



# Bad external actors and good nuclear energy: Media discourse on energy supplies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia

Petr Kratochvíl<sup>a</sup>, Matúš Mišík<sup>b,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Institute of International Relations Prague, Czech Republic

<sup>b</sup> Comenius University in Bratislava, Department of Political Science, Slovakia

## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

Natural gas supply  
Energy security  
Nuclear energy  
Media discourse  
Russia  
Czech Republic  
Slovakia

## ABSTRACT

For Central and Eastern European countries, energy security has been one of the top political topics ever since the 2009 gas crisis. Although these countries have a shared interest in this issue, their preferences – especially those regarding the role of Russia as their main energy supplier – are not identical. This paper examines and juxtaposes the discourses on natural gas supply in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Utilizing a broadly constructivist perspective, the article explores the media discourses connected to energy supplies in these countries. Methodologically, the paper employs critical discourse analysis to examine this discourse. The paper argues that the media discourses in both countries underline the overall unreliability of the external environment and stress the necessity to rely on domestic energy sources. In the Czech case, such an environment also includes the EU, which translates into a critical stance towards renewable energy, viewed as being forced on country by the EU. In contrast, the Slovak discourse presents the EU as a suitable arena for energy cooperation. Both countries agree on the support for nuclear energy, which is considered to be a domestic – and therefore most reliable – energy source.

## 1. Introduction

In the 1990s, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) underwent a complex and painful economic transition from the Communist planned system to a free market, which profoundly transformed all sectors of their economies including energy policy. Most of these countries did not pay much attention to the political aspects of the energy sector, which adjusted to the new market conditions while keeping the supply structure almost unchanged. The one-directional natural gas transmission system that supplied CEE countries from Russia since the late 1960s (Högselius, 2012) was considered reliable thanks to its long-term problem-free functioning. Although the Baltic States experienced supply interruptions already at the very beginning of the 1990s (Grigas, 2013), this has only had a very limited impact on their energy policies, as well as the policies of other CEE countries, including those in the Visegrad Group (V4). Only the Czech Republic diversified its gas supplies (Binhack and Tichý, 2012) before the 2009 gas crisis.

This crisis, however, served as a ‘wake-up’ call for many countries of the CEE region (Lee, 2017). After the crisis, not only these countries, but also the EU’s institutions started to look for ways to improve energy

security and prevent another crisis from happening. This resulted in (among other things) diversification, further development of the internal energy market, and the creation of the Energy Union. In spite of all these measures, Gazprom is still the main gas supplier to the EU with more than a 40 percent-share of total imports in 2016 (Eurostat, 2019).

This paper examines media discourses on natural gas supplies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. While the material aspects (such as the disruption of supplies or specific energy-related business interests) may have played a role in the initial argument regarding the need for enhanced energy security, the answers to the questions regarding what this enhancement actually means and how energy security can be achieved are primarily dependent on the framing of energy policy, the national narratives on energy supply, and the rhetorical justification of the policy choices in the energy sector. In order to explore these issues, the paper employs critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine the media discourse on energy supplies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. This discourse creates an environment for presenting ideas, testing solution or excluding unsuitable options; as such it presents an important step in policy development. This paper studies four different time periods: three energy crises (2006, 2009, 2014) and the ensuing period of “mature framing”. The analysis is based on a unique textual corpus comprising of

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [kratochvil@iir.cz](mailto:kratochvil@iir.cz) (P. Kratochvíl), [matus.misik@uniba.sk](mailto:matus.misik@uniba.sk) (M. Mišík).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2019.111058>

Received 1 June 2019; Received in revised form 17 August 2019; Accepted 13 October 2019

Available online 31 October 2019

0301-4215/© 2019 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

393 newspaper articles published in leading Czech and Slovak dailies.

The following section briefly outlines energy policies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia with a special focus on the natural gas sector. The third section provides details on the research design, while the fourth part discusses the four periods chosen for the analysis. The fifth section examines the discourses in the two scrutinized countries. The sixth section discusses the results of our analyses, while the conclusion presents the findings and policy implications.

## 2. The development of Czech and Slovak energy policy

The Czech Republic and Slovakia spent most of the 20th century in a common state, which meant that many infrastructural systems – including the energy sector – were built as one. This has proven to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the fact that the existing infrastructure needed only limited upgrades enabled the two countries to quickly react to the gas crises (cf. Mišík and Nosko, 2017). On the other hand, the negative impact of transit and loop flows in electricity has, for the very same reason, been exported from the Czech Republic to Slovakia (Janda et al., 2017; Singh et al., 2016). After the so-called Velvet Divorce of 1993, the two republics embarked on different energy policy paths with the Czech Republic supporting investment in new energy supply interconnectors and Slovakia keeping its energy infrastructure essentially unchanged until the 2009 gas crisis. The latter relied on the long-term gas contract with Gazprom, while the Czechs signed a twenty-year contract with a Norwegian supplier at the end of 1990s (cf. Binhack and Tichý, 2012).

Slovakia's reliance on Russia as its only source of natural gas has proven to be the main issue behind the harsh impact of the 2009 crisis on the country. The absence of infrastructural connections beyond the Ukrainian part of the Brotherhood pipeline, which was cut off during the crisis (Lee, 2017), meant that Slovakia had no access to external gas supplies during the peak of the heating period in January 2009. The 2009 crisis was further exacerbated due to the technical nature of the country's underground storage system, which did not allow these reserves to be used. All of this led to energy security becoming the country's top priority in the following period (Mišík, 2019). The Government started to support initiatives aimed at improving the existing gas infrastructure, particularly developing reverse flow with the Czech Republic and Austria, and creating new interconnectors with Hungary and Poland.

Thanks to these upgrades, the Slovak gas sector achieved a good score during the stress tests organized by the European Commission (EC) in 2014. Energy security and security of supply have, however, remained high on the agenda, mostly thanks to the legacy of the 2009 crisis. The Slovak transmission system operator Eustream proposed a new pipeline – Eastring – meant to connect the Slovak transmission system with the gas hub that should be developed in Turkey after the completion of the TANAP and Turk stream pipelines (Eastring, 2019; Franza, 2015). This project should guarantee the utilization of the country's transmission system (the Slovak section of the Brotherhood pipeline) even after the termination of the transit through Ukraine.

Both Slovakia and the Czech Republic continue to develop their nuclear sectors, the latter also providing continuing support for electricity generation from coal<sup>1</sup> (Axelrod, 2004; Frantál and Malý, 2017; Jirůšek et al., 2015; Sivek et al., 2017). Although developed during the federal period at the very beginning of the 1990s, the alternative oil pipeline IKL (Ingolstadt–Kralupy–Litvínov) built by the Czech Republic was the first major diversification project in the CEE region (Černoch et al., 2012). This project predetermined the Czech Republic's different, more active (when compared to Slovakia, but also to other CEE countries) approach to energy security. In 1997, the country signed a

long-term contract with Norway on gas supplies, which – although expired in 2017 – ensured a high level of energy security (Jirůšek and Kuchyňková, 2018). Some authors go so far as to claim that “the security of oil and natural gas supplies ceased to be a relevant issue when the Czech Republic diversified its import portfolio and transit routes in 1996–1997” (Holzer and Mareš, 2020: 226). Moreover, the Gazelle pipeline was built at the beginning of 2010s to serve as both a transit for Russian gas from the Nord Stream pipeline to southern Germany and a connection to the domestic market. This enabled the Czech Republic to gradually improve its access to the German gas hubs, which nowadays play a decisive role in the country's natural gas supply.

