



**Russia's Post-2014 Energy Security Strategy: Pipeline Diplomacy, Asian Pivot and Eurasian Geopolitical Realignment**

**Sushma Rani<sup>1</sup>, Surender Singh Bagaria<sup>2</sup>**

**Department of South and Central Asian Studies, Central University of Punjab<sup>1</sup>, Panjab University, Chandigarh<sup>2</sup>**

**ABSTRACT**

This study examines the position of the European Union (EU) within Russia's post-2014 Eurasian energy security framework, focusing on the changing dynamics of energy interdependence, geopolitical realignments, and strategic responses. The Ukraine crisis of 2014 and Russia's annexation of Crimea marked a significant turning point in EU–Russia energy relations, transforming a largely cooperative energy partnership into a more competitive and geopolitically sensitive relationship. The research employs a qualitative methodology based on secondary data analysis, drawing upon academic literature, policy documents, and reports from international organizations to evaluate developments in Eurasian energy governance. The findings reveal that Russia responded to Western sanctions and growing political tensions by diversifying its energy exports towards Asia and strengthening partnerships with countries such as China and India through major infrastructure projects and market reorientation strategies. Simultaneously, the European Union pursued energy diversification policies, expanded renewable energy investments, increased liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports, and implemented the REPowerEU strategy to reduce dependence on Russian energy supplies and enhance strategic autonomy. Although the level of energy interdependence between Russia and the EU has declined considerably, the EU continues to remain an important actor in Russia's broader Eurasian energy strategy due to its large energy market, regulatory influence, and role in global energy governance. The study concludes that the post-2014 Eurasian energy landscape is characterized by a shift from mutual economic dependence to a more complex framework shaped by geopolitical competition, sanctions, market diversification, and energy transition policies. The future trajectory of EU–Russia energy relations will depend on evolving geopolitical developments, regional security considerations, and the pace of global energy transformation.

**Keywords:** European Union, Russia, Eurasian Energy Security, Energy Interdependence, Geopolitical Realignments, Energy Diversification, Strategic Autonomy.

**Introduction**

Energy is not only a basic industry, but also a strategic sector that plays a key role in geopolitical thinking and political decision-making. The European Union, as an important global player, faces many challenges in its energy policy, which is constantly reshaped by the dynamics of international events (Streimikiene et al., 2022). Energy security and energy dependence are not only fundamental concepts, but also indicators of political and economic development and independence. Energy security is perceived as the ability of a state or a larger community, such as the EU, to effectively respond to external and internal threats that could threaten a stable supply of energy and, thus, overall economic and social stability. On the other hand, energy dependence reflects the extent to which the EU is dependent on the import of energy resources from other countries and regions. This can lead to risk of geopolitical shocks (Sueyoshi et al., 2023). It is therefore an essential indicator for assessing safety. There are still problems with ensuring stable supplies of energy sources in today's complicated geopolitical situation. In the context of current events, however, it is necessary to emphasize geopolitical factors, which have fundamentally influenced the flow of energy resources. This is especially so in the Eurasian area in connection with the sanctions on Russia, which is the main supplier of oil and natural gas. There have also been fundamental changes in these flows.

The energy relationship between Russia and the European Union (EU) has undergone seismic changes since 2022. For over half a century, energy trade had been the cornerstone of the economic relationship between the EU (and its predecessor the European Economic Community) and Russia (until 1991, the Soviet Union) (Högselius 2013). After the end of the Cold War, EU-Russia energy relations expanded further, in line with the liberal logic that closer economic ties would have spillovers in the political arena, thereby creating and consolidating a comprehensive partnership. In 2004, the accession of a few East-Central European member



states that were wary of energy dependence on Russia, Poland and the Baltic States in particular, introduced a more critical line of arguments vis-a-vis Moscow in the EU, but remained largely a minority voice until 2022.

