

**Jenik RADON, Prof.** | Columbia University, USA

**Oliver RICHMOND, Prof.** | University of Manchester, UK

**Ibrahim SIRKECI, Prof.** | Regent's College London, UK

**Ian TAYLOR, Prof.** | University of St Andrews, UK

**Ali WATSON, Prof.** | University of St Andrews, UK

**Brian WHITE, Prof.** | University of Sheffield, UK

**Stefan WOLFF, Prof.** | University of Birmingham, UK

**Birol YESILADA, Prof.** | Portland State University, USA

**Hakan YILMAZKUDAY, Prof.** | Florida International University, USA

*The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development is published on behalf of the Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis (CESRAN) as an academic e-journal. The articles are brought into use via the website of the journal (<https://therestjournal.com/>). CESRAN and the Editors of The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development do not expect that readers of the review will sympathise with all the sentiments they find, for some of our writers will flatly disagree with others. It does not accept responsibility for the views expressed in any article, which appears in The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development.*

*\* The surnames are listed in alphabetical order.*

# the rest: journal of politics and development

*Previously published as Journal of Global Analysis (JGA)*

## INDEXING & ABSTRACTING

- Academic Index
- Bielefeld Academic Search Engine (BASE)
- Columbia International Affairs Online (CIAO)
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- EBSCO Publishing Inc.
- EconLit
- EconPapers
- Genamics JournalSeek
- IDEAS
- Index Islamicus
- Infomine
- International Bibliography of Book Reviews of Scholarly Literature in the Humanities and Social Sciences (IBR)
- International Bibliography of Periodical Literature in the Humanities and Social Sciences (IBZ)
- International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS)
- International Relations and Security Network (ISN)
- Lancaster Index to Defence & International Security Literature
- Peace Palace Library
- Research Papers in Economics (RePEc)
- Social Sciences Information Space (SOCIONET)
- Ulrich's Periodicals Directory

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## RESEARCH ARTICLES

**6**

**Defining Peace: A content analysis of Brazil's, China's, and the European Union's discourses on the Ukraine War**

*By Luis Gouveia Junior*

**23**

**State Intervention in the Public and Private Spheres in Times of Crisis: Covid-19 Pandemic**

*By Dilber Akbaba*

**49**

**The Judgment of Climate Change on Food Availability in Nigeria**

*By Olubunmi David Apeloko, Celestina Ekene Chukwudi, Fadeke Esther Olu-Owolabi & Samuel Ezennia*

**76**

**NATO PA's Role in Consolidating Article 2 of the Atlantic Alliance Treaty**

*By Nádia Teresa dos Santos Loureiro*

**90**

**The Regional Security Complex Theory and Energy Triangle of EU-Turkey-Russia**

*By Mehmet Ferhat Firat*

**101**

**Beyond the Quasi-Alliance? An Analysis of the Japan-Australia Special Strategic Partnership**

*By Daisuke Akimoto*



International Think-tank [www.cesran.org](http://www.cesran.org)

Consultancy

Research Institute

CESRAN International is headquartered in the UK

CESRAN International is a member of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)

**CESRAN International** is a think-tank specialising on international relations in general, and global peace, conflict and development related issues and challenges.

The main business objective/function is that we provide expertise at an international level to a wide range of policy making actors such as national governments and international organisations. CESRAN with its provisions of academic and semi-academic publications, journals and a fully-functioning website has already become a focal point of expertise on strategic research and analysis with regards to global security and peace. The Centre is particularly unique in being able to bring together wide variety of expertise from different countries and academic disciplines.

The main activities that CESRAN undertakes are providing consultancy services and advice to public and private enterprises, organising international conferences and publishing academic material.

Some of CESRAN's current publications are:

- THE REST: Journal of Politics and Development (tri-annual, peer reviewed) [www.therestjournal.com](http://www.therestjournal.com)
- Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (biannual, peer reviewed)
- Political Reflection Magazine (quarterly) [www.politicalreflectionmagazine.com](http://www.politicalreflectionmagazine.com)
- CESRAN Paper Series
- CESRAN Policy Brief
- Turkey Focus Policy Brief

CESRAN International also organises an annual international conference since 2014. Until 2023 it was called as “International Conference on Eurasian Politics and Society (IEPAS)”. From 2023, it was renamed as “CESRAN: Annual Conference on International Studies”.

[www.cesran.org/call-for-papers](http://www.cesran.org/call-for-papers)

- **Ranked among the top 150 International think tanks**

# The Regional Security Complex Theory and Energy Triangle of EU-Turkey-Russia

the rest:  
journal of politics and development  
2024 | vol 14(1) | 90-100  
[www.therestjournal.com](http://www.therestjournal.com)

**Mehmet Ferhat Firat**

Adiyaman University, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, mehmetfirat@adiyaman.edu.tr  
Orcid No: 0000-0002-2066-3763

## KEYWORDS

Regional Security Complex,  
Copenhagen School,  
Energy Security,  
Natural Gas,  
Turkey-EU-Russia

