

Geopolitical Analysis of the Crimean Peninsula and the Black Sea in the Context of Turkish-Russian Energy Policy

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ABSTRACT

The introductory paragraphs of the article consider the historical approach to how important the black sea and Crimea are in geopolitical terms, which became more important after the eighteenth century. In addition, the main issue that was studied in the article; the Maritime geopolitics of the black sea and Crimean peninsulas in accordance with the new situation that arose as a result of the annexation of Crimea to Russia after the referendum, as well as the state of Turkey's energy needs and how the issue of energy security will be resolved in the future. Although Turkey has two important waterways, such as the Straits of Istanbul and the Dardanelles, it has been appreciated why it cannot turn this superiority into some kind of advantage. The data used in the article is usually based on official reports published by government agencies. The point from which mutual trade relations between Turkey and Russia originate, through gas pipelines, and the benefits and harms of the situation are discussed. Both in the Black sea and partly in the Eastern Mediterranean, gas exploration operations are underway; their reflection in Turkish foreign policy has been deconstructed. Questions such as how much natural gas Turkey needs per year and which countries import gas that needs it were discussed with the data.

Keywords: geopolitics, Turkey, Russia, energy, security, Black Sea, Crimea

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Геополитический анализ Крымского полуострова и Черного моря в контексте турецко-российской энергетической политики

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РЕФЕРАТ

Во вводных параграфах статьи рассматривается исторический подход к тому, насколько важным в геополитическом плане является Черное море и Крым, которые стали более важными после восемнадцатого века. Кроме того, основной вопрос, который был изучен в статье, морская геополитика Черноморского и Крымского полуостровов в соответствии с новой ситуацией, которая возникла в результате присоединения Крыма к России после проведенного референдума, а также состояние энергетических потребностей Турции и как будет решаться вопрос энергетической безопасности в будущем. Несмотря на то, что Турция имеет два важных водных пути, таких как проливы Стамбул и Дарданеллы, было оценено, почему она не может превратить это превосходство в какое-то преимущество. Данные, используемые в статье, обычно основаны на официальных отчетах, опубликованных государственными учреждениями. Точка, из которой исходят взаимные торговые отношения Турции и России, через газопроводы, а также обсуждается польза и вред ситуации. Как в Черном море, так и частично в Восточном Средиземноморье, проводимые операции по разведке газа, их отражение в турецкой внешней политике было деконструировано. Такие вопросы, как, сколько природного газа требуется Турции в год и какие страны импортируют газ, который нуждается в этом, были обсуждены с данными.

Ключевые слова: геополитика, Турция, Россия, энергия, безопасность, Черное море, Крым

From the fifteenth century, when the Ottoman emperor Mehmet II dominated the Black Sea and its surroundings, until the Ottoman Empire was forced to leave the region to the Russian Empire as a result of the struggle for dominance in the Black Sea, the Ottoman Empire continued to exist as the only undisputed power on Sea and land. It has dominated all of the commercial activities in the region on both land and sea and has been able to direct these activities according to their own interests and strategic needs of the state. In the early periods of the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate, one of the most powerful states in the Black Sea region, was brought under control, leaving the Crimea Khanates under the control of the Ukrainian steppes and the Caucasus. Here is a result of this situation; It would be wrong to say that the Ottoman Sultans were very concerned about the security of the Russian Empire and the Black Sea until the 20th century. However, as a requirement of Russia's strategy to expand from the north and south to the warm seas, Russia had to fight with the Ottoman Empire in order to establish dominance in the seas, to access and control the trade routes. The first field of application of this strategy developed by Tsar Petro I can be mentioned as the war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, which was built around the Prut River in 1711. Although Russia lost the war against the Ottoman Empire in this war, Tsar Petro I continued to develop strategies on this ideal axis. As a result of the war; The Azov fortress was returned to the Ottoman Empire and the fortresses built around the Dnieper River were destroyed. After these dates, Russia preferred the way of achieving its strategic goals on Iran and Caucasus side and carried out geographical and military preliminary investigations in order to establish superiority in Caspian Sea [1, pp. 116–117]. Until the collapse of the state after the victory of the Ottoman Empire, it was seldom able to triumph over Russia (except for the Crimean War of 1735–1739 and 1853–1856), and in the aftermath of the Ottoman-Russian wars, it can be easily observed that it is mostly Crimean-Caucasian axis. After Russia managed to control the Crimea and the Caucasus, it succeeded in reaching the borders of Istanbul over the Balkans during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877–1878 [8, pp. 677–678]. There is no doubt that the 19th and 20th centuries were the most difficult periods in terms of the political and social history of the Ottoman Empire. Under the influence of democratization and freedom struggles, the Ottoman Empire had to go through a period of political depression and turmoil under the influence of political and philosophical thought currents that started to spread from the west to the world. The Ottoman Empire could not produce an antithesis against all these political and economic ideas movements or could not reach the sufficient intellectual maturity in the political, economic and social studies that would analyze the point in this new world order that started to form. Especially the political movements based on the "Nationalism" principle that started to spread from Europe turned the Ottoman citizenship system upside down. While the concept of citizenship within the state is more religion-based, race-based ideas began to emerge after these dates. This was particularly effective on the Muslim population.