The Czech transmission system is currently undergoing preparations for its connection to the Nord Stream II pipeline and a general redirection of transit (from east-west direction to west-east direction) through its territory (Rozhlas, 2019). Both countries are preparing for changes in the transit environment brought on by the Nord Stream II project and the expected termination of transit via Ukraine in a short- or mid-term perspective.<sup>2</sup> However, as the following section explains, this topic did not dominate the media discourse; rather, the main topic in the last examined period (2018–2019) was nuclear energy.

These differences in the energy area mirror the more general variations in the countries' bilateral relations with Russia.<sup>3</sup> Leonard and Popescu (2007) group EU member states into five different categories based on their relations with Russia; while Slovakia belongs among the ‘friendly pragmatists’ that prioritize business over criticizing Russia when it comes to human rights and similar areas, the Czech Republic is a ‘frosty pragmatist’ which has no problem expressing its negative position and continuing to conduct business. A more recent analysis claims that “Czech views of contemporary Russia are very contradictory, and ... the tensions are increasing” (Holzer and Mareš, 2020: 228). The different Slovak attitude can be illustrated with the doubts concerning EU sanctions against Russia “because of the economic damage they caused to [its] econom[y]” (Romanova, 2016: 784), an argument which is in line with the ‘friendly pragmatist’ logic.

## 3. Research design: exploring discourses and narratives of energy policy change

To explore the research puzzle, the article employs critical discourse analysis (CDA; cf. Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, 2004; Wodak and Meyer, 2016a; Wodak and Meyer, 2016b) as its main methodological tool. CDA starts from the fundamental assumption that (not only political) discourses are a social practice (Wodak and Meyer, 2016b: 6). Discourse analysis can not only uncover the ways in which some outcomes are made feasible while others are excluded, but also show what rhetorical strategies are employed to reach these ends (Tichý, 2019). However, CDA contains an important critical element, which uncovers how discourse is manipulated to achieve certain political ends and how it can be used to legitimize the dominant narrative (Jancsary et al., 2016: 199). In this sense, CDA uncovers the ideological backgrounds of the political utterances and the subsequent energy policy choices, which often cannot be entirely reduced to mere economic calculation or security concerns. Hence, while the CDA does not explore causality, it sheds light on the way dominant actors can shape public discourses to achieve their political or economic goals.

Our approach is based on the understanding that policy change, which is seen as a necessary consequence of the repeated energy crises, is constituted on the discursive level and only later formally promulgated in official policy documents, after this has been enabled by a shift

<sup>1</sup> The Slovak Government aims to phase-off coal from electricity generation by 2023.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of writing (the summer of 2019), it is uncertain what the situation will be after the end of 2019, when the transit contract between Russia and Ukraine is supposed to expire.

<sup>3</sup> We would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for drawing our attention to this issue.

in the framing of (a) specific event(s). Schmidt and Radaelli argue that discourse helps “overcome the structure–agency divide” and enable new ideas to overcome “entrenched interests, institutional obstacles and cultural impediments to change” (2004: 207). However, they recommend caution when exploring the links between public discourse and policy change as institutions, culture or interests can also shape the discourse. Similarly, Béland does not focus on causality, but instead argues that discourse is used by policy advocates to “overcome the scepticism” and “convince decision makers, interest groups and the population at large that change is necessary” (2007: 124).

This paper explores exactly this key juncture: how energy supply is framed in the media debate, which key actors are identified, and which arguments connect these discursive clusters to preferred policy choices. Our aim is to examine the discursive ‘conditions of possibility’ for specific policy options. The policy choices themselves do not constitute the main focus of this article, as we do not explore causal links between discourses and policy change. Instead, we show how the discursive environment, which is more conducive to some choices than others, is constituted.

Discourses are not a mere epiphenomenon, or an ‘addition’ to material reality. Discourses determine which material realities are taken into account and define what counts as relevant material reality for a specific policy (cf. Kratochvíl and Tichý, 2013). To give an example of the surprising (and seemingly contradictory) power of political discourses: even though the dependence on Russia in material terms may increase if a Russian company is involved in building additional nuclear reactors in the Czech Republic, the dominant discourse still claims that the turn to nuclear energy will decrease the country’s dependence on Russia (see below). In this sense, discourses can trump material considerations and policy choices thus often reflect these discursive constructions rather than ‘material facts’.

We explore a revised version of Wodak’s discursive strategies; from her instrumentarium, we have chosen the three strategies that best elucidate how influential political narratives emerge and how potential policies are discursively shaped: the strategies of nomination, predication and argumentation (Wodak, 2004). Firstly, the strategies of nomination focus on the key actors, as defined in the (media) discourse. The strategy identifies the main actors (who they are), describes their main characteristics (how they are identified), and examines the roles these actors play in discussions about energy policy. The nomination strategies are essential as they define who is endowed with agency in the specific policy field and who does not enter it as a relevant actor.

Secondly, the strategies of predication focus on how the various actors and policy options (or, in the case of energy policy, energy sources) are described and what attributes they are assigned. Subsequently, these strategies also examine which positive or negative values are attached to the various actors and policy options in the discourse. The strategies of predication thus bring a strong normative element, distinguishing between actors, energy sources and policies in terms of their positive/negative role.

Thirdly, the strategies of argumentation create argumentative chains, which connect these actors to policy prescriptions. To explore the strategies of argumentation means to look into what national (energy) narratives are created in the discourse and with what political aims. Here, we also uncover what frames are used to justify the inclusion or exclusion of specific sources in/from the energy mix and how these frames form a complex discourse that eventually leads to the desired policy outcomes. These strategies also serve to suppress other options, which are fully acceptable in other countries. Hence, successful strategies of argumentation are then often taken up by official documents, as well as political and business actors who use them to justify their plans.

#### 4. Comparing the cases: three crises and one period of mature framing

The article analyses media debates in the Czech Republic and

Slovakia during four time periods. The first three periods cover times of heightened tensions and external energy crises. The first is the Russian–Ukrainian gas dispute of 2005–2006 (the media analysis covers the period of two months: December 2005 and January 2006). During this time, the Russian gas supply decreased, with both the Russian Gazprom and Ukrainian Naftogaz being accused of causing the problems (Mayer, 2008). The crisis soon became a broader issue as a number of European countries suffered undersupply, which was further exacerbated by the fact that the crisis affected not only the CEE countries, but also other European countries including France and Italy.

The second crisis is a similar gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine from 2008 to 2009 (the media analysis again covers a two-month period: December 2008 and January 2009). While the disagreement originally pertained to the price of gas and its transit in the new contract for 2009 between Gazprom and Naftogaz, it quickly evolved into a protracted crisis (Lee, 2017). Along with the CEE region, South-Eastern Europe was also particularly heavily hit as the issue once again transcended the narrow confines of a business disagreement, becoming a top political topic. Indeed, the very decision to reduce the gas flow was made in a televised speech by President Putin (Kramer, 2009). The crisis received substantial media coverage, especially in the countries that were most severely hit. The repetition of the crisis was in many ways considered a turning point as it heavily damaged both Russia’s and Ukraine’s reputation as reliable partners (Pirani et al., 2009).

The third period this study examines is the dispute from 2014 (May–June 2014), in which Naftogaz and Gazprom failed to reach an agreement on debt payments. The crisis was intensified by Gazprom’s request for Ukraine to pay for its energy imports upfront. Even with intense involvement on the part of EU officials – headed by Commissioner Oettinger – the crisis was resolved only after several months of negotiations (BBC, 2014).

