

Securitizing the EU-Russia gas trade: The impact of crises on energy policy



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Abbreviations

CIS	- Commonwealth of Independent States (<i>former Soviet Republics</i>)
EC	- European Commission
ECT	- Energy Charter Treaty
EU	- European Union
ToL	- Treaty of Lisbon

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Chapter one: Introduction

It is no exaggeration to assert that the relation between the EU and Russia is a complicated one. An important pillar of this relationship is the elaborate natural gas trade taking place between both players. The European-Russian gas trade has come a long way since its inception in 1968 (Dickel and Westphal 2012, 1). In contrast with the trade barriers that deny most Russian companies access to the European market, Russia's energy behemoths enjoy an exceptionally luxurious position (Holslag 2006, 12). Today Russia accounts for 34% of the EU's gas import (European Commission 2012, 6), while a newfound philosophy of petronationalism enlarged the revenues of fossil fuel trade to a staggering 50% of Russian GDP and 70% of its export. These revenues are key to financing the state's social expenditures (O Kelly 2010, 10). Meanwhile, Russia looks poised to claim its piece of the Asian economic success-story by resetting its energy export-priorities eastward (Buckley 2013, 1). But notwithstanding the Eurasianist turn in Russia's future energy strategy, strong ties continue to bind Russia with Europe.

Since the end of the Cold War, several political crises have taken place between Russia and a few important transit countries, which led to sudden cut-offs of Russian gas deliveries to Europe. Notably the Russia-Ukraine gas spats of 2006 and 2009 were painful reminders for the EU and Russia of their strategic interdependence as well as the need for political cooperation by transit countries. Indeed, they are manifestations of how the implications of this natural gas trade extend beyond liberal economics and spill over into the realist realm of supra-, inter- and national security considerations.

In this respect, the continued high demand abroad for its energy resources is a *conditio sine qua non* for Russia's internal stability and the survival of its political elite. Since the advent of Putin, the Kremlin holds a tight grip on the federation's energy players (the quintessential examples being its large share in the boards of Gazprom and Rosneft and the triggering of the bankruptcy of Yukos (Expropriation News 2011)). This was achieved in the context of a broader scheme to eliminate any viable opposition to the Kremlin or Putin (Stratfor 2012, 1). Since it was feared that the energy sector could be used as a power base for potential rivals, the Russian energy sector was purged from oligarchs and foreign firms that were not under the Kremlin's control. In order to consolidate the Kremlin's power, some of the most powerful people in Russia were stripped of their assets and influence. According to Stratfor

(2012, 1), these large energy firms were also to become an asset for Moscow's aspirations. There are ample examples of how Russia's foreign policy uses energy exports abroad as a 'weapon' to obtain political gain (Stegen 2011, 6511). Gazprom's considerable hold over the European energy market makes the EU a prime target for the energy weapon. By using a divide-and-rule strategy in bilateral negotiations with member states, Gazprom continues to dominate Europe's internal gas market. This strategy comes to fruition even more in the former Soviet space in Eastern Europe. As we will argue, Russia is keen to use its position as the sole gas supplier to some of these states as a lever to extract political concessions. Consequently, "Moscow's geopolitical reach rises and falls to some extent with the price of oil and gas" (Mankoff 2009, vii).

Likewise, the EU's strategic interest in ensuring gas provision became bluntly apparent during the Russo-Ukrainian gas spats, the consequences of which severely reduced imports and caused sudden regional shortages of gas (and, via gas-fired power stations, even electricity) supply throughout the EU's energy market (Westphal 2012, 1). Among other factors, it was the lack of a coherent EU response to Moscow's actions which spurred recent efforts by the European Commission to extend its competences in the energy field (Maltby 2013, 1) and to unbundle the energy supply line (Westphal 2012, 2).

However, the conferral of certain energy competences to the Commission does not deprive member states of their status as international actors. That is the case with the EU's energy competences as well. Some member states continue to pursue bilateral energy trade negotiations with Gazprom (a clear case in point being the bilateral negotiations that were conducted over the South Stream project). As will be argued later in the text, the EU's upstream diversification projects in the Caucasus have been blocked quite successfully by Russian efforts. For now, all of the pipelines that transport Caspian gas to Europe still pass through Russian territory. This reality manifested itself yet again in the recent decision to start the construction of the South Stream pipeline. Due to the longevity and high cost of energy infrastructure and long-term take-or-pay clauses running the show, it seems unlikely that the Commission will be able to successfully conduct an integrated European strategy vis-à-vis Gazprom in the near future. Meanwhile the Russians' efforts to secure their preferred type of (transit) diversification have been successful, resulting in the Nord Stream, South Stream, and Blue Stream projects, which effectively deny Ukraine a collateral in future negotiations with Moscow (O Kelly 2010, 68).

Clearly, the current state of the EU-Russia gas trade is multifaceted. Recent evidence of this was collected in Kratochvil and Tichy's (2013) discourse analysis of the speeches of the Russian and EU policy makers. They were able to group the array of statements into three distinct types of discourses (respectively professing integration, liberalization and diversification). However, they did not go as far as to theoretically frame these data. This research builds on the findings of these authors and supplements it with a theoretical perspective that may explain the security aspect behind the EU-Russia natural gas trade: the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), developed by the Copenhagen School authors Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan.

This theory distinguishes the sphere of 'security' from regular kinds of policy making. It stresses the importance of speech acts in the process of socially constructing a threat ('securitization'). One of the strengths of this theory is that it uses both material and non-material elements. This makes it an appropriate lens to study natural gas trade, a field in which material infrastructure and political, economic and security concerns are intertwined. It also provides us with an empirical opportunity: by theorizing the security concerns of both actors and determining their respective views on gas trade, we can understand the reasons behind their possible securitization of the natural gas trade.

We will therefore analyze the literature to explore whether the EU and Russia have identified gas trade as a security concern and which factors explain their posture. To do so, we first need to establish to which extent the EU can be regarded as a security actor. As a sovereign state, Russia is unmistakably able to identify and protect its security interests. Yet this is far less obvious for the EU. How does the EU's interpretation of what constitutes security problems relate to the security needs of the member states? The last part of chapter two will deal with the reciprocity between the EU and Russia as security actors. Each of the ensuing chapters in this thesis uses a particular analytical perspective on the state of the EU-Russia gas trade.

Based on the RSCT, chapter three will provide the answer to the first research question: how did the current state of the EU-Russian gas trade come into being? Material conditions lay at the basis of the 2006/2009 gas shortages in Europe and the tensions between Ukraine and Russia that caused them. Since these episodes are crucial to understand the current EU and

Russian interpretations of energy security, this chapter covers both the context of Russia's actions during these crises, and the reasons and solutions for the EU's vulnerability to cut-offs. While this part of the research also addresses Russia's energy security concerns, it mainly focuses on the EU's gas market, since the immediate consequences of the gas crises were only felt in the European market. Moreover, the Russian gas market is still monopolized by Gazprom, and has been far less subjected to recent change than the European market.

To describe the discourses that the EU and Russia presently use, we formulated the following research questions:

Which discourses does the EU invoke when dealing with the Russian gas import since 2006?

Which discourses does Russia invoke when dealing with the gas export to the EU since 2006?

Chapter four will provide the answer to these questions by summarizing Kratochvil and Tichy's findings. It explains the differences and similarities of the Russian and EU postures on the ideas of integration, liberalization and diversification of their energy trade. Especially the diversification discourse is of great importance to us, since this is analogous to the Copenhagen School's concept of securitization. This will allow us to formulate a conclusion on how socially constructed security concerns have altered the material energy prospects for the EU and Russia.

Evidently, this research will not take into account some important issues in the global energy trade. The global energy sector has changed dramatically over the last few years. In particular, the increasing viability of shale gas extraction has brought about a revolution that will also have an impact on the energy security of the EU and Russia. But such game-changing developments demonstrate just how hard it is to predict the energy sector's future developments. It is not the goal of this research to assess the future of the energy sector, since this requires technical knowledge that will lead us beyond the political and security aspects of the energy trade.

