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**SECURITIZATION OF ENERGY AND CLIMATE IN GERMANY  
AND POLAND AFTER RUSSIAN INVASION TO UKRAINE**

Master's thesis

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

The document length is 19 669 words from the introduction to the end of the conclusion.

Kaja Ainsalu, 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2023

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## **ABSTRACT**

The way societies produce and consume energy has a profound impact on climate. Modern climate and energy policies are intertwined, but there is a space for potential conflicts. Russian invasion to Ukraine in 2022 has also been a game changer as energy security has gained a lot of importance since.

The relationship between climate and energy policies during the energy crisis and ongoing war offers an interesting topic to research. This thesis looks at the two neighbouring countries, Germany and Poland, as their dependence on Russian energy import was high, but they carry a divergent understanding of energy security and climate ambition. It is comparing if and how the climate and energy nexus have been exploited to be securitized by the countries' political leaders. Original securitization theory and further widening of extraordinary measures have been combined in this thesis.

Drawing on a climate-energy nexus discourse analysis, the paper shows that for Germany the concern about climate change is visible at their energy policy decisions, while Poland is prioritizing energy security through conventional energy. The discussion mainly stays on the political level, but attempts to securitize energy has been done by both countries. As a result of the war, decisions and actions for energy and climate have speeded up, but in general it didn't make countries to abandon their earlier climate and energy plans, just the timeframes have been adjusted.

Keywords: energy security, energy transition, climate change, securitization, Germany, Poland, Russian invasion

## INTRODUCTION

*“The climate crisis is the biggest international challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century facing our international community. Climate protection and the energy transition are not only about the future of our planet, of our families and our children. Rather – and we’re witnessing this at the moment in the most brutal way – this is about tangible security interests and geopolitics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”* Annalena Baerbock, German Minister for Foreign Affairs (Federal Foreign Office, 29.03.2022)

In 2015 Paris Agreement, the first legally binding climate commitment from 2020 onwards, countries agreed to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below the 2 degrees above the pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees above the pre-industrial levels. Since then, the decarbonisation has been moving gradually to be the main policy goal of energy policy in many countries.

Taking into account various committed climate pledges, national and international climate and energy policies, the world should be in the rapid energy transition currently. And yet, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA) the investments into clean energy and energy efficiency are not enough to reach the agreed climate goals by mid-century and at the same time, the investments into conventional energy have also declined, being insufficient to meet the potential growth in demand like it has happened in 2022 (Biroł, 2022, pp. 5-6).

Since 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022, Europe literally by overnight needed to start dealing with the possible energy scarcity and insecurity. Until 2022 Russia was Europe’s biggest supplier of fossil fuels as in 2021 it was responsible around 40% of its gas, 30% of its oil and 45% of its coal import. Among the European Union (EU) members, Germany was the biggest importer of Russian conventional energy across all the mentioned energy sources. The EU has been committed to the energy transition, though the pace hasn’t been fast enough, and the dependence on Russian energy has even increased due to the decline of domestic supply and low investments into renewable energy (Benton *et al.*, 2022, p. 14). Natural gas was seen as a bridging fuel to a climate neutrality, the cleanest and cheapest option to substitute coal and help the EU during the period when the clean-

energy technologies were yet to be developed, in principle until 2030 (Holland, 2022, p. 89). Skyrocketing gas prices and possible gas shortages in early 2022 urged European countries to quickly explore immediate substitutes for their energy imports from Russia to secure more or less normal daily existence to their citizens as well to their economies. Energy security started to dominate political discourse next to the climate protection aspects (Schiffer *et al.*, 2022, p. 166).

Fatih Birol, the Executive Director of IEA, suggested that Russian fossil fuels needs to be replaced by the production elsewhere, “even in a world working towards net-zero emissions by 2050” (Birol, 2022, p. 7). The quickest option is to use more domestic fossil fuel resources. Many countries, especially in Europe, have been prolonging the work of their fossil fuel power plants, like Germany and Poland, who have extended the life of some of their coal-fired power plants. International Energy Agency suggests also to extend the production from existing fields and if needed to build new infrastructure, like liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminals in Europe as in the future these terminals could be used for low-emission (green) hydrogen or ammonia (Ibid.). Both Germany and Poland have been investing to their gas infrastructure in 2022, opening new pipelines and LNG facilities to improve the reception and diversify suppliers.

Another relatively fast short-term solution is to diversify the conventional energy import and to build new partnerships - throughout 2022 EU members have signed more than 70 different deals with 27 partner countries. Data from the EU’s Energy Deals Tracker is showing that the EU is mostly focusing to secure new gas supplies as about 65% of energy import in 2022 are either with gas or LNG (Dennison *et al.*, 2022). Even if around half of those deals are with clean energy there is a risk that the EU member states will maintain their current energy profiles also in the medium period because of the investments made to the gas infrastructure (Ibid.).

More forward-looking option is to accelerate the shift towards more cleaner and efficient energy supplies, which could allow to abandon the fossil fuels over time. However, this decision will mature with a delay as there will be a gap between the political and/or investment decisions made and when the green energy facility will be operational. Also, some countries like Poland have decided to build its first nuclear power plant, when Germany has prolonged for a short while the operation of its remaining nuclear power plants.

Recent Working Paper from the International Monetary Fund highlights that it might seem like a dilemma to strengthen energy security and addressing climate change at the same time, but they are actually “two faces of the same coin” as policies and structural reforms aimed to reduce dependence on dirty energy would not only deliver a significant reduction in GHG emissions, but

also helping to improve energy security throughout Europe (Cevik, 2022, p. 4). The same opinion is expressed by Fatih Birol, who says that there is no need to choose between responding to the current energy crisis and addressing the climate one, as they are closely linked – large investments in clean energy is the ultimate guarantee of energy security in the future and it will bring down the GHG emissions (Birol, 2022, pp. 5-6).

The listed options above show the possible solutions how to overcome the current energy crisis, but as there are potential conflicts between climate and energy interests it offers an interesting perspective to study. Based on the above the research problem of this thesis focuses to the relationship of climate and energy decisions during the war and ongoing energy crisis. The aim of this paper is to study if and where the interests of climate policy and energy policy in the context of securitization are crossing each other after Russian invasion to Ukraine in 2022. It will focus to Germany and Poland as the purpose of it is to study if and how the climate and energy nexus have been exploited to be securitized by German and Polish leaders. The term “nexus” in the context of climate and energy implies that these sectors are increasingly linked as decisions and actions in one sector will have a significant effect to the other.

Germany and Poland are making an interesting mix to study as neighbouring countries face some rather similar challenges as both countries are very dependent from conventional energy, including Russia as their energy import partner number one; in addition, they are two biggest coal producers in the EU and their national GHG emissions are very high. At the same time, they have had diametrically opposing positions when it comes to the energy security and Nord Stream 2 – pre-war Germany saw this as purely economic venture and Poland as a threat to the whole European energy security. When it comes to the climate policy, they also share different viewpoints. Germany is known as a climate leader and in addition, current government has made climate issues one of its main priorities. Poland, on the contrary, is known as a laggard in climate policy, being the major opponent for the EU’s ambitious climate policy for years.

Energy transition means hard decisions from politicians, they need to find paths to transform the economy to be more sustainable and at the same time to prevent social unease. Those decisions would most probably have a negative effect to people’s lives in shorter timeframe (like job losses in certain sectors, higher prices, economic insecurity, etc), but in a longer perspective it will pay off. Pisani-Ferry (2022, p. 65) has summarised it well:

*“Climate action often involves making life today for the lower middle-class or the citizens of developing countries more expensive, in the hope of improving the living conditions of*

*yet-unborn future humans, most of whom will be foreigners. For these reasons the political-economy obstacles to effective and efficient action are daunting. Governments face strong incentives to postpone, posture and cheat”.*

Taken into account the abovementioned the research question for the thesis is following: What are the post-war implications to the securitization of climate and energy policies in fossil fuel dependent Germany and Poland?