To enable the emergence of mature narratives on the meaning of the crises for national energy policies and firmly embedded framing, we wanted our fourth period to be both sufficiently temporally removed from and longer than the previous three. Ultimately, we opted for the most recent developments during the last 15 months (January 2018–March 2019), when debates on energy in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia have once again intensified. Our focus in the fourth period is on nuclear energy, identified by the preliminary analysis as the most prominent topic within the energy discourse. We analyse how nuclear energy is discursively connected to the three crises and why it has become the dominant topic in the debate on energy supply.

Our textual corpus consists of a total of 393 newspaper articles, published in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia (see Table 1). The selection was software-assisted and based on the following key words (in Czech and Slovak): ‘energy crisis’ and ‘energy policy’ for the first three periods, and ‘nuclear energy’ for the fourth period. Although we were particularly interested in Russia and Gazprom as the key suppliers of natural gas to both countries, we did not include them among our key words because we wanted to avoid creating a selection bias that would imply that the national energy debate revolves exclusively around these

**Table 1**  
Key elements of the comparative analysis.

	The Czech Republic	Slovakia
Newspapers	<i>Dnes</i> , <i>Hospodářské noviny</i> , <i>Lidové noviny</i> , <i>Právo</i>	<i>Hospodárske noviny</i> , <i>SME</i> , <i>Pravda</i> , <i>Denník N</i>
Number of articles	123	270
Key words	energy policy, energy crisis (the first three periods); nuclear energy (the fourth period)	
Periods	December 2005–January 2006 December 2008–January 2009 May–June 2014 January 2018–March 2019	

Source: The authors

actors. In this way, we were able to obtain a more comprehensive picture and identify when Russia emerges as a specific actor and when others (such as the EU) are more visible. The preliminary analysis of the last period under scrutiny (January 2018–March 2019) showed that nuclear energy is the dominant topic within media reports on energy policy, while other previously identified topics (such as Nord Stream 2, emissions and customer protection) were discussed much less frequently.

We analysed the following dailies: *Dnes*, *Hospodářské noviny*, *Lidové noviny*, *Právo* (the Czech Republic), *Hospodárske noviny*, *SME*, *Denník N*<sup>4</sup> and *Pravda* (Slovakia). Subsequently, we engaged in manual coding, identifying the sections of the texts, which contained relevant nominations, predicates and argumentation strategies. We specifically focused on media statements made by policy-makers. We started from the assumption that the informal setting (as opposed to official policy documents) is conducive to more openness on the part of the policy-makers and planned policy changes are often initially “tested” in the public arena. This strategy also typically includes depicting favourably the arguments supporting the preferred policy and criticizing the alternatives (the strategies of intensification and mitigation; Wodak, 2004).

## 5. Media discourse on energy supply

### 5.1. Strategies of nomination

We begin our analysis by examining strategies of nomination, which identify the key actors involved in the discourse, as well as their main characteristics, and their place within the discussion on energy supply.

The most fundamental feature of the Czech media discourse on the three energy crises revolves around three groups of actors with gradually changing roles in the crises: Russia, the European Union, and the crises “victims”. The position of Russia within the discourse is relatively stable with the only substantial change emerging in the fourth analysed period. In contrast, the assessment of the EU and its actions during and after the crises continuously deteriorate across the analysed periods. Finally, the most fluid nominations pertain to the group of the victim countries, which frequently changes not only in terms of its composition, but also the countries’ role and perceived share in causing the crises.

Interestingly, in the Czech media discourse, Russia and its energy policy are seen as fundamentally unchanging and predictable (the Russian approach “has not moved even by an inch”, Březina, 2009). For some, the essence of Russia’s energy policy is using energy as a new type of political weapon; for others, the key to understanding Russia’s behaviour lies in the combination of economic and technical aspects (see the strategies of predication below). However, neither approach detects changes in the Russian behaviour. The resulting tendency is to perceive Russia as a structural constraint of national energy policy options, rather than an actor whose policy is also subject to change. As the Czech Ambassador-at-Large for Energy Security Václav Bartuška repeatedly argued, countries like the Czech Republic have few instruments at their disposal to influence the Russian policy and the country “has to be realistic” in accepting this fact (Tvarůžková et al., 2009).

In contrast, the perception of the EU radically changes during the first three analysed periods. Initially, the EU was simply depicted as an actor who was taken by surprise and did not react forcefully enough to stop the crisis. Paradoxically, in the later crises, it is sometimes seen as a greater culprit than Russia. As Czech Trade Minister Martin Říman argued, the problem is the missing energy infrastructure of the Union, an argument often supported in the media by experts: “The fact that our internal gas market does not work is a far worse problem than the dependence on Russian gas” (Tvarůžková, 2009). The media framing often goes beyond accusing the EU of neglect and paying insufficient

attention to its own energy market. When, during the 2014 crisis, Bulgarian Energy Minister Dragomir Stoynev complained that his country “became a hostage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict”, an article was published in *Lidové noviny* bearing the title “Sofia Feels Like a Victim of the EU” (Žizka, 2014a).

The third group of actors includes the countries described as passive victims, those who suffer the consequences of the crises but are – for mostly geopolitical reasons – incapable of escaping their dependence on Russia. These countries always include Ukraine, sometimes also Georgia and the Eastern (and South-Eastern) wing of the European Union. The main message of this nomination strategy is that the Czech Republic also belongs to these victims (or, at least, potential future victims): “Yesterday it was Ukraine, today Georgia, and tomorrow ...” (ČTK et al., 2006). The second crisis (2009) further strengthened this narrative, as Russia remained the dominant actor in the CEE region, with new victims added to the group (Bulgaria and Slovakia). Again, the victimhood is primarily related to these countries’ geographical location.

The Czech national nomination strategies thus create a discursive context in which: 1) the EU is seen as an important actor who will, however, remain weak and ineffective even in the foreseeable future; 2) Russia is more of an unchanging structural constraint than an actor; and 3) countries in the region often become victims of this unfortunate constellation. This framing of the three crises thus inevitably leads to the argument that the Czech Republic’s goal has to be to escape the fate of the victim. At the same time, it cannot rely on the joint action of the European Union. This entails an interesting paradox: the critique of the supposedly egoistic steps made by other countries (such as Nord Stream and the case of Germany; cf. Tymošenková, 2006; Březina, 2009) leads to the argument that the only way for the Czech Republic to proceed is to behave in a similarly egoistic way. In the end, the Czech Republic emerges as a fourth type of actor, distinct from the three analysed above.

Paradoxically, the critique of the egoistic focus on the national energy mix and national energy preferences leads to discarding the EU’s Energy Union and prioritizing instead the increased independence of the Czech energy policy. The resulting political recommendation, which follows from this framing, is that the problems of the EU energy policy are so deep that the Czech policy should not focus on strengthening the common policy, but instead on fighting for the autonomy of the Czech energy policy, including determining its own energy mix for the foreseeable future. The EU is thus gradually “externalized” in the mainstream discourse, changing from an actor who can fight for Czech energy interests, into another background condition (in some ways similar to Russia) from which the country has to gain increased independence in its energy policy decisions. Even during the Czech EU Presidency, and even when referring to the crisis negotiations led by Czech policy-makers, the EU position is treated as entirely different from the Czech one, almost as if the country were not an EU member state (cf. the approach of Czech Trade Minister Říman during the second energy crisis).