Chapter two: The Copenhagen School and Regional Security Complexes Theory

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework that underlies this analysis. It is based on the work of the Copenhagen School founding scholars. More specifically, the work of Ole Wæver and Barry Buzan and their Regional Security Complexes Theory (RSCT) serve a guiding role in this thesis.

a. Constructivism

To reconcile the somewhat conflicting issues of sovereignty and economic interdependence as they have been presented in the introductory chapter, we turn to constructivism. Constructivists argue that rather than material resources, social concepts are crucial to understand international relations. In this sense they differ radically from the materialistic traditions of neorealism and neoliberalism (Hurd 2008, 299). This is not to say that constructivists claim that raw capabilities (in this case having large gas reserves) and other material conditions don't play any role in international politics. Their argument is that those factors' fundamental importance can only be understood through the social construction of their meaning (Hurd 2008, 313). According to Hurd (2008, 313), such social concepts derive their meaning from intersubjective and institutionalized ideas. In the case at hand this means that rather than the material dominance of Russian gas in the European energy sector or the importance of the revenues of European sales for Russia's public expenditures, it is the way in which both actors perceive their relation that is truly fundamental.

What then do intersubjectivity and institutionalization mean in the case of gas trade? While stable energy relations are of great importance to both actors, it resolutely falls outside of traditional security concerns, i.e. the ability to safeguard military and political control over one's territory. But since security is intersubjectively defined, there is nothing precluding gas trade from becoming a security issue. In this respect the regional security complex theory and the dynamics of securitization are enlightening.

b. Regional Security Complex Theory

Buzan and Wæver (2003, 3) argue that the regional level of security became more autonomous and more prominent since decolonization and the end of the bipolar world order of the Cold War. According to these authors the security field is often preoccupied with regional threats. This is because the effect of threats tends to diffuse over longer geographic distances. Securitizations often cluster together in regional security complexes (RSCs). Consequently, the "[p]rocess of securitization and thus the degree of security interdependence are more intense between actors inside such complexes than they are between actors inside the complex and outside of it" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 3). These RSCs can disintegrate or

merge with each other to create supercomplexes. To explain this, their regional security complex theory (RSCT) uses a mix of materialist and constructivist approaches.

Concepts such as bounded territoriality and distribution of power are inspired by neorealist materialism. On the constructivist side, RSCT builds on the ideas of the Copenhagen School (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 4). The latter asserts that the security field is fundamentally distinguishable from the standard policy making activity. If a political issue is transferred from a standard policy to a security policy context (i.e. “securitized”), it legitimates extraordinary and non-democratic procedures to protect the referent object’s survival (Taureck 2006, 3). The downside of raising the stakes on a concrete issue to the security level is that this creates a threat to order and principles. This is the price to pay for attempting to gain control over the concrete issue (Wæver 1995, 21).

Consequently, ‘insecurity’ and ‘security’ are not binary opposed conditions. Both concepts are based on a given security problematique. Insecurity arises when policy makers fail to formulate a meaningful response to the threat at hand. If however, no threat exists to begin with, the security issue is simply irrelevant, meaning that the challenge constitutes neither insecurity nor security (Wæver 1998, 45). Security is not a positive value that should be maximized. On the contrary, “[t]ranscending a security problem by politicizing it cannot happen through thematization in security terms, only away from such terms” (Wæver 1995, 57). Wæver argues that in its traditional form security is a *jus necessitatis* for threatened elites, and so it should remain (1995, 46).

Wæver’s narrow concept of security demands three conditions to be fulfilled (1995, 51): “(1) urgency; (2) state power claiming the legitimate use of extraordinary means; and (3) a threat seen as potentially undercutting sovereignty, thereby preventing the political ‘we’ from dealing with any other questions”. Traditionally, military threats were the quintessential security concerns. This was because of their very swift emergence, a feeling of outrage against unfair play and the possibility for the conqueror to impose its will. Yet security is not only a military issue. “[I]f the same overturning of the political order can be accomplished by economic or political methods, these, too, will constitute security problems” (Wæver 1995, 43).

Since the 1980s the security agenda has expanded from (military) security of the state to the security of the people, be it individually or collectively (Wæver 1998, 40). This includes additional concerns which may harm individuals, ranging from protecting cultural identity to countering environmental degradation. While the security domain should not encompass everything that is politically desirable, it is debatable where the line between the two should be drawn and what the specific nature of security issues is. This thesis aims to determine whether the EU and Russia perceive gas trade as a security issue and which are the factors that explain their respective postures.

Securitization happens through ‘speech acts’ conducted by the elites. By publicly claiming that something is a security issue, they automatically make it one (Wæver 2004, 13, in Taureck 2006, 3). Three steps need to be taken for a securitization speech act to be effective: (1) the identification of existential threats; (2) emergency action; and (3) effects on inter-unit relations by breaking free of rules (Buzan *et al.* 1998, 6, in Taureck 2006, 3). According to Taureck, the first step in this process is the securitizing move, which –in principle- can be made by any unit. However, to successfully securitize an issue, one also needs to have the means to socially and politically construct a threat, since acceptance by an audience is required to legitimate the securitization and its far-reaching political consequences. In this way material resources in turn influence the social construction process.

c. Criticism

One needs to be mindful of a number of problems that are inherent to Buzan and Wæver’s theory. For one this has to do with the theory’s own presumptions, which imply that the act of performing a securitization analysis on a given topic in itself carries with it political effects (Taureck 2006, 1). Furthermore McDonald (2008, 1) argues that the securitization theory is excessively narrow in three ways. Firstly a tunnel vision is maintained as regards the form of act constructing. The theory’s focus lies on the speeches of dominant (political) actors, and in doing so excludes other forms of representation (e.g. images or material practices) while also limiting oneself to those actors that are institutionally legitimized to speak on behalf of the collective at hand (in this case the EU, the Russian government and their respective energy corporations). Second, the context of the act is also defined narrowly. The theory does not give due attention to the possibility that incremental processes and representations may construct security over a longer period of time. The Copenhagen School authors also remain

vague about why particular representations lead to acceptance or rejection of securitization by the constituencies. Finally, and perhaps most fundamentally, McDonald argues that not enough attention is given to the way in which security (as a normative goal or expression of core values) is understood in particular contexts. A narrow conceptualization of security politics as the mere designation of threats to security invokes a sense of inherent negativity (McDonald 2008, 1).

d. Europe's Post-Cold War RSC

We will now discuss the regional security complexes that operate in contemporary Europe. The security field is divided between two spheres, centered on the EU and Russia respectively (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 343).

EU RSC

The meaning of 'European security' is open for interpretation. Wæver refers to Egbert Jahn's distinction between *Euronational security* and *European regional security* (1987, in Wæver 1995, 71-72). With the first concept, Jahn meant security whereby Europe constitutes a referent object of security. He contrasted this with European regional international security which concerns the aggregated sense of security of its constituent security actors. Although Wæver maintains a narrow state-centric approach on security, he sees the EU as an exception to this rule. While Germany, France, and the UK still hold the status of great European regional power, "gradually during the 1980s, and in a much accelerated fashion after 1989, Europe as a whole became a referent object of security" (Wæver 1995, 72). Today, the EU can be regarded as the most relevant security actor in its territory because it "has revolutionized the way its members think about security, replacing the old traditions of balance-of-power politics and noninterference in internal affairs with a new model under which security for all is guaranteed by working together" (Leonard and Kundnani 2013, 1).

Wæver and Buzan (2003, 352) argue that during the Cold War, the to-be EU area was overlaid by the two superpowers that defined the dominant security concerns externally. After the end of the Cold War, EU-Europe was "set free", albeit under the scope of NATO. This led to a fragmented security agenda of numerous loosely connected concerns (Wæver and Buzan 2003, 352). In the wake of the Soviet Union's implosion, a wave of securitizations swept the

EU RSC. The two basic security premises reflexively dealt with European integration itself (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 356). The first post-1989 security issue restated the founding *esprit de corps* of the European Communities, i.e. the idea that Europe's age-old experiences of war, conquest and power balances should never again come about. Europe's history was considered a threat to its contemporary security. On the other hand, European integration was also portrayed as a threat, triggering fears of losing one's national identity. Hence, the main opposing security discourses in the EU are the two sides of the integration coin. Moreover, since 1989 several new and more topical concerns have also been converted in security terminology in Europe, making "the total European security landscape [...] extremely complicated, exhibiting almost all imaginable forms of insecurity except the classical military one" (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 357).

According to Wæver (1995, 18) the ongoing processes of European integration and the 'culturalization' of nations lead to the emergence of societal security. While the state defends itself against threats to sovereignty, societal security is preoccupied with threats to identity. Wæver claims that some circumstances could bring society to call upon the state for defense, and thus collapse back into the old constellation of distinct nation-states. By contrast, EU integration relates to "a perspective whereby state security and societal security are increasingly differentiated as separate fields, each having a distinct referent object" (Wæver 1995, 18).