Russia's attack on Ukraine shattered the widespread belief among Western European elites that a large-scale war between Russia and Ukraine would not happen and that a land war in the heart of Europe was anachronistic in the twenty-first century. The war caused geopolitical and market turbulence on a continental, and arguably global scale (Belyi 2015, Godzmirski 2019). Europeans realized they could no longer take the security of their fossil fuel supply for granted when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Coal, liquefied natural gas (LNG), uranium products, crude oil and oil products, and other energy items were being imported by Europe from Russia at the start of the conflict. Prior to the invasion, Russia was Europe's top supplier of natural gas, accounting for almost 40% of the continent's imports through four major pipelines (Kardas, 2023). Austria and Latvia were among the European nations that depended on Russia for more than 80% of their gas supply. However, Germany was by far Russia's biggest petrol consumer in terms of volume, importing almost twice as much as Italy, the country's second-largest consumer. The Economist stated in May 2022 that "oil and gas together account for 60% of primary energy, and Russia has long been the biggest supply of both" (Statista 2026). It supplied more than half of Germany's gas, around half of its coal imports, and a third of its oil on the eve of the conflict in Ukraine.

The 2014 Ukrainian crisis, and particularly Russia's annexation of Crimea, became a turning point in European politics, reshaping entirely the course of relations between Russia and the EU. Set off by the political turmoil in Ukraine, and aggravated by Russia's military action in Crimea this incident gave rise to the most severe standoff between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War period. Russia's actions during the conflict posed a serious threat to territorial sovereignty thus justifying the imposition of economic sanctions against the country on the part of the European Union and the United States. From a purely practical perspective the crisis demonstrated Europe's reliance on Russia in terms of its energy supply. This also intensified concerns regarding energy security, diversification and strategic autonomy.

Despite ongoing energy exchange between Russia and the European Union after 2014, there was an erosion in trust on both sides and energy started being perceived not as a means of economic partnership but as a tool of geopolitical competition. These events contributed to the further diversification of Russian export markets towards Asia and the development of energy supply sources outside of Russia by the EU (European Council, 2024; Krickovic, 2015). By the end of 2022, Russia had acquired an additional 103 tankers from countries that had been under western oil sanctions, notably Iran and Venezuela. Moscow announced it would not deal with countries enforcing the ceiling; it possibly aimed to use its new fleet to try to supply partners such as India, China and Turkey, which became the largest buyers of Russian oil as the EU decreased imports drastically (Sheppard, Cook and Ivanova 2022). As a result, the year 2014 can be regarded as a turning point in the history of energy relations within Eurasia.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The situation with the conflict in Ukraine in 2014 has radically changed the energy geopolitics of relations between Russia and the European Union. The shift in Russian policy towards its energy strategy in Eurasia combined with efforts from the EU to diversify sources of energy have led to a change in traditional patterns of energy interdependence. Nonetheless, there still does not exist enough understanding about the position of the European Union within Russian post-2014 energy security in Eurasia.

### **Objectives**

- 1) To examine Russia's post-2014 Eurasian energy strategy and role of the EU within Russia's energy security framework.
- 2) To analyze EU strategic responses to changing energy interdependence.



### **Energy Security and Interdependence Theory**

Securing stable and safe supply of energy resources is currently one of the main tasks of state governments. Russia's attack on Ukraine transformed the European energy crisis into a structural one. The surge in gas prices had already spilled over into the electricity market; the war extended the rise in prices to oil and its derivatives, as well as to several critical minerals of which Russia is a major exporter.

The asymmetry of interdependence between Russia and the EU can be examined in relation to energy security and transformation. The second theoretical pillar, transformation, serves as the catalyst for upcoming changes that also take the shape of power shifts. It is to be expected that certain states would become stronger while others will become weaker as a result of new technologies. This fact is reinforced by a number of emerging studies on the topic of energy transformation (Gielen et al., 2019).