The main actors involved in the Slovak discourse on the three gas crises are the EU, Ukraine and Slovakia itself. Surprisingly, Russia is mentioned much less frequently and its role is mainly seen as business-oriented, rather than political. Both Russia and Gazprom, as the gas supplier for Slovakia, are included in the Slovak discourse to a limited degree. The 2006 crisis is seen as a trade dispute between Russia and Ukraine. For example, SPP, a Slovak gas company which at the time was also responsible for transit, claimed that Russia had to deal with the situation by itself and make sure that gas reached Slovakia in sufficient amounts (Vechter, 2006). During a similar situation in the oil sector at the end of 2005, the Slovak transmission company Transpetrol claimed that “contracts [between countries] are not enough, we also have to have, and maintain, very good relations between the companies” (Pravda, 2005). However, it was a visit by the Minister of Economy Jirko Malchárek that was interpreted as “aligning interests of Slovak and Russian governments” (Kóňa, 2005) and ended the crisis period when no oil flowed to Slovakia. The situation coincided with the discussion about

<sup>4</sup> Established in late 2014, this newspaper covers only the last examined period. However, it was included in the analysis, because it became one of the most important printed Slovak dailies by 2018.



selling of 49 percent of Transpetrol shares (and managerial control) owned by Yukos, at that time under tax fraud investigation by the Russian authorities.

A similar situation occurred in January 2009, when the Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico went to Moscow and Kiev in the middle of the gas crisis to discuss possible ways to resolve the crisis. However, since Russian representatives were interested only in discussion with the EU (Milan, 2009), he did not manage to mediate the end of the crisis (Hudec, 2009). The discourse portrays Slovakia as a victim of the crises, even though the Ministry of Economy admitted that it “overestimated [Slovak] energy security” during the crisis in both the natural gas and electricity sector (Turanský, 2009). The interconnection between natural gas supplies and electricity grid stability was one of the primary issues during the 2009 crisis. However, the learning curve of Slovak authorities was rather flat: according to the then Minister of Economy Jirko Malchárek, there were no risks for the future connected to the 2006 crisis, and any future diversification depended on economic and technical aspects of the proposed solutions (Vechter and Pálková, 2006).

The 2009 gas crisis changed this view significantly. The Slovak Prime Minister described the following crisis of 2014 as “a serious threat to Slovak energy security” (Pravda, 2014). However, he viewed it as a strictly trade issue again, because “if anybody would want to use gas as a weapon, this would be happening during winter” (Holeš, 2014). Moreover, the situation in 2014 was different as the Ministry of Economy claimed readiness “to deal with a situation in which supplies are interrupted” (Pejko, 2014). Even after the supply to Ukraine was cut-off in June 2014, the Slovak Ministry maintained that the country was ready for such a situation as well (Krajanová, 2014).

Ukraine is viewed as a key actor in both the 2006 and 2009 crises, being the main focus of Slovak media discourse. Since Slovakia at the time did not rely on any other supply routes, the state of its gas supplies during the two crises was directly connected to the situation in Ukraine. As the following section on the strategies of predication will argue, the image of Ukraine in the analysed material was very negative and the country was blamed for the crises by Slovak representatives.

In spite of its focus on Ukraine, the EU is the most visible actor within the Slovak media discourse during the second gas crisis. Despite ongoing discussions about setting up a solidarity mechanism on the EU level as a way to solve the crisis (Krajanová, 2009), the main issue in Slovak media discourse connected to the EU is, paradoxically, not the lack of natural gas infrastructure or unpreparedness for a crisis situation, but the decommissioning of the Slovak nuclear power plant (NPP) in Jaslovské Bohunice. As part of its accession negotiation, Slovakia agreed to shut down two reactors of this power plant: the first one at the end of 2006, the second one two years later. The second reactor was thus shut down only a couple of days before the 2009 gas crisis broke out. Slovak representatives claimed that it was necessary to “restart one reactor of the nuclear power plant, until we stabilize the system” (Zsilleová, 2009) as the lack of gas limited the ability to produce electricity in gas-fired power plants to balance the electricity grid and replace the reactor's production. The EC criticized this plan, claiming that it would consider restarting the reactor to be a breach of the accession agreement (HN, 2009). Even the then Slovak Commissioner Ján Figel' argued that restarting the reactor would be a violation of the accession treaty and that the Slovak Government would have to “explain itself” (Caplovic and Matisák, 2009). This met with considerable criticism from Slovak representatives (Kováčik, 2009a), prompting discussions on the possible ways in which the EC would be able to penalize Slovakia, such as limiting its access to structural funds (Nejedlý, 2009) or denying it decommissioning support (Ragáčová and Hudec, 2009). Ultimately, even though everything was ready for this step, including the approval from the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic, the Government did not restart the reactor (Ragáčová and Hudec, 2009).

## 5.2. Strategies of predication

Strategies of predication present a complementary discursive feature to the actor nominations. The key component of these strategies is to normatively assess the actors (but also policies and energy sources) identified by the previous step and assign them (positive or negative) values, which facilitate the subsequent strategies of argumentation.

As the central actor, Russia is described in overwhelmingly negative terms in the Czech media. It is seen as unreliable and its gas as “dirty” (Procházková, 2009). Furthermore, it is portrayed as being associated with non-transparent business practices on the Russian energy market. However, these negative connotations are not always seen as a result of intentional behaviour. The instability, though clearly caused by Russia, can also be a consequence of negligence or sabotage (Klekner, 2006). In a similar vein, Russian gas is seen as unreliable and Russia as lacking technical prowess: “Moscow does not have technical knowledge and qualified workers” (Jakes, 2006). Equally importantly, the Russian business environment, rather than government policies, is suggested as a possible source of problems (cf. Procházková, 2009).

Unlike discursive nominations, predication strategies simultaneously indicate a reorientation from the security-centred discourse towards an economic one. Thus, Russian oil deposits in both Siberia and the Far East may be large, but their extraction is economically unfeasible (Jakes, 2006). In a move which is essential for the justification of Russia's status as the potential provider of nuclear energy, this predication strategy acknowledges the country's inability to reliably deliver a sufficient supply of gas and oil, but at the same time removes the evil intention from the discourse, thus trying to present Russia as an acceptable partner in other ventures (i.e. nuclear energy).

The predications related to the EU are more dynamic. With increasing frequency from the first to the third crisis, more and more predicates started to depict the EU as a fragmented, rather than unified actor, with fairly divergent views on Russia: “Any belief about a unified and principled approach of the European Union towards Moscow is illusory” (Pešek, 2014). As a result, the media mainstream interprets the Energy Union as a naïve dream, a utopia which can never be achieved unless the European integration in the field becomes much deeper. However, this cannot happen, due to “substantial historical differences in the very foundations of the energy policies of individual countries” and the “absolutely extreme energy policy of Germany” (Březina, 2009). The institutions such as the EC are not representative of the entire EU and are generally disinterested in the state of its CEE members. As argued, “the Eastern part of the Union [...] is unsure about what to do under the Brussels energy directive, incapable of solving the problem independently” (Březina, 2009).

The predicates attached to the Czech Republic have dramatically evolved over the years. While the country was originally seen as passive and weak, and as such a potential prey to Russian depredations, its self-description after the third crisis was entirely different. Hence, the conclusive predicates related to the Czech Republic are “autonomous” and “well equipped” for future energy crises. For instance, the officials from the Ministry of Trade strongly stressed that the country was “thoroughly prepared” for possible future cut-offs (ČTK and DPA, 2014). A number of state officials and policy-makers repeatedly expressed the same conviction about the Czech Republic being substantially more independent and much less vulnerable than it was a decade ago. In this context, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Lubomír Zaorálek claimed that the country had “no reason to panic” (Palata, 2014), while the Ambassador-at-Large for Energy Security Bartuška went so far as to claim that “the Czech Republic belongs among the countries which have done the most for the diversification of supplies” (Palata, 2014).

