

Original article

Three Seas Initiative capabilities in terms of diversification of natural gas supply versus Russian Federation foreign policy – a geopolitical approach

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to determine potential strategic directions of development of the Three Seas initiative so as to ensure that it becomes an effective geopolitical system capable of the diversification of current natural gas sourcing towards non-Russian sources. The Russian Federation bases its geostrategic approach to foreign policy on controlling geopolitical pivots, and endeavors to regain lost influence spheres due to the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a monopolist in terms of natural gas supply to Central-East European countries, the Russian Federation has strengthened its position by having reach a set of geostrategic goals within the years of 2008-2018. The threat of using natural gas supply shortage as an instrument of foreign policy is one of the biggest challenge for Central-East European countries. The Three Seas Initiative is a popular international policy concept in Central-East Europe. However, its capabilities in terms of diversification of natural gas supply are limited because of the control of geopolitical pivots by the Russian Federation. The article indicates a set of challenges for diverting current natural gas supply, and proposes a set of strategic directions for developing the Three Seas Initiative.

KEYWORDS

Three Seas Initiative, Russian Federation, geopolitics, diversification, natural gas supply



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Introduction

The orientation of foreign policy of the Russian Federation within the period of years 2008-2018 indicates an endeavor to regain spheres of influence lost due to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Russian Federation is an active actor on the international arena, capable of achieving its geostrategic goals by legitimate or illegitimate use of force. It is worth pointing out that during the analyzed period the Russian Federation has stabilized its position as the main military power in the Europe. The region of Central-East Europe, as one of lost spheres

of influence, has become an area of especially increased tension in relations between Russian Federation and countries of the region.

In terms of the manner of realization by the Russian Federation with regard to its foreign policy, there is the tendency to use force in order to assure the realization of national interests. Because of the necessity to implement long-term, processual, large-scale analysis, the author decided to use geopolitics as one of the functioning paradigm of the realistic theories. The hypothesis of the article is: the Russian Federation as a fuel exporter endeavors to take control over geopolitical pivots for the purpose of cutting off central-eastern European countries from opportunities to diversify fuel-sources. In this article, the research issue concerns the supply of natural gas. The aim of the article is to determine best strategic directions for developing the Three Seas Initiative into an effective geopolitical system capable of diversifying natural gas supply toward non-Russian sources.

The Russian Federation rests its economy especially upon exporting fossil fuels. Crude oil and natural gas are characterized by a significant share in Russian Gross Domestic Product. In the years of 2008-2017, the Russian Federation produced 5 979.8 billion cubic meters of natural gas [1]. The share of natural gas within the Russian Gross Domestic Product in years 2007-2016 has an average value of 3.04%, with minimum value of 1.71% (in 2010) and maximum value of 4.05% (2009) [2]. The European Union is one of the most significant markets for Russian economy. In 2017, Russia has a total share of about 40.32% of the entire European natural gas market [3]. There is no doubt that retaining control on gas resources, as well as well infrastructure and natural gas pipelines system are pillars of national interests of Russian Federation. The significant dependency between the Russian economy and the export of fuels emphasize the relevance of the fossil fuels international trade. Parallel to economic factors, the strategic importance of gas export is highlighted by use of gas supply as an instrument of foreign policy.

It is worth pointing out that the Russian Federation uses a shortage of fuels supply as an instrument of so called "energy blackmail". Despite the fact that every gas supply shortage negatively affects the Russian economy in financial terms, there are strategically useful outcomes in stressing countries previously belonging to the lost sphere of influence. Vulnerable to energy blackmailing are countries characterized by insufficient diversification of fuels supply from non-Russian sources, such as Belarus [4, p. 1], Estonia [5, p. 6], Latvia [6], Lithuania [7, p. 6], Poland [8, p. 1] or Ukraine [9, p. 3-5]. In referring to the research issue of the article, it is important to underline a lack of profitability in building subsequent pipelines such as Nord Stream II or Turkish Stream in terms of economy. However, the strategic importance of new pipeline systems derives from an opportunity to short fuel supply for a particular country without incurring unnecessary losses. In terms of orientation of Russian foreign policy, pipelines indicate the direction of Russian geostrategic expansion.