Crimea has been one of the most troubled regions in the last few centuries of the Ottoman Empire. This historical peninsula to where the north of the Black Sea is a very important and strategic region for Turkey, Russia and other countries in the region. The Sea of Azov, which is connected to the Black Sea via a sea crossing called the Kerch Strait, is another inland sea of geopolitical importance. However, it should be noted that the geopolitical analysis of the Black Sea only from the point of view of Turkey and Russia will not be sufficient for the determination of the region's political sphere of influence. By analyzing the political conjuncture shaped by the inclusion of the interests of

the other states surrounding the Black Sea in the region, it will be possible to explain with solid data what an international geopolitical position it has. It should not be forgotten that when the Black Sea's geopolitical domain is examined in detail, it will be understood that it covers the Baltic Sea, Balkans and Caucasus geography directly. When analyzing Risk and strategy, the indirect effects of Black Sea geopolitics can be seen even in the struggles for security and power in the Mediterranean and even in the Indian Ocean.

It is possible to explain on the basis of data how strategic Crimea is from both the Russian and Turkish perspective and to analyze this issue in more detail. Because geopolitics provides us with a systematic analysis of information that we can reveal what effects geography can have on human nature, life and international relations [5, p. 23]. The term "*geopolitic*" was first used by the Swedish political geographer Johan Rudolf Kjellén (1863–1922). Some other scientists and thinkers who have led to the emergence and development of geopolitics within the social sciences include the German Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904), the British Sir Halford Mackinder (1861–1947), the French Paul Vidal de La Blache (1845–1918), USA. Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840–1914) and Nicholas J. Spykman (1893–1943). Geopolitic is considered to be an important field of political science that studies the relationship between power and purpose today and the future on the basis of physical and political geography. It determines the direction that all elements of power draw on policy through geographical platform and data. In this context, Geopolitics; it enables us to better understand and analyze the possible consequences when all the underground and aboveground natural resources of a country are used as political and military trumps in power struggles. It analyzes the human and geographical capacity of the geopolitical state or a region that directly affects its economic and commercial activities, its social and scientific progress, and continues this process according to the principle of putting forward a perspective for the future. However, it should be emphasized that the geopolitical field of study focuses on security in general. The main subject of all possibility calculations made through geopolitical analysis is, in all circumstances, geography, politics and state. Through these concepts, disclosure of a region or interstate policy, and especially security issues, can take place on more solid ground [6, pp. 318–319].

Black Sea is an inland sea between Europe and Asia in terms of geographical position in the northern hemisphere in terms of mathematical position. To summarize which water crossings are connected to the Black Sea; It connects to the Azov Sea through the Strait of Kerch, the Sea of Marmara through the Strait of Istanbul and the Aegean Sea via the Dardanelles Strait. Considering all these waterway connections, the geographical position and hinterland of the Black Sea proves its rare geopolitical position. The status of the Kerch Strait at the time of the USSR was under the provisions of an inland sea, just like the Sea of Azov. However, the dissolution of the USSR, the emergence of two separate states such as Russia and Ukraine created the need for a change in the status of the Kerch Strait. For this reason, the Kerch Strait has been accepted as part of the Ukrainian borders. As a result of this new situation formed by the inclusion of Crimea in Russia's borders in 2014, Russia is considered that the Kerch Strait an inland sea and therefore the old situation will not be recognized [7, p. 984]. When the Turkish Straits are examined in terms of International Maritime and waterways law, the straits that connect the two seas and/or two separate economic regions are considered in the category. When the status of the Straits being national or international is examined, it is evaluated in the category of "*National Straits*" because it is only within the borders of Turkey. Istanbul and the Dardanelles have been in this status for about 6 centuries [4, pp. 11–12]. Although the Straits are, arguably, an element of the national borders that should be under Turkish control, Turkey's sovereignty over the Straits has been limited by some international agreements. With