The Slovak strategies of predication are substantially different. While representatives of other European countries saw Russia as the main culprit for the gas crises or claimed that both parties were responsible for the situation, Slovak representatives openly blamed Ukraine for the 2009 gas crisis (Štulajter and Jančík, 2009a). Thus, the predicates

connected to Ukraine were rather negative, with the transit country seen as “unreliable” and the main culprit for the crisis. Minister of Economy Ľubomír Jahnátek went so far as to warn Kyiv that “Slovakia will be cautious” in future negotiations about its integration into international structures (Latta, 2009). The use of such strong words was not limited to the 2009 crisis: in 2014, Prime Minister Robert Fico stated that Ukraine “brutally deceived us in 2009. It didn’t help us and it stole gas” (Pravda, 2014). Although the Slovak Government ultimately enabled the development of a reverse flow that helped Ukraine import gas from European countries, it was rather reluctant to support the new infrastructure and only did so under considerable pressure from the EC. The Slovak transmission company also blamed Ukraine for the crisis, claiming that the problem was not with “the source” of gas but with shipping via Ukraine (Štulajter and Jančík, 2009b).

The predications related to Russia are much friendlier, depicting the country as “reliable” or “not responsible” for the energy crisis. The Prime Minister Fico even offered Gazprom to develop a joint-venture gas company in Slovakia following the 2009 gas crisis (Kováčik, 2009b). Gazprom is never singled out as being responsible for any of the crises and the trade nature of the dispute between Ukraine and Russia is often highlighted in official Slovak discourse. Russia’s (and Gazprom’s) intentions to send gas to Slovakia is not questioned; on the contrary, it is understood that Russia’s ability to send gas to its European customers is limited due to the problematic transit route. “The problem is with the transit via Ukrainian territory ... this is not a problem of the Russian source”, claimed the CEO of the Slovak distribution company (Štulajter and Jančík, 2009b). The image of Russia as a gas supplier is further improved in the official discourse following the Government’s successful negotiation over better prices and better conditions in 2014. The same year saw the Slovak Government take over the 49 %-share in the leading energy company (SPP) from the minority owner EHP in order to decrease the price for end customers, especially households. Direct negotiations with Gazprom resulted in lower prices, which were closer to spot prices (Čikovský and Krajanová, 2014).

The most complex predicates are attached to the EU, which is partially viewed via issues directly connected to the natural gas sector and more extensively via issues linked to the electricity sector. The EU is seen as especially “stubborn” when it comes to the issue of restarting the Slovak reactor. After the EU expressed its negative position towards such a move, emphasizing that shutting down the power plant is the “basic requirement of Slovak accession to the European Union”, Prime Minister Fico took “full responsibility”, claiming he would face the consequences if Slovakia restarted the reactor (Kováč, 2009). On 10 January 2009, the Government approved this move as, according to Fico, the “cutting off of gas supplies threaten[ed] the entire electricity grid. If we [did] not make this decision, we [would] face the threat of a black out”. The Government was aware that this step meant a breach of the accession agreement, but argued that the “damage done to the accession agreement [was] much smaller compared to the possible damage” caused by not restarting the reactor (Štulajter and Jančík, 2009a). Although Slovak representatives claimed that the European Commission was “sympathetic” to Slovakia’s situation, its official position on the possibility of a breach of the accession contract remained unchanged (Ragáčová and Hudec, 2009).

### 5.3. Strategies of argumentation

The third type of strategy examines how arguments are developed in a concrete policy area within the discourse. Using previously defined actors and their assigned predicates as a starting point, the strategies of argumentation move the discourse-building process forward by identifying actions suitable and unsuitable for these actors. While strategies of nomination and predication do not fully predetermine possible argumentation chains, they limit possible options, reducing those considered non-feasible.

The notion which assumed central position within the dominant

Czech strategy of argumentation is that of “strategic vulnerability” (c.f. Mišík, 2019). For the national energy policy, strategic vulnerability becomes the key lesson from the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, both because of the rigid Russian position and because of EU’s inability to escape from its dependence on Russia fast enough (Cerný, 2006). As influencing Russia’s policy is ruled out as implausible, only three theoretical options remain: multilateralization (i.e. support for EU’s nascent common energy policy), diversification based on bilateral arrangements (such as focusing on new contracts with Norway), or a turn inwards that would stress the Czech Republic’s need for increased independence in general.

The last option – the inward turn – proved to be discursively most successful (cf. Právo, 2009), leading to a redefinition of the entire concept of energy vulnerability. Within this newly defined concept, Russia is no longer seen as the sole threat to national energy security but is replaced by external settings in general. Thus, the argumentation stresses that this is not necessarily a question of the hostility of external actors, but an insurance policy against a deeper unreliability of the external world, which cannot be trusted to deliver the needed energy supplies, be it for political, economic or technical reasons. The advantage of this discourse is that the argument that the external environment is dangerous resonates well with the public mood regarding other policy areas, such as migration, and that, as a consequence, virtually every high-ranking policy-maker can adopt the argument, including those who would otherwise support a pro-Russian policy (Czech President Miloš Zeman or the Communist party KSČM).

In policy terms, the dominance of the inward turn has two consequences: the ever-increasing critique of renewable sources of energy and, even more strongly, the clear support for nuclear energy. Interestingly, the focus on renewable energy gradually became virtually synonymous with an externally imposed energy policy, whereby both Germany and the EU at large are seen as the actors who forced the Czech Republic in this direction. In particular, the German *Energiewende* is often interpreted as extreme and radically different from the Czech preferences (Březina, 2009; ČTK, 2014). The opinion of the Czech Association of Industry and Transport, which was given much media space, saw the focus on renewable energy as EU’s refusal “to actively work on the increase of its competitiveness” (HN, 2014a, cf. also Žižka, 2014b). Paradoxically, the Minister of Environment echoed the same sentiment when he argued at a meeting of the Council of Ministers against a too forceful CO<sub>2</sub> reduction as this may lead to “the loss of competitiveness” (HN, 2014a). The conclusion in the analysed media is unequivocal: renewable energy sources have a limited potential in the Czech case (Lukáč, 2018).

In such a discursive setting, nuclear energy becomes the only rational solution, a discursive panacea for the ills plaguing Czech energy policy, seen as both a domestic source (despite the dependence on external partners in building the new blocs) and a clean energy source (Honzejek, 2018). A number of policy-makers from all mainstream political parties argued that nuclear energy is the right defence against strategic vulnerability (cf. the views of the Chairman of the Subcommittee for Energy of the Chamber of Deputies Jan Špika; Tvarůžková and Soukup, 2009) and that “Europe without the atom will become a prey for the beasts” (the Christian Democratic MEP Jan Březina; Březina, 2009). Even new influential parties such as the Pirates adopted the same discursive strategy, arguing in favour of new nuclear blocs (Brodničková, 2019). The political class was supported by the views of senior civil servants such as the Governmental Envoy for Nuclear Energy and former CEO of ČEZ company Jaroslav Míl (Šitner, 2019) as well as a plethora of energy experts (for the latest examples, see, e.g. Anděrová, 2018; Zenkner, 2019).