The speech act of security is mainly a tool for building up the EU. "Security is invoked in a sense that can be interpreted as a call to defend a not-yet-existing social order. Hobbesian anti-anarchy logic is being used at a level between the domestic and the international" (Wæver 1995, 22). In contrast, the separate units primarily engage in societal security. Yet, societal security and the continuation of the integration process in Europe depend on one another. Wæver sees this as the indication that the Euro-state has arrived: "it uses state security logic even as its constituent countries have begun to act as almost-stateless nations using the logic of societal security" (Wæver 1995, 22).

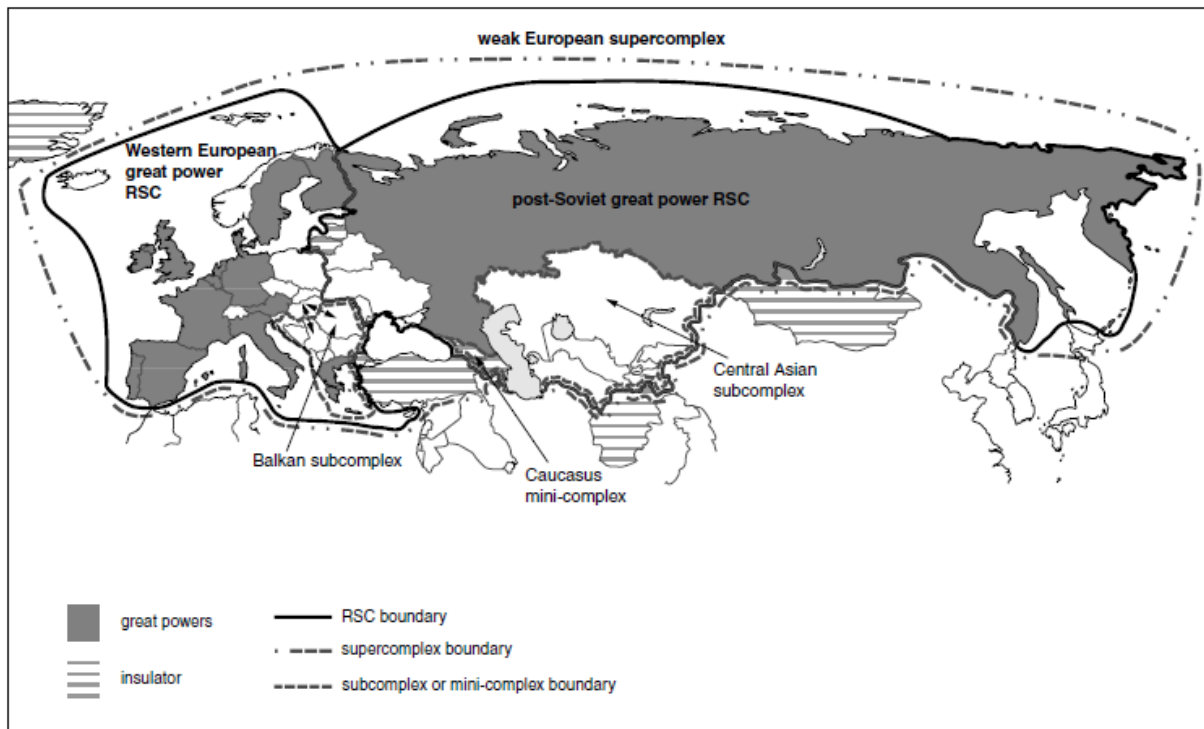
Russia's RSC

We now turn to the Russian RSC. There are of course fears for material threats that lead to securitizations within this RSC as well. But far more important is that, according to

Christensen (2002, 105), Russia constructs threats and uses securitizations to create an area in which the countries in the region (and other great powers) view Russia as the absolutely dominant power due to its security concerns and activities. These securitizations create a security complex which comprises the following three distinct levels (Wæver and Buzan 2003, 398). Firstly, since the RSC is centered on Russia, its domestic level is important for the entire region. The most sensitive issue here is the impact that the lack of recognition and respect given to it on the global stage has on the Russian state identity. This immediately brings us to the second level in the Russian RSC: the global arena. This is important to Russia (more so than Europe) in its attempts to secure a larger role outside its region and to legitimize its regional empire. However, starting from 1992, the third level, Russia's 'near abroad', has been its main priority (Wæver and Buzan 2003, 404).

Similar to the EU, in the post-Soviet era "Russian national security doctrines are based on a broader understanding of the notion of security, in which the non-military issues such as the economy, social problems, environment, demography, information, culture and religion are included" (Sergunin 2011, 92). Among other factors, the Soviet-era energy infrastructure in the CIS makes Russia's continued influence in this region vital for the pursuit of its domestic and global aspirations. Hence, it is in the regional (inter-unit) level that most of the security dynamics operate. These rarely take the traditional state-threatens-state form, even though Buzan and Wæver (2003, 409) mention the GUUAM cooperation (involving Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova) as a tentative act of balancing against Russia. We can conclude that "Russia pursues global policy aims (driven by its self-vision) at the regional level" (Christensen 2002, 105).

Illustration: Post-Cold War European Great Power Centered Regional Complexes (source: Buzan and Wæver 2003, 350)



From a RSC theoretical perspective, this period has been highly significant. Writing in 2003, the authors considered the post-Soviet space asymmetrically entrenched into Russia's RSC. However, the 2004/2007 enlargements integrated many former Soviet states into the EU. O'Brennan (2006, 15) sees security considerations at the basis of the enlargement process. He supports the constructivist approach, arguing that the EU is a "pluralistic security community" and that eastern enlargement is the central vehicle that propels the expansion of that community. "EU actors interpreted enlargement-related geopolitical issues as different types of security challenges. In the process of making securitising moves they laid the groundwork for a process of desecuritisation which transformed the external into the internal, the geopolitical into the everyday politics of European integration" (O'Brennan 2006, 15).

Historically, this area has often undergone these patterns: waves of growth and recess of Russia alternate with changing levels of independence and involvement with other regions (mainly Europe) (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 397). In the Post-Cold War era the EU RSC expanded at the expense of Russia's RSC. However, these authors did not identify the mutual dependence in the energy sector as one of the securitized threats. They did argue that "[a] crisis somewhere in the borderland between the two complexes could [...] strengthen this

weak supercomplex” (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 374). We will now look at the evolution of the gas trade between Western Europe and Russia since the end of the Cold War.

Chapter three: The evolution of energy security in the Post-Soviet space

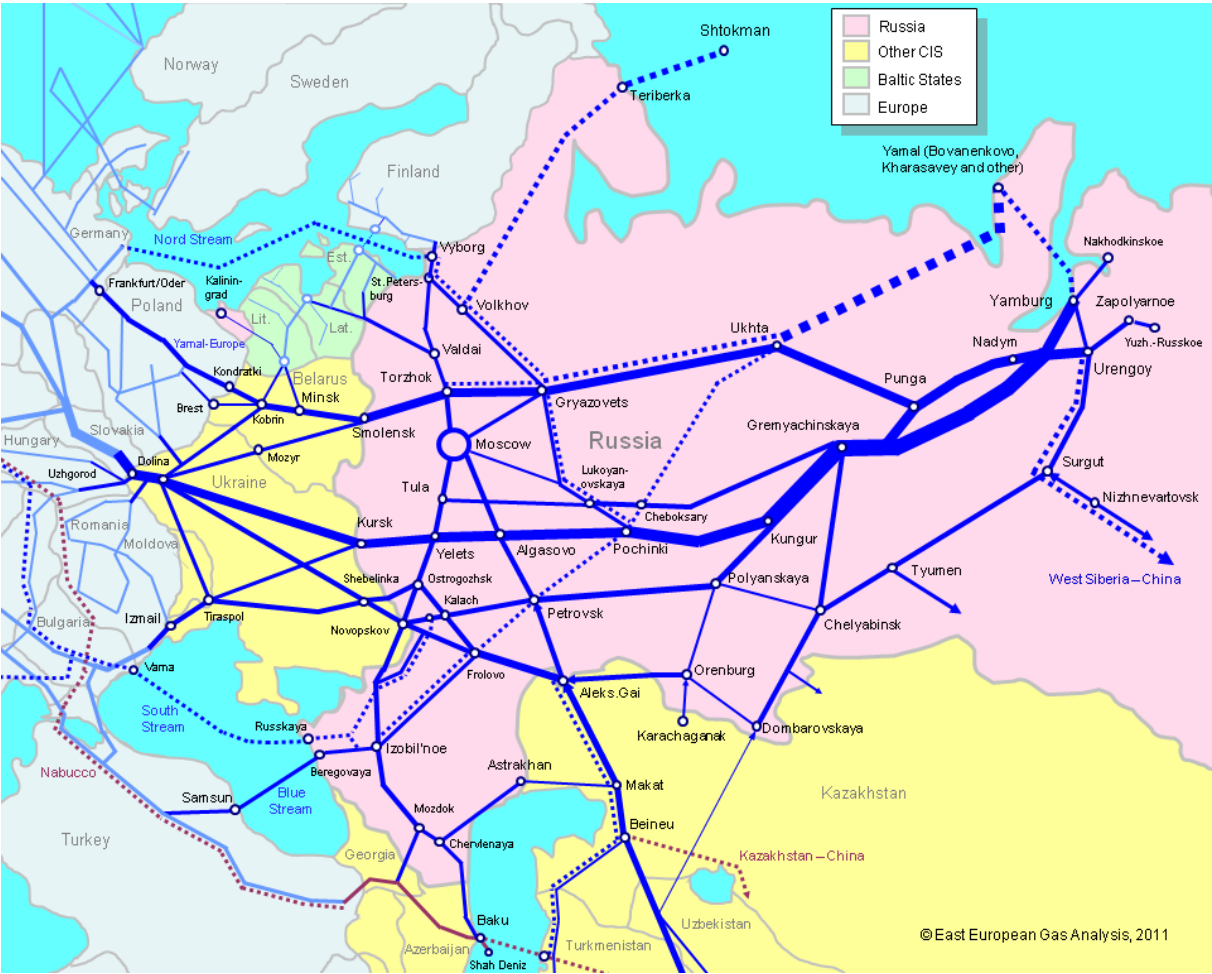
This chapter contextualizes the EU-Russian gas relations. As we have argued, the chaos that the Soviet Union’s demise brought to Eastern Europe rekindled the security threat of relapsing into Europe’s destructive past. These fears catalyzed the EU’s 2004/2007 eastern enlargement and thus had a material impact on the EU’s current energy dependence. We will now run through the energy securitization process since the Union’s 2004 enlargement. Of special interest are the responses that were formulated to the 2006 and 2009 gas disputes between Ukrainian Naftogas and Russian Gazprom.