the conclusion of the World War I, the control of the Straits was taken out of the hands of the Ottoman Empire in accordance with the treaty signed with the Ottoman Empire and the “*Convention on the regime of the Straits*” and completely disarmed from the military point of view. Although the sea crossing of military and commercial ships through the Strait was established within the framework of some principles, the Ottoman Empire had no say. On July 20, 1936, The Straits issue was reconsidered and the “*Montreux Straits Convention*” was signed and the status of the Straits and the terms and conditions under which the crossing of the Straits would be determined again. The treaty was signed between Bulgaria, USSR, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Japan, Romania, Yugoslavia and Turkey. Later in 1938 Italy signed up this agreement. When the provisions of the treaty are examined in detail, it will be understood that the most challenging items in terms of Turkey’s Black Sea geopolitic are the following. Recognition of freedom of sea crossing through the straits to all countries (Article 1), if Turkey is involved in any war and the ship wishing to cross the Strait is a merchant vessel not belonging to one of the states parties to the war, it may normally carry out its sea crossing through the Strait (Article 5), in times of peace where there is no war, merchant ships may proceed on their way without paying any tax or toll — if they do not stop at any port in the Straits — regardless of the cargo they carry by day or night through the Straits (Article 2) there are articles of agreement such as. The provisions of this agreement, which we have mentioned, are related to merchant ships, and the limitation of Control and control of warships over the crossing of the Strait has been imposed on Turkey. Supply ships connected to the Naval Forces of any country and intended to carry fuel shall be able to pass through the straits without any tonnage limitation (Article 9). Warships under a designated tonnage will be able to continue on their way during daytime crossings without paying any tax or transit fees –states with or without coast to the Black Sea — (Article 10). States that coast to the Black Sea, on the other hand, will be able to carry warships heavier than the designated tonnage through the Straits (Article 11) and during all these sea crossing, the Turkish government was required to notify the Turkish government that only the crossing of the strait would be made within a specified period of time (Article 12–13)¹. As can be seen, the control of the Straits within Turkey’s own borders has been almost completely taken away. It is clear that Russia has been able to produce more independent policies in shaping the Black Sea geopolitics. Russia, like Turkey, has adopted the strategic goal of having control of the Black Sea in its own hands or of having other states unable to intervene in order to realize their own military and political policies in the region. If Russia’s “*Naval Doctrine*” is to be examined in this context; The mention of the Black Sea and Caspian Sea naval fleets among the Naval organizations tasked with solving the problems arising in the oceans and the seas surrounding Russia and protecting its strategic and political interests refers to the importance Russia has given to the Black Sea militarily (Article 44). The level at which these naval forces placed in the region will be maintained in terms of quality and size is determined and organized in response to the planned strategic policies of Russia (Article 45). Russia has designated the world’s Marine and ocean areas as Atlantic, Arctic, Indian, Caspian, Pacific and Antarctic sea and ocean areas in accordance with its national interests and needs to be evaluated together with each other or strategically (Article 50). In this connection, the Black Sea, Azov Sea, Baltic Sea and Mediterranean Sea are mentioned as seas to be evaluated within the framework of the integrated strategic policies of the “*Atlantic Ocean Region*” (Article 53). The presence of NATO is shown as the only ob-

¹ Turkey Coast Guard. Official Page. “*Montreux Strait Convention*” [Electronic Resource] // URL: <http://www.kiyemniyeti.gov.tr/userfiles/file/mevzuat/Montreux%20Bo%C4%9Fazlar%20S%C3%B6zle%C5%9Fmesi.pdf> (Accessed: 10.10.2019).

stacle to achieving Russia's goals in the Atlantic region (Article 51). As the basis of Russia's National Maritime Policy in the Black Sea and Azov Sea, it is stated that Russia's strategic position in the region should be strengthened rapidly and comprehensively and that peace and stability in the region should be maintained (Article 56)¹. Generally, Turkey's main policy in the Black Sea region is to create a regional cooperation environment based on a regional identity and belonging to this region and to minimize the possibility of possible foreign intervention that could destabilize the region. The realization of all these objectives is supported by various military collaborations for the activities to be carried out on the sea, which the Turkish Naval Forces lead or are a party to. Speaking of foreign interventions in the Black Sea, it is notable that the US, EU and NATO have increased their effectiveness especially in neighboring countries to Russia, which has led to political crises in Georgia in 2008 and in Ukraine in 2014². The basis of Turkey's Black Sea policy, maintain political and military stability in the Black Sea and to increase the mutual trust and cooperation among the countries bordering the Black Sea. This is why Turkey and by countries with the coast of the Black Sea (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russian Federation, Ukraine) in 2001, "*The Black Sea Naval Co-Operation Task Group*" (BLACKSEAFOR) established and in particular not only to engage in joint military activities on marine aiming to establish an international organization. Actually, in this context it said that Turkey and Russia do not see each other as a threat in the region. This naval organization that was created, states parties reiterated their commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations specified in the agreement, as further development of cooperation between the Black Sea coast and believed in the necessity of dialogue states, have committed to strengthen regional security and stability and contribute to good neighbourly relations³. Turkey's participation in peaceful military and civilian initiatives and organizations on the Black Sea would be wrong to consider it merely as maintaining peace and security in the region. Because at this point it should be noted that Turkey has a negative situation in terms of geopolitical and international law arising from the Montreux Straits Convention. It should not be overlooked that Turkey has and continues to compensate for its reservations in this context and its impossibility due to international law through organizations such as NATO and the BLACKSEAFOR. The most important point here is the fact that Russia is having a hard time achieving its national goals in the Black Sea during the processes in which Turkey prefers to act together with NATO. Because, on its own initiative, NATO often makes it difficult for countries in the region to realize their political interests in the Black Sea by entering the Black Sea with warships, especially because of the crises between Ukraine and Russia. In the past few years, Turkey's political affinity with Russia, and sometimes even its partnership, has been highly criticized by NATO members, and even Turkey's membership in NATO has been questioned. It is obvious that this rapprochement is not an option but a necessity for Turkey. In particular, the turmoil in the domestic politics of the country and the complex process of the coup attempt against the government and the military operations launched against terrorist organizations in the south and southeast of Turkey caused Turkey to contradict the Western states and the United States. The turbulent period in Turkey's domestic politics and the coup attempt against the government; the military actions against the terrorist organizations in

¹ President of Russian Federation. Official Page. "*Naval Doctrine of the Russian Federation*" [Electronic Resource] // URL: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/uAFi5nvux2twaqjftS5yrIZUVTJan77L.pdf> (Accessed: 12.10.2019).