1. The Three Seas Initiative – geopolitical approach

The Trimarium is an area located at the land constriction of Eurasia, between the Adriatic Sea, Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. The distance between the Adriatic Sea (Triesto) and the Baltic Sea (Szczecin) is approximately 900 kilometers. The distance between the Baltic Sea (Gdańsk) and Black Sea (Odessa) is about 1250 kilometers, and between the Adriatic Sea (Shengjin) and the Black Sea (Burgas), the distance is slightly above 650 kilometers. Geographically, the

Trimarium area is diverse in terms of terrain. The main orographic barriers are Carpathian Mountains, narrowing the lowland passage on the east-west line. Moreover, it is a land gate connecting Europe with the rest of the Eurasian continent. Historically, numerous wars have taken place in the area. In relation to the contemporary situation of countries, the Trimarium consist of a set of medium-sized and small countries bordering the largest country in the world.

Geopolitically, the Trimarium is one of the most significant land areas in Eurasia as it connects Heartland with Rimland. The area separates the continental Eurasian mass from peninsular Europe and is the only natural land route from the interior of the continent to Western Europe. The northern part of Central-East Europe is a particularly important geostrategic region that has seen itself as the battleground for many hegemonic wars [10, p. 513-53]. In the thought of Halford Mackinder, the area is a westernized extension of the Heartland into eastern lands, thus it has been a space for clashes between land and sea powers [11, p. 66-71]. Karl Haushofer, basing on the previous research of Friedrich Ratzel, sees the contemporary and historic Trimarium area as a significant part of the *Kontinentalblock* concept [12, p. 119-20] in which the east border of it was and is the divide between the hegemonic regions of Germany and Russia. During the Cold War, the Trimarium area, after occupation, was a western part of the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union, as well as an area of potential war between Soviet Union and western countries. After the collapse of Soviet Union, the Trimarium became the homeland of post-soviet countries, characterized by western-style democratization of political systems and liberalization of economic systems. Currently, most countries of Trimarium are members of the European Union. Today's Trimarium countries also cooperate in regional organizations, such as the Three Seas Initiative.

Nowadays, the Three Seas Initiative is one of the most popular concepts of international policy in the region of Central-Eastern Europe. Member states of the Three Seas Initiative include Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia [13]. Relating to research problem of this article, the Three Seas Initiative intends to develop an intraregional system of pipelines connecting the Baltic States, Austria with Bulgaria and Greece with Italy. A project begun by Croatia and Poland, the Three Seas Initiative has seen success especially because of common interest in the diversification of fuels. The first summit was held in Dubrovnik in 2016. The Joint Statement on the Three Seas Initiative ending the first summit highlighted the necessity of cooperation in terms of energy [14]. The Warsaw Summit in 2017 hosted the representatives of twelve countries. During the meeting, problems related to energy infrastructure were discussed [15]. The third summit was launched in Bucharest in 2018. The set of proposed projects was divided into three categories: energy, digital transformation and transportation [16].

Within the energy category, numerous propositions for pipeline construction were presented. In the Baltic region, the proposed pipeline is intended to connect Lithuania and Poland. Referring to the Black Sea, the planned infrastructure project will connect Romania and Austria by a gas pipeline through Bulgaria and Hungary. The project of the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline intends to connect Greece and Italy via Albania, with interconnectors between Greece and Bulgaria, as well as between Bulgaria and Serbia. One of the most important projects that was confirmed is the construction of a liquefied natural gas terminal on Croatia's Krk Island, first proposed as long ago as 2013 and the subject of the first summit. The total funding drawn from European Union funds is more than 155€ billion [16].

2. Russian Federation foreign policy in 2008-2018 – a geostrategic approach

The set of energy infrastructure projects in the Trimarium area might be understood as the reaction of central-eastern European countries to Russian Federation activity as monopolist in terms of supply of fuels. Since 2000, an increase of share of fuel export within the Russian economy has been recorded. The Russian Federation within the period of years 2000-2018 has reached its geostrategic goals, strengthening its position as a continental power. In terms of the research aspect of this work, critical are its activities directed towards countries in the Trimarium region to maintain the position of monopolist of fuels supply, and hence to hold geopolitical power.