We will consider the European institutions as the representatives of the European energy policy. The European energy market faces several challenges, all of which demand an EU-level response. The national energy markets in the EU each have a particular set of vulnerabilities and opportunities, which lead to highly diverging policies. Some governments have been more eager than others to embrace renewables. There are also differences in the willingness to break through the dependence on Russia. Such internal and external challenges make it hard for the European Commission to set out an effective energy policy. Yet, “[t]he Commission has had a degree of success as a policy entrepreneur in ‘coupling’ of policy, political and problem ‘streams’, and in doing so expanding its competences in the internal energy market, and to a lesser extent in the external dimension” (Maltby 2013, 441).

a. 1989-2004: Gas security becoming an issue

Material preconditions set the stage of the European RSC. We therefore start by analyzing the roots of the current state of affairs in the EU-Russian gas trade. What distinguishes the gas market from other fossil fuel trade is the fact that it is conventionally transported through (often overland) pipelines. Consequently, it necessitates political goodwill and cooperation of the transit countries. This is particularly outspoken in the case of the former Soviet Union, since the pipelines destined for Europe were constructed with centralization towards Moscow in mind. The political independence of Ukraine and Belarus is a new phenomenon that significantly complicated gas transport.

Illustration: Capacity of major gas pipelines in Russia and Europe (source: European dialogue)



Prokhorov and Denshchykova (2009, 20) allude to the fact that the Soviet gas industry was born in Ukraine in the 1930s and expanded from there. Since then, the focal point of the gas infrastructure shifted to Western Siberia, but Ukraine remains important to Moscow to this day. With the demise of the Soviet Union, Ukraine gained independence, yet “vital assets for Gazprom [were] located in Ukraine and thus no longer under its direct control. This policy has led to a decade of ‘unauthorized diversions’ by Ukrainian companies of gas in transit to European customers” (Prokhorov and Denshchykova 2009, 20).

Realist preoccupations dominated the 1990s. The former Soviet republics still found themselves heavily susceptible to Moscow’s influence. The Kremlin quickly started exploiting this weakness by using these states’ energy supply to force them to adopt political concessions. In 1990 and 1992, the gas supply to the Baltic states was disrupted amidst their

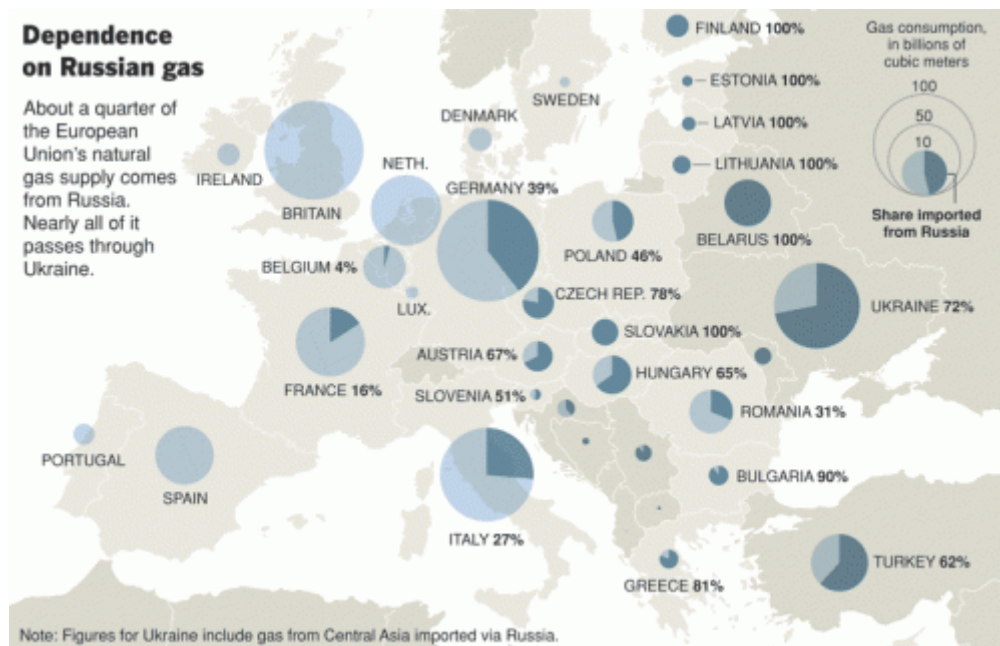
first steps towards independence. In '91 and '94 the Kremlin also cut back its gas exports to Ukraine. On the one hand Moscow's actions were out of spite with Ukraine for its unpaid debt to Russia and its diversions of gas supplies intended for other customers. But strategic considerations were in play as well: Russia pursued access to the Black Sea for its fleet (by leasing the Ukrainian naval base in Sebastopol (The Economist 2010, 1)), and it wanted to control the Ukrainian gas infrastructure (Prokhorov and Denshchykova 2009, 20).

Besides these regional power plays, the Energy Charter Treaty of 1991 aimed to “strengthen the rule of law on energy issues, by creating a level playing field of rules to be observed by all participating governments, thus minimising the risks associated with energy-related investments and trade” (Energy Charter Secretariat 2004, 14). Until recently, it was the only governance framework encompassing both Russia and Europe (Belyi 2012, 2). Russia initially applied the provisions of the ECT, but refused to ratify it and eventually abandoned it in 2009. Moscow's reservations on the ECT are based on its perception of the treaty as the main tool of the EU's energy policy.

b. 2004-2009: Increased vulnerability and crises

With the 2004 enlargement looming, the European Security Strategy (2003, 3) had already mentioned the vulnerability of the EU's energy sector, which -so it argued- necessitated a more interconnected energy infrastructure. But barring this, the document did not attend to gas import security. The ensuing 2004 and 2007 Eastern enlargements have increased the EU's aggregate dependence on Russian gas. Most of the new member states continue to rely predominantly (many of them even exclusively) on Russian imports for their gas needs. Consequently, this development increased the number of member states in the EU that perceived the diversification of energy supply as a more pressing issue (Maltby 2013, 441).