² Turkish Naval Forces Command. Official Page. "*Turkish Navy Strategy*" [Electronic Resource] // URL: https://www.dzkk.tsk.tr/data/icerik/392/DZKK_STRATEJI.pdf pp.9 (Accessed: 12.11.2019).

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. Official Page. "*BLACKSEAFOR*" [Electronic Resource] // URL: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/blackseafor.en.mfa> (Accessed: 25.11.2019).

southeastern Turkey and northern Syria, Turkey has confronted America and Western states in international politics. In Syria, American supports to the PKK and the YPG more than ever before, nearly 4 million Syrian refugees have fled the civil war in their countries and sought refuge in Turkey and their needs are being met by the state, rising unemployment rates and economic difficulties in Turkey have made it difficult for Turkey to conduct a comprehensive foreign policy analysis for the future. The argument for dividing Syria and establishing a Western-backed Kurdish state there has a crucial impact on the security of Turkey's internal and external borders. Although Russia's position on the existence of the PKK and the YPG is not the same as Turkey's, Syria's position on the indivisibility of its territory gives it more opportunity to develop common policies with Turkey. For all these reasons, Turkey's political partnership with Russia and its expansion in many areas should be seen as an inevitable result.

The question of "Continental Shelf" is one of the main factors affecting that will change the political and military interests in the Black Sea or the possibility of realization of these interests. Continental shelf refers to the right of a state to own up to 200 nautical miles from the seabed, starting from the coastline, and to search for underwater and offshore natural resources in this area and to engage in processing/operating activities when any natural resources are identified. In fact, it could mention that there is a situation in the region that states have agreed to until 2014 and that does not cause any controversy. It is clear that a debate on the sovereignty of maritime areas over the Black Sea will begin following this political option of the people of Crimea, that agreed to secede from Ukraine and join Russia as a result of the referendum held in Crimea on March 16, 2014. The European bloc and NATO, including Turkey, claimed that this election was unlawful and invalid and took it to the United Nations Security Council. However, The European bloc and NATO, including Turkey, claimed that this election was unlawful and invalid and submitted it to the United Nations Security Council. However, as a result of Russia's "refusal" to discuss the issue on Crimea and China's "abstention" vote in the 15-member UNSC, no decision has been taken in the UNSC¹. Turkey, on the other hand, issued a statement immediately after the referendum, stressing the rights and security of Tatars living in Crimea and calling for security and calm in Ukraine and especially in Crimea. He reiterated that he would not recognise any status in the region as a result of the referendum². The main problem that needs to be addressed geopolitically is that while the continental shelf issue has changed in favour of Russia, Turkey has evolved into a situation that turns against the countries bordering the Black Sea and especially against NATO. As can be understood from the mutual agreements signed between the two countries after the recognition of Abkhazia's independence by Russia, the control of Abkhazia's maritime defence and security of these seas was left to the Russian side. (Article 3) Within the maritime areas covered by the sovereignty of the Republic of Abkhazia, it was decided that Russian warships would be conducted unhindered in accordance with the rules agreed with Abkhazia in order to carry out military exercises planned for support purposes and to carry out normal activities at sea (Article 10)³. As a result of this proximity Russia has established with Abkhazia, it is clear that it has a sphere of influence in

¹ "Yes" to Russia in Crimean referendum. March 16, 2014 [Electronic Resource] // URL: https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2014/03/140316_kirim_sonuc (Accessed: 02.12.2019).

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. Official Page. "No: 86, 17 March 2014, Press Release Regarding the Referendum held in Crimea" [Electronic Resource] // URL: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_86_17-march-2014_-press-release-regarding-the-referendum-held-in-crimea.en.mfa (Accessed: 01.12.2019).

³ President of Abkhazia. Official Page. Law of the Republic of Abkhazia "On Ratification of the Agreement between the Republic of Abkhazia and the Russian Federation on Joint Efforts in the Protection of the State Border of the Republic of Abkhazia" . [Electronic Resource] // URL: <http://presidentofabkhazia.org/upload/iblock/8fa/z16.pdf> (Accessed: 22.11.2019).

the maritime areas of the Black Sea — apart from its previous coastline — starting from Crimea and continuing to the border with Georgia as a result of its political and military moves. What is wrong with Turkey is that by not recognizing the Declaration of independence of Abkhazia, which does not belong to Georgia under any circumstances, Russia will be the only international power to have a say in Abkhazia. After almost 100 years in which no state has managed to become a military and political determinant in the Black Sea, these developments in the region prove that Russia is now in a position to dominate the region more. Today, with the acquisition of Crimea, Russia seems to have completely taken control of the entrances and exits in the Azov Sea¹. Although the Crimean Peninsula and Russia did not have any land access by land, a bridge was built over the Kerch Strait very quickly and Road Transport was established. But as of today, Russia's only connection to the Crimean Peninsula is this bridge. Geographically Crimea in the hands of Russia foreign policy statements flatly rejected by Turkey because it is this new conjuncture, although this situation is partially, though not completely ignored, it would not be wrong to state that accepted or ignored².