Referring to Russian Federation's need for gaining and keeping control over areas important in terms of diversification of gas supply, the Caucasus region is one of the most important targets. Separating Black Sea from Caspian Sea, the Caucasus is one of a few possible diversification paths connecting Central Asia and Europe. Significantly, the European Union tried to create such possibilities by launching the Eastern Partnership. The initiative targeting Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, was presented to the European Council in June 2008 [17]. The Eastern Partnership had the intent of enhancing energetic security and regional free trade [18]. Russian Federation reaction was to invade Georgia in August, 2008 under the pretext of protecting Russian citizens. The Russo-Georgian war lasted only five days, but enabled it to take control over strategic lands. South Ossetia as annexed by Russia brought Russian forces closer to the most important Caucasian pipelines running from Azerbaijan to Georgia [19, p. 15]. Furthermore, by seizing Abkhazia, the Russian Federation shortened the Georgian Black Sea coastline by more than 60%. Nowadays, without the coastline of Abkhazia, Georgia has a coastline of about 100 kilometers, thus the Russian Black Sea Navy is able to control the Georgian Black Sea coast. Because only the partnership between Azerbaijan and Georgia creates the opportunity for an energy corridor from Central Asia to Central-East Europe, Russia's strong influence within the Caucasian countries disallows realization of European geostrategic plans. In addition, because of the fact that the Russian Federation plays the role of guarantor of the national security of Armenia, there is possibility to destabilize Azerbaijan by increase antagonisms based upon the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh area [20, p. 4].

In terms of empowerment of the Russian Federation position in Central-East Europe, seizure of oil-rich areas is one of the top priorities, as is maintaining a dominant role within the Black Sea basin. The closest oil deposits in Central-East Europe to Russian Federation are located in Donetsk Oblast and Luhansk Oblast. In order to control the Black Sea basin, there is a need to create capabilities for reaching the Bosphorus Strait in the shortest possible time. Before the occupation of Crimean Peninsula, Russian naval base on the Black Sea basin located in Krasnodar Krai did not allow Maritime Forces to swiftly block the Bosphorus Strait. Hence, the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula was a geopolitical need for the Russian Federation in regard to controlling the Black Sea [21]. The Crimean Peninsula seizure was also an effective way of destabilizing Ukraine, especially its eastern regions. By supporting separatist movements, Russian Federation brought the Donetsk Oblast and Luhansk Oblast to secession [22, p. 6-11]. The warfare in Eastern Ukraine has completely paralyzed local industry, including the natural gas and crude oil industry, which further weakened Ukraine's economy and precluded fuel supply of non-Russian sources. Relating to the geostrategic plan of regaining lost

influence within the region of Central-East Europe, the seizure of Ukrainian lands is a means of destabilizing bordering countries.

Another sphere of Russian influence lies in Central Asia. The region is abundant in crude oil and natural gas. However, the increasing impact of China on Central Asia countries is constantly undermining the Russian position. In addition, the potential of Iran to play the role of a regional power is also a significant concern in Russian foreign policy. The Russian Federation has been exploiting every occasion to tighten relations with Iran after the set of sanctions was imposed by western countries. The crude oil trade ban has forced Iran to seek exportation opportunities in non-western markets. Hence, the Russian Federation has begun importing Iranian oil. This economically irrational decision was taken up on the basis of the calculation of strategic benefits related to maintaining control on fuel supply. The Iran-Russia relations are also relying on the common interest of balancing the impact of China within the region of central Asia [23, p. 31]. The strategic Iranian-Russian alliance is reinforced by joint military operations during the Civil War in Syria [24, p. 8-14].

Cooperation with Turkey during the Civil War in Syria has also allowed Russian Federation to establish a strategic alliance. Significantly, in the period of the development of the Islamic State of Iraqi and Sham, Turkey imported crude oil from war-affected areas, white-washed it and exported this to Europe [25, p. 12-3]. It is highly possible that the import was provided by terrorist groups. After stepping in following the defeat of the Islamic State of Iraqi and Sham, the Russian Federation involved Turkey in an alliance. It is worth noting that Turkey has demonstrated an independence in this relationship by shooting down a Russian fighter [26, p. 10-2]. This incident, ironically, has had positive impact on Turkey-Russia relations and showed Turkey to be potentially a powerful ally. The strong partnership was not undermined even after the Russian Ambassador to Turkey was assassinated [27]. Parallel to closing the most stable land corridor for diversification opportunities, by the strong partnership with Turkey, Russia has safeguarded the south bank of Black Sea and enhanced its capabilities to close the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits by its navy. In terms of military power, partnership with the country disposing the second biggest army in North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a visible sign of solidarity problems within the North Atlantic Pact.