Illustration: Proportion of Russian gas in gas consumption in the EU (source: Cassata 2009)



Simultaneous to this heightened awareness, new crises continued to emerge between Russia and the transit countries. In 2004, Poland and Lithuania suffered supply disruptions as a result of the Kremlin's attempt to take over Belarus' gas pipeline system (Smith 2006, 2, in Prokhorov and Denshchykova 2009, 27). During a number of days in December 2005, Gazprom suspended flows to Ukraine amidst a dispute over gas price increases. In this case, Austria, Italy, Poland and Germany were affected with a 30% decrease in their pipeline pressure (Prokhorov and Denshchykova 2009, 28). These authors also mention the January 2006 gas spats between Ukraine and Russia, during which much larger scaled shortages of gas were felt in a dozen countries, including Germany and Italy.

But the most serious crisis occurred in 2009 when Ukrainian-Russian quarrels about alleged Ukrainian theft of 65.3 mcm of fuel gas (which was worth 26 million USD, but resulting in a loss of 2 billion USD for Gazprom (Korchemkin 2012, 7)) again prompted Russia to stop its gas supply to Ukraine. As in the 1990s, Ukraine satisfied its own energy needs by tapping off gas intended for EU customers. The EU was confronted with a shortfall of 300mcm per day, lasting for 14 days (EC 2009, 14). This brought about a substantial contraction of economic activity in countries that did not have alternative import options. Within the EU, the most hard-hit country was Bulgaria. Outside of the EU, most damage was done to Serbia, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kovacevic 2009, 19). Kovacevic (2009, 16) concluded that states which had prepared national emergency plans (Croatia, Romania

and FYR of Macedonia) fared much better to the blow than the others. Likewise, the EC (2009, 14) assessed that many countries were able to switch to alternative supply sources such as LNG, Russia's Yamal pipeline (which passes through Belarus instead of Ukraine), Norway, Libya, domestic production and storage, and internal EU cross border trade. The problems that did occur were not caused by the gas shortage in se, but because of inadequacies in the interconnection, and route and fuel diversification options in Central and South Eastern Europe (EC 2009, 14). The document also stated that alternative sources and spare gas storage (approx. 800 mcm) could have fully compensated the lack of supply. The evolution towards supranationalization of the energy policy in the EU runs parallel to the enlargement process and the recent episodes of crisis. We will now briefly summarize how this policy came into being.

EU energy policy

According to Fischer and Geden (2013, 3), the current European energy policy has been mainly developed between 2005 and 2007. Until then, the EU-level policy (e.g. the Green Paper on security of energy supply of 2000) had been quite ineffective. The First Gas Directive of 1998 led to a high number of infringement procedures against member states and companies (including Gazprom) in an anti-monopoly investigation into long-term gas contracts (Maltby 2013, 436-440).

The failure of the European constitution called for alternative pathways to deepen EU integration. Maltby (2013, 441) argues that an explanatory factor in the EC's increasing competence in the energy domain was the role that it had in the gradual social construction of energy dependence as a problem. The 2006 and 2009 crises created a policy window that allowed the Commission to couple this problem to a solution for energy insecurity that had already been circulating: further internal market integration and diversification of supplies.

In 2006 the EC issued a Green Paper listing the energy security challenges confronting the Union. It argued that the EU should tackle security by limiting its general import dependence, diversifying its supplies through the construction of additional pipelines and LNG-terminals, addressing the consequences of supply risks, and lowering the consumption of energy. To do so, the Commission coined the 'European Transparency Initiative'. In the same year, the Gas Coordination Group was formed to "exchange information and to develop both short and long

term concrete measures which reinforce the security of gas supply to the EU” (Europa Press Release 2009, 1).

The EU continued to take on the energy problems in 2007, when it issued the Security and Solidarity Action Plan. According to Julia Kuznir (2011, 9), this document aimed to liberalize the EU energy market, enhance energy efficiency and diversify energy supply. It promoted the concept of the Southern Gas Corridor to access additional gas fields in the Caspian and Middle Eastern regions. “Three main gas pipeline projects were included in the Southern Corridor plan: (1) the Interconnection Turkey–Greece–Italy pipeline project (ITGI), (2) the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline project (TAP) and (3) the Nabucco pipeline project.” (Kuznir 2011, 9). An additional development in 2007 was the creation of the EU Network of Energy Security Correspondents (NESCO) to collect and process “geopolitical and energy related information and to provide an early warning tool to support the Union's overall strategy with the aim of ensuring the security of energy supply”, as the External Action Service (EEAS) phrases it.

Kuznir (2011, 9) says that following the adoption of the Security and Solidarity Action Plan, the Nabucco-pipeline became the ‘flagship project’ for the EU. “The European Commission viewed the project from two perspectives: (1) as a foundation for the diversification of gas supply and (2) as a real opportunity to realize its geopolitical vision of connecting the Caucasus and the Caspian region into one energy network” (Kuznir 2011, 9). This 7.9 billion euro project had been on the negotiating table since 2002. The pipeline would cross 3.900 kilometers and pass through Turkey, Bulgaria and Hungary to end in Austria. 31 billion cubic meters of gas would be transported to Europe per year. The Nabucco consortium involved Austria’s OMV, Bulgaria’s Bulgargaz, Germany’s RWE (that sold its share in the project to OMV in 2013 (Deutsche Welle, 1)), Hungary’s MOL, Romania’s Transgaz and Turkey’s Botas, each of which held a 16.67% stake (Kuznir 2011, 10). The project would start from the Azerbaijani Shah Deniz and Turkmenistani gas fields, with the option of also including additional suppliers such as Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan and Egypt.

Illustration: Nabucco Project (source: European dialogue)



The Commission provided support to this project in many ways. Firstly it was given a mandate by the 27 member states to act as a negotiator between the Nabucco consortium and the supplier countries. This led to the conclusion of a long-term intergovernmental agreement in July 2009. It has effectively been ratified by all of the states involved (including Turkey and Azerbaijan). Kuszniir also argues that the Commission has extended financial support to the project. Four billion euros was granted on behalf of European banks. Lastly, the Commission also helped to coordinate the administrative, environmental and social impact assessments in the countries concerned (Kuszniir 2011, 10).

We can conclude that the Commission's agenda-setting efforts led to a stream of (internal as well as external) policy proposals to tackle the problems associated with the undiversified and increasing energy import dependency (Maltby 2013, 441). Maltby also notes that the Commission set the tone for how energy security and energy policy are perceived and interpreted in the EU, with increased supranationalized governance as the solution to the prevailing problems. The EC would be engaged in the implementation, regulation and governance of the energy field (Maltby 2013, 441). We will now elaborate on how said crises have influenced the internal and external aspects of the gas sectors in the EU and Russia.

c. 2009-2013: Unbundling, liberalization and diversification

The EU gas market

The European Commission represents the interests of a range of member states that have hugely diverging energy markets. Some major interest groups in the Western EU-states (Germany in particular) don't have any problem with overly depending on supplies from Russia (McKillop 2012, 1). If the EU wishes to develop a coherent energy policy, it is important to include both these pro-Russian views as well as those of the member states that feel more vulnerable to Russia's dominance. "[A] major test for the EU in developing a more coherent energy policy for Europe could be how to balance these views with those of other member states that are more dependent on Russian energy and are concerned by the political leverage Russia could exert on parts of Europe if no alternatives are found to alleviate at least some of that dependence" (Ratner *et al.* 2013, 28). Overcoming these problems of import dependence and energy security will require both internal and external measures.

In spite of its efforts, the Commission's external policy in the energy field has not delivered results. Socor (2013, 1) argues that the Nabucco project in its original form lost the EC's strong political backing by 2011. After the project was reformed into "Nabucco-West", it did not receive any more support from the Commission than the rivaling projects for Azerbaijani gas (mainly TAP) did. Socor (2013, 1) states that the Nabucco project was also undermined because of lacking commitment by the participants and the absence of a major gas producer with experience in the Caspian basin in the consortium. Gazprom had also signed bilateral agreements with major European companies to implement alternative projects (Kusznir 2011, 11). Austria's OMV proposed allowing Gazprom to use parts of the Nabucco-pipeline for the transport of Russian gas. Moreover, after OMV's failed attempt to take over its Hungarian partner in the Nabucco consortium (MOL), it sold its large package of shares in that company to Russia's Surgut Neftegaz (Socor 2013a, 1). Some key European firms (e.g. Wintershall) are also co-funding the rivaling South Stream project (Bechev 2012, 1). Instead, the EU hailed the decision by the Azerbaijani Shah Deniz 2-consortium to construct the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) as the European route of the Southern Gas Corridor (Euractiv 2012c, 1).