Interdependence can be defined as a relationship between two or more actors, which assumes that a change in the position of one actor will affect other actors (Rosecrance & Stein 1973). The concept of interdependence makes it possible to analyse a whole range of problems (Binhack & Tichý 2012). Symmetrical interdependence is a relationship of equal reciprocal dependence of one subject on another and is the extreme of an interdependent relationship (Keohane & Nye, 1973). According to studies, an equivalent dimension of interdependence between states reduces the risk of involvement in conflicts and reduces the risk of disputes in trade relations (Barbieri 1996). Mitrany (Mitrany 1994) proposed a top-down approach directed by governments and governmental organisations responsible for connecting states in specific areas (Mitrany 1994). Deutsch focused on transactional relations between states. These transactions included the intensity of trade exchange, the flow of information and migration (Deutsch 1957). Deutsch assumed that the increased intensity of these transactions between states would necessarily lead to the creation of institutions that would eventually become the basis of a security community.

Nye and Keohane created the concept of complex interdependence by the state and manner of coexistence of states in the international area, which they defined by three characteristics (Keohane & Nye 1973). In a situation of complex interdependence, international interactions take place through many communication channels. International relations in the model of complex interdependence is not only the domain of formal interactions between states, but includes many other formal and informal actors and relationships. The importance of individual actors is not only that each actor pursues its own goals, but that at the same time they increase the mutual sensitivity of the foreign policy of interdependent states (Keohane & Nye 1973). Keohane and Nye further write that state policies in a state of interdependence are not subordinated to one priority, such as the military and the securing of defense (Keohane & Nye 1973). The possibility of using force is limited by the costs of interdependence. The costs of interdependence primarily represent the economic losses that a state would suffer from the interruption of informal, commercial, communication, infrastructural and other ties with another state when military force is used. The researchers note that in developed countries these costs exceed the potential gains from new territory gained by military force (Keohane & Nye 1973). Invoking an international military conflict also serves as a stabilizing internal political tool in a state of interdependence (Keohan & Nye 1973). Interdependence should not necessarily be characterized as a situation of reciprocal dependence of one subject on another. Such a situation, called symmetric interdependence, is considered one of the extremes of interdependence. Keohane and Nye (Keohane & Nye 1973) emphasize that the unequal distribution of profits and expenditures is at the centre of asymmetric interdependence that provides a source of power.

This study identifies changes in fossil energy resource flows through supplier diversification to the EU in the context of Russia's geopolitical developments and policies. At the same time, we can also see the advancing diversification of oil and natural gas importers and Russia's increasing efforts to expand its influence in developing countries such as India. At the same time, we are monitoring the energy transformation in the EU, which is associated with risks and problems, such as securing the supply of specific and rare elements for the production of renewable energy, securing new technologies, managing markets and tenders, regulating market access and new standards, etc. Russia could use these risks and problems to slow down the transformation. Most of the sustainable energy is renewable energy. Therefore, another term for energy

transition is renewable energy transition. Many authors address the impact of political and economic decisions on energy mix and energy transition, as well as energy independence and security (Auer & Anatólis, 2014; Díaz et al. 2019; Rusin & Wojaczek, 2023).



### EU-Russia Energy Relations and Changes after 2014

The Russia-Ukraine crises showed how geopolitical events can affect the energy sector. But this relationship works both ways, and changes in energy markets can also have an impact on geopolitics. The ongoing energy transitions have an impact on the changing demand for energy resources and these processes will take long. It means that fossil fuel producers will still have influence. It can be assumed that due to the increase in the use of clean energy, this influence is decreasing. But energy transitions do not mean the end of geopolitical risks. The traditional risks associated with fossil fuel reserves are evolving and not completely disappearing. Transitions could be destabilizing for weak producer states that are not successful in diversifying their dependence on oil and gas export revenues. At the same time, new emerging risks of clean energy can be observed in supply chains (Bordoff & O'Sullivan 2023). Both traditional and new security risks have worsened the situation in an international system characterized by rivalry and little cooperation. The introduction of clean energy in recent years and high fossil fuel prices may give further impetus to the transitions. However, geopolitical shocks do not allow long-term development to be predicted. The key element in the future will be the development of rivalry and cooperation. Geopolitical factors unfold gradually, the relationship with Russia and its position in the international trade with energy resources is crucial. Clean energy cooperation can be protected from wider political tensions and global development can be accelerated in line with the NZE Scenario (IEA 2023). The Net Zero Emissions by 2050 Scenario (NZE Scenario) is a normative scenario that shows a pathway for the global energy sector to achieve net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2050, with advanced economies reaching net zero emissions in advance of others. This scenario also meets key energy-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular universal energy access by 2030 and major improvements in air quality. It is consistent with limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5°C (with at least a 50% probability), in line with emissions reductions assessed in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Changes' (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report (IEA 2024). Undoubtedly, however, geopolitical tensions can reduce clean energy ambitions as well as fossil fuels.