Political discourse analysis has been used as a tool for the analysis of securitization process as it allows to explore what messages have been sent out, what threat perceptions exist and what kind of solutions have been proposed by German and Polish leaders. The analysis focuses on the utterances of key securitizing actors – top politicians who are responsible for the energy and climate field (ministers) and heads of states active in international fora. Speeches, statements, press releases, interviews, articles and other relevant materials of the selected securitizing actors from both primary and secondary sources were used for the current analysis. The primary selection was done among materials where securitizing actors mentioned at least one of the following key words – climate, energy, climate security, energy security, climate change or energy transformation/transition. Collected materials were coded as “securitizing actor”, “threat”, “referent object” and “solutions proposed” to study to which extent the issues raising from the combination of the post-war energy-climate nexus have been tried to securitize. Finally, they were categorised by the thematical coding based on the recurrent themes of the speech acts. This thesis is not making any claim on successful securitization as the acceptance of the audience – a vital aspect to claim the successful securitization – was not analysed, instead possible securitization moves were part of the analysis, to study in which context the issue was politicized or securitized by the political elite.

For that the case study method has been applied as it is a good tool to explore the similarities, differences and patterns within and between Germany and Poland in the context of post-war climate-energy nexus.

The timeline under the research was from the beginning of the war, the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 till the end of January 2023, some exceptions have been done to capture important messages either earlier or later. During the selected timeframe energy and energy security issues were gaining a momentum, and some significant and urgent decisions were made how to safeguard the energy security and how to move on with the climate goals.



The data gathering was done mainly thorough the formal channels of the relevant institutions of securitizing actors and in addition international and national news agencies were used as well. For Germany the official webpages of the Federal President, the Federal Chancellor, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Germany, and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action were used. For Poland the official webpages of the President, the Prime Minister, and the Ministry of Climate and Environment were used. In addition, international and national news agencies like BBC, CNN, Aljazeera, Politico, Financial Times, Deutsche Welle, Der Spiegel, Polskie Radio, Notes from Poland and The First News were used.

All of the materials used during the study were published in English. The latter does limit the available sources and speech acts to study compared with the original languages, but as the media sources are diverse and expand the information given by the official channels it mitigates the limitation.

Regarding the theoretical framework, the thesis is based on the securitization theory created by the Copenhagen School of Security Studies (CS) as it brings together utterances about security and decision-making, described in a more detail at the following chapter. Additionally, further development of the original securitization framework is used as widened emergency measures by Heinrich and Szulecki (2017) have been applied.

The structure of the thesis proceeds as follows. The first chapter contains the detailed overview of the securitization theory created by the scholars from the CS. The first subchapter describes the background and key features of the theory and the second subchapter focuses to the securitization of the environment. The second and third chapters cover the empirical part. They are dedicated to German and Polish securitization case studies and analysis of the speech acts by their securitizing actors. It will explore the utterances of German and Polish leaders during the first year of the energy crisis and is linked back to the securitization theory. The fourth chapter presents the discussion of findings where two national debates are compared. The thesis ends with presenting a conclusion of the research findings.

# 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## 1.1. Securitization theory background and key features

Until the end of the Cold War security evolved mainly around different military threats, but at the post-Cold War era the prevalent concept, where security was seen solely as a military subject connected with the use of force, started to lose its dominance. The shift was towards widening the security agenda, from the security of state (national security) to the security of people, both individually and collectively (Waever, 1995). One of the new approaches was initiated by the Copenhagen School. They questioned the primacy of the military component and state in the forming of security as they placed security in a wider perspective involving also nonmilitary threats appearing from the environmental, economic and social sectors (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 1).

Their securitization theory is part of the constructivist paradigm as for the securitization theory there are no objective threats as security itself is not an objective condition. Because security is socially constructed and as existential threats are different across sectors and countries, anything could be transformed into security issue, but labelling something as a threat shapes the way of addressing it. This raises a question where to stop as otherwise security as such will become a synonym for everything that is politically good or desirable (Waever, 1995). It has been tagged by the CS as one of the dangers what widening the security beyond the traditional military sector will bring (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 1).

Humankind faces myriad of vulnerabilities and threats, both military and non-military, that will be dealt primarily at political, business-as-usual level, and only some of them will be flagged as a security issue, the issue above everyday politics. CS has divided issues into three dimensions (Ibid., pp. 23-24):

- a nonpoliticized issue is not at the government's radar neither it is part of the public discussions;
- a politicized issue is part of the government's agenda, belonging under the public governance and figures at the public debates;

- a securitized issue has been perceived as an existential threat, which needs an urgent action and tools outside the normal political toolbox and discussions. The latter could also be seen as an extreme version of politicization.

The difference between political level and securitized level could be summarised that “politicization opens up and securitization closes down” (Ibid., p. 143). This indicates that at the politicised level discussions and debates are part of the regular political practices, whereas at the securitised level rupturing ordinary political practices are allowed to the ruling elite. Securitization theory allows to explore the political process behind the choice of threats, to investigate why some of them are taken more essential and urgent compared to others, why they are moved from the political level to security level (Trombetta, 2011, p. 135; Szulecki, 2020, p. 2).

Balzacq (2011, p. 1) says that no issue is essentially a menace and it will come a security issue only through the use of language, the speech act. *A speech act* is a certain type of social process, where *a securitizing actor* needs to claim to the intended *audience* that there is *an existential threat* to *a referent object*, with what the audience needs *to agree* and with their acceptance the securitizing actor has been granted the use of *emergency measures* beyond normal political rules (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 4; my emphasis). As presented, the use of language is important in securitization theory as highlighting “security” in a speech act is essential because “the utterance *itself* is the act” as “by saying it, something is done” (Waeber, 1995, p. 55; Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 26). Until the audience accepts the claim, the securitization has not been successful, it is merely an attempt, “a securitization move” (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, pp. 25-26). Even though the acceptance of audience is important in the securitization process as it grants the possibility to use the extraordinary measures, the CS itself doesn’t put much emphasis to describe the audience and it has been usually seen as a general public.

Referent object is an object who faces the existential threat and whose survival is at stake pursuant to the securitizing actor. The latter is a person or a group, who claims publicly the existential threat towards a referent object. The list of referent objects nor securitizing actors is not conclusive, though Williams (2003, p. 514) highlights that not all actors are in equally powerful positions to make the claims nor are all claims socially effective. A good example is given by the President of Nauru, Marcus Stephen, representing Small Island States at the United Nations Security Council’s (UNSC) hearing about the impact of climate change:

*“I often wonder where we would be if the roles were reversed. What if the pollution coming from our island nations was threatening the very existence of the major emitters? What*

*would be the nature of today's debate be under those circumstances?"* (United Nations Security Council, 2011, p. 22)

The main components of the successful securitization process are “existential threats, emergency action and effects of interunit relations by breaking free of rules” (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 26) and as a result of it, a new reality has been created as from now on the securitized issue will be dealt in a new way - above normal political rules and regulations, giving the state elites special rights to deal with it. CS emphasises that emergency measures do not need to be adopted, but there needs to be an understanding that there is a possibility to legitimize the emergency measures, the so-called breaking free of rules (Ibid., p. 25).

Many scholars say that the definition of the extraordinary measures given by the CS is too narrow and would not allow to search the field properly (Heinrich & Szulecki, 2017, pp. 39-41). For instance, Salter (2011, p. 121) argues that so-called usual measures, which do not break the rules of the ordinary political process, also make for securitization until there is some public policy change, either in discourse, budget, or in actual policy, such as the granting of new or emergency executive powers. Similarly, Kuzemko (2014, p. 260-261) presents exceptional measures as a “break with previous political practice” which thereby reduces government responsibility for policy and leaves less possibilities for “political discretions, deliberations and interventions.” In a view of critique towards the CS, Heinrich & Szulecki (2017, p. 39) are trying to find an answer, if there can be also a securitization without the call for exceptional measures and/or the breaking of rules, so that it could take place inside the normal political process. The authors say that majority of the securitizing moves “have ended in measures that are part of the ordinary politics”, but the new measures bring novel political practice that clearly differs from the previous one, and came up with three suggestions that together or alone could be taken as extraordinary measures if it is legitimized by reference to security (Ibid., pp. 40-41):

- breaking norms - explicit or implicit prescriptions about “how things are done”
- shifting competences and power towards the executive
- withholding or limiting information

As an example, Heinrich & Szulecki (2017, p. 45) present German energy transformation with the phase out of nuclear energy as an extraordinary measure because it was finally implemented by the CDU-led conservative government after it had reversed an earlier decision by the previous SPD-led social democratic government to that effect. It was a complete political U-turn for the

CDU, which had strongly opposed the phasing out of nuclear energy before (Ibid.). Similarly, the construction of the Polish LNG terminal at the Baltic Sea could also be looked as an extraordinary measure as its construction was commenced by the conservative government and the liberal successor government did not reverse the decision, as it has been a common practice in Poland after the governmental change (Ibid.). Those could be considered as extra-ordinary measures as they have been breaking the norms, traditions how things have been done.