Illustration: Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (Source: Trans-Adriatic Website)



However, “TANAP and TAP are only the initial steps for [...] a Southern Corridor energy highway that will eventually carry Central Asian, Caspian, Iranian, Iraqi and East Mediterranean gas flows via Turkey to the high value international markets” (Ögütcü 2013, 1). This means that the Commission’s external policy has thus far proven unable to defend the interests of member states that seek to curtail Russia’s dominance as a supplier. In contrast, the recent measures taken by the Commission to reshape the EU’s internal energy market have been more successful. It succeeded in creating “a policy monopoly through building expertise and [problematizing] the issue, and influencing how energy security and energy policy is perceived and interpreted within the EU; and how policy and legislation evolves” (Maltby 2013, 441).

The Treaty of Lisbon became the first piece of EU primary legislation to make energy policy a shared competence of the member states and the Union. However, the new energy title merely codified the practices that were already in use regarding the division of energy competences between the European institutions and the member states (Andoura *et al.* 2010, 98). Andoura (2010, 98) concludes that the national governments retained sovereignty over their natural resources and energy taxation issues, while they ceded the competences for all the other aspects of energy policy to the Union institutions. Also in 2009 and 2010, the EU adopted the Regulation on Security of Gas Supplies and the accompanying Regulation on Trans-European Energy Infrastructure Guidelines. The latter deal with “infrastructure challenges to ensure true interconnection in the internal market, integration of energy from

variable renewable sources and enhanced security of supply” (European Commission 2013, 6).

In the Third Energy Package of 2009, EU policy makers pertinently addressed the need to unbundle the EU’s domestic gas market in order to deny foreign behemoths such as Gazprom an undue share in it. This unbundling process separates the transportation infrastructure from upstream production and final distribution to customers in the gas supply sequence. Energy companies were forced to sell supply networks (Pick 2012, 330), while independent transit corporations and system operators were established (Westphal 2012, 2). The idea was to dismantle the system of long-term contracts asymmetrically negotiated with foreign gas giants, by creating a public transport medium that offers all market participants unhindered third-party access to a virtual trading place. This move has been criticized by Putin for breaching article 34 of the EU-Russia Partnership, which states that both actors should not adopt measures that restrict the operation of each other’s companies (EurActiv 2012a).

In any event, the European Union has thus adopted policy that turns away from the (more expensive) security of long-term gas import, and instead pursues its security of supply by promoting a liberal and competitive European energy market. The idea was that by limiting ownership of the infrastructure in combination with more internal solidarity, the EU’s energy market would be better protected from supply disruptions. Incidentally, Gazprom’s failure to abide by the requirements set by the Third Energy Package was also the basis of the Commission’s anti-trust case against the company. The internal market reform thus successfully pressured Gazprom to split its European assets (EurActiv 2012b).

There are also signs that member states are willing to begin ceding more substantial powers in the external field to the Commission. Beyond its already mentioned negotiating role in the Nabucco project, the Council in 2011 again mandated the Commission to negotiate a legally binding treaty for Caspian gas on behalf of the EU (Maltby 2013, 441-442). This means that “the Commission has successfully framed energy policy as a problem that requires increased (though not exclusive) supranational governance, recommending solutions and establishing a role for the institution in their implementation, regulation and governance” (Maltby 2013, 441). However, de Jong (2013, 9) points to the sobering fact that the EU member states have not always used the combined weight of their energy markets to their advantage. Since 2006, many initiatives that were taken to overcome this problem failed (for example the proposal to

include a mandatory ‘energy security clause’ into third country agreements). The Commission still exerts more control over the EU’s internal energy market than its external policy. The EU should therefore formalize the principle that member states have to act in the benefit of the EU as a whole in their bilateral relations with partners (de Jong 2013, 9).

Russia’s gas market

Under Putin’s presidency, the Russian state turned back the privatizations of the 1990s and regained its grip on key industries - especially the energy industry. This operation was not fuelled by economic motives but rather by the desire to strengthen the position of the state (O Kelly 2010, 15). Wæver and Buzan (2003, 404) claimed that the main security concern for Russia is its near abroad. This is most obvious in its gas policy. As the considerable differences in prices below illustrate, Gazprom’s actions are driven just as much by the Kremlin’s strategic concerns as economic motives. The company pays 132 dollars per 1000 m³ to produce natural gas. Selling that gas in the domestic market for only 66.7 euro, Gazprom makes up for this loss of production costs by setting its export prices higher.

Table: Gazprom’s average gas prices in Euro per 1000 m³ (source: Gazprom)

	2009	2010	2011
Russia	43.4	58.2	66.7
Europe	166.3	184	224.8
Former SU states	126.4	159.1	190.9

However, Socor (2013, 1) points out that Germany is able to get Russia’s natural gas cheaper than Ukraine. This motivated Ukraine to initiate the procurement of (partly re-exported Russian) gas from European suppliers such as RWE. Socor (2013, 1) argues that although these volumes are still small, they are growing and hence reduce Gazprom’s market share in Ukraine. Since gas prices are used as a political tool by Moscow, it needs to control the transit pipelines that ensure the demand for Russian gas. Consequently, building gas infrastructure that bypasses Ukraine is currently one of the Kremlin’s main objectives. Besides the occasional gas price conflict with Ukraine, there is also the fact that Russia is wary of the EU’s presence in its backyard (e.g. the Association Agreement with Ukraine (Kononczuk 2013, 1)). With these concerns in mind, Russia tended to oppose Nabucco, which would induce the Caucasian region to politically and economically engage more closely with the EU.

Instead, Moscow supported the construction of alternative transit routes to the EU through the Nord Stream (bilaterally negotiated with German E.ON and BASF (Gazprom 2005, 1)), Blue Stream (negotiated with Turkish BOTAS and Italian Eni) and South Stream (bilaterally negotiated with Italian Eni, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary and Greece) projects. Regarding these projects, a Gazprom spokesman stated that the Nord Stream and South Stream pipelines would reduce Ukraine's importance for transit to zero (Bierman 2012, 1).

These pipelines would indeed have some detrimental effects for the negotiation position of EU-minded elements in Kyiv vis-à-vis Moscow since it no longer has Russia's access to the EU gas market as a collateral (O Kelly 2010, 68). By allowing member states to conclude these projects, the EU ends up with a weaker toolbox for exerting some influence over these states. Indeed, O Kelly (2010, 68) makes the point that while these states were hedging between Brussels and Moscow, they are now forced to resolutely turn to Moscow for their sustenance.

But while Russia did have success in building the Nord Stream pipeline, the latest of its projects is also facing considerable problems. Although the construction of South Stream already started in late 2012, the final cost of the project is far from clear. Gazprom's original estimate of €15.5 bn. was later raised to €16-17 bn., with some sources now even figuring €27 bn. (Bechev 2012, 1). Europe's option to use LNG, the shale gas revolution, and the unbundling of the EU's gas market have all called into question the profitability of South Stream. Bechev (2012, 1) also argues that Russia may not have enough easily accessible gas to fill in the existing capacity.

In the next chapter the main moments of crises will be used as benchmarks to assess the evolution of the securitization discourse of both the EU and Russia. This will enable us to see if there are "securitization shocks" in response to episodes of sudden crisis, and whether such shocks affect long-term policy. Since contracts in the energy sphere are typically concluded to span many years or even decades, the policy responses to sudden cut-offs could have important long-term repercussions. Moments of crisis can influence the character of the official speeches on this topic. This in turn could provide EU and Russian policy makers an incentive to look beyond traditional policy options and preferences.

Chapter four: Present discourses in EU-Russia gas trade policy

Recent research by Kratochvil and Tichy (2013) identified three main discourses regarding the EU-Russia gas trade, which aren't neatly distinguishable from one another. In addition, both actors ascribe different contents to these discourses. However, the three discourses can all be identified in both the EU's and Russia's speeches.

a. Integration discourse

Firstly Kratochvil and Tichy identify the integration discourse (2013, 394). This perspective features the most positive outlook on things. It is a purely economic perspective which highlights the interdependence that characterizes the EU-Russian gas relations and the idea that integration is possible and desirable because of the complementary interests of Russia and the EU. The authors state (2013, 400) that its legal basis is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement of 1997. Integrationists differ from liberals by supporting the idea that the EU-Russia gas relations have a special status and extend beyond a simple trade partner relationship. The goal of the EU and Russia to integrate their energy markets materialized in 2000 in the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, which aimed for an ever closer common energy space (Dickel and Westphal 2012, 1). Nonetheless, both actors attribute different meanings to complementarity and integration.