## ABSTRACT

*This study explores the application of the regional security complex theory (RCST) to the energy relations between the European Union (EU), Russia, and Turkey. It underscores the critical role of energy security in shaping international relations and highlights the mutual interdependence among these actors in the energy issue. The study sheds light on the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on energy security and emphasizes the need for diversification of energy sources to reduce dependency on Russian natural gas. Turkey's active and neutral policy with Russia has formed a security complex in energy relations among these three actors. The claim that shared concerns or threat perceptions among actors assumed by the regional security complex theory constitutes a security complex has been used within the framework of this study to justify the existence of an energy security complex between Turkey, Russia, and the EU. Furthermore, given its strategic geographical position and energy infrastructure projects, this research outlines Turkey's potential as a critical isolator actor and energy hub in the region. Overall, this study offers valuable insights into the complex dynamics of energy relations and the evolving regional energy security landscape in the EU-Russia-Turkey triangle.*

Received October 27, 2023  
Revised December 08, 2023  
Accepted December 25, 2023

## Introduction

It can be argued without exaggeration that the relationship between the European Union (EU)-Russia and Turkey is a complex one. A crucial aspect of this relationship involves the intricate energy interactions between both entities. Recently, the changing dynamics of global politics have elevated the concept of "energy security" to the forefront of international relations. Relying on a single country for energy supply has been perceived as a means of exerting influence over another country. Thus, within this context, the diversification of energy suppliers and routes has gained significant importance. The increasing demand for energy and the initiatives aimed at diversifying energy sources has led to a heightened focus on natural gas in recent decades. It is evident that Turkey is heavily dependent on Russian gas, as it relies on Russia for approximately 50 per cent of its natural gas needs (Gaber, 2022). Furthermore, it is important to note that the EU, as the largest consumer of natural gas, is also inclined to utilize Russian gas. Therefore, energy security has increasingly become a driving force behind EU-Turkey and Russia relations, with a particular emphasis on natural gas.

The various approaches brought to the concept of security by the Copenhagen School have made it possible to analyze the energy issue as a security concept. At the same time, the school's proposed regional security complex approach has made it possible to envision an energy-centric security complex in the EU-Turkey-Russia triangle. The regional security complex theory (RSCT) divides the international order into regional security complexes, global powers, and insulating countries. Turkey is classified as an insulator, meaning it is not connected to any security complex and lacks the power to influence any complex (Buzan, 2003:147). However, Turkey's unique geographical position challenges its insulator identity and offers opportunities for engagement in energy security cooperation. The establishment of a Turkey-based regional energy security complex is seen as a possibility, considering Turkey's regional situation and the need for energy interdependence.

The reasons that make it possible to propose a kind of energy security complex in the EU-Turkey-Russia triangle are undoubtedly the mutual interdependence relationships among these actors in the energy domain. However, in recent crises such as the Russia-Ukraine war, energy security has become of primary importance for all three actors in this triangle. Therefore, the fundamental assumption of this study is that the EU, Russia, and Turkey form an energy security complex. To support this argument, the upcoming sections will first focus on the basic assumptions of the Regional Security Complex Theory, examining how the issue of energy security can be analyzed within this theoretical framework. On the other hand, to fully illustrate mutual interdependence relationships, especially the projection of natural gas imports and exports between the EU and Russia, is necessary. Therefore, the post-Ukraine crisis dimension of the EU-Russia energy relationship will be revealed.

Additionally, within the framework of the concept of the "insulator power" proposed by Buzan and his colleagues (Et al., 1998), who are among the founders of the regional security complex theory, Turkey's position will be examined. According to the theory, Turkey, as an insulating power, occupies an influential position in energy-centered relations between the EU and Russia. Turkey is at the centre of the EU-Russia-Turkey energy security complex with its pipelines, geostrategic position, and its project of becoming an energy hub.

## **Regional Security Complex Theory**

The Copenhagen School argues that security is not an inherent quality but a product of human creation. The notion of security varies depending on the prevailing circumstances and how threats are perceived (Buzan, 2015: 131). Therefore, discussions on security must address inquiries such as who formulated this notion and with what purpose. Security is established when the necessity arises. Expanding on this idea, Buzan (1991: 436) argued that the perception of security could be associated with different sectors and identified five distinct sectors such as political, military, environmental, economic, and societal. The Copenhagen School's methodical approach, which classifies the perception of security into sectors, underscores that the determinants of these sectors are the targets of the threats; in other words, the primary factor is the objective (Buzan, 1991: 440). The Copenhagen School has broadened the application of the sectoral approach method, which analyzes the intricate connections among different entities concerning security. In this study, the interpretation of energy security encompasses a dynamic process that guarantees consistent and dependable supply and demand across multiple sectors, such as political, military, economic, social, and environmental, operating at different levels ranging from international and regional to national and individual. This involves the engagement of diverse actors within the realm of security (Huysmans, 1998).

In the domain of theories pertaining to International Relations (IR), the notion of energy security has attracted considerable scrutiny, especially in the aftermath of the oil crises experienced during the 1970s. The termination of the Cold War constituted a momentous milestone, propelling energy-related issues to the forefront of worldwide political discussions. Consequently, energy security has

assumed a crucial role in deliberations across diverse academic fields, encompassing international relations. Towards the later stages of the Cold War, the Copenhagen School investigated security in environmental, economic, and social dimensions, deviating from the military and state-centred approach. This institution is the primary establishment to embrace a constructivist approach to assessing energy security (Açıkmeşe, 2011: 57-58).