Securitization is following the principle “if we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant” (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 24), because securitized issue has been labelled as the most important issue among others and should be treated as an absolute priority. But security label will also bring practices connected with the logic of war and emergency and raises a question is a securitization as such a desirable thing as it will not offer possibilities for negations and political debate (Trombetta, 2011, pp. 135-136). CS gives also a warning of framing the issues in terms of security easily as they do not believe “the more security the better” approach as a need for securitization demonstrates a previous failure to handle the issue at a political level, using the toolbox of normal political rules and regulations (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 29). This is the reason why the CS scholars prefer desecuritization over securitization (Waever, 1999, p. 335) and they emphasise that it is always a political decision to use securitization. As Waever (1999, p. 338) voices it “how does the trade-off look between this gain and the price paid by democracy?”

## **1.2. Securitization of environment: climate change and energy**

Copenhagen School of Security Studies securitization theory has listed environment as one of the five distinct sectors, but securitizing environmental problems raises conflicting views as for some it is “the ultimate security” as for others “the pollution of security proper” and for most it is something in between (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 71).

Environment has been “relatively constant background factor, rather than issue of its own” for the most of human history, but because of the human activity and increased knowledge of planetary ecosystem, it has climbed up both the political and security agenda (Buzan, 1991, p. 131). Environmental problems started to emerge in political debates in 1970ties, environmental security discussions started to gain momentum a decade later (Trombetta, 2008, p. 585) and it has also reached the high politics in UNSC. First ever UNSC meeting about climate change was held in 2007.

Sharp increase in population and steady economic growth during a very short time, mainly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, are thought to be the main root causes behind the current environmental problems because more people need more food, space for living and increasing energy consumption is vital for the economic growth. This is the reason why the “industrial humanity,” a term used by Dalby (2013, p. 35), has had a huge impact in shaping its surroundings on earth and beyond.

Securitization of environment is gaining a momentum as more and more leaders see environmental issues falling under “the ultimate security” label. Oels (2012, p.185) argues that since 2003 climate change has been started to be pointed as a threat to national, international, and human security both in political declarations and scientific publications. Recent statements from COP27 will support this, like Joe Biden saying “The climate crisis is about human security, economic security, environmental security, national security, and the very life of the planet” (The White House, 11.11.2022), Australia’s Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chis Bowen emphasised that “Climate change is a primary economic and security challenge for our region – and an existential threat to the Blue Pacific continent” (Bowen, 2022) and Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin highlighting “Climate change is the biggest global security challenge we face. However, ongoing wars and violence in different parts of the world are magnifying its impacts” (Finnish Government, 2022).

The relationship between nature and human civilization is the main issue under the environmental security for the CS - how humankind could preserve its current level of civilization and at the same time not to destroy the biosphere (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 76). CS emphasises that environmental security is not about existential threats to the nature as such as it will survive one way or another, the concern is the maintenance of the stable environment as a precondition of all human enterprises (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 76; Buzan, 1991, pp. 19-20). German Chancellor Scholz has summarised this well saying that if humankind would like to achieve the 1.5-degree target there is a need to halve the global CO2 emissions before the end of the decade and “we will only succeed if we think about climate change mitigation and prosperity in conjunction” (The Federal Government, 18.07.2022). Therefore, the security angle raises from the nature-human nexus. It contains a paradox as a contemporary lifestyle, which is causing the environmental decay, is not sustainable as humankind is living beyond the carrying capacity of the earth and the only way to secure the humankind from the environmental threats are to change the lifestyle (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, pp. 76-81). The decision about to change the lifestyle is not easy to make and many governments are looking justifications not to. One of the recent most influential steps has been President Trump’s

decision in 2017 to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord. The centrepiece of his message during the announcement was continuous support to the current model of American economy as he sees Paris agreement in “lost jobs, lower wages, shuttered factories, and vastly diminished economic production” to American people (The White House, 2017). According to him it will result around 2.7 million lost jobs for Americans (Ibid.). In 2021, when President Biden brought the United States back to the Paris Climate Accord, he saw the exact opposite as he stated “when I think of climate change (...) I think of jobs” and described also the paradox between the interest of the environment and human civilization as “a case where conscious and convenience cross paths, where dealing with this existential threat to the planet and increasing our economic growth and prosperity are one in the same” (The White House, 2021).

According to the CS environmental securitization has two agendas – scientific one and political one, which are intertwined as academic field will introduce and highlight the environmental threats and political sphere will decide if and/or how to deal with them (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, pp. 71-73). Involving academic agenda into environmental security discussions is needed because of the great variety of complicated issues and variables, its cumulating and creeping nature, long time horizon etc. To use scientific data in a speech act adds more credibility and helps to explain the threat to the audience. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a good example of the merge of these two agendas. It is the most important scientific body in the field and since 1990 it is producing regular profound and transparent scientific assessment on climate change. IPCC has raised the awareness about the threats of climate change and has a huge role that governments and other actors have started to address and prioritise it more vigorously. Awareness raising is important as securitization is an intersubjective act and reflects the values and interests of the society (Trombetta, 2011, p. 138).

Environmental sector incorporates various issues and CS has listed six categories under the environmental security: disruption of ecosystems, energy problems, population problems, food problems, economic problems and civil strife, but considers the “disruption of ecosystems,” which also includes climate change and loss of biodiversity as the purest environmental issue as the rest of them overlap often with other sectors, but are viewed through the environmental prism (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, pp. 74-75). As shown, securitization theory does not bring energy out as a sector of its own. Some scholars like Natorski & Herranz-Surrallés (2008, p. 75) are saying that energy is an elusive domain which could be examined within each of the five sectors. As for example, if energy is securitized under environmental sector the focus might be on mitigating the damaging effects of using fossil fuels, whereas if it is securitized under military domain the focus could be

on the potential for external suppliers of a resource to coerce a state (Judge *et al.*, 2017, p. 155). This thesis is looking energy through the lenses of environmental sector: energy production is vital and necessary, but it needs to be done without heavy impacts to the environment. Judge *et al.* (2017, pp. 155-156) is presenting an idea that energy could be also a distinct sector, but for this it would need to have a specific feature and is saying that it could be “an indirect referent object” as in many cases of energy securitization energy supply as such is not the referent object itself, but it is “the *means* through which survival of some other referent object is secured.”

Because of the huge variety of issues, the environmental sector offers many possibilities for referent objects in all levels of analysis – at the one end of the spectrum there is the environment itself and at the other the nexus of civilization and environment. Some referent objects could be classified as very concrete ones like survival of individual species/habitats, others on the contrary are overwhelming large-scale issues like the maintenance of the planetary climate. Buzan *et al.* (1998, p. 23) are stating that the survival of human civilization and species are “clear cases” for securitization, the rest, that will stay in between the spectrum, are harder to securitize.

Environmental sector also accommodates a considerable number of different actors to the ones already mentioned above, most important ones are lead actors and veto actors. They are sector specific actors who are affecting the dynamics inside the sector (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 36; Floyd, 2021, p. 84). As the name refers, lead actor is raising and supporting an important environmental topic for them, they could be states, but also scientific communities, influential NGOs or intergovernmental bodies (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 77). Many EU’s green initiatives would fit under this category as well the above-mentioned IPCC activities. Lead actors are using different strategies to persuade other actors on their side, it could be awareness raising, leading by example, using diplomatic means, financing activities, etc. Copenhagen School considers those activities merely as a politicization rather than securitization (Ibid., p. 77). Veto actors, usually states and companies/industries, are actors who try to use their power to diminish the importance of some environmental issues that is against their interests (Ibid., p. 77). At the Climate Change Conference COP26 in 2021 India and China as big coal producers used their power to soften the language in the final agreement about coal phase-out as in the beginning the wording was supposed to be “the phase-out of unabated coal power and of inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels” and the wording finally agreed was “phase down” (United Nations, 2021). In the current thesis both Polish government and the union of Polish miners could be looked as veto actors towards ambitious climate action with their continuous support to the usage of domestic coal.