Energy and geopolitics create a situation in international relations where competition for energy resources becomes a key factor influencing world politics (Krejčí 2001). The current energy situation is a result of long-term development and has a fundamental influence on the political and economic stability of states. The importance of energy as a key factor in global security has increased as a result of oil crises, where energy resources have been used as tools of economic and political pressure (Kempe 2023). The current situation in which Russia uses energy as a means of economic and political influence is an example of the geopolitical use of energy as a weapon. Russia has shown that energy resources can be misused for conflict and disruption of international stability. A fundamental moment is the perception of the Russia-EU relationship, the influence of energy relations on the identity of the EU and Russia, the influence of ideological values on energy relations and the formation of energy interests (Sharples 2011).

An essential element for the investigation of interrelationships is inclusion in the process of energy transformation in the present. Energy transformation in the past and its consequences, as well as the dynamics of change, are presented by Sovacool (Sovacool 2016). Some authors present a conceptualization of changes related to energy transformation and their consequences (Stirling 2014). Some authors deal with the interdependent relationship between the EU and Russia. Their research is often limited to geopolitical aspects, where they are interested in geopolitical power in addition to economics. Krickovic (2015) states that interdependence in energy is an area that can bring about tension in security relations. This phenomenon erodes the mutual trust that has been built through business ties and long-term contracts. These assumptions do not respect energy cooperation and suggest that energy could be used not only for political purposes but also for security purposes. Geopolitical analyses in the context of energy transformation, consequences and risks have been written, for example, by Griffiths (Griffiths 2019). The intersection of geopolitics and energy security is a critical area of study that has gained increasing interest and signals critical areas of interest and collaboration.

**Research Gap**

Previous academic research on the energy policy of the EU and Russia has emphasized European energy security issues, energy as a foreign policy instrument used by Russia, and effects of the Ukrainian crisis on EU-Russia energy cooperation. Also, increasing attention is being paid to the post-2014 Russian policy of energy diversification in the direction of Asia and increased energy partnerships in the South. Nevertheless, most studies analyze these developments separately and pay limited attention to the European Union's position within Russia's broader post-2014 Eurasian energy security framework. However, there is scarcity of research that integrates the analysis of how new trends in energy interdependencies, geopolitical realignments, sanctions, market diversifications and strategies of Russia and the EU influence their relation in the changing Eurasian energy regime. The goal of this research is to address this gap by locating the European Union within Russia's evolving energy security framework and assessing the implications for Eurasian energy governance and regional stability.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research design used in this study was a qualitative one based on secondary data analysis. This paper sought to assess the role of the European Union in the new Russian Eurasian energy security strategy post-2014 through an examination of the evolving dynamics of energy interdependence and strategic reactions. The descriptive-analytical method was used to assess the trends that have been developing in the energy relationship between the EU and Russia since 2014.

Secondary data were used in carrying out the research, and this included peer-reviewed academic journals, books, policy briefs, reports, and statistics from international institutions such as the International Energy Agency (IEA), Eurostat, the European Commission, the European Council, the World Bank, and appropriate Russian energy authorities. The academic literature available in the areas of energy security, complex interdependence, geopolitics, and energy governance in Eurasia was analyzed to develop the theoretical basis of the study.

The analytical framework was guided by the theory of complex interdependence and the concept of asymmetric energy dependence. Emphasis was made on understanding how geopolitical events following 2014 affected the mutual dependency relations between Russia and the European Union. In addition, Russia's policy shift towards Asia and other emerging economies in terms of energy relations was also analyzed, together with the counteractions undertaken by the EU such as diversification of energy sources and adoption of energy security measures. The data was analyzed using qualitative content analysis and comparison of policy documents, patterns of energy trade, and strategic developments. The trends of natural gas exports, energy diversification, sanctions, infrastructure development and energy transition were studied in order to discover changes in the Eurasian energy space. The findings were interpreted within the broader context of regional energy governance and geopolitical competition to evaluate the evolving role of the European Union in Russia's post-2014 Eurasian energy security framework.