Russian involvement in the Civil War in Syria has fixed the image of Russian Federation as reliable military ally [28, p. 20-30]. Parallel to stabilization of position of dominant power in the Middle-East region, the Russian Federation assured the safety of its naval base in Tartus [29, p. 31]. In terms of the research problem of this article, the maritime forces stationing in Syria are essential for blocking the Dardanelles strait and preventing any hostile navy from interfering in the Black Sea basin. In addition, partnership with Syria allows the Russian Federation to influence one possible way of diversification of fuel supply from the Middle East, both by land and by the sea. The Syrian coastline is 193 kilometers long and for all intents and purposes is Russian territory. Moreover, Russian influence in Lebanon has been growing recently [30]. Hence, in the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea, the Russian presence is broadening. Despite the fact that Israel remains the most stable ally of United States of America, its capabilities to play the role of country importing fuels from other Middle-East countries and exporting them by sea terminals are limited, especially by its antagonisms with almost every country in the Middle East region.

The Russian Federation has a strategic partnership with Japan. As one of the bigger importers of Russian natural gas, Japan remains an important economic partner. On the canvass

of developing the North Korean nuclear program, recently there has been an increase of tensions in relations between South Korea, China, Japan and United States in the East Asia region. Because of its abundant base of rare-earth metals [31, p. 3], North Korea is a strategic economic partner of China. South Korea is a powerful ally of United States. Hence, the Russian Federation will not probably endeavor to establish a sphere of influence on the Korean Peninsula because of the existing relations of both Koreas with two most powerful countries on the world. In addition, the Chinese fuel market is one of the biggest on the world, especially because of the high index of energy consumption of Chinese industry. This creates an potential opportunity to export fuels, especially in situation of losses caused by intentional fuels supply shortage in European markets, but nowadays there are numerous political obstacle on the way to increasing the share of gas supply from Russian sources [32, p. 49-53].

3. Challenges for Three Seas Initiative as a geopolitical system

In the analyzed period of years 2008-2018, the Russian Federation has broadened and stabilized its spheres of influence in Ukraine, Caucasus, Turkey, Syria and Iran. The geostrategic orientation of foreign policy of the Russian Federation indicates an endeavor to control geopolitical pivots. According to Zbigniew Brzezinski's theory of geopolitical pivots, countries such as Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, South Korea are playing important geostrategic roles because of their situation [33, p. 41]. In the years 2000-2018, the Russian Federation has effectively destabilized Ukraine (including seizure of the Crimea Peninsula and inclusion of Donetsk Oblast and Luhansk Oblast into its sphere of influence), used Nagorno-Karabakh as an instrument of destabilization in Azerbaijan, as well as formed strategic alliances with Iran and Turkey. The only one remaining geopolitical pivot – South Korea – is currently out of Russian capabilities because of the risk of confrontation with China or the United States of America. However, including four geopolitical pivots into their area of influence has given the Russian Federation capabilities to enforce its position of fuel supply monopolist for the countries of Central-Eastern Europe. The Three Seas Initiative in fulfilling the notion of the Trimarium, is an attempted geopolitical counter to Russian influence. However, its geopolitical dimension has not been fully implemented so far. Still, in the theory of geopolitics, the Three Seas Initiative is important in maintaining the independence of the central-eastern European area.

As of February 2019, the Three Seas Initiative in terms of geopolitics has become capable of playing the role of "Cordon Sanitaire" [34, s. 156] rather than having impact on international relations as an independent geopolitical block. Relating to research problem of this article, it is important to analyze the system of Russian gas pipelines, supplying the Europe, especially the Trimarium area.

The Nord Stream pipeline runs from Wyborg to Lubmin in Germany, evading the Baltic states, and Nord Stream II provides a strategic opportunity for Germany to play the role of gas hub and, also, in case of supply shortage, to provide gas storage facilities [35, p. 12-9]. Despite lack of economic rationality in investing in a second, parallel gas pipeline, the strategic benefit is a strong partnership with the leading European Union country. The Northern Lights and Yamal gas pipelines are one of the most significant gas infrastructure for the economic security of the Trimarium and due to their capacity are also one of the strongest instruments of energy blackmail. In the Ukraine, the Soyuz and Brotherhood System pipelines are connected with

the Yamal pipeline. The Blue Stream pipeline creates a loop around the Black Sea, strengthening the position of Turkey as strategic partner, and is also connected through the Black Sea by Turkish Stream. Although the Gas-West pipeline starts from Eastern Ukraine and head towards Turkey via Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria, this stream cannot be considered an instrument of diversification because it is under the Russian sphere of influence. Among the important infrastructure project in the Trimarium area is the Easting gas pipeline project, which would connect a gas hub located in the European part of Turkish territory with Slovakia by way of Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary [36]. However, it does not creates any opportunity for diversification the supply of fuels, because of the fact that the Russian Federation can cut the supply for Easting without creating a shortage of supply for Turkey. Also the uncompleted Trans-Adriatic gas pipeline creates no capability for diversification of supply of natural gas.