In 1998 Buzan *et al.* (1998, pp. 28-29) stated that it is complicated to securitize environmental issues as the threats are rather new and their existential urgency at the time was not known. If the urgency is not clear the issue has more likelihood to end up as a political issue. Or it could be overtaken by other threats that come to be seen as bigger and more urgent (Buzan & Wæver, 2009, p. 274), like war on terror, acute financial crisis, Covid pandemic and now Russian invasion to Ukraine. As German Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock has pointed out in many of her statements while visiting different, especially developing countries, she has been told that “we understand your concern about the war of aggression against Ukraine, but our greatest security risk is the climate crisis” (Federal Foreign Office, 22.11.2022).

Copenhagen School itself does not see that environmental securitization has been successful as it has not led to the use of extraordinary measures (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 83). According to Oels (2012, p. 185) empirical analysis is not showing any proof of undemocratic proceedings and of extraordinary measures used in the case of climate change. Similar situation has been brought out by Szulecki (2020, pp. 2-3; Heinrich & Szulecki, 2017, p. 38) saying that securitization in energy is not very common. Dupont (2019, p. 373) argues that there has been many securitization moves, but not actual climate change securitization as at the international fora the audience is very wide. The international audience has not agreed with one unified interpretation of climate change as a security threat. Yet other scholars have said the fact itself that climate change has been discussed at the international level is an effect of successful securitization (von Lucke *et al.*, 2014, p. 858) or this could be seen as a contribution to the securitization. Trombetta (2011, p. 136) takes step further and argues that securitization of the environment must be considered successful as it has brought about measures and policies that probably otherwise would not have been committed to. Similar supportive tone has been used by Floyd (2007, pp. 342-343), who states the securitization of environment could cause positive environmental outcomes and desecuritization could be a negative feature in cases where the topic just disappears from the general policy agenda.

As when CS prefers an issue not to get to be as a security issue and sees desecuritization as a good move, Trombetta (2008, p. 589) agrees with Floyd as “environmental security have been made not only with the intent of prioritizing issues but also with that of transforming the logic of security and the practices associated with it.” The CS does admit that securitization as such has “tactical attractions” in mobilizing attention, support and resources for an issue under certain circumstances, but applying the mind-set of security will also bring problematic side effects (Buzan *et al.*, 1998, p. 29). Thus, to choose between securitization and politization depends on the concrete situation, but it will always remain a political decision.

## **2. SECURITIZATION IN GERMANY**

Germany is the fourth largest economy in the world and it belongs to the top ten of the largest GHG emitters as its economy faces a strong ongoing fossil fuel dependency. The current Federal Government of Germany, led by the Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democrats) took power in December 2021 and is composed by Social Democrats, Greens and Free Democrats. Climate and energy have found a prominent place at their coalition agreement. The government succeeded Angela Merkel's long reign and some of its members, especially from the Green Party, have been critical towards her government's previous energy and climate policy and relying too much to Russia's energy import. The Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier is serving his second term and took office on 2017. Previously he has been the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Angela Merkel's government.

### **2.1. Germany's energy mix and dependence on Russian fossil fuels**

Majority of Germany's energy needs, about 80%, are still covered by fossil fuels – 32% comes from oil, 24% from natural gas and 20% from two different types of coal, renewables and nuclear account for about 17% and 3% respectively (Appunn *et al.*, 2022). In 2021 Germany released around 8 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per capita to the atmosphere, which is 2-3 tonnes more than the global average (Climate Action in Figures, 2022, p. 5) and its energy sector is responsible approximately for 30% of Germany's GHG emissions (Germany's current climate action status, 2023, p. 10).

Import accounts for 60% of its energy. Until 2022 dominant amount of its fossil fuel import originated from Russia, and it made Germany its largest market (Stoicescu, 2022, p. 2). Oil import from Russia in 2021 was roughly 34% and by early 2023 it declined around to zero, being replaced by UK, Norway and Kazakhstan (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2023). Gas import in 2021 was 55%, during 2022 it dropped to 20%, and since August 2022 there hasn't been basically no gas import from Russia. Imported coal plays only a small role in Germany's energy sector, in 2021 Russia accounted for 50% of it, and already in summer 2022 Russia's coal was put under the EU's embargo (Wettengel, 2023).

The Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz has acknowledged that Germany has relied too long and too single-sidedly on Russian energy supplies (Fife & Chase, 2022), and stated at the European Council's special meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> of May that as an "immediate consequence of the Russian attack" Germany aims independence from it, but it will be a major challenge for Germany, while at the same time investments are needed to "stop to man-made climate change and achieve a carbon-neutral economy in Germany within a short period of time" (The Federal Government, 31.05.2022). Similar has been echoed by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock saying that Germany is "paying a high price for the delay to the energy transition caused by the Grand Coalition: with our dependency on Russia and by falling even shorter of our climate targets" (Junge & Pötter, 2022). The utterances indicate both problems at the same time – energy security and fight with the climate change – it is common to German speech acts.

As the statistics shows above, Germany has toiled to lower its dependency from Russia's fossil fuels since the Russian invasion in 2022. As a good illustrative utterance is given by the Federal Economic Affairs and Climate Action Minister, Robert Habeck, who has declared that the ongoing war has shown clearly that "energy and climate policy is also part of security policy," that Germany needs to be independent "as fast as possible from the shackles of Russian imports" and "ambitious energy and climate policy is the key to secure sustainable energy supply" (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 29.08.2022). The incumbent government has taken stronger, a hawkish position towards Russia compared with the previous ones. After the war started in 2022, the dependence on Russian energy has been considered as a security threat to Germany's national security and for the secure energy supply by all German top politicians. The main long-term solution offered by them to overcome the current energy crisis is to accelerate the transition to renewables, and at the same time natural gas has been projected as a bridge solution for short- and medium-term supporting to phase-out both nuclear by the 2023 and then coal by 2030.

### **2.1.1. German view to Nord Stream pipelines**

For a long time, previous German governments have taken both Nord Stream pipelines as business projects, seeing those as a private sector matter with no geopolitical implications. Angela Merkel's government only accepted the political aspect of them in late 2018 (Rettman, 2018), but also the incumbent Chancellor Scholz echoed as late as the end of 2021 that it is a private sector endeavour (Wettengel, 2021). Green Party members Ministers Baerbock and Habeck have had a different and opposing view towards Nord Stream 2 since the beginning. Foreign Minister said in her pre-war

interview in January 2022 that Nord Stream 2 definitely has a geopolitical implication (Audino, 2022).

Germany halted the approval process of Nord Stream 2 on 22<sup>nd</sup> of February as a reaction to Russia's recognition of Ukraine's two separatist regions and after Chancellor Scholz came under a strong international pressure. However, the certification was already put on hold by the new government as German regulators were assessing its compliance to the German and EU's regulatory framework. Foreign Minister Baerbock has said that all energy projects in Germany need to comply with the EU regulations, including the Nord Stream 2 and "that's currently not the case" (Ibid.). In early March 2022, more than two thirds (67%) of Germans supported to halt the process (Infratest Dimap, 2022). Baerbock has stated that

*"Should Russia attempt to use energy as a weapon or commit further aggressive acts against Ukraine, we will work with our European partners to take effective action. We stand by this statement. And, at the same time, it is our political responsibility to ensure that everyone in Europe, regardless of their income, can afford electricity and a warm home – which is another reason why it's so important to strengthen the independence of our European energy supply."* (Audino, 2022)

She projects Russia as a threat and clearly sends a message to Europe, Ukraine and Russia at the same time and her statement has been proven to stand at the post-war environment. As a referent object, she brings out affordable energy for Europeans, who might face shortage of supply as well as price hikes resulting from Russian action and highlights the need for energy independence, which carries the position of German government.