The main concept within the Slovak discourse, particularly influenced by the 2009 crisis, is also that of “strategic vulnerability”. However, the Slovak media discourse does not depict Russia as an unreliable supplier, claiming instead that the supply chain was compromised via Ukrainian activities during the gas crises. Like in the Czech case, it is not Russia itself that is the main threat – it is the overall external

environment. However, Slovakia had to find a way to improve its energy security and increase the resilience of its entire energy system (the gas sector was not the only one which was affected by the crises). Two options dominated the discourse: multilateralization (involvement in the development of the EU energy policy and at the V4 level) and the inward turn (utilization of domestic nuclear energy).

The immediate solution to the crises came in the form of developing new gas infrastructure. Already in 2006, the Slovak Prime Minister claimed that “we have and want to have good relations with Russia; however, diversification is not harmful” (Wojcieszynska, 2006). However, at the time, the Government had not made any real steps in this direction. The discussion was mostly connected to new major pipelines that were supposed to bring gas from sources other than Russia (Nabucco) or via alternative routes (South Stream). Talking about the latter, the Slovak Ministry of Economy argued in 2014 that “every new gas pipeline improves the security of the country” (Holeš, 2014). Later projects such as Eastring point to a much more active approach of the Slovak Republic towards diversification after the 2009 gas crisis.

Multilateralism on both the V4 level and within the EU has gradually gained the dominant position within the Slovak energy discourse. By gaining the position of a Commissioner for a Slovak citizen, the Government improved its connections to the EU decision-making process, which was supposed to enable it to pursue its policies more successfully at the EU level. For example, Slovakia objected to the EC having competences in the nuclear sector, since anti-nuclear countries were expected to exert pressure on the Commission (HN, 2014b). The Slovak Government expressed an interest in the position of Commissioner for Energy as early as 2008, and started talks with its EU partners, the first one being the Czech Republic (SME, 2008). Although these efforts were not successful, the position of EC Vice President for the Energy Union in the period from 2014 to 2019 was occupied by the Slovak nominee Maroš Šefčovič.

The inward turn is also present in the Slovak discourse, manifested in the country's support for nuclear energy. Nuclear energy is again seen as a domestic source that can solve the problems that occur within the electricity as well as the gas sector, since it can ensure some of the services provided by gas generators. The importance of nuclear energy for energy security was already stressed during the 2009 gas crisis; since then, it has been considered as not only a domestic, but also a carbon-friendly energy source due to the low levels of greenhouse gases emissions (Lauková, 2018a). The Government proposed plans for up to three new NPPs in different locations: the final decision to finish Mochovce 3&4 NPP was made in 2008; in the same year, a discussion was launched regarding an entirely new nuclear power plant that was supposed to replace the one in Jaslovské Bohunice; Kecerovce NPP in eastern Slovakia was also being considered around 2009. Although nuclear energy consequently enjoyed considerable support, the main issues discussed were the budget overruns and delays connected to NPP Mochovce 3&4 (currently under construction; Lauková, 2018b) and the feasibility of a new NPP under the current market conditions. The Jaslovské Bohunice V3 project was cancelled in 2018 due to “the current wholesale electricity price on the market [that] does not predict sound economic returns for this project” (Poracký, 2018).

## 6. Discussion

The analysis has shown commonalities and differences in the media discourses of the two examined countries. Discourses are crucial for policy-making as they constitute an arena in which policy options can be tested, refined, adopted, or discarded. CDA provides tools that can follow the development of arguments and thus create basis for further analyses of policy change. This section discusses the main results of the analysis conducted in this paper (see Table 2): the media discourse underlines the overall unreliability of the external environment and stresses the necessity to rely on domestic sources of energy. In the Czech case such an environment also includes the EU, which translates into a

**Table 2**

Summary of the strategies.

	The Czech Republic	Slovakia
Main actors (strategies of nomination)	Russia, the EU, Ukraine, the Czech Republic	Ukraine, the EU, Slovakia
Their characteristics (strategies of predication)	Russia: weak and unreliable The EU: fragmented and naïve The Czech Republic: first weak, later well prepared	Ukraine: guilty of causing the gas crises The EU: problematic due to its requirement to close down the Slovak nuclear reactor Slovakia: weak, threatened Russia: constructive, but not dominant in the discourse
Prescribed actions (strategies of argumentation)	The country has to rely on itself as the external environment is dangerous. Nuclear energy should be preferred over renewable sources.	The country has to rely on itself, but also cooperate with the EU and the V4. Nuclear energy is the best solution, but renewables are not rejected.

Source: The authors

critical stance towards renewable energy sources, viewed as forced upon the country by the EU. In contrast, the Slovak discourse presents the EU as a suitable arena for energy cooperation. Both countries agree on the support for nuclear energy, which is considered to be a domestic – and therefore most reliable – source of energy.

Within the Czech media discourse, neither the reliance on gas exports from Russia nor the multilateral cooperation within the EU are considered to be winning strategies. Instead, the Czech Republic emerges as a new, autonomous actor who has to rely on its own diversification policies, as well as a mixture of both bilateral and multilateral arrangements that prop up national self-sufficiency and decrease the Czech energy vulnerability. In the Czech media discourse, Russia is presented in negative terms as an unreliable partner with low economic potential. However, the EU is also viewed negatively – as a fragmented, naïve actor. This discursive strategy thus leads to an inward turn within the Czech discourse. External sources are unreliable and so is the imposition of the energy strategy by external actors, which leads to scepticism towards renewable energy. On the other hand, the predicates used to describe the Czech Republic itself gradually shifted from passive and weak, to well prepared for another crisis.

The Slovak media discourse is different: Russia is not at the centre of the discussion in the Slovak case and is viewed mostly via trade issues, while Ukraine is openly and repeatedly blamed for the crises. Slovakia did not undergo the same transformation as the Czech Republic, and continued to be depicted as a victim during the entire analysed period. Unlike the Czech case, the inward turn in the Slovak media discourse is complemented by multilateralism that favours broader cooperation within the region and the EU. However, the Union is portrayed in a negative light for its criticism of the Slovak preparations to restart one of its reactors during the 2009 crisis. The Slovak discourse lacks the Czech sharp criticism towards renewables that can be linked to a more favourable view of the Union and its energy policies. The inward turn is the reason behind the support for domestic energy sources, especially nuclear power. This is considered to be the only viable option vis-à-vis a negatively perceived external environment.

Transit issues have not been identified as a topic in the discourse on energy supplies in either of the two countries. This can indicate that the development of the new infrastructural projects with an impact on the two countries (such as Nord Stream II) are seen as commercial rather than security-related. Such a conclusion would be in line with the previously presented arguments about the Slovak Eastring pipeline project (Mišík and Nosko, 2017). This would also indicate that energy transit does not constitute the backbone for national discourses on energy security despite the efforts of both governments to present it as such.



## 7. Conclusions and policy implications

This paper examined media discourses on natural gas supplies in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Utilizing CDA, it studied discourses during three gas crises (2006, 2009, 2014) and one longer period between January 2018 and March 2019. While the Czech media discourse explicitly identifies Russia as a threat, the Slovak media discourse is much more positive towards Russia, listing Ukraine as the main culprit of the 2009 gas crisis. However, both countries share the perception of vulnerability. This resonates with the more comprehensive idea about the unreliability of the external environment in general, which is also prevalent in other parts of the Czech and Slovak media discourse (such as in the discourses on migration). The Czech media discourse presents the EU as imposing its policies on the member states and therefore part of such an environment. In contrast, the Slovak discourse considers it to be part of the solution, despite its negative image during the 2009 gas crisis.