The importance of the Black Sea in energy geopolitics is undeniable for both Europe and Turkey. As it is known, Turkey, which is on the transit route of natural gas marketed both to Turkey and to the world by Azerbaijan, Iran and Russia, is a strategic country. Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that Turkey is merely a bridge country in the transit of natural gas pipelines because it is among the most important customers of natural gas transferred via these pipelines. Only Russia exports natural gas to Turkey through 3 main pipelines. These are the two pipeline routes that need to be emphasized; The first one is the so-called Akım Blue Stream ve pipeline and construction works started on December 15, 1997 within the framework of an agreement signed between Turkish company BOTAŞ and Russian company Gazexport. It was officially opened on November 17, 2005 and put into service. Blue Stream pipeline starts from Samsun province in the territory of Turkey continues thence westerly direction until Istanbul and Thrace. Another is called “Turkish Stream” and it was decided to build on October 10, 2016. According to the agreement signed between Turkey and Russia; It was designed as a submarine gas pipeline in the Black Sea and was announced on January 8, 2020³. Although these natural gas pipelines do not pass through the Crimea, the position of Crimea is very important especially for the security and supervision of the second line called “*Turkish Stream*”. Turkey has become a transit point for most of the natural gas delivered to Europe through planned and still active natural gas pipelines, both by land and by regional sea areas. Thanks to this transmission network of gas being transferred from Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia not only meets Turkey's needs but also creates a conjuncture in which Turkey can use its geographical position in terms of energy geopolitics. The fact that Turkey has such an important political and economic surplus in terms of energy geopolitic may turn into political arguments that it can use, especially in some problems between Europe and Turkey. Actually, the main issue that bothers European states is Russia's dominance over gas in the energy market. The fact that gas will be delivered to Europe via Turkey -as it is a more secure and stable

¹ Sophia Petriashvili. “*The shift of dominance in the Black Sea*” August 26, 2019. [Electronic Resource] // URL: https://neweasterneurope.eu/2019/08/26/the-shift-of-dominance-in-the-black-sea/?fbclid=IwAR3ZJ0OHK1e7ACR9y0wGI5GKrwjuuWUy0TIG6a6mOuFjmEP-xbCWHuf_88A (Accessed: 28.11.2019).

² Elif Sudagezer. “*Crimea-Turkey ferry service resumes in December*” November 22, 2019. [Electronic Resource] // URL: <https://tr.sputniknews.com/columnists/201911221040678693-kirim-turkiye-feribot-seferleri-aralik-ayinda-yeniden-basliyor/> (Accessed: 02.12.2019).

³ “*Opening date of Turkish Stream announced*” December 6, 2019. [Electronic Resource] // URL: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2019/gundem/turkakimin-acilis-tarihi-aciklandi-5494367/> (Accessed: 07.12.2019).

country compared to other countries in the region — although it inspires confidence in the gas suppliers and suppliers, the fact that the imported gas will come from Russia is pushing Europe to urgently seek other sources. If we make an assessment about gas supply security and stability for Turkey; Due to the natural-gas dispute between the Russian Federation and Ukraine imported gas from the “West Pipeline” to Turkey can be cut from time to time, especially in the winter months. This situation is very risky for Turkey’s energy supply security problems and gives rise to sudden changes in the economic parameters. Especially when the pipeline to be built to supply gas to Turkey via the Turkish Stream gas pipeline is put into operation, this risky environment, which is available at any time due to the route of the Western Line, will be largely neutralized¹. The new gas and oil deposits concentrated around the island of Cyprus are important for Europe’s response to the energy problem and for the world oil and gas market. Turkey is the country with the longest coastline in the Eastern Mediterranean. By virtue of the 1959 Zurich and 1960 London treaties, the island of Cyprus has a guarantor right under international law. Turkey participated in the conference on maritime uses in 1958 in Geneva and signed the UN Convention on the law of the Sea. However, he did not sign the UN Convention on the law of the Sea, which was drafted in 1982. Turkey, like all landlocked countries, has completed its work on the maritime continental shelf, the adjacent region and the “*Exclusive Economic Zone*”. There is no need for Turkey to give any notice to the world regarding the continental shelf issue. However, the “*Exclusive Economic Zone* “ is a different matter and Turkey needs to take a decision on this issue and declare it to the world. For this reason, Turkey has declared the distance of the continental shelf in the Mediterranean and Black Sea as 12 nautical miles and the distance of the continental shelf in the Aegean Sea as 6 nautical miles. In 1986, the Exclusive Economic Zone for the Black Sea was declared as 200 miles. However, an Exclusive Economic Zone has not been declared for the Mediterranean. The most important point to know here; As stated explicitly in the 1982 UN Maritime Law Convention, “The relevant countries negotiate and agree on an equitable basis” and if the declaration of the Exclusive Economic Zone conflicts due to the presence of reciprocal or contiguous countries, the countries concerned may discuss and decide between themselves. As a result of the final agreement between two or more Contracting States, the Economic Area can be determined. Turkey is the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus went to the mutual agreement of the two states and activities have accelerated the search for hydrocarbon deposits in their marine areas. In accordance with the final agreement between two or more states parties, it may designate an Exclusive Economic Zone. Turkey, on the other hand, has reached a mutual agreement with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the two sides have accelerated the exploration of hydrocarbon deposits in their regions. On the other hand, the distance between countries less than 400 nautical miles of marine areas in the eastern Mediterranean, sharing it will lead to problems in Israel, Greek Cypriot Administration, Egypt and other states which are included in this group by establishing a consortium among themselves through negotiations within the framework of their try to shape their own interests in the maritime field. The energy ministers of Egypt, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Palestine, and the Greek Cypriot administration met and held a meeting in Cairo on January 14, 2018, with the European Union Commission and the World Bank also attending the meeting. At the meeting, they decided to create an Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum (EMGF) in order to provide close cooperation on the operation of hydrocarbon deposits. Turkey, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Libya, Syria and Lebanon appear to have formed