One of the new extensions brought to the security approach by the Copenhagen School is the theory of regional security complexes. The regional security complex theory (RSCT) also presents a more up-to-date and pertinent approach to conceptualizing energy security. Buzan is the founding academic associated with this particular theory, with additional contributions from Wæver (Buzan and Wæver, 2003). The concept of a regional security complex is defined as a collection of states whose primary security concerns are intricately linked to the point where their national securities cannot realistically be considered independently. One significant advantage of RSCT is its ability to challenge prevailing notions and facilitate discussions about security concerns among members of a specific security complex. This approach dispels the overly generic assumptions of liberalism and realism and proposes that the concept of energy security can be analyzed and approached using different methods, all within the framework of RSCT (Buzan, 2003). RSCT confidently explains the existence of energy complexes and the relationships between two or more states within a region while also demonstrating how energy has been "securitized" within a particular geographical area. However, in order to classify an energy security complex, it is crucial to understand the nature and extent of energy dependencies by studying a state's energy profile, which includes factors such as external dependence, diversification possibilities, trade levels, and domestic supplies. This underscores the challenging nature of RSCT, as a state with 100% dependency on oil, for example, contributes to the securitization of energy, whereas a state where oil only constitutes 10% of its energy profile presents a distinct perspective. Therefore, when analyzing energy security from this standpoint, it is necessary to decide whether it is more advantageous to group major energy sources together or to base our understanding on the overall energy reliance of a given state. Additionally, it is important to recognize that energy security also encompasses the need for supply security and demand security. Moreover, dependence between two or more states can be both positive and negative.

As a result of the theory of regional security complexes, the Copenhagen School argues that there are two types of regional complexes: homogeneous and heterogeneous. Homogeneous complexes can emerge in any security sector, including military, environmental, and societal security, while heterogeneous complexes are regional complexes in which different security sectors are integrated. For example, the EU has a heterogeneous regional complex in which all security sectors are perceived similarly by both state and non-state actors (Buzan et al., 1998: 17-18). This study asserts the existence of a kind of energy security complex in the EU-Russia-Turkey triangle. Regional energy security complexes are composed of interactions related to energy between two or more states in a specific geographic area. Inevitably, an energy dependence relationship exists among these actors. In this context, it is claimed that Russia, the EU, and Turkey form a regional security complex from the perspective of energy security (Elbassoussy, 2019: 340).

The claim of the existence of an energy-related security complex between the EU-Russia-Turkey is explained through the mutual interdependence of these actors. Therefore, an analysis is needed to understand the policies these actors have developed in the context of energy security. The crises that have occurred in recent years have inevitably brought the issue into the realm of energy security. In this sense, the strained relations between the EU and Russia, particularly due to the recent Ukraine war, should be analyzed through sanctions and the energy crisis.

## **EU-Russia Energy Relations**



After Russia's intervention in Ukraine, the issue of the European Union's energy dependence has once again become a significant topic in energy security studies. In response to Western sanctions, Russia has imposed restrictions on the amount of natural gas supplied to Europe as a retaliatory measure. Most recently, in the summer of 2022, the Russian energy company Gazprom announced that natural gas exported to Europe via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline would be provided at only 20% capacity due to "maintenance work" (Halser and Paraschiv, 2022). Simultaneously, the European Commission (2022) unveiled the "European Natural Gas Demand Reduction Plan." According to this plan, aiming to reduce dependency on Russia in the energy sector and enhance Europe's energy security, member countries of the European Union are expected to reduce their natural gas consumption by 15%. Initially, these reductions are envisioned to be voluntary, but if the situation worsens regarding energy supply from Russia, the proposed limitations on consumption may become mandatory and binding (European Commission, 2022).

While there may be a mutual interdependence between Russia and the EU, especially in terms of natural gas supply, this dependency renders the EU more vulnerable to Russia. According to data from the European Council for the year 2020, Europe produces 42% of its consumed energy domestically and imports the remaining 58% from external sources. Renewable energy constitutes 40.8% of the total energy produced in European Union countries, while nuclear energy makes up 30.5%. However, the imported energy consists largely of fossil fuels, with 29% of oil, 54% of coal, and 43% of natural gas being imported from Russia. The data also indicates that natural gas accounts for 24% of Europe's total energy consumption, inevitably trapping Russia-EU relations in the dimension of energy (Eurostat 2020).