In both cases, nuclear energy is perceived as the most appropriate response to these challenges. It is discursively constructed as both a domestic energy source (despite the dependency on fuel supply from Russia) and one with a very strong “green” dimension, which contributes to the climate goals of both countries. In the Slovak case, the position of nuclear energy was exacerbated by its role in the 2009 gas crisis, when it dominated the media discourse due to government efforts to restart the then recently closed reactor in NPP Jaslovské Bohunice. Strikingly, despite also being a domestic source, coal was not an important part of the discourse during the three energy crises in either country.

The research has important policy implications. First of all, although those external settings are the same for the whole of Europe (or at least the EU), the material context alone cannot explain the deep differences in the approaches of individual EU member states. By discursively prioritizing nuclear energy, the Czech Republic and Slovakia clearly diverge from the German approach. Indeed, the Czech dominant media discourse even sees the German strategy as naïve and the focus on renewables as ideological. Hence, discourses, framing and perceptions play an essential role in understanding national energy policies, explaining the differences, which the material conditions cannot account for.

Second, the reliance on nuclear energy is deeply entrenched in the discourse. The only relevant discursive elements that bring further expansion of nuclear energy into question are financial considerations and the question of the economic feasibility of the new nuclear reactors. Unlike nuclear energy, the arguments based on renewable sources have little traction in the two countries (especially the Czech Republic). For these sources to become acceptable, they would have to be presented as internal solutions, not as externally imposed by the EU. Third, although Russia is described quite clearly in the national political discourses, these discourses differ from one policy field to another. Hence, while Russia may be seen as an unreliable gas supplier, a Russian company can paradoxically still be seen as a suitable constructor of new nuclear reactors.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the anonymous reviewers whose comments and suggestion helped them improve this article. They would also like to thank the guest editors of the special issue and Nada Kujundžić for language editing. Matúš Mišík would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Slovak Research and Development Agency Grant No. APVV-16-0062.

## References

Anděrová, A., 2018. Nové jaderné bloky má podle expertů financovat spíš stát. *Hospodarské Novy*. 4 (24), 18.

- Axelrod, R., 2004. Nuclear power and EU enlargement: the case of Temelín. *Environ. Pol.* 13, 153–172.
- BBC, 2014. Russia-Ukraine gas deal secures EU winter supply. *BBC 10* (31), 14.
- Béland, D., 2007. The social exclusion discourse: ideas and policy change. *Pol. Politics* 35, 123–139.
- Binhack, P., Tichý, L., 2012. Asymmetric interdependence in the Czech-Russian energy relations. *Energy Policy* 45, 54–63.
- Brodňáková, K., 2019. Piráti na výzvědech. Kdo dostaví Dukovany? *Právo* 1.5, 19.
- Březina, J., 2009. Bez atomu bude Evropa koristí dravců. *Mlada Fronta Dnes*. 1 (29), 09.
- Čaplovič, M., Matisák, A., 2009. Na spústenie V1 by Slovensko doplatilo. *Pravda* 1 (1), 09.
- Černoch, F., Dančák, B., Koďoušková, H., Leschenko, A., Ocelík, P., Ošička, J., Šebek, V., Vlček, T., Zapletalová, V., 2012. The Future of the Družba Pipeline as a Strategic Challenge for the Czech Republic and Poland. Muni Press, Brno.
- Černý, A., 2006. Úleva nezapláš obavy. *Hospodarské Novy*. 1 (5), 06.
- Čikovský, K., Krajanová, D., 2014. Enel Mochovce nezvládá. *SME* 6.23, 14.
- ČTK, 2014. Zprávy dne. *Lidové Novy*. 5 (3), 14.
- ČTK, AFP, Reuters, 2006. Útok vzal Gruzii plyn. *Lidové Novy*. 1 (23), 06.
- ČTK, DPA, 2014. Rusko zavřelo Ukrajině plyn. *Právo* 6.17, 14.
- Eastring, 2019. Routing. <http://www.eastring.eu/page.php?page=routing> (accessed 5.15.19).
- Eurostat, 2019. Import Gas. Annual Data.
- Fairclough, N., 2013. Critical Discourse Analysis. Routledge, London.
- Frantál, B., Malý, J., 2017. Close or renew? Factors affecting local community support for rebuilding nuclear power plants in the Czech Republic. *Energy Policy* 104, 134–143.
- Franza, L., 2015. From South Stream to Turk Stream (The Hague).
- Grigas, A., 2013. The Politics of Energy and Memory between the Baltic States and Russia. Routledge, London.
- HN, 2009. Za atomku nám hrozí trest. *Hospodarské Novy*. 1 (13), 09.
- HN, 2014. Obnovitelné zdroje dál povládnou Evropě. *Hospodarské Novy*. 6.10, 14.
- HN, 2014. Fico nechce viac kompetencií pre komisiu. *Hospodarské Novy*. 5 (5), 14.
- Högselius, P., 2012. Red Gas. Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Holš, M., 2014. Plyn zastavíme v júní, varuje Európu Putin. *Pravda* 5.16, 14.
- Holzer, J., Mareš, M., 2020. Czech Security Dilemma. Palgrave, London.
- Honzek, P., 2018. Funkci jaderného ambasadora Ruska zvládá Zeman skvěle. *Hospodarské Novy*. 9 (17), 18.
- Hudec, S., 2009. Fico cestoval na vlastnú päsť. Únia to vedela. *SME* 1 (15), 09.
- Jancsary, D., Höllerer, M.A., Meyer, R.E., 2016. Critical analysis of visual and multimodal texts. In: Wodak, R., Meyer, M. (Eds.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Studies*. Sage, London, pp. 180–204, 2016.
- Jakeš, P., 2006. Priejde po ropě metan? *Mlada Fronta Dnes*. 1.28, 06.
- Janda, K., Málek, J., Rečka, L., 2017. Influence of renewable energy sources on transmission networks in Central Europe. *Energy Policy* 108, 524–537.
- Jirůšek, M., Kuchynková, P., 2018. The conduct of Gazprom in central and eastern Europe: a tool of the Kremlin, or just an adaptable player? *East Eur. Polit. Cult.* 32, 818–844.
- Jirůšek, M., Vlček, T., Koďoušková, H., Robinson, R.W., Leshchenko, A., Černoch, F., Lehotský, L., Zapletalová, V., 2015. Energy Security in Central and Eastern Europe and the Operations of Russian State-Owned Energy Enterprises. Muni Press, Brno.
- Klekner, R., 2006. Gruzie bez dodávek ruského plynu i elektriny. *Hospodářské noviny* [WWW Document]. URL: <https://archiv.ihned.cz/c1-17664540-gruzie-bez-dodavek-ruskeho-plynu-i-elektriny> (accessed 5.28.19).
- Kóna, M., 2005. Akcie transpetrolu neodkúpime. *SME* 12 (7), 2005.
- Kováč, J., 2009. Firmy porušujú zákaz. Nadalej berú plyn. *Hospodarské Novy*. 1 (9), 09.
- Kováčik, M., 2009. Vláda spúšťa jadrový blok V1. Pre istotu. *Pravda* 1 (12), 09.
- Kováčik, M., 2009. Gazprom štartuje na Slovensku tento rok. *Pravda* 1.27, 09.
- Krajanová, D., 2009. V Európskej únii sa prebudila solidarita. *SME* 1 (10), 09.
- Krajanová, D., 2014. Rusi stopli plyn Ukrajinu. *SME* 6 (17), 14.
- Kramer, A.E., 2009. Russia Cuts Gas, and Europe Shivers. <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/07/world/europe/07gazprom.html> (accessed 5.27.19).
- Kratochvíl, P., Tichý, L., 2013. EU and Russian discourse on energy relations. *Energy Policy* 56, 391–406.
- Latta, B., 2009. Minister Jahnátek: Trň z páty nám vytrhol radový technik. *Pravda* 1 (30), 09.
- Lauková, L., 2018. Mochovce z nás spravia exportéra elektriny. *Hospodarské Novy*. 2 (21), 18.
- Lauková, L., 2018. Mochovce: piate meškanie a 300 miliónov eur navyše. *Hospodarské Novy*. 6 (14), 18.
- Lee, Y., 2017. Interdependence, issue importance, and the 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas conflict. *Energy Policy* 102, 199–209.
- Leonard, M., Popescu, N., 2007. A Power Audit of EU-Russia Relations. European Council on Foreign Relations, London.
- Lukáč, P., 2018. Tomáš Hüner, ministr průmyslu a obchodu: dělení ČEZ je hloupost. *Hospodarské Novy*. 3 (23), 18.
- Mayer, S.M., 2008. Path dependence and Commission activism in the evolution of the European Union's external energy policy. *J. Int. Relat. Dev.* 11, 251–278.
- Milan, L., 2009. O vymáhání škod od Rusov nechce stát hovořit. *Pravda* 1 (12), 09.
- Mišík, M., 2019. External Energy Security in the European Union. *Small Member States' Perspective*. Routledge, London.
- Mišík, M., Nosko, A., 2017. The Easting gas pipeline in the context of the Central and Eastern European gas supply challenge. *Nat. Energy* 2, 844–848.
- Nejedlý, T., 2009. Fico kvôli Bohuniciam neodstúpi. *Hospodarské Novy*. 1 (13), 09.
- Palata, L., 2014. Rusko prestalo dodávať plyn Ukrajinu. Zavre kohouty i Unii? *Mlada Fronta Dnes*. 6 (17), 14.
- Pejko, M., 2014. Ukrajinci zaplatili časť dlhu. Odvracajú hrozbu. *Hospodarské Novy*. 6 (5), 14.