German government hasn't made public announcement about misjudging the Nord Stream 2 project, and they prefer to lay low with the topic. An illustrative utterance could be found from Minister Baerbock's speech at the business forum: "I don't want to get into Nord Stream 2 now and who was right when and how. That's water under the bridge" (Federal Foreign Office, 06.09.2022). The English language webpage of Federal Chancellor will only bring out 5 hits from 2022 about Nord Stream 2; and according to the Appunn & Wettengel (2022) Scholz even avoided the name of the pipeline during the joint press conference with Joe Biden in February 2022. In April 2022, Der Spiegel was asking directly from Scholz why isn't he able to admit that Nord Stream 2 was a mistake, and he answered:

*“We prevented it from going into operation in response to Russian aggression. And geostrategically, we should have diversified our imports much earlier. And it also would have been right to have moved earlier to accelerate the expansion of renewable energies in such a way that we become independent of the import and use of fossil resources, also for the sake of the environment.”* (Amann & Knobbe, 2022)

He does not utter clearly that the Nord Stream 2 as such was a mistake or a threat back then, instead he is listing what Germany should have done differently to avoid the current situation. Those are the actions his Federal Government is executing currently. In the speech act he also acknowledges the need to abandon the fossil fuels from the environmental perspective. But the incumbent President Steinmeier, former Minister of Foreign Affairs at Angela Merkel’s government, took another position saying:

*“That was a mistake, clearly. (...) Now, not only has a multibillion-euro project failed, but our behavior has also resulted in a loss of credibility with our Eastern European partners. That hurts.”* (Amann & Medick, 2022)

The war in Europe has changed German positions towards energy security as they do accept the threat caused by Russia via the weaponization of energy and that both Nord Stream pipelines were political tools, their own heavy dependence of Russian fossil fuels and that some earlier wrongdoings have put German citizens and businesses into a very difficult situation. Also, that this has had an impact to their climate targets. Even though the incumbent government is critical towards Russia, the Nord Stream is not a topic they are proactively very vocal and trying to maintain a low profile, especially when compared with their Polish counterparts.

## **2.2. Climate and energy targets**

The core of Germany’s current climate and energy legislation is the Climate Change Act 2021 version. In addition, the coalition agreement shows the direction. The first Climate Change Act 2019 version was amended because the German Federal Constitutional Court ruled on 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2021 that German Federal Government has a legal obligation to safeguard the fundamental rights of its citizens from the actual threat of climate change and the measures used in the 2019 act were insufficient to protect the climate and future generations (Stäsche, 2022, pp. 2-3). The amended act went into force already in June 2021 and determines that Germany’s climate, energy and

economic policies are to be aligned with the Paris Climate Accord's goal of maintaining the global warming at 1.5 degrees and sets that climate targets might be increased, but not decreased (Federal Climate Change Act, 2021). The document brings forward the climate neutrality deadline to 2045 from 2050, sets more ambitious targets to reduce the GHG emissions at least 65% for 2030 and 88% for 2040 compared to 1990 levels (Ibid.). Current government also decided to bring forward the coal phase-out to 2030 from 2038, 50% of the heat is planned to come in a climate-neutral manner by 2030 as well as 80% of electricity will be produced via renewable energy by this deadline.

Future generation is something that all German politicians refer in their speech acts, when it comes to the climate protection, highlighting the need for a continuous and fast action. The Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier used his Christmas address to emphasise the need to continue the fight against climate change as it has not lost its urgency in the light of other worries as "After all, we all share a common goal: that the young are not the "Last Generation" on this planet. Rather, that they are the first generation in a climate-friendly world" (Der Bundespräsident, 25.12.2022). In addition, Chancellor Scholz and Minister Habeck have tied the future generation referent object with prosperity. For instance, Robert Habeck said:

*"With this agreement, we are bringing forward the lignite phase-out in the Rhineland by eight years to 2030. This is a milestone for climate action and helps to meet our climate action targets. We must face up to our responsibility towards future generations: climate action ensures freedom and prosperity beyond the present day."* (The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 04.10.2022)

But the actual situation is not so rosy. In January 2022, shortly after Robert Habeck took the position of the Economic Affairs and Climate Action Minister, he presented a review of Germany's current climate action and stated that Germany is far from achieving the set targets as "climate action taken in all sectors so far is inadequate," in addition he predicted that Germany will fall behind both of its 2022 and 2023 targets (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 13.01.2022). According to the presented document, Germany needs to triple its pace, if it wants to meet its GHG reduction targets. It is also felt by German society as majority of people (84%) think that their government is reacting too slowly, and only 27% believe that Germany will be successful for reducing its planned GHG emissions by 2030 (European Investment Bank, 2022a).

The fight with the climate change has a central place in the current coalition agreement and achieving the Paris Climate Accord target, 1.5 degrees, has been set as a priority. Dramatic expansion of renewable energy with accelerated approval and planning procedures is planned as renewables are the centrepiece of the energy transition and renewable energy implementation will get a priority until climate neutrality has been reached.

### **2.3. Energy transition as a top priority**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2022, three days after Russian invasion to Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz made a political statement to the Bundestag, a *Zeitenwende* speech, where he called Russia a threat and set five courses of action. Among others he highlighted the national security issue in the triangle of energy-climate-economy as:

*“And we will change course in order to eliminate our dependence on imports from individual energy suppliers. And after all, the events of recent days and weeks have shown us that responsible, forward-looking energy policy is not just crucial for our economy and our climate. It is also crucial for our security. This means that the faster we make progress with the development of renewable energies, the better.”* (The Federal Government, 28.02.2022)

He highlights the same triangle and idea repeatedly over the following year, including at his COP27 statement. Other key ministers have aligned with Scholz. Federal Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Robert Habeck pointed out on 25<sup>th</sup> of February that people “not so keen on climate protection” should have understand for the moment that ending Germany’s reliance on conventional energy wherever possible is a “crucial strategic issue – even a matter of security policy” (The Federal Government, 25.02.2022). Minister for Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock has expressed similar idea saying that the current war has persuaded “even the last sceptics in Germany” that there is a need for more renewables and energy efficiency “not only to protect the climate, but to safeguard our energy security” (Federal Foreign Office, 18.07.2022).

The understanding that renewables are tools to reduce the need for conventional energy and offer a way out from Russian import, has been in Germany for a while (Szulecki & Kusznir, 2017, p. 124). The energy crisis resulting from the war is offering now the window of opportunity for a quick energy transition – it needed to be done anyway, the new coalition agreement sets the

direction and the society is positive about it. As high as 80% of Germans believe that the war in Ukraine and its effects on energy prices should accelerate the green transition (Meza, 2022), and more than two thirds of Germans were supportive to the measures their government had taken against Russia, even if this would mean energy bottlenecks, increased energy prices and impacts on German businesses (Infratest Dimap, 2022). Germany has supported its citizens and businesses with different relief measures that will run into 2024. They are very costly to the government, around 200 billion EUR, but will be necessary to execute as energy needs to be affordable for everyone, pointed out by politicians.

In his speech acts the Chancellor has admitted that the energy transition will not be easy, but he and the rest of the politicians present the challenges mostly in a positive light and are tying the climate action with economic growth and possibilities, for instance:

*“We are resolutely pushing forward with the decarbonization of our industry. We want to be climate-neutral by 2045. And at the same time, we will remain a country with a strong manufacturing sector. And despite all the difficulties this past year showed us: we can and we will succeed in that.”* (The Federal Government, 18.01.2023)

Many speech acts showcase the concrete connection between the war, the need for energy transition and independence and how this in turn have an effect to climate targets. For example, the Federal Chancellor mentions repeatedly that “Putin’s use of energy as a weapon, rapidly rising energy prices – all this merely reinforces our commitment to that goal [2045 climate neutrality]” (The Federal Government, 18.07.2022) as “now we have even more cause to do it [2045 climate neutrality]” (The Federal Government, 26.05.2022). Similar thoughts could be found both in Baerbock’s and Habeck’s statements, like at COP27 Minister Habeck talked about it in the same manner:

*“Russia’s current war of aggression against Ukraine is significantly overshadowing the global commitment to climate action. Nevertheless, more than ever, now is the time for increased climate action.”* (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 06.11.2022)

With this type of speech acts they are reassuring that Germany will honour the climate commitment despite the ongoing war in Europe and has no plans to change the course taken by the government.