In a statement dated 20 July 2022, the European Commission (2022) characterized the decreasing energy supply from Russia to Europe as a "conscious attempt to weaponize energy." As of June 2022, the flow of natural gas from Russia to Europe has decreased to the level of 30% of the 2016-2021 average, and there is an expectation that this flow might come to a complete halt while the war continues in Ukraine (European Commission, 2022). Efforts to reduce Europe's dependency on Russian natural gas are not new and have been ongoing since the Soviet era. These efforts can be summarized as implementing policies to prevent monopolization, scrutinizing and, if necessary, penalizing Gazprom's monopolistic practices, diversifying natural gas supply sources, increasing LNG import capacity, constructing cross-border pipeline connections, and developing contingency plans for disruptions in natural gas supply from Russia (Di Bella et al., 2022). The ongoing war in Ukraine, Russia's policies, and global inflationary pressures currently lend greater urgency to these initiatives than ever before. The European Union initiated efforts to decrease dependence on Russian natural gas from the early days of the Ukraine war. The "REPowerEU" project, launched by the European Commission on 18 May 2022, sets the goal of ending energy relations with Russia by 2030 (European Commission, 2022).

According to the assessments of the European Commission, in the event of Russia cutting off natural gas, there will be a gap of forty-five billion cubic meters between August 2022 and March 2023, including the winter period (European Commission 2022). Therefore, if the same amount of savings can be made in natural gas consumption, Europe will not be affected by Russia's moves. However, there are several uncertainties here. Firstly, will measures voluntarily taken by countries be sufficient to achieve such savings? Secondly, there is no binding agreement on how the savings will be made. The fact that this is entirely left to the governments of member countries, without coordination at the European level, raises questions about how effective the implementation can be. Finally, the plan includes many exceptions. For example, countries such as Ireland, Malta, and the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCA), which are not connected to the Continental European natural gas network, will be exempt from restrictions. Spain and Portugal, due to the situation with their connections, will only be obligated to a 7% reduction. Countries entirely dependent on natural gas for electricity generation, such as Greece, will not be required to make a reduction in

consumption (Di Bella et al., 2022). All these exceptions will make it challenging to implement the plan effectively. In a period when European economies are undergoing a sensitive process with the impacts of the pandemic, inflation, and recent political instability in some EU member countries, is it possible to experience interruptions in energy? The plan proposes addressing the gaps created by energy savings "economically efficiently and on the basis of solidarity" but lacks explanatory provisions on how this can be fully achieved throughout Europe.

According to the initial reactions to the plan, Southern European countries such as Spain and Greece, which do not need heating much due to their warmer climates and have relatively low industrial production, believe that the plan requires "disproportionately excessive sacrifice" from them. Northern European countries, more industrialized and consuming more energy in winter, such as Germany, argue that they have already invested in renewable energy and continue to do so, accusing Southern European countries of "acting irresponsibly" (Siddi and Prandin, 2023). Under these conditions, will the "calls for solidarity" from the commission be sufficient to establish a common front in the energy field against Russia, or will the natural gas plan lead to increased disagreements within Europe?

In addition to the attempts to reduce dependency targeted by the plan, it is necessary to address diversification efforts. In this context, negotiations with countries such as the United States, Qatar, and Azerbaijan can be shown as alternatives to natural gas currently supplied by Russia, Norway, and North African countries. In March, after Russia invaded Ukraine, U.S. President Joe Biden promised European leaders to supply more liquefied natural gas (LNG) to compensate for Europe's shrinking natural gas supply (Renshaw and Disavino, 2022). However, doubts about how the United States will increase LNG exports to Europe exist due to the limits of the U.S. LNG sector's exports and the dominance of long-term agreements that determine where natural gas will be exported globally for 20 years. The United States plans to triple its commitment to export an additional 15 billion cubic meters of LNG to Europe this year, exceeding Biden's commitment in March. However, even if natural gas exports from the United States to Europe increase, the ongoing threats of Russia not sending natural gas create uncertainty as Europe approaches the winter months, where natural gas usage is high (Simon, 2022). As the number one producer of liquefied natural gas globally, the United States plans to ship more liquefied gas to the region as a solution to European allies' dependence on Russian gas. Currently, all seven facilities producing liquefied gas in the United States are operating at full capacity. Therefore, some experts point out that no matter how high global fuel prices are, America may not be able to produce more LNG in this period (Semet, 2023).

On the other hand, with the export facility Calcasieu Pass of Venture Global in the state of Louisiana expected to provide more liquefaction services starting this year, America's production capacity is expected to increase by the end of 2022 (Cunningham and Kern, 2022). According to analyses of Rystad Energy (2023), the U.S. can easily surpass the 15 billion cubic meter target because prices in Europe seem to go far beyond spot prices in Asia. On the other hand, if the supply of natural gas from Russia is cut off, the existing liquefied natural gas stations in Europe have limited capacity to receive additional natural gas from America or other producers. With all these dynamics, especially with the decrease in natural gas supply and the increase in global demand, the increase in energy prices does not seem like an easily bearable cost for European economies, which are already in danger of recession. On the other hand, there is a risk of dependency on the United States, especially in the field of natural gas, for European countries that want to reduce their dependence on Russia (Semet, 2023). In terms of diversification efforts, the supply of natural gas from other producer countries to the EU remains a long-term plan, considering the production capacity of source countries and the inadequacy of pipeline connections. Therefore, the EU must make extensive infrastructure investments to reduce external dependence, especially in energy and, specifically, natural gas. The shift to renewable energy sources will not be able to prevent the slowdown in industry and production in the short term.