In current geopolitical context, the Three Seas Initiative capabilities in terms of diversification of natural gas supply are insufficient. There is no doubt that development of gas pipelines within the twelve countries of Three Seas Initiative will create opportunities of balancing the supply of natural gas in case of supply shortage. The set of intraregional natural gas pipelines will also boost the integration of the gas market. However, in order to indicate the strategic directions of the territorial development of Three Seas Initiative, there is a need to refer to the Eurasian geopolitical position of Russian Federation, especially by using a geostrategic approach to assessing the foreign policy of Russian Federation.

4. Strategic directions of development of the Three Seas initiative as an effective geopolitical system

The geostrategic approach to analyzing the foreign policy of the Russian Federation indicates the complex problem of creating a geopolitical barrier separating the European Peninsula from the rest of Eurasia. The continental and maritime barrier of opportunities of fuel supply diversification are among most challenging threats to the economic security of European countries, especially for the Central-Eastern European region. The Russian Federation through its spheres of influence is a significant obstacle to diversifying the supply of fuels. The Russian Federation being a significant chunk of the north part of Eurasia is the biggest continental obstacle in terms of fuel supply diversification. In the Black Sea basin, the Russian Federation has supreme naval power, and controls strategically the most important points such as Crimean Peninsula and the Bosphorus Strait. The strategic alliance with Turkey safeguards the south coastline of Black Sea, increase the ability for the Russian federation to set a naval blockade on the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits and prevents efforts in terms of using the Turkish–Greek corridor to diversify through accessing Middle-East sources.

In the Middle East, Russian allies and influence spheres cover almost all the east coast of Mediterranean Sea except for Israel. Unfortunately, the hostility between Israel and its neighboring states most likely will prevent it from acting as a hub for fuel transference to Europe. Due to the international status of Suez Canal, there is a possibility of diversifying gas supply by use of Middle-East sources and a maritime route around the Arab Peninsula. However, economic calculations indicate that maritime transport of fuels is more expensive in terms of transportation costs than land pipes.

Despite the fact that Russian Federation and Iran, as regional powers in Central Asia, are cooperating in the international fuels trade, there are still natural gas deposits outside the

Russian influence. Nevertheless, within the region of Central Asia the main problem of fuel diversification lies in the lack of developed infrastructure. In addition, China, being the biggest investor in Central Asia is interested especially in importing fuels for its growing economy. Even if European countries invest in pipeline infrastructure in order to exploit sources from Central Asia outside of Russian influence, the only possible way of transference of product is via tanker – so hence, is not viable economically as the shortest way from South-East Asia and East Asia to Europe is through the Barents strait and Arctic Ocean, and again lies within the Russian sphere of influence.

Thus, the geostrategic capabilities of the geopolitical system of the Three Seas Initiative are currently limited, especially because of lack of membership of countries characterized by important geostrategic positioning, and because of Russia's advantageous geopolitical positioning. For example, within the basin of Baltic Sea, the existence of the Kaliningrad Oblast creates an opportunity for the Russian Federation to maintain a strong maritime presence within the Baltic. Indeed, without the coastline of the Kaliningrad Oblast, Russian naval forces could be easily blocked by mining the Bay of Finland. In order to ensure undisrupted realization of pipeline construction projects, there is a need to maintain prevalence in the basin of Baltic Sea, especially in terms of naval power. Thus, membership of Finland, Sweden and Denmark would be necessary in terms of geostrategy, especially relating to the possibility of closing the Danish Straits to prevent Russia's Northern Fleet from joining its Baltic fleet. To that end, inclusion of Germany and Norway is also justified in terms of possibility of blocking the North Fleet in the North Sea and of safeguarding the North Sea basin to exploit Norway crude oil deposits as an additional supply diversification opportunity.