**Russia's Post-2014 Eurasian Energy Security Framework**

Strategic reorientation across Europe and Eurasia centers on three intersecting drivers: the prolonged conflict in Ukraine, the relentless expansion of NATO and the EU, and punishing Western sanctions. Together, these forces have fundamentally dismantled the post-Cold War security architecture.

- **The Ukraine Crisis**

The 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia transitioned from a regional dispute into an ongoing, grinding conflict of attrition (Yan and Zhang, 2026).

**The Conflict:** Despite intense fighting and attacks on critical infrastructure, Ukraine has sustained its defensive lines, driving the European Parliament Study on EU-Ukraine 2035 to propose long-term European security integration (Damen, 2023).

**Industrial and Strategic Shifts:** Kyiv has pivoted its defense industry toward joint European arms production. Combining European financing with Ukrainian battlefield-tested expertise in drones and electronic warfare



- **NATO and EU Expansion Concerns**

The steady eastward march of Western institutions fundamentally shifted threat perceptions across both Moscow and the Euro-Atlantic community.

**Security Dilemma:** Moscow has long viewed the enlargement of reports on Ukraine-NATO Relations and the EU into the post-Soviet sphere (such as the integration of former Warsaw Pact states) as existential security threats.

**European Reassessment:** Conversely, Russia's aggression drove a historic strategic reorientation in the West. It expedited the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO, abandoning long-held neutrality, and prompted the European Union to grant candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova (Damen, 2023).

- **Western Sanctions**

A barrage of unprecedented economic measures and restrictions has forced a profound geo-economic recalibration globally.

**Economic Isolation:** The European Union and the United States have deployed dozens of sanction packages, isolating key Russian sectors and freezing overseas assets.

**Strategic Pivot:** Facing these economic pressures, Russia has shifted its focus from European integration toward deeper Eastern partnerships - specifically increasing economic and diplomatic reliance on China. A study on global impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war details how this has resulted in a heavily polarized global environment (Yan and Zhang, 2026; Moskalenko et al., 2024).

### **Eurasian Energy Diversification**

Because of its enormous oil and gas deposits and its location connecting Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, Eurasia plays a significant role in world energy policy. As a result, Russia, the EU, and China frequently interact and clash there. Eurasia is viewed by the EU as a crucial resource for energy supply diversification. The EU is attempting to strengthen energy ties with countries in Central Asia and the Caspian region because they are concerned about becoming overly reliant on Russian gas. For instance, the Southern Gas Corridor, which connects European markets to Azerbaijani gas via the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) and the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP), demonstrates how the EU hopes to obtain alternative energy and enhance security in this region (Maltby, 2013). The EU hopes to lessen the geopolitical risks connected with energy dependence through these programs, in addition to diversifying supply sources.

China now plays a significant role in Eurasian energy as well. Beijing invested heavily in developing energy infrastructure and resources throughout Central Asia due to the region's rapidly increasing energy needs and security concerns. China increased its influence in the region and improved access to gas and oil by constructing pipelines, transportation routes, and economic connections through the Belt and Road Initiative (Liao, 2021). The conventional power dynamics in Eurasia are being altered by this expanding influence, which presents both Russia and the EU with new opportunities as well as difficulties. In the center of this evolving geopolitical landscape lies Central Asia. Countries like Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan hold huge stores of oil and gas and act as key transit spots linking up big consumer markets. Because of this, they've become better at juggling ties with various outside powers, boosting their clout in global energy politics. The region is currently a hot spot in the global energy games as China, Russia, and the EU compete for access to resources, markets, and transportation routes. Beyond simply seizing resources, the New Great Game in Eurasia increasingly focuses on more ambitious strategic objectives like gaining influence, integrating economies, and establishing advantageous geopolitical positions. The region has been rearranged and the energy order has become much more complex and multipolar as a result of these conflicting energy policies. Assessing the future of European energy security and the changing geopolitical environment of Eurasia requires an understanding of these changes.