¹ Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Turkey. Official Page “*Natural Gas Pipelines and Projects*” [Electronic Resource] // URL: <https://www.enerji.gov.tr/tr-TR/Sayfalar/Dogal-Gaz-Boru-Hatlari-ve-Projeleri> (Accessed: 07.12.2019).

another group. Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus continue to cooperate in this area, in addition to the recently signed agreement between Turkey and Libya on the determination of maritime borders, and political balances in the Eastern Mediterranean have begun to gradually form¹. However, not only the Mediterranean coastal states but also the European Union have accelerated the exploration of gas and oil, which it believes can be sufficient for it through bilateral agreements. US companies Noble and ExxonMobil, as well as Italian company ENI and French company TOTAL, are already operating in the region under their agreements with the government of Southern Cyprus. With all these agreements, they try to exclude Turkey and declare it an Exclusive Economic Zone and license the hydrocarbon deposits that have been identified in the region. [2, pp. 222–223] The “Eastmed” pipeline project aims to deliver gas from the Eastern Mediterranean region to Europe via Southern Cyprus, Crete, Greece and then Italy. If the route of the pipeline is to be considered, it is not to pass through Turkey or within the Turkish maritime borders in any way. The line will be approximately 2000 km long and 3.3 km deep, although it is considered as an alternative to Russian gas in terms of cost and safety, it does not appear to be an efficient project for today. Western states try to ignore Turkey’s interests in Cyprus and try to discourage Turkey from seeking gas and oil in the Eastern Mediterranean with threats of economic and political sanctions over this issue. Turkey, on the other hand, is continuing its underwater hydrocarbon exploration activities with two drilling ships in spite of all these threats. At this point, the European Union has started to discuss some of the sanctions clauses it intends to dictate to Turkey. Travel bans and asset freezes for Turkish army and drillship captains, those who participate in drilling and provide financial, technical or logistical support to the work, other than those responsible, and other persons and entities connected with them will be included in the sanctions. Moreover, it is understood that issues such as a ban on funding to all persons and entities covered by sanctions and a halt to the “Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement” negotiations between Turkey and the EU and suspending high-level contacts with Turkey are on the agenda². As can be understood from these attitudes of Europe and the world, the fact that Turkey will have its own energy resources will have a great strategic impact. The fact that the gas that will be transported to Europe through this project will be an alternative to the gas supplied by Russia is one of the most important factors that motivates Europe in this regard. With LNG supplied from states in the Western Mediterranean, Europe’s gas needs are met by close to 25%. If an agreement is reached with Turkey and it can ensure energy security, it will be able to transport liquefied gas (LNG) through pipelines to Europe at rates that are cheaper and more efficient. In the event of such a situation, Russia’s gas hegemony over Europe and Turkey would be broken [3, p. 85].

The energy-policy equation will become more challenging every day when the demand for energy increases year by year and the dependence of Turkey and the European Union countries on this resource is considered. As we mentioned at the beginning of the article, Turkey has become a state that has started to need a lot of oil and even more gas, especially after the 2000s. Turkey has become an increasingly important and powerful regional player in the past 10 years, with the goal of becoming one of the top ten major economies in the world. With an annual growth rate of 5.5% in the period 2002–2018, Turkey is 13th in the world as of the end of 2018. It has become the country with the largest economy. Turkey in order to achieve these goals, the

¹ “Eastern Mediterranean: How Does the Turkey-Libya Agreement Affect Balances in the Region?” December 10, 2019 [Electronic Resource] // URL: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-50682215> (Accessed: 10.12.2019).

² “EU: Turkey in the Framework of the Eastern Mediterranean Sanctions Because of Drilling Have Been Set” November 11, 2019. [Electronic Resource] // URL: <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-50378376> (Accessed: 07.12.2019).