The idea of integration clearly dominates the energy discourses of the Russian Federation (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 400). The Russian version of this discourse presumes that there is a symmetrical interdependence between both actors which necessitates integration. Energy interdependence is "a cementing factor of the established relations and this factor ought to be regarded as a thing of positive value and not as a threat" (Lavrov 2007, in Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 400). While Russian integration proponents admit that Russia needs the EU's technological assistance and the revenues of its energy trade with Europe, it is divided on the question whether this dependence is symmetrical. Sometimes they reason that the EU is equally dependent on the import of Russia's resources. But Putin has also admitted that "Russia depends even more on European customers than they depend on their suppliers" (Putin 2006, in Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 400), since 44% of the EU's gas is bound from Russia, while the EU's market accounts for 67 percent of Russian gas exports. The proper

course of action, according to this discourse, is a negotiated process in which both actors contribute equally (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 394).

According to Kratochvil and Tichy (2013, 394), the EU considers itself as the most advanced, prosperous and democratic actor. Since the EU regards itself as the more experienced one in terms of market integration between the two actors, it feels Moscow should follow its lead by gradually moving towards the implementation of the *acquis communautaire*. This discourse encourages Russia to adopt the necessary norms to tackle its competition policy, ensure economic transparency and improve the investment climate. This would strengthen the EU-Russian partnership, which would in turn benefit Russia's internal economic, social and political development.

Another issue in which both actors differ is the preference for multilateral EU cooperation or bilateral partnerships. Russia maintains close bilateral relations with Germany, France, Italy and Spain (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 400). Moscow would like to broaden the cooperation in the energy field "to be not only mutually beneficial, but also based on common approaches and principles", such as "the predictability and stability of energy markets" (Khristenko 2005 and Putin 2006, in Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 400).

Considering the massive importance of fossil fuel exports to the EU for Russia's internal stability, and the alternatives that are becoming increasingly available for the EU (e.g. by the shale gas-revolution and the construction of LNG-terminals), Moscow's dependence on the bilateral gas trade could soon outweigh that of the EU. This offers the potential to create a normative power platform for the EU, in line with its interpretation of the integration discourse. Moreover, Belyi (2012, 2) points out that "as LNG began to flow into the European hubs, it began to dawn on Russian companies that gas markets are in transformation. Hence they began to show greater willingness to get involved in the EU regulatory design through EC-established foras [after] 2009-10". A fine illustration of this is the ongoing anti-trust case against Gazprom that made it reorganize its activities in Europe to meet the Third Energy Package requirements (EurActiv 2012b). Nonetheless, Gazprom's bilateral partnerships with key European gas companies have contributed to the failure of Nabucco, and as such hampered the EU's external policy by blocking its source diversification options.

b. Liberalization discourse

Secondly, Kratochvil and Tichy distinguish statements that are inspired by the preference to further liberalize the energy market (2013, 394). This discourse is analogous to the integration discourse in the sense that it approaches EU-Russian energy relations from an economic rather than a security perspective. But unlike the EU's integration perspective, the liberalization discourse does not suppose any asymmetry in the energy relations between the two. Its prescription is that state actors should refrain from intervening in the energy trade as much as possible. A concrete outcome of these liberal reflections is the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). Both actors agree that the ECT would be beneficial to promote liberalization. But again, the Russian and EU discourses differ in their interpretation of liberalization and in their assessment of the ECT.

For the EU, the idea of an interconnected internal energy market in combination with promoting its liberal principles beyond the EU will help to secure stable energy supplies, increase competitiveness and improve the predictability of the energy relations (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 397). Meanwhile, Russia tries to strengthen, or at least hold on to, its position on the EU's energy market. Both sides tend to share a positive perception of the other as a natural trading partner whose cooperation is guided by economic interests and convenience.

In spite of this, Kratochvil and Tichy (2013, 395) found that both players also have their own grievances that they try to overcome. Russia considers itself troubled by the limited access that Russian energy companies have to the EU's internal market. It also feels blocked by the EU's political barriers to liberalization, based on its fears of economic overdependence on Russia. It considers the ECT asymmetrically disadvantageous for its domestic energy market. Meanwhile, the EU criticizes Russia for its energy market's lack of openness to European investors. It is also dismayed that Russia maintains a monopoly over its energy resources. It sees the ECT as a balanced tool that spreads the burden of liberalization evenly.

c. Diversification discourse

The described conflicts of norms, practices and policy objectives have led to the politicization of gas trade (Belyi 2012, 4). This brings us to the third of Kratochvil and Tichy's discourses:

diversification (2013, 395). This is analogous to RSCT's securitization perspective and contains the most relevant type of speeches for this research. These authors conclude that this discourse uses a profoundly different perspective than the other two. As opposed to the economic aspirations with regard to the integration or liberalization of their respective markets, this discourse refers primarily to the political aspects of the EU's dependence on Russia and any security problems that it could cause. Contrary to the idea of interdependence as a stabilizing institution in international relations, these speech acts claim that it is a "harmful factor whose influence is to be minimized" (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 395).

Out of the three discourses, the EU and Russian diversification discourses diverge the most (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 402). This has to do with the differences in Russia's and the EU's threat perceptions. The Union's interpretation perceives the limited number of supply sources as its greatest threat. It particularly questions Russia's reliability as a supplier. Its aspiration to secure its supply necessitates a governance regime that ensures competition on the market. This competition was to be enhanced by fragmenting the downstream market (Belyi 2012, 3) and diversifying the EU's suppliers by the now defunct Nabucco-pipeline.

On the other hand, Russia prioritizes the diversification of supply lines, because it perceives the dependence on the transit countries as its biggest security threat. Being a supplier state, Russia's main objective is to sustain the stable revenues of the continued demand for its gas (de Jong 2013, 33). This means that it needs to maintain the long-term access to markets and control the upstream energy resources. Its preferred governance structure would restrict competition and cover security of transit, especially concerning Ukraine. However, there was no unambiguous rejection of the Nabucco-project by Russia. Some voices (e.g. Foreign Minister Lavrov) professed to be neutral and not to have any problem with the idea of alternative pipelines to Europe (European Dialogue 2012, 1). "Due to these differences, the two sides have as yet failed to agree on an international gas transit regime" (Belyi 2012, 3).

This discourse also alludes to the possibility of an energy dilemma. While the relation between the two actors is presented as (in principle) symmetrical, it does not rule out rivalry driven by the idea of a zero-sum game in the gas trade. The EU's efforts to maximize transparency in the Russian energy sector, diversify its energy sources, and protect its own infrastructure from Russian takeovers would necessarily lead to Russian counteraction, and vice versa. "Vilifying Russia as an unreliable supplier will encourage Moscow to develop new

outlets for its hydrocarbons. Indeed, this trend is already underway, with the scheduled opening of the Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean oil pipeline to China in late 2012” (Mehdiyeva 2012, 1).

Kratochvil and Tichy synthesize their research as follows.

Table: Common and distinct features in the EU and Russian energy discourses (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 403)

Discourses	Integration	Liberalization	Diversification
Commonalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Positive perception of interdependence -Need for more cooperation -Stress on the strategic partnership -Emphasis of a strong legal and institutional foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -EU and Russia as natural trade partners -Stress on pragmatism and economic interests – Relations seen as mutually beneficial and convenient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Prioritization of security considerations over economic interests -Energy seen as a strategic foreign policy instrument
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The EU stresses the integration of Russia into the EU market -Russia underlines mutual rapprochement, equality and compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The EU is critical of Russia’s refusal to open its energy market to the West -Russia stresses the limited access of Russian energy companies to the EU’s internal energy market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Divergent assessments of Russia’s reliability as an energy partner -Incompatible interpretations of diversification (routes vs. suppliers) – different perceptions of energy dependence
Key terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Integration -Cooperation -Partnership -Interdependence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Market access, market reforms, and market rules -Liberalization and investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Energy security -Diversification -Alternative routes, sources, and projects

	-Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)	-Transparency -Effectiveness -Energy Charter Treaty (ECT)	-Energy infrastructure interconnections outside Russia -Energy cooperation with third countries
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The research of Kratochvil and Tichy does not make a distinction between the securitization of sudden cut-offs of supply and the securitization of the dependence on Russia in itself. But one should be mindful that there are many nuances to the 2006/2009 cut-offs and these crises do not necessarily represent Russia's overall reliability as a supplier. Although the EU does not share Russia's view that the gas crises were mainly the fault of Ukraine, it holds Ukraine partly responsible for them as well (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 402).