A central component of Russia's post-2014 energy strategy has been the development and expansion of major energy infrastructure projects aimed at diversifying export routes and reducing dependence on traditional transit corridors. The Power of Siberia pipeline, launched in 2019, symbolizes Russia's strategic pivot toward Asia by supplying natural gas directly to China under a long-term agreement, thereby strengthening Sino-Russian energy cooperation. Simultaneously, TurkStream, operational since 2020, was designed to transport Russian natural gas to Turkey and Southern Europe through the Black Sea, bypassing Ukraine and enhancing Russia's access to alternative European markets. In contrast, the Nord Stream projects represented the culmination of Russia's efforts to secure direct energy links with Western Europe, particularly Germany. While Nord Stream 1 significantly increased Russian gas exports to Europe, Nord Stream 2 became highly politicized amid growing geopolitical tensions and was ultimately suspended following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Together, these projects illustrate Russia's broader strategy of market diversification, transit-route restructuring, and the use of energy infrastructure as an instrument of economic and geopolitical influence within the evolving Eurasian energy landscape (Henderson & Mitrova, 2020; Stern, 2022; Vošta, 2025; Lang & Westphal, 2017).

### **Locating the European Union within Russia's Eurasian Energy Strategy**

For decades, the European Union has been an integral part of the energy policy of Russia as the main importer of Russian oil and natural gas exports. Since the dissolution of the USSR, the energy cooperation between Russia and the European Union has been based on mutual dependencies: while Russian energy industry used the demand of Europe as a major source of foreign income, the EU was heavily dependent on the import of Russian fuels for satisfying its needs. The natural gas segment of cooperation between the two parties had reached a point when Russia relied on pipelines to provide the EU with energy produced in the former Soviet republics. By 2010, Russia provided more than one-third of natural gas imports of the European Union, while the EU was a recipient of the lion's share of the export income received from the energy sector (Stern, 2014).

The importance of the European Union in Russia's energy scheme was further enhanced by important energy projects like Nord Stream and Nord Stream 2. Nord Stream and Nord Stream 2 were important initiatives aimed at providing Russia with an opportunity to supply Europe directly without involving the transit countries, such as Ukraine, thus ensuring low risks of transit and providing Russia with greater stability in its presence on the energy market in Europe. The decision to implement such energy projects showed that Moscow thought that the existence of high economic interdependence could contribute to energy cooperation despite possible political controversies (Henderson & Mitrova, 2020).

The situation changed dramatically when, in 2014, due to the Ukrainian crisis and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, the West imposed economic sanctions against Russia. Political tensions and concern over energy dependence prompted the EU and Russia to re-examine their strategies. Despite the fact that energy cooperation between the two sides was not completely halted after the crisis, their relationship had gradually become more adversarial, and the issue of energy cooperation had acquired a geopolitical nature. Russia started seeking alternative markets for its energy products, focusing on Asia, and the EU accelerated its efforts at diversifying energy supplies (Romanova, 2016; Krickovic, 2015). Still, until recently, Europe remained Russia's major energy market.

Asymmetric interdependence provides insight into how we might examine the role of the European Union in the framework of the Russian Eurasian energy strategy. Although the two were interdependent with each other, their level of vulnerability was different depending on the region or sector. The Eastern and Central European nations were much more dependent on Russian energy supplies compared to Western Europe, resulting in different degrees of exposure to possible interruptions in supplies. Moreover, Russia's dependence on the European market meant that Russia had limited means of leveraging energy policy as a way to coerce European nations due to high economic losses involved in such an approach (Keohane & Nye, 2001).