The energy dependency of the European states on Russian gas has been a fact seen by the European states and others. That is why the EU and leading states in the organization have been looking for diversification of energy suppliers and alternative energy resources, especially green energy. Acknowledging this strategic deficiency and looking for alternative ways are not adequate to reduce energy dependency as it takes a long time and costs a tremendous sum. In short, the EU's high demand for energy resources to maintain its status, economic growth, and technological and industrial superiority has made Turkey a key actor in the EU's energy security.

### **Potential of Turkey as an Isolator Actor**

The evolving structure of international security after the Cold War, marked by the cessation of competition between the two superpowers, has provided other states with greater opportunities for influence. Consequently, the concept of regions has gained significance, requiring intense interaction among proximate states for an area to be considered a region. Within this framework, security relations concentrate regionally, leading to the development of friendship or enmity through interstate interactions over time (Shafaei and Naghdi, 2015). A region constitutes a distinct subsystem formed by the security relations among a group of states connected by geographical proximity. In this context, the regional security complex theory focuses on the diverse security themes inherent in regions and how this diversity can be examined. The study of the regional security complex theory begins with the division of the world into different regional security complexes, global powers, and isolated units. Super or global powers are states that transcend geography and distances in their security relationships, operating at the global system level (Fawn, 2009). While every state can belong to only one complex, global powers serve as exceptions. Major powers, positioning themselves above regional powers, are often considered global power contenders, influencing multiple regions. Despite being analyzed at the global level alongside global powers, major powers have limited capacities to impact the global system. The competition among major powers enhances regional competition within security complexes (Buzan and Wæver, 2003).

Post-Cold War international players on the global stage include the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the European Union as a whole, Japan, China, and Russia. According to Buzan (1991: 190), a security complex is built upon the interconnection of the fundamental security concerns of a group of countries that cannot be realistically separated from each other. Regional security complexes are analytical units defined primarily within the framework of the security concept, characterized by intense mutual interdependence among constituent entities. Buzan's concept emphasizes filling the gap between state and system (global) levels or national security and international security (regional) through regional security complexes.

Weak interactions among regional security complexes are explained by the concept of isolating units. Isolating units may belong to no complex or multiple regional security complexes (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 484). The concept of isolation, traditionally associated with states in the literature, is applicable in the context of isolating regions (mini complexes) as well. Isolating states and regions have relatively less mutual dependence on the security domain with their neighbouring regional security complexes. While the isolation concept is central to the regional security complex theory, it is not adequately detailed by the theory. The key issue here is how the concept of isolation should be addressed. Due to the unique dynamics within each regional security complex, initial impressions suggest limited interaction between different regions (Santini, 2017).

Turkey, in this context, has been defined by the founders of the theory as playing an isolating role between Europe and the Middle East (Buzan, 1991:196). Although it may not be directly included in any security complex today, the concept of isolation provides an explanation for Turkey. Turkey, unable to be singularly affiliated with either the European or Middle Eastern security complex, is influenced by and, at times, has the potential to influence these security complexes. According to the

theory, isolating states are expected to assume a relatively passive role by absorbing energies around them (Buzan and Waever, 2003: 392). However, Turkey challenges the classic isolating definition with its regional active policies, as suggested by Buzan and Waever (2003: 485). Despite pursuing an active foreign policy, Turkey still functions as an isolating state as it fails to strategically bring together actors from different neighbouring regional security complexes (Buzan and Waever, 2003: 485).

Turkey's geographical proximity to energy-rich regions such as the Middle East, Russia, and the Caspian region, as well as its role as a bridge between these regions and the European Union, positions it as a potential centre for a regional energy complex. The concept of an "energy security complex" in this region is put forward, suggesting that Turkey has the potential to be an effective member of such a complex, going beyond its role as an insulator country. The energy security complex refers to a regional security complex that is formed by energy-related interactions between two or more states in a specific geographic area, including energy dependence and the perception of such dependency as a security concern (Elbassoussy, 2019). In the context of this paper, the regional energy complex includes Russia, the European Union (EU), and Turkey. These countries are considered regional security complexes due to their interdependence in terms of energy resources and infrastructure. The energy security complex in this region is characterized by the presence of natural gas and oil pipelines across Ukrainian and Turkish territory, which creates interdependencies and challenges in ensuring energy supply security. The EU's lack of a direct geographical link to Russia is often neglected due to the extensive pipeline networks across Ukraine and Turkey, which connect the European Union's members to Russian energy resources.

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine War, initiated on 24 February 2022, has had a direct impact on Ukraine's territorial integrity, regional security, and the security of Europe's natural gas supply. Prior to the conflict, EU member states relied on Russia for 45% of their total natural gas consumption, equivalent to approximately three hundred million m<sup>3</sup> per day. However, with the commencement of the war and in a manner reminiscent of the illicit annexation of Crimea in 2014, there has been a substantial reduction in Europe's natural gas imports from Russia due to EU-imposed sanctions. Consequently, as of October 2022, the daily imports had dropped to below one hundred million m<sup>3</sup> (McWilliams et al., 2023).