United Nations International Energy Agency, International Energy Forum, International Renewable Energy Agency, International Atomic Energy Agency, G20, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Asia Cooperation Dialogue, ASEAN, the African Union, the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Gulf Cooperation Council, NATO, OSCE, OECD, the Developing Eight Countries (D-8), World Trade Organization, the World Energy Council, World Petroleum Council, The European Centre for Global Energy and Nuclear Research such as policy-oriented organizations in the work/by active participation in meetings and to follow the studies evaluated and strives to take part in decision making of these organizations¹. Even if it differs according to the years, especially after the 2000s, both the economic growth of Turkey and the intensity of natural gas demand in all sectors within the country due to this trend gained speed and the increase in gas imports was observed to a large extent. Today, although Turkey imports gas at different rates, Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran maintain their place among the most important gas-supplying countries. Turkey generally supplies the gas it receives from Russia through pipelines (Table 1).

Table 1

Turkey's imported gas supply routes classified by type of gas [9, p. 10]

Years	By Pipeline Gas		By LNG		TOTAL
	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity
2013	39.419,44	87,08	5.849,54	12,92	45.268,98
2014	41.981,41	85,22	7.280,87	14,78	49.262,28
2015	40.778,11	84,21	7.648,96	15,79	48.427,08
2016	38.724,48	83,54	7.627,68	16,46	46.352,17
2017	44.484,67	80,52	10.765,28	19,48	55.249,95
2018	39.032,13	77,51	11.328,45	22,49	50.360,58

Looking at 2018 data (Table 2), about 46.95% of the gas imported was purchased from Russia. Especially after 2007, thanks to Azerbaijan's gas supply to Turkey and then the gas purchased from Iran, Russia's share of the total imports could be drawn to the rate indicated in the latest chart.

Turkey has in terms of being able to minimize the risky situation by expanding the range of their energy supplier countries in order to enhance the flexibility of supply and security of supply, from Algeria since 1994 under a signed purchase agreement in 1988, under the terms of a purchase agreement signed in 1995, started to buy LNG from Nigeria since 1999. In general, the rates of gas imported by Turkey vary according to months during the year. These gas usage rates, which are on a rising trend in the fall and winter months, are declining in the spring and at irregular and lowest levels in the summer months (Fig. 1). Excluding the exchange rate shock and economic contraction experienced by Turkey in 2018 and 2019, the main factor in the fact that the gas consumed by Turkey varies greatly over the months is due to the increase in the rate of use of gas in homes during the cold seasons.

¹ Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Turkey. Official Page "We direct our energy policy with an effective diplomacy, which is a prerequisite for the achievement of the 2023 targets set for the 100th anniversary of our Republic" [Electronic Resource] // URL: <https://www.enerji.gov.tr/tr-TR/Sayfalar/Enerji-Diplomasi> (Accessed: 07.12.2019).

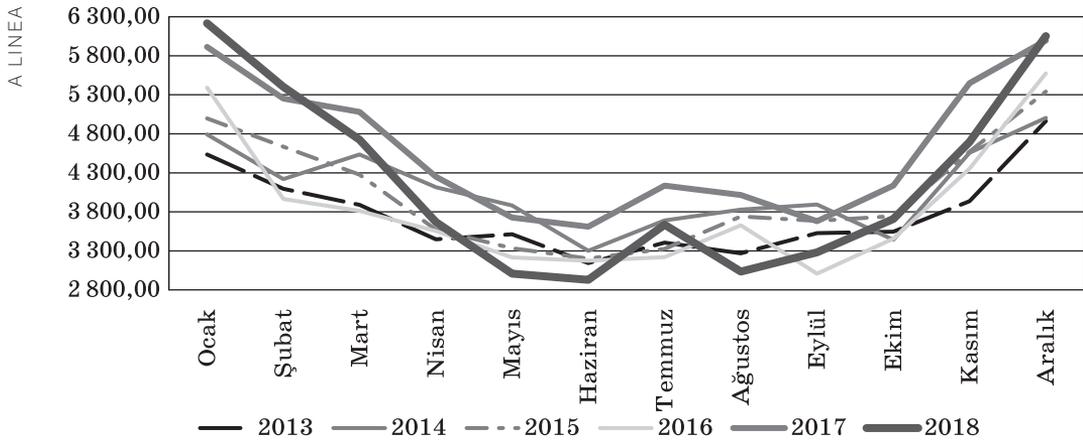


Fig. 1. Comparison of Monthly Import Quantities for 2013–2018 (Million Sm³) [9, p. 13]

Turkey is a country that imports gas completely and must have regular and safe energy. The political turmoil in international relations directly affects Turkey due to its sensitivity to energy. In this context, in particular, the natural gas pipelines that Russia continues to build and have been finished have a very important place. As can be seen from the data, Turkey still needs energy despite all the energy diversification. Therefore, the security of gas pipelines constructed in the Black Sea; Political-economic relations with Russia; Black Sea security and military issues Turkey-Russia relations are the most important highlights in terms of the work area. Especially in 2015, Turkey’s agenda to reduce air attack that took place between Turkey and Russia occupy the most basic questions; What was the attitude of Russia in natural gas shipment. Contrary to popular belief, the main factor determining relations with Russia rather than military issues is energy geopolitics for Turkey. When we approach the issue for Russia, the importance of these gas pipelines in the Black Sea; The fact that after the Crimean issue, the US and the EU have overcome anti-Russian sanctions with minimal damage is almost the only instrument. Both regular and emergency needs, which leads to both the European Union and Turkey’s natural gas to the debate on the implementation or the weight of sanctions against Russia will be performed and differences of opinion on this issue.