Germany has used the momentum created by the war to safeguard its energy security and move on with the energy transition as the Federal Cabinet approved already on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 the so-called Easter Package, which is considered to be the largest energy policy revision for decades. Heinrich *et al.* (2016, p. 2) bring out that earlier obstacle to expand and support renewables was the lack of policy harmonization across different ministries and also between the Federal Government and regional governments. Though this step was in preparation before the war started, in the light of urgency and energy crisis the Easter Package shows the changed priorities. Habeck points this out as:

*“The Easter package is part of our agenda and we have been working flat out over the past months to put it together. It has now been given a double urgency in the face of Russia’s illegal attack on Ukraine. On the one hand, there is the climate crisis that is coming to a head. On the other, Russia’s invasion shows how important it is to exit from fossil fuels and consistently press ahead with the expansion of renewables”* (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 06.04.2022).

After the amendment entered into force on 29<sup>th</sup> of July he commented:

*“In view of the worsening climate crisis and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, the expansion of renewable energy has become a matter of national and European security, we need to transform our energy systems as fast as possible, away from fossil fuels towards renewable energy. (...) From today, the principle applies that the use of renewable energy is in the public interest and serves public security.”* (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 29.07.2022)

In general, this means “renewables first” as renewable energy will be prioritised and speed up when energy decisions are made as the government’s worry about both the climate change and energy security is high. German government has clearly perceived the urgency and has acted accordingly as it aims to double its renewable energy with less than a decade and tripling the pace of renewables’ expansion. Over the course of 2022 Habeck and Scholz have been praising the accelerating pace when it comes to prioritized different energy infrastructure projects like “approvals for electricity grids (...) are granted on average two years faster than before” (The Federal Government, 18.01.2023) or when Germany’s first LNG terminal was constructed with less than 200 days, Minister Habeck said “that’s amazingly quick” (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 15.11.2022). Scholz summarises the changed work pace

*“Germany can be flexible; we can be unbureaucratic; and we can be fast. (...) a new “German speed””* (The Federal Government, 18.01.2023).

The speech acts show that the energy crisis has shaken a lot traditionally very slow German bureaucracy and its work processes in the energy sector as vital measures to prioritize one type of energy source were adopted extremely fast. Renewable energy prioritization contains a securitized logic. According to the original CS securitization theory those emergency measures have been implemented within the framework of law as was discussed and approved by the Parliament and most of the measures were planned to be adopted according to the coalition agreement anyway, thus strictly taken they fall under the politization category. But when to follow the further development of emergency measures by Heinrich & Szulecki (2017, pp. 39-41) the approval of the Easter Package is a successful securitization move as it was done breaking earlier norms (slow bureaucracy) and it is shifting the competences and power towards the executive branch as they have now the right to decide how and when to use the “overriding public priority” label.

In the speech acts above, national security could be considered as an overarching referent object needing a protection through safeguarding energy independence and energy security, but also achieving climate neutrality/targets and affordable energy for people and businesses could be seen as a referent object. Energy independence, energy security and renewable energy could also be looked as referent objects, but in this context, they are mostly the means through which the survival of the national security and climate targets is secured, the concept that Judge *et al.* (2017) presented. The discourse presents renewable energy as a pro-security element for the national security and to climate goals, it is a leitmotif of German top politicians’ speech acts. The speech acts about the renewable energy are positive and reassuring, politicians do not point out the negative aspects or risks of the renewables like volatility, rare elements needed for the development, etc. In addition, speech acts are also contributing to the awareness raising among their audience as German government has set a strong focus on the expansion of renewable energy as the main energy supply in the future and this type of speech acts are amplifying the idea. The speech acts present the inextricability of climate and energy sectors, but none of them have given a priority over the other, they are seen as part of the same solution package where they do support each other, not oppose. The securitizing actors showcase the energy transfer both important and pressing issue, though the speech acts may not use explicitly a word “threat”. However, its looming nature is on the background and it is understandable that Russian war and energy dependence are the main reasons for the changed course in German energy policy.

## 2.4. Gas and coal

In a longer-term German government is prioritising green energy options, but for the shorter term they are supporting the extended operational period of some coal-fired power plants and conventional energy investments, mainly to natural gas, both domestically and internationally.

In the Zeitenwende speech, Scholz brings out two solutions how to ensure the national security: the first one is to create reserves of coal and gas – to store and purchase them from the world market, and the second one is to build rapidly two LNG terminals to Germany (The Federal Government, 28.02.2022). This conflicts with Germany’s ambitious climate goals, especially as they are already falling behind. With this speech act national and energy security as referent objects will contradict and prevail the climate goals. As these solutions are supporting the use of fossil fuels, politicians have felt the need to explain this in their later statements. Already at the same speech, the Chancellor underlines that both of the decisions are also investments to the green energy infrastructure as “our current short-term needs can dovetail with what is already needed long-term for the transformation to succeed,” as for example LNG terminals can be used later to transport green hydrogen (The Federal Government, 28.02.2022). This is in line with the coalition agreement. For the reassurance, over the following year Scholz has emphasised several times that Germany will not overlook its climate goals. For example, at COP27 he said that

*“By 2045 Germany will be climate neutral. We will phase out the fossil fuels without any ifs and buts. There must not be the international renaissance for fossil fuels. And for Germany I can say – there won’t.”* (Scholz, 2022)

At COP26 in 2021 Germany pledged to end its public support for all fossil fuel projects abroad by the end of 2022. However, it is a non-binding commitment which Germany hasn’t included into its concrete policies and the pledge offers a bit of a back door as it allows an exception for "limited" circumstances that comply with climate goals (Reuters, 2022). As a result, Germany discussed in 2022 to support the expansion of new gas fields in Senegal, but Chancellor has referred that new investments into gas needs to be aligned with the 2045 carbon neutrality objective and no new lasting dependencies on conventional energy will be made not in Germany or producer countries (The Federal Government, 18.07.2022). This is further strengthened by the Foreign Minister Baerbock saying that gas is a stopgap for Germany and it will expire “by the mid-2040s at the latest, it will only be permissible to transport green hydrogen” and the single aim of new investment are “to substitute Russian gas supplies for a short period of time” (Junge & Pötter,

2022). As diversification of suppliers has become important to Germany, energy cooperation, both in the field of fossil fuels and renewables, as well as climate cooperation, has been a priority topic for many international visits and meetings made by the members of German politicians during 2022. USA, Egypt, Qatar, Canada, India, Mexico, and Senegal are just some examples.

Germany extended the operational period for some of its coal power plants, which were to be switched off at the end of 2022, but will remain now operational longer, at least by 2024. Responsible Minister Habeck has called this as temporary measure, which does not affect the overall 2030 coal phase-out plans (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 13.07.2022), even if some state premiers from coal regions have wanted to postpone the deadline back to 2038. He has described the continuous usage of coal power being “painful, but necessary in view of the gas shortage” (The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 04.10.2022). Also, Chancellor Scholz has used many times emotional approach, where he shows the conflict between his wishes and real actions taken when it comes to coal power as well as investments into gas infrastructure:

*“No one can be pleased that the share of coal-fired power generation is rising again, in Germany as well, in response to looming bottlenecks in gas supplies. (...) this is an emergency measure imposed for a very short, limited period of time, and it does not take away from our climate targets. The same is true of investment in the gas infrastructure. Yes, we temporarily need new LNG capacities, so that the lights don’t go out in people’s homes or in factories and businesses here and in many other countries around the world.”*  
(The Federal Government, 18.07.2022).

Also, Minister for Foreign Affairs have echoed the same – “For a short period, we will have to revamp coal-fired plants as an emergency reserve – but only as a reserve” and “In the short term, we have to take tough decisions that we don’t like, to reduce our dependency on Russian gas and oil” (Federal Foreign Office, 18.07.2022).