We can conclude that the integration and liberalization discourses do not see the mutual dependence between the EU and Russia as a threat that needs to be averted, but as a guarantee for stable gas trade. For example, Finland, which depends on Russia for 100% of its gas imports, has never politicized its dependence to the extent that the EU did in response to the Russian-Ukrainian spats. This fits into Buzan and Wæver's assertion that the CIS is Russia's main priority (2003, 404). Moreover, "despite its aggressive rhetoric, economically Gazprom is highly dependent on revenues from European markets, and hence on cooperative terms with the EU" (Pick 2012, 355). Pick (2012, 355) also refers to the fact that Gazprom needs the EU market "to make up for the losses generated within its domestic market, the investment gap in Russia's upstream sector, and the improbability of Gazprom reaching out to Asian markets within the near future" (Pick 2012, 355).

But as was argued by Maltby (2013, 441), the 2006/2009 crises were important because they played in the Commission's hand by giving it a window to consolidate its policy constructions: Nabucco and internal energy market consolidation. Regardless of the Nabucco's failure, Russia perceives the EU discourse that calls for the limitation of Russia's access to the EU energy market as a motivator to look for alternatives (for example China) (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 402-403).

Chapter five: Conclusion

It is unclear what the future holds for the EU-Russia gas trade. The EU's internal energy policy of unbundling production, transit, and distribution companies make it a more challenging market for Gazprom (Bechev 2012, 1; EurActiv 2012a), while the EU's dwindling global market share and its possible alternatives to Russian gas has brought about a Eurasianist turn in Russia's petronationalism (Buckley 2013, 1; Holslag 2006, 13). Moreover, the advent of alternative energy sources such as renewables, LNG and shale gas could reduce the EU's dependence on Russian gas (Stegen 2011, 6512).

Meanwhile, the EU is struggling to consolidate further integration and supranationalization of the European energy market (Maltby 2013, 442). Although the Commission has had some success in restructuring the EU's internal gas market (through liberalization and unbundling) (Maltby 2013, 441), that is where its success in breaking Gazprom's hold over the EU's gas market ends. The Commission's attempt to conduct an external policy that aims to bypass Russia (i.e. the Nabucco project) has been definitively given up (Socor 2013a, 1) and has given way for the TAP/TANAP pipelines (EurActiv 2012, 1). Currently, short-term thinking is becoming a challenge for long-term gas infrastructure projects (Westphal 2012, 3). The failure of Nabucco and the difficulties that the South Stream project faces are manifestations of these challenges. This thesis analyzed the impact that these crises had on the Commission and the Kremlin's energy policy preferences. Our goal was to determine to which extent the EU and Russia deemed these sporadic interruptions of gas trade a security concern.

This is important since there are disadvantages of politicizing and securitizing gas imports. "The apparent use of Russian gas exports as a foreign policy tool [...] suggests that geopolitical considerations motivate Russia's energy policy, which appears irreconcilable with the EU's attempts to de-politicise gas relations with Russia" (Pick 2012, 355). Buzan and Wæver's theory poses that securitizing gas trade would bring this issue into a new realm whereby policy makers have the freedom to adopt virtually limitless measures to ensure gas supply. "Politicization of energy supplies in the EU stimulated aggressive and decisive Russian foreign policy in the sphere of energy directed on depriving the EU of possibilities to diversify its energy supplies. Securitization and extraordinary measures may lead to the increase of confrontation between the EU and Russia in the sphere of energy supplies" (Prokhorov and Denshchykova 2009).

Yet, Wæver and Buzan (2003, 404) have argued that it is Russia's near abroad which is the Kremlin's key concern. The political aspect of gas prices is vital in Russia's dealings with these states. Russia's strategy was recently illustrated when Gazprom billed Ukrainian Naftohaz for uncollected gas that was part of a take-or-pay clause (Kononczuk 2013, 1). Kononczuk (2013, 1) argues that this was motivated by Russia's goal to pressure Ukraine into joining the Customs Union and distancing itself from the Association Agreement with the EU, "which is currently the most important objective of Russia's policy towards Kyiv". The energy weapon is the strongest asset that Moscow has to exert pressure on Ukraine. On the one hand, the success of Nord Stream and potential success of South Stream have considerably weakened Ukraine's ability to withstand the Kremlin's pressure (O Kelly 2010, 68). On the other hand, European gas exporters such as RWE are re-exporting their (often Russian) imported gas to Ukraine, hence reducing Gazprom's market share in the country (Socor 2013b, 1). Regarding Russia's posture concerning the EU-Russian gas trade, Kratochvil and Tichy (2013, 394-404) concluded that Russia's speeches profess the preference for symmetrical integration, the importance of ensuring Gazprom's access to the EU market through liberalization, and the diversification of transit routes which circumvent Ukraine.

Kratochvil and Tichy (2013, 398) found that gas import became a sensitive issue in the EU's speeches in light of its new member states' high dependence on Russian gas and the expected rise of energy import dependence. The energy crises between Russia and Ukraine of 2006 and 2009 led the EU to blame both Ukraine and Russia for cutting off its gas imports. The EU's speeches point to the importance of the proper integration of Russia into the EU energy market and criticize Russia for closing its energy market to European companies (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 403). At the same time Kratochvil and Tichy (2013, 403) argue that there are highly diverging assessments of Russia's reliability as an energy partner. The effect of these gas crises also transcended the EU's rhetoric. The liberalization of the EU's energy market by the Third Energy Package effectively marked the end of long-term gas contracts between Russia and Europe (Westphal 2012, 3).

The European Commission's assessment of the energy crises made several points that nuance the idea of Russia's sole responsibility for the crises. Firstly, Russia has never used its 'energy weapon' outside of the former Soviet space. Moreover, the EC acknowledges that "the EU-

Russia Early Warning Mechanism had warned about the possibility of the crisis in late December 2008” (EC assessment 2009, 5). The Commission’s assessment argues that the supply shortages in se were not the main problem. “It was mainly the inadequacies in gas transport which constrained flows (capacities, reverse flow capabilities, unusual routes, insufficient integration of gas networks in Central and South Eastern Europe), not an aggregate shortage of gas” (EC 2009, 14). The Commission accepts that Russia and Ukraine are equally responsible for the gas cut offs (Kratochvil and Tichy 2013, 402). It also heavily stresses the idea that the crises were exacerbated by the lack of internal solidarity (EC 2009, 17-18). Hence, the idea of some EU ‘diversificationists’ that these crises showed Russia’s unreliability as a gas supplier, and that its influence is to be minimized at all costs is an oversimplification. The Union’s perceived need to unbundle and integrate the European gas markets must be motivated by other factors than merely the concern about the overdependence on the gas imports from Russia.

Since the end of the Cold War, the perceived need for integration to overcome political chaos spurred the EU to take over Russia’s former sphere of control. This expansion presented new challenges for the EU. While the Russia’s dominance over these countries’ energy sector was indeed a problem, Russia’s huge gas supplies to them are not a threat to their very existence. The securitization of gas dependence has to do with the peculiar nature of the EU as a security community. Buzan and Wæver (2003, 376) argue that it is not a direct security system that defends collective security. Rather, it is a largely desecuritizing order that operates by re-securitizing a strong meta-narrative of the historical development of Europe in the past, present and future (Buzan and Wæver 2003, 376). Further integration is the solution to this threat, and the energy sphere would then be a new policy field onto which this securitization has materialized. The 2006/2009 gas spats provided the Commission with a crisis situation that was needed to enlarge its influence in energy policy. According to Maltby (2013, 441) the EC managed to couple this problem to a solution for energy insecurity that had already been circulating: further internal market integration and diversification of supplies.

Based on Wæver and Buzan, one could argue that the Union’s main security concern is to properly integrate its new member states into the EU project, rather than break through the overdependence on Russia as a supplier. Notwithstanding some alarmist voices in the EU, according to this theory the securitization of gas import dependence would be primarily motivated by the need for further and deeper integration, and not by grievances against

Russia. Policy makers need to understand the energy weapon to formulate appropriate responses to threats of disruption and manipulation (Stegen 2011, 6512). Stegen (2011, 6512) argues that the EU's policy of promoting a single energy market and diversification helps minimize the threat and impact of supply disruptions.

To break through the overdependence on Russia, internal energy market reforms (particularly energy solidarity mechanisms between member states) are needed. "The EU's handling of the [2009] crisis showed that a lack of a well-functioning exchange of up-to-date, reliable and consistent information between gas companies, as well as inadequate and fragmented information on cross-border flows served to undermine full effectiveness of solidarity measures" (de Jong 2013, 27). The Commission's anti-trust case and the consequent reorganization of Gazprom's activities to abide by the Third Energy Package (EurActiv 2012b) have shown that its regulatory competences on the internal market can even be used as an external energy policy tool.

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