When the volume of trade between Turkey and Russia is analyzed, it will be seen that between 2007 and 2015, Russia was among the 10 countries with which Turkey exports the most (Table 3), and this situation changed after the aircraft downing crisis that occurred in 2015. In the period from 2015 to 2018, although the political-economic relations between Turkey and Russia are stable and rapidly trend of improvement in, there is no major increase in the export rates to Russia. In 2017, Turkey’s exports to Russia amounted to \$ 2.74 billion, while Russia’s exports to Turkey amounted to \$ 19.51 billion. Although Turkey exports more kinds of products to Russia, the most important export product of Russia is gas. In Turkey, the proportion of oil and natural gas in the annual import rate is very high due to very little production of this natural resource¹. Therefore, Turkey’s urgent need for gas and oil is the main reason for the imbalance in Russian-Turkish trade rates.

¹ Turkey Exporters Council. Official Page. *Country Information Note “Russia”* [Electronic Resource] / URL: https://www.tim.org.tr/files/downloads/ihracat/Ulke_Masalari/ulke_bilgi_notu/Rusya%20C3%9C%20Bilgi%20Notu.pdf (Accessed: 07.12.2019).

Table 3

Imports of Natural Gas for the Years 2008–2018 (Million Sm3) [9, p. 8]

Countries	Russia		Iran		Azerbaijan		Algeria		Nigeria		Others*		Total	Change from the previous year, %
	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity	Rate(%)	Quantity	Rate, %	Quantity	
2008	23.159	62,01	4.113	11,01	4.580	12,26	4.148	11,11	1.017	2,72	333	0,89	37.350	4,21
2009	19.473	54,31	5.252	14,65	4.960	13,83	4.487	12,51	903	2,52	781	2,18	35.856	-4
2010	17.576	46,21	7.765	20,41	4.521	11,89	3.906	10,27	1.189	3,13	3.079	8,09	38.036	6,08
2011	25.406	57,91	8.190	18,67	3.806	8,67	4.156	9,47	1.248	2,84	1.069	2,44	43.874	15,35
2012	26.491	57,69	8.215	17,89	3.354	7,3	4.076	8,88	1.322	2,88	2.464	5,37	45.922	4,67
2013	26.212	57,9	8.730	19,28	4.245	9,38	3.917	8,65	1.274	2,81	892	1,97	45.269	-1,42
2014	26.975	54,76	8.932	18,13	6.074	12,33	4.179	8,48	1.414	2,87	1.689	3,43	49.262	8,82
2015	26.783	55,31	7.826	16,16	6.169	12,74	3.916	8,09	1.240	2,56	2.493	5,15	48.427	-1,7
2016	24.540	52,94	7.705	16,62	6.480	13,98	4.284	9,24	1.220	2,63	2.124	4,58	46.352	-4,28
2017	28.690	51,93	9.251	16,74	6.544	11,85	4.617	8,36	1.344	2,43	4.804	8,7	55.250	19,2
2018	23.642	46,95	7.863	15,61	7.527	14,95	4.521	8,98	1.668	3,31	5.140	10,21	50.361	-8,85

Table 4

Turkey's most exporting countries since 2007¹

S r a	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany	Germany
2	UK	UK	France	UK	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq	Iraq	UK	UK	UK	UK
3	Italy	UAE	UK	Italy	UK	Iran	UK	UK	Iraq	Iraq	UAE	Italy
4	France	Italy	Italy	France	Italy	UK	Russia	Italy	Italy	Italy	Iraq	Iraq
5	Russia	France	Irak	Iraq	France	UAE	Italy	France	US	US	US	US
6	Spain	Russia	Switzer-land	Russia	Russia	Russia	France	US	France	France	Italy	Spain
7	US	US	US	US	US	Italy	US	Russia	Switzer-land	UAE	France	France
8	Romania	Spain	Russia	Spain	Spain	France	UAE	Spain	Spain	Spain	Spain	Nether-lands
9	UAE	Romania	UAE	UAE	UAE	US	Spain	UAE	UAE	Iran	Nether-lands	Belgium
10	Nether-lands	Iraq	Spain	Iran	Iran	Spain	Iran	Iran	Iran	Nether-lands	srael	Israel

¹ Turkey Exporters Assembly, Economic Research Branch, Official Page. "Analysis Of The Products And Target Markets For Which Turkey Has Competitive Advantage Among The 1000 Most Imported Products In The World" [Electronic Resource] // URL: https://tim.org.tr/files/downloads/Raporlar/RCA1000_Raporu.pdf pp. 34 (Accessed: 07.12.2019).

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