In this type of speech acts both energy security and climate goals could be counted as referent objects, but over the short period energy security prevails, as this guarantees the functioning of the society. Politicians are trying to reassure the audience that it is in accordance with Germany’s longer period climate objectives and that the investments will not go wasted as they will be used afterwards as green energy infrastructure. According to the speech acts carbon neutrality deadline for 2045 is rock solid and it has been mentioned very frequently, and the same applies for the 2030

coal phase-out as government has not been giving any signs to postpone them during the energy crisis. The securitizing actors show remorse as the decisions are going against one of this government's priority – a green transition. The extension of the operation of power plants and building LNG terminals have been called as emergency measures by the securitizing actors. Those could be interpreted as a securitization move as this is something extraordinary in the context of German politics, breaking the usual norms and bringing policy change.

On 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 German Government announced that Federal Network Agency has been temporarily appointed as the fiduciary for the Gazprom Germania Group as the latter operates critical infrastructure for Germany's gas supply. At the time Gazprom Germania belonged to Russia's state-owned gas company Gazprom. Similar fiduciary process was done with the Rosneft Deutschland as of 16<sup>th</sup> of September. Minister Habeck commented the Gazprom Germania's decision

*“(…) serves to protect public security and order and to maintain the security of supply. This step is imperative. (...) The unclear legal situation, violations of the reporting obligation and the announcement of the liquidation of Gazprom Germania are now forcing the Federal Government to take this step.”* (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 04.04.2022).

As a further step the government transferred the company to the federal ownership as of 14<sup>th</sup> of November due to the financial difficulties, but as it is the provider of the vital services to Germany, the government needed to save it from the bankruptcy (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 14.11.2022). Another similar case was with Uniper, European largest Russian gas importer whom German government saved from the bankruptcy because it has a central role in Germany's gas and electricity supplies. Scholz has said that Uniper has a “paramount importance for the economic development of this country, for the energy supply of citizens and many firms” (Amelang, 2022). Minister Habeck stated

*“We will not allow a systemically relevant company like Uniper to fail, thus jeopardising Germany's energy security. The shortage of energy that has been artificially created by Russia is not a normal fluctuation that the market can digest. In order to safeguard the security of our energy supply, we therefore intend to use the redistribution mechanism of the Energy Security of Supply Act, and we will be discussing this with parliament.”* (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 22.07.2022)

To save the company of overriding importance for German economy, Federal Government, approved by Parliament, needed to change the legislation which would grant the state with power to take stakes in utilities and allow energy companies to pass on increased procurement costs when specific conditions apply (Wettengel, 2022). This step is also pre-emptive for the next similar situations in the future. Habeck said during the process that “These instruments are sharp swords that we give ourselves but do not want to use yet. We would only use them with great caution.” and if Parliament will approve the proposal, the government is still “yet to be decided” if Uniper will be supported (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 22.07.2022). In September Germany nationalised the whole company.

Both of them are preventive actions to eliminate the threat towards the critical infrastructure and are strategic and successful securitization moves – companies offering vital service to Germany as referent objects, threat posed by Russia and/or its energy policy, followed by proposed and executed emergency measures. The measures were implemented inside the political sphere as it is breaking the norms as this type of actions are rare in German society, as well as the decision is giving more power to the executive branch of political sector.

## **2.5. Nuclear power**

The decision to close down German nuclear power plants was made more than a decade ago, after the Fukushima nuclear catastrophe, as Germans consider the technology and waste management not to be safe enough. Nevertheless, in the light of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, German Federal Government has prolonged the work of three last nuclear power plants until the mid-April 2023 as earlier they were planned to close down at the end of 2022 (The Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, 05.09.2022) and as the Minister for Foreign Affairs said “any measures that will help us get through the winter are right. But I’m not convinced that nuclear power plants will solve our gas problems” (Eichinger *et al.*, 2022). Nuclear power is indeed responsible only around 3% of Germany’s energy mix.

The IEA has suggested to keep the nuclear plants opened beyond 2022, but the report from the Ministries of Economy and Climate, and Environment and Nuclear Safety showed that keeping them operational longer would give only a small contribution to the energy production and it would be very costly (Wehrmann, 2022). Surprisingly the public support to nuclear power has increased during the war as a survey from March 2022 show that 40% of Germans are supporting the

continuous use of nuclear power, which has doubled within four years (Meza, 2022) and from the beginning of 2023 it has increased already to 71% (Nuclear Newswire, 2023). The reasons are mainly economical.

## **2.6. Summary**

The war and earlier dependence on Russian energy import has changed Germany's energy policy a lot, it has not changed the climate policy, but the short-term and medium-term measures accepted by the government will have an impact to it. The post-war German climate-energy nexus speech acts are clearly prioritizing the energy transition via accelerating the usage of renewables, thus following the course already set by the current government in late 2021. The war has clearly highlighted and boosted the need for a quick energy transition benefitting both energy security and climate goals, but also a need for diversification of suppliers and investments for conventional energy have emerged.

Threats are rarely concretely mentioned in the speech acts, but the main one on the background is the threat posed by the Russian energy policy, Germany's dependence of Russian import. The main referent objects are national security, energy security, and climate goals/neutrality, but also energy independence, affordable energy for people and businesses and future generation has been mentioned. Most of the speech acts also bring out solutions, including some examples of the implemented emergency measures, like Easter Package and nationalisation of vital service providers. Speech acts present full securitization moves for energy, but despite this most of the discourse is taking place in politicised level, as debates are encouraged and proposed solutions are not outside the legal frame.

### **3. SECURITIZATION IN POLAND**

Polish current government, led by Mateusz Morawiecki, has been in power since 2019 and is composed by the Law and Justice (PiS) and junior partner Solidary Poland. Both parties are Eurosceptics and ideologically national, right-wing populist. PiS has been ruling since 2015. Incumbent President Andrzej Duda, also associated with PiS, has been in his position since 2015, his second term began on 2020. During the last parliamentary elections energy issues were not debated much, but climate topics were present with dividing line between opposition and coalition, where the first accused the government doing an inadequate job when it comes to the decarbonisation (Jermalavicius *et al.*, 2020, p. 35). Poland will have general elections in autumn 2023.

#### **3.1. Polish energy mix and dependence on Russian fossil fuels**

Polish economy is hugely dependent – around 88% – on fossil fuels, out of which coal accounts for around 42%, oil 29% and natural gas 17% (International Energy Agency, 2022, p. 17), and Poland is importing most of them in vast quantities. The remaining is covered by renewables, mainly produced by onshore wind and biomass. This type of energy mix makes Poland the largest coal-based European economy and puts it among the least emissions efficient economies in the EU. Polish energy sector is responsible for about 80% of Poland’s GHG emissions and it is tightly linked with domestic coal sector. Even though domestic coal is its main energy resource, its production has been in decline, and since 2017 Poland has been a net importer of coal (International Energy Agency, 2022, p. 11) and most of it (75%) came from Russia. For crude oil Russian import accounted for 66% and for natural gas 55% (Forum Energii, 2022). All of this made Russia the biggest supplier for Poland across all types of fossil fuels. By early 2023 Poland has cut most of its ties for Russian energy and imported only small quantity of oil from Russia.

Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has said that to get independent from Russian fossil fuels Poland needs to “preferably move towards modern energy, which uses the latest technological achievements – hydrogen and renewable energy, as soon as possible” (The Chancellery of The



Prime Minister, 20.05.2022). Until now, renewable energy in Poland has not had much of a success story to tell, but Poland has made suppliers' diversification one of its energy policy priorities and thus its latest big investments have been made to natural gas infrastructure: in 2016 Poland opened its first LNG terminal in Świnoujście, and in 2022 Baltic Pipe was opened connecting Poland with Norwegian gas as well as north-south interconnections with both neighbouring Lithuania and Slovakia were opened. More investments to gas infrastructure are planned in the coming years. Minister of Climate and Environment, Anna Moskwa said at the opening of Baltic Pipe at the end of September 2022 that "It is no coincidence that we have completed so many gas investments this year. We've known for a long time that cooperation with the East urgently needs to be revised" (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 30.09.2022). In November 2022 Polish government took over the Gazprom's assets in Poland to ensure the energy security as the company possessed the vital infrastructure - Polish part of the Yamal-Europe gas transmission pipeline (Ptak, 15.11.2022). Similar process was made also against the Novatek Green Energy. When it comes to the energy security, those have been rational decisions to safeguard its energy supplies and security as Poland has been cautioning Western Europe long time about the threat of weaponizing energy by Russian Federation.