- Pešek, P., 2014. Na Rusko přísně. A selektivně. Lidové Nov. 6 (11), 14.
- Pirani, S., Stern, J., Yafimava, K., 2009. The Russo-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of January 2009: a Comprehensive Assessment. Oxford.
- Poracký, M., 2018. Ficovu elektrárnu chce Žižka zastavít. SME 6 (20), 18, 20 June 2018.
- Pravda, 2005. Transpetrol má získat iná ruská firma. Pravda 12 (6), 05.
- Pravda, 2014. Fico: chceme vidieť spor len cez obchod. Pravda 6 (17), 14.
- Právo, 2009. Ríman vyzval EU k investíciám do infraštruktúry. Právo 1 (22), 09.
- Procházková, P., 2009. Tajemný Vliv Ve Válce O Plyn. Lidové Noviny. [https://www.lidovky.cz/svet/tajemny-vliv-ve-valce-o-plyn.A090108\\_103730\\_ln\\_zahranici\\_mtr](https://www.lidovky.cz/svet/tajemny-vliv-ve-valce-o-plyn.A090108_103730_ln_zahranici_mtr) (accessed 5.28.19).
- Ragáčová, K., Hudec, Š., 2009. Na štart stačí jeden podpis. SME 1 (14), 09.
- Romanova, T., 2016. Sanctions and the future of EU-Russian economic relations. Eur. Asia Stud. 68, 774–796.
- Rozhlas, Č., 2019. Ruský Plyn Poteče Do Nemecka I Pres České Území. Plynovod Eugal Naváže Na Nord Stream [WWW Document]. URL. [https://www.irozhlaz.cz/ekonomika/nord-stream-2-plynovod-eugal-cesko-zemni-plyn\\_1904151100\\_anj](https://www.irozhlaz.cz/ekonomika/nord-stream-2-plynovod-eugal-cesko-zemni-plyn_1904151100_anj) (accessed 5.26.19).
- Schmidt, V.A., Radaelli, C.M., 2004. Policy change and discourse in Europe: conceptual and methodological issues. West Eur. Politics 27, 183–210.
- Singh, A., Frei, T., Chokani, N., Abhari, R.S., 2016. Impact of unplanned power flows in interconnected transmission systems - case study of Central Eastern European region. Energy Policy 91, 287–303.
- Sivek, M., Vlček, T., Kavina, P., Jirásek, J., 2017. Lifting lignite mining limits – correction of the Czech Republic energy policy. Energy Sources B Energy Econ. Plan. Policy 12, 519–525.
- Šitner, R., 2019. Míř chce změnit energetiku. Lidové Nov. 1 (15), 19.
- SME, 2008. V komisi chceme energetiku. SME 12 (23), 08.
- Štulajter, I., Jančík, Ľ., 2009. Plyn máme my, nie SPP. SME 1–26.09.
- Štulajter, I., Jančík, Ľ., 2009. SPP: koniec sveta pre plyn o osem dní nepríde. SME 1 (10), 09.
- Tichý, L., 2019. EU-Russia Energy Relations: A Discursive Approach. Springer, London.
- Turanský, V., 2009. Plyn núdzu v energetike nerieši. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (12), 09.
- Tvarůžková, L., 2009. Evropa si za krizi může sama. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (8), 09.
- Tvarůžková, L., Kubátová, Z., Ehl, M., 2009. Evropa bez plynu z Ruska. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (7), 09.
- Tvarůžková, L., Soukup, O., 2009. Gazprom přichází o stovky milionů dolarů. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (13), 09.
- Tymošenková, J., 2006. Ukrajinu čekají další energetické krize. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (12), 06.
- Van Dijk, T.A., 1993. Principles of critical discourse analysis. Discourse Soc. 4, 249–283.
- Vechter, J., 2006. Z Ukrajiny už ide na Slovensko menej plynu. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (2), 6.
- Vechter, J., Pálková, D., 2006. Dodávky plynu sú už plynulé. Hospodarske Nov. 1 (4), 6.
- Wodak, R., 2004. Critical discourse analysis. In: Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J.F., Silverman, D. (Eds.), Qualitative Research Practice. Sage, London, pp. 185–202.
- Wodak, R., Meyer, M. (Eds.), 2016. Methods of Critical Discourse Studies. Sage, London.
- Wodak, R., Meyer, M., 2016. Critical discourse studies: history, agenda, theory, and methodology. In: Wodak, R., Meyer, M. (Eds.), Methods of Critical Discourse Studies. Sage, London, pp. 1–33, 2016.
- Wojcieszynska, M., 2006. Visegrád chce riešiť energetickú krízu. SME 1 (18), 06.
- Zenkner, P., 2019. Atomoví byznysmeni míří do Prahy, pozval je Filip kvůli Dukovanům. Hospodarske Nov. 2.12, 19.
- Žizka, J., 2014. Sofie se cítí obětí EU. Kvůli plynu. Lidové Nov. 6 (10), 14.
- Žizka, J., 2014. Smlouvy s Gazpromem nesmí být tajné. Lidové Nov. 6 (16), 14.
- Zsilleová, M., 2009. Jahnátek: Únia nás nezastaví. SME 12 (13), 2009.