Four primary routes facilitate the transportation of Russian gas to Europe, namely the Nord Stream, the Ukrainian Transit Line, the Yamal, and Turkish Stream. Following the commencement of the war, gas flow in the Yamal route, connecting Belarus to Poland and Germany, was abruptly halted. Simultaneously, a significant reduction in gas flow through the Ukrainian Transit Line occurred since the war's onset, with an ongoing conflict between Gazprom and the Ukrainian natural gas company Naftogaz (Andrei, 2022). Conversely, Nord Stream has experienced multiple interruptions in recent times attributed to leaks, with each party placing blame on the other. In contrast, the Turkish Stream seems to be a pipeline that continues to operate without interruptions. As of October 2022, more than 10 billion m<sup>3</sup> of Russian gas has been transported to Europe through the Turkish Stream. This underscores the significance of the Turkish Stream, similar to TANAP, in ensuring the supply of natural gas to Europe (Semet, 2022).

In this period of heightened significance for the Turkish Stream, two additional occurrences have highlighted Turkey's potential role as a crucial energy hub for delivering Russian natural gas to Europe. Firstly, there was a disruption in gas flow at the end of September 2022 due to detected leaks in the natural gas pipelines of Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2, which supply gas from Russia to Germany. Concerns have been raised, suggesting the possibility of sabotage orchestrated with underwater military equipment (Teslova, 2022). Secondly, during the 6th Conference on Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in Astana, Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin, in discussions with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, presented the idea

of rerouting natural gas to Europe by addressing the losses experienced in the Nord Stream Lines in the Baltic Sea. This involved redirecting through the Black Sea and establishing main routes passing through Turkey. The same statement also proposed the potential establishment of a natural gas centre in Turkey. While the realization and technical details remain uncertain, the announcement that the proposal will undergo decisive discussions between the parties within a week has generated optimistic expectations (Milov, 2022: 68).

Despite not possessing abundant hydrocarbon resources, Turkey's energy approach revolves around positioning itself as a pivotal nation in the energy landscape, commonly referred to as an "energy hub." Particularly in the natural gas domain, Turkey has effectively implemented this strategy over the years through extensive energy infrastructure projects. Turkey appears to have adeptly leveraged its geostrategic location to serve as a crucial transit route connecting energy resources with end consumers. Key projects like TANAP, Turkish Stream, and the Turkey-Greece Natural Gas Interconnection exemplify Turkey's notable achievements in the natural gas sector (Novikau and Mohasilovic, 2023).

Effectively managing TANAP is crucial for Turkey, serving the dual purpose of fulfilling its domestic energy requirements and providing a viable alternative to Russian natural gas for Europe, given Turkey's intermediary role. Thus far, the primary focus has been on guaranteeing the secure transmission of gas through the pipeline and facilitating its distribution to global markets. In the upcoming period, TANAP is expected to gain increased significance for the European Union, which is intensifying efforts to explore alternative energy sources due to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine (McWilliams et al., 2023). The potential expansion of TANAP's capacity or the establishment of new parallel lines is under consideration, and Azerbaijan's success in the Second Karabakh War is likely to further support such initiatives. This situation is expected to impact the ongoing negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding Karabakh, as no peace treaty has been signed in favour of Baku. The positive atmosphere also favours the advancement of Trans-Caspian projects. Kazakhstan's initiative to transport hydrocarbon resources to Azerbaijan through the Caspian Sea and subsequently to global markets via existing Turkish lines, bypassing Russia, is of utmost importance. This scenario, similarly applicable to gas-rich Turkmenistan, could significantly influence the energy landscape in Eurasia. Developments in the Eastern Mediterranean have gained increased significance, with Turkey actively asserting its role in regional energy collaborations through agreements with the TRNC and Libya, along with ongoing hydrocarbon exploration activities (Novikau and Mohasilovic, 2023).

Despite the EU seeking alternative sources in the aftermath of the Russian-Ukrainian War, the reality remains that natural gas imports from Russia will persist under the current circumstances. In this context, Turkey stands out as the most secure route. In summary, Turkey's persistent efforts to become an energy hub in the region have the potential to overcome the challenges in the energy triangle of EU-Russia-Turkey. This, in turn, may contribute indirectly to the resolution of political disputes among various actors in the region. Therefore, in the context of the regional energy security complex proposed by this study, Turkey occupies a highly influential position as an isolator actor.

## **Conclusion**

The Regional Security Complex Theory has enabled the analysis of the complex relationship, energy interactions, and the concept of "energy security" between the European Union (EU), Russia, and Turkey. In an environment where diversifying energy suppliers and routes, especially in the context of natural gas, has become crucial, the Regional Security Complex Theory can be applied to envision an energy-centric security complex in the EU-Turkey-Russia triangle. The theory classifies Turkey as an insulator but suggests that its unique geographical position could offer opportunities for engagement in energy security cooperation. Therefore, considering the mutual interdependence

relationships in the energy issue among these actors, it can be argued that the EU, Russia, and Turkey form an energy security complex. The post-Ukraine crisis dimension of the EU-Russia energy relationship makes such an assumption possible, given Turkey's effective position in energy-centred relations between the EU and Russia, including its pipelines, geostrategic position, and its project of becoming an energy hub (Firat and Dağ, 2023).