Relating to Black Sea basin, currently, there is no possibility for diversifying the supply of fuels via this region. In this situation, the Three Seas Initiative should focus on developing interconnectors between member countries in order to disallow the Russian Federation of generating fuel shortages as forms of national control. The Three Seas Initiative should also seek opportunities for undermining the Russian-Turkish alliance and to involve Turkey in the Three Seas Initiative as the connector with Middle East countries. Furthermore, the Three Seas Initiative should expand to the other Balkan States to prevent the increase of Russian influence. In addition, the growing common energy market of Three Seas Initiative countries should encourage fuel companies to sign long-period contracts. Also, Greece membership should be considered in terms of building terminals allowing fuel supply from African sources, whether inclusion of Turkey will be possible or not. Access to Adriatic Sea creates an opportunity for diversification of fuels from Africa. Indeed, it should be underlined that in terms of economic calculation, African sources of diversification of fuels should be considered. Despite the fact that African states are not among most oil-rich countries, their geographic proximity allows to reduce the costs of transportation. The planned gas terminal on Krk Island will be located on the Croatian coast. Relating to diversification opportunity from North Africa, the Three Seas Initiative should include Italy as the peninsular country situated the closest to the Africa continent and also having long coastline exposure with the Adriatic Sea.

Conclusions

Three Seas Initiative is the leading political project aiming for realization of the Trimarium concept. However, the current capabilities of Three Seas Initiative are insufficient in terms

of diversification of natural gas supply. The Russian Federation in the period of 2008-2018 has reached many geostrategic goals, and has effectively realized its strategy of regaining lost influence over Central-East Europe. Currently (as of February, 2019), the Russian Federation has unquestioned geopolitical dominance in the Black Sea Basin and Caucasus Region. Due to its strategic partnership with Turkey, Syria and Iran, Russian Federation has stabilized its position in Middle East region. Despite increasing Chinese influence in the Central Asia region, there is a possibility of creating a land corridor for diversification of natural gas via Afghanistan and Pakistan and then by gas tankers to LNG terminals. However, because of the need for huge investments in building harbor infrastructure on the Pakistani coast and the current escalation of the Pakistan-India conflict, the capabilities of diversification by the possibly the only land route from Central Asia is limited. The Three Seas Initiative should, therefore focus on expanding partnership with the Scandinavian countries, as well as the Balkan countries. In order to create possibilities for diversification of natural gas supply from non-Russian sources, there is a need to invest in developing of drilling and tapping, as well as transfer infrastructure in North Africa. In addition, the Three Seas Initiative should involve in partnership Italy and Greece as countries that could enable low cost maritime transportation of LNG by gas tankers via Mediterranean Sea. The most important geostrategic challenges for the Three Seas Initiatives, however, are undermining the strategic Russian partnerships with Turkey and Iran. If the creation of land corridor to Middle East and Central Asia would be possible, cooperation with Turkey and Iran should increase the economic security of all of Central-Eastern European countries, bonded by the Three Seas Initiative.

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The author declared no conflict of interests.

Author contributions

The author contributed to the interpretation of results and writing of the paper. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical statement

The research complies with all national and international ethical requirements.

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Biographical note

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Potencjał Inicjatywy Trójmorza w zakresie dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu ziemnego versus polityka zagraniczna Federacji Rosyjskiej – podejście geopolityczne

STRESZCZENIE

Celem artykułu jest określenie strategicznych kierunków rozwoju Inicjatywy Trójmorza jako efektywnego systemu geopolitycznego, zdolnego do dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu ziemnego z nierosyjskich źródeł. Federacja Rosyjska opiera swoje podejście geostrategiczne w polityce zagranicznej na kontrolowaniu sworzni geopolitycznych. Federacja Rosyjska dąży do odzyskania kontroli nad utraconymi strefami wpływów w wyniku upadku Związku Radzieckiego. Jako monopolista w zakresie dostaw gazu ziemnego do Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, Federacja Rosyjska wzmocniła swoją pozycję przez osiągnięcie zespołu geostrategicznych celów w latach 2008-2018. Zagrożenie użycia podaży gazu ziemnego jako instrumentu polityki zagranicznej jest jednym z największych wyzwań dla Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej. Inicjatywa Trójmorza jest jedną z najpopularniejszych koncepcji polityki międzynarodowej w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej. Jednakże, jej potencjał w zakresie dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu ziemnego jest ograniczony z powodu przejmowania kontroli nad sworzniami geopolitycznymi przez Federację Rosyjską. Artykuł wskazuje zarówno zespół wyzwań dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu ziemnego, jak i strategiczne kierunki rozwoju Inicjatywy Trójmorza.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

Inicjatywa Trójmorza, Federacja Rosyjska, geopolityka, dywersyfikacja, dostawy gazu ziemnego

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