Russia's broader post-2014 Eurasian energy policy aimed at decreasing Russia's dependence on the European market through diversification of its energy exports and expansion of partnerships within Asia. Various



projects like the Power of Siberia gas pipeline, energy collaboration with China, as well as emerging market engagements exemplify the attempts undertaken by the Russian authorities to diversify the export structure. Despite that, these actions did not immediately make up for Russia's losses in Europe in terms of income sources. At that time, the EU still generated considerable revenue flows and served as a benchmark in Russian energy calculations. As a result, the EU has not been discarded by Russia as part of the Eurasian energy strategy but has simply shifted its role from dominating pillar of Russian energy exports to being one of its elements (Vošta, 2025).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has significantly hastened this process. As a result, the European Union has implemented an unprecedented set of economic sanctions, formulated the REPowerEU policy, curtailed imports of natural resources from Russia, and strengthened collaboration in the energy sector with new partners like Norway, the USA, Algeria, and Azerbaijan. The amount of Russian natural gas imports in Europe has fallen dramatically, and Russia has redoubled its attempts to promote its exports towards Asia and other countries in the Global South. All these factors have led to a significant decline in interdependence between Russia and the EU in the energy sector (European Commission, 2024; European Council, 2024; Vošta, 2025).

In spite of these shifts, the role of the European Union as one of the most significant partners of Russia's Eurasian energy policy cannot be ignored. The EU still represents one of the largest energy consuming markets in the world and is characterized by great purchasing power. Moreover, it remains one of the most influential players in global energy governance and is able to use its regulatory policy and climate actions to change the course of development in the sphere of energy relations. In the eyes of the Russian leadership, the lack of the European market is rather costly and forces Russia to look for other customers; however, not a single area has yet managed to become the new Europe in terms of profitability.

### **EU Strategic Responses to Russia's Energy Realignment**

To cope with the impact of Russia's energy shift after 2014, the European Union has adopted a multifaceted strategy which focused not only on decreasing reliance on Russian fossil fuels but also ensured energy security. After the Russia-Ukraine conflict of 2014, followed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the European Union formulated new strategies, including energy sanction against Russia, diversification of energy sources, and increased liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports and implementation of REPowerEU strategy. Norway, the USA, Algeria, and Azerbaijan became important energy providers for Europe. Besides, significant investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy networks were also made by the EU.

The REPowerEU strategy aimed at cutting dependence on Russia for fossil fuels, boosting energy resilience, and fast-tracking clean energy technology implementation. These were indicative of the general strategy by the EU to ensure strategic autonomy from geopolitical risks and promote climate neutrality under the framework of the European Green Deal. Consequently, interdependence between the two blocs in terms of energy has greatly weakened, leading to a new multipolar energy order in Eurasia (European Commission, 2024; European Council, 2024; Krickovic, 2015; Romanova, 2016; Vošta, 2025).

### **Conclusion**

Since 2014, the post-Ukraine period has entailed the most substantial changes to the energy structure of Eurasia, completely reforming the very essence of energy cooperation between Russia and the European Union. In the past, the EU played a key role in Russian energy policy, as the recipient of major Russian oil and natural gas exports, which gave rise to a mutually beneficial and highly interdependent relationship between the two. The Ukraine conflict, coupled with the 2014 annexation of Crimea, as well as a series of further deteriorations in political ties between the two, brought about an enormous shift in the status quo. This study signified that although energy interdependence is still a very important characteristic of the EU-Russia relationship, its nature has changed from being dependent on each other economically into a much more complicated one that is characterized by geopolitics, sanctions, and competition for resources. The Eurasian energy strategy pursued by Russia since 2014 is a conscious move on the part of Russia to decrease



their dependence on Europe by improving their energy infrastructure, developing their market share, and increasing their cooperation in energy with China and others.

Moreover, the research findings suggest that the European Union appears to retain its strategic importance as part of Russia's broader Eurasian energy strategy, even in light of the decreasing levels of energy dependence on Europe. First of all, the EU is one of the largest energy consumers in the world; secondly, it is an important regulator of the international energy market; thirdly, the Russian Federation needs Europe as an object for planning future projects in the energy sector. Eventually, the future of EU-Russia energy relations will rely on broader geopolitical developments, the pace of the global energy transition and the capability of both actors to balance strategic competition with the practical realities of energy security and economic interdependence.

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