Disruptions in Russia's natural gas supply have created a new challenge for the energy security of the European Union. As emphasised earlier, the EU's plan to reduce natural gas consumption in response to potential supply cuts includes some uncertainties and exceptions. Additionally, efforts for diversification, including negotiations with the United States, Qatar, and Azerbaijan as alternatives to Russian natural gas, and concerns about natural gas supply from these countries do not provide sufficient opportunities for the EU's energy security (Firat and Dağ 2023). Moreover, policies for extensive infrastructure investments and the transition to renewable energy sources, especially natural gas, do not offer an immediate solution to meet the energy needs of the EU. This situation aligns with the energy security concerns of the EU and Turkey, emphasizing the importance of common concerns among actors, a fundamental condition for discussing a regional security complex.

As mentioned in the previous sections, both Turkey and the EU have a similar level of dependence on Russian natural gas. In the last decade, the issue highlighted by crises between Russia and the EU has transformed into an energy matter, becoming a prominent security concern. Similarly, the issue of energy, which is also a significant determinant of Russia-Turkey relations, has become a crucial topic of discussion between Turkey and the EU, particularly after the recent migration issues. From Russia's perspective, retaining the EU as the largest market for Russian natural gas is crucial. Therefore, our study's findings have shown that these three actors share common concerns and, furthermore, have common interests in the field of energy security. Thus, the shared concerns among the actors in the region, forming a security complex, and the focus of our study on the energy security of the Turkey-EU-Russia trio make it possible to define it as an energy security complex.

This study primarily examines Turkey's strategic role in the context of a regional energy security complex. In this context, Turkey's unique position between Europe and the Middle East and its potential to influence and be influenced by security complexes in these regions is crucial. At the same time, Turkey's efforts to become a significant energy hub, particularly due to its potential as a critical energy centre in the natural gas domain, support this role. Examining Turkey's role in transporting natural gas to Europe, especially in light of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, makes it possible to explore the complex regional energy security assumption formed in the EU-Russia-Turkey triangle.

In conclusion, this study attempts to explore the concept of energy security within the framework of the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) proposed by the Copenhagen School. According to the theory, energy security operates at various levels, connecting political, military, economic, social, and environmental factors from international to individual levels. The RSCT provides a suitable approach to conceptualize energy security, emphasizing the interdependence among states within a specific geographical area. The study argues for the existence of an energy security complex in the EU-Russia-Turkey triangle, highlighting the mutual interdependence of these actors in the energy issue.

## References

Açıkmeşe S (2011) Algı mı, Söylem mi? Kopenhag Okulu ve Yeni Klasik Gerçekçilikte Güvenlik Tehditleri. *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi* 8 (30): 43-73.

- Andrei R (2022) Turkey's Energy Strategy: In Search of an Upgraded Political and Energy Status. In: Natural Gas at the Frontline Between the EU, Russia, and Turkey: A Conflict-Cooperation Perpetuum. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 231-263.
- Buzan B (2015) The English School: A neglected approach to international security studies. *Security Dialogue* 46(2): 126-143.
- Buzan B (2003) Regional security complex theory in the post-cold war world. In: *Theories of new regionalism: A Palgrave reader*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, pp. 140-159.
- Buzan B (1991) New patterns of global security in the twenty-first century. *International Affairs* 67(3): 431-451.
- Buzan B and Wæver O (2003) *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Buzan B et al. (1998) *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Cunningham S. and Kern R. (2022) \$5B Louisiana LNG Project to Break Ground Immediately. *Rigzone*, 22 February, 2022.
- Di Bella G et al. (2022) Natural gas in Europe: the potential impact of disruptions to supply. *IMF Working Papers* 145.
- Elbassoussy A (2019) European energy security dilemma: major challenges and confrontation strategies. *Review of Economics and Political Science* 4(4): 321-343.
- European Commission (2022) Save Gas for a Safe Winter: Commission proposes gas demand reduction plan to prepare EU for supply cuts. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_22\\_4608](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_4608) (accessed 10 November 2023).
- European Commission (2022) Secure gas supplies: EU legislation helps to prevent and respond to potential gas supply disruptions. Available at: [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-security/secure-gas-supplies\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-security/secure-gas-supplies_en) (accessed 10 November 2023).
- European Commission (2022) REPowerEU: A plan to rapidly reduce dependence on Russian fossil fuels and fast forward the green transition. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_22\\_3131](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_3131) (accessed 8 November 2023).
- Eurostat (2020) The EU imported 58% of its energy in 2020. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20220328-2> (accessed 11 November 2023).
- Firat M F and Dağ R (2023) Türkiye's Desecuritization of Energy Resources in the Eastern Mediterranean After Russia-Ukraine War. *Novus Orbis* 5(2): 148-171.
- Fawn R (2009) 'Regions' and their study: wherefrom, what for and whereto?. *Review of International Studies* 35(S1): 5-34.
- Gaber Y (2022) Turkey can become an energy hub but not by going all-in on Russian gas. *Atlantic Council*, 7 December, 2022. Available at:

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/turkeysource/turkey-can-become-an-energy-hub-but-not-by-going-all-in-on-russian-gas/> (accessed 7 November 2023).

- Halser C and Paraschiv F (2022) Pathways to overcoming natural gas dependency on Russia the German case. *Energies* 15(14): 39-49.
- Huysmans J (1998) Revisiting Copenhagen: Or, On the Creative Development of a Security Studies Agenda in Europe. *European Journal of International Relations* 4(4).
- McWilliams B., Tagliapietra S., Zachmann G. and Deschuyteneer T (2023) Preparing for the next winter: Europe's gas outlook for 2023. Bruegel Policy Contribution.
- Milov V (2022) European gas price crisis: Is Gazprom responsible?. *European View* 21(1): 66-73.
- Novikau A and Muhasilović J (2023) Turkey's quest to become a regional energy hub: Challenges and opportunities. *Heliyon*.
- Renshaw J and Disavino S (2022) U.S. LNG exports to Europe on track to surpass Biden promise. Reuters, 26 July, 2022. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/us-lng-exports-europe-track-surpass-biden-promise-2022-07-26/> (accessed 6 November 2023).
- RystadEnergy (2023) Navigating the future of energy. Available at: <https://www.rystadenergy.com/> (accessed 12 November 2023).
- Santini H (2017) A new regional cold war in the Middle East and North Africa: Regional security complex theory revisited. *The International Spectator* 52(4): 93-111.
- Semet S (2023) Corking Russian Gas: Global Economic and Political Ramifications. CATO Institute. Available at: <https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/corking-russian-gas>. (accessed 8 November 2023).
- Shafae M and Naghdi F (2015) Regional Powers and World Order in the Post Cold War Era. *Geopolitics Quarterly* 11(40): 148-176.
- Siddi M and Prandin F (2023) Governing the EU's Energy Crisis: The European Commission's Geopolitical Turn and its Pitfalls. *Politics and Governance* 11(4).
- Simon F (2022) Top US gas exporter eyes Europe growth, 'with the right contracts.' Euractiv, 31 September, 2022. Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy-environment/news/top-us-gas-exporter-eyes-europe-growth-with-the-right-contracts/> (accessed 8 November 2023).
- Teslova E (2022) Russia summons Danish, German, Swedish envoys to protest Nord Stream gas pipeline probe. Anadolu Agency, 14 October, 2022. Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/russia-ukraine-war/russia-summons-danish-german-swedish-envoys-to-protest-nord-stream-gas-pipeline-probe/2710661>. (accessed 7 November 2023).





[www.cesran.org](http://www.cesran.org)

Tower Court, Oakdale Road, York YO30 4XL, UK



ISSN 2632-4911

## Call for Papers

*The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development* endeavours to become the foremost international forum for academics, researchers and policymakers to share their knowledge and experience in the discipline of international relations and its subfields: international security, international political economy, international organisations, foreign policy analysis, political history, etc.

*The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development* is an open-access, double-blind peer-reviewed journal. The journal is published at its own website <https://therestjournal.com/The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development> welcomes submissions of **articles** from related persons involved in the scope of the journal as well as **summary reports of conferences and lecture series** held in social sciences.

Prospective authors should submit 4.000-9.000 words articles for consideration in Microsoft Word-compatible format. For more complete descriptions and submission instructions, please access the Author Guidelines and Style Guidelines pages at the website <https://therestjournal.com/> Contributors are urged to read the author guidelines and style guidelines carefully before submitting articles. Articles submissions should be sent through the "MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION" page at the website.

*Editors-in-Chief:*

**Dr. Ozgur TUFEKCI**

**Dr. Rahman DAG**

*“Quarterly News-Magazine”*

# POLITICAL REFLECTION

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTION

*Published by CESRAN International*

### **Political Reflection**

welcomes contributions

from scholars, students, and professionals

in all aspects of international relations, politics, and political economy.

- Articles submitted should be original contributions and should not be under consideration for any other publication at the same time.
- Articles for the Magazine should be submitted via email to the following addresses:  
**Rahman.dag@cesran.org | editors@cesran.org | emrah.atar@cesran.org**
- Author's name, title and full address with a brief biographical note should be typed on a separate sheet.
- The ideal **PR** article length is from **1000** to **2000** words.
- **Political Reflection Magazine adheres to the CESRAN Harvard reference style.** View the guidelines below to ensure your manuscript conforms to the reference style. <https://therestjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Reference-Style.pdf>
- If a submitted article is selected for publication, its copyright will be transferred to **Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis (CESRAN Int.)**. Published papers can be cited by giving the necessary bibliographical information. For re-publication of any article in full-text permission must be sought from the editors.
- Authors bear responsibility for their contributions. Statements of fact or opinion appearing in **Political Reflection Magazine** are solely those of the authors and do not imply endorsement by the Magazine or the **CESRAN Int.**

# *Leadership*

***Honorary President***  
Ken Booth



***Director-General***  
Ozgur Tufekci



***Deputy Director-General***  
Rahman Dag



**cesran** international  
CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS - CESRAN



think-tank ■ consultancy ■ research-institute

[www.cesran.org](http://www.cesran.org)

the

nest

**Journal of Politics and Development**

ISSN 2632-4911