### **3.1.1. Polish view to Nord Stream pipelines**

Poland has seen both of the Nord Stream pipelines between Germany and Russia as a geopolitical venture, a security threat, waiting for its time to pop up and has been for years a vehement opponent for the new Nord Stream 2 project. Poland has been repeating continuously that the construction of the pipeline conflicts with the EU's Gas Directive as the Nord Stream 2 is not following the principles of diversification of the energy sector, what the directive aims for, and its leaders have been extremely vocal about the security threat what building the new pipeline could bring to Europe. Prime Minister Morawiecki has characterized Russia's domination in the gas area as "the era marked with blackmail, threats and extortion" (The Chancellery of The Prime Minister, 27.09.2022). The words he uses frequently when speaking about energy weaponization by Russia.

Since the 2022 Russian war against Ukraine started, all prominent Polish politicians have been constantly and emotionally reminding to the domestic and international audience their earlier positions about Nord Stream. The main criticism is towards Germany and its previous governments led by Angela Merkel. Prime Minister has pointed that Poland was "not wrong about Russia's intentions" (The Chancellery of The Prime Minister, 26.08.2022) and "some Western European leaders" were eager to get cheap natural resources and peace at the same time, but instead

they got the exact opposite (Islam, 2022). Same type of criticism is visible also at the statement of President Duda (Khalid, 2022):

*“This is precisely what we were warning of, as Poles, the countries of the European Union, Germany; we were warning the European Union institutions in Brussels that it would be dangerous to enter into such a close energy partnership with Russia.”*

The utterance from the Minister of Climate and Environment is summarising well the Polish political elite’s point of view:

*“For many years, Poland has been warning against making the EU energy sector dependent on Russian raw materials (...) It turned out that we were right. (...) This success tastes bitter.”* (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 27.05.2022)

As the threat has materialised and the referent object - the diversification of energy supply and energy security, has got a hit, the speech acts of the top Polish politicians in essence underline that they were proven right, but as a misfortune they were not listened to when they gave their warning about the dangers to involve Russia as the block’s main energy supplier. It also refers that Europe has only itself to blame as European institutions together with its leading economy have overlooked the need for diversification and have put themselves into a situation where Russia enjoys the dominant importer position for the vital energy resources.

### **3.2. Climate and energy targets**

The main Polish climate and energy policy document is national “Energy Policy of Poland until 2040” (EPP 2040), plus National Energy and Climate Plan for 2021-2030, which is made to submit to the European Commission. The core objective for the climate-energy nexus is energy security, while ensuring competitiveness of the economy, energy efficiency and reducing the environmental impact, with the optimum use of its own energy resources (Energy Policy of Poland until 2040, 2021). The document clearly states that energy security is the priority component.

Central challenges for Polish energy policy are reducing its reliance on coal, to deploy new sustainable energy technology and to diversify away from Russian gas. There is a lack of strategic planning and coherence between Polish energy and climate policies as coal has “unquestionable and dominating role” in planning energy future and environmental objectives are coming as

second-order priorities (Skoczkowski *et al.*, 2018, p. 1342). This is also visible from the speech acts of Polish politicians.

Plans to diversify its fossil fuel suppliers have been listed at Polish national energy and climate strategies as one of the core objectives. Described diversification plans at the EPP 2040 do not contain the word “threat” or direct link to Russia, instead “strong dependence from just one [East] direction” has been used. Taking this into account, Poland has been working to diversify its conventional energy imports away from Russia well before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. This has been also positively acknowledged by the latest IEA Polish report (International Energy Agency, 2022). The 2022 LNG deliveries came already from the USA, Qatar, Nigeria, Egypt, etc.

By 2030 Poland plans to reduce its GHG emissions about 30% compared with 1990, renewable energy will account for 21-23% of its energy consumption (though implementing this at the 23% level has been set as conditional, depending if Poland will get additional EU funds, which they now have been granted), at least 32% of Poland’s electricity consumption comes from renewables and the share of coal in electricity generation will not be more than 56% (Energy Policy of Poland until 2040, 2021). It also states the first nuclear power plant is to be commissioned by 2033 (Ibid.). Before the war natural gas was considered as the most suitable bridging fuel for the energy transition, those plans are now been slightly reevaluated. But still, according to the Prime Minister using gas offers “alternative to coal” during the decarbonisation process, as it impacts climate protection and reducing the CO2 emission allowances costs (The Chancellery of The Prime Minister, 27.09.2022). In 2022 Poland imported record number of LNG, and it has turned to be the main source of gas to Poland.

Target dates for coal power generation phase-out nor achieving the climate neutrality have not been mentioned in the document. Decarbonisation of the energy sector will be mainly done through the usage of nuclear power and offshore wind, but also increasing the capacity of photovoltaics. According to experts Poland needs to “redouble” its efforts when it comes to renewables (International Energy Agency, 2022, p. 16). Even if the Polish targets are quite modest, still only 41% of Poles believe that Poland will succeed to reduce its GHG by 2030 and a very big proportion (87%) think that the government is reacting too slowly to climate change (European Investment Bank, 2022b). Poles seem to be more optimistic about the green transition than their government as 65% of them believe that the ongoing war in Ukraine and its effects for the prices of fossil fuels should accelerate the green transition and 49% of them expect the government to prioritize the

development of renewable energies, before focusing to diversification to avoid being very dependent from a single energy provider (32%) (Ibid.).

### **3.3. Energy security as a top priority**

The development of Polish energy sector has been predominantly determined by two main concerns - energy security, which is based on domestic coal, and political desire to keep energy prices low (Skoczkowski *et al.*, 2018, p. 1307). The ruling political elite's worry about the climate change is low as when compared with other leaders' Polish politicians will not emphasise climate change, for example Prime Minister has pointed out that the world is facing three crises at the moment - energy, inflation and security ones (The Chancellery of The Prime Minister, 07.09.2022).

All top Polish politicians have used the current war in Ukraine to push both of those agendas at the expense of energy transition and climate ambitions. Minister of Climate and Environment has said that the war has brought out differences in the energy situation of individual states and “we [Poland] hope today for understanding for the selection of the own path of transformation and energy security” (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 19.07.2022). The same is basically repeated by the Deputy Prime Minister Jacek Sasin, who said that Poland will not abandon energy transition, but “only adjust it to our conditions” and “the new situation beyond our eastern border requires a rethink of the European Union's climate policy” (Polskie Radio, 05.04.2022). At the COP27 in November, President Duda stressed that besides achieving climate protection goals the most important thing is to ensure energy security as “today we must say this with all clarity: energy security is a top priority” and he continued that “energy problems caused by the Russia–Ukraine war had to be taken into account when planning climate goals” as “Just transformation should help people, not hamper their lives and steep them in poverty” (The Chancellery of the President, 07.11.2022). The speech acts mostly do not explicitly name the threat, but the threat posed by Russia and ambitious climate action is perceived in the context. The speech acts above show the prioritization of energy security over other policies, in this case the climate one, which aligns well with the EPP 2040 objective. Polish government is willing to safeguard the energy security at any costs as there are direct references in the speech acts for selecting their own path to deal with the ongoing crisis even if it will contradict with other interlinked policies like the EU climate policy.

Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki published his opinion piece “The green transition cannot come at the cost of European security” at Financial Times on 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. The article is summarising well the overall approach of the Polish government and political elite when it comes to the current climate-energy nexus. Morawiecki (2022) declared:

*“Regaining stability and achieving decent living conditions for the people of Europe now requires abandoning some important assumptions, especially where energy policy is concerned. (...) Until recently, the EU’s energy policy was concerned solely with climate change. (...) In addition to climate protection, the energy security of countries is now paramount. This is a message I have conveyed to other EU leaders on behalf of all Poles and Europeans concerned about their future. The energy sector must be understood in a wider context and the issue of security must take priority. Poland recognises the importance of fighting climate change. However, (...)”*

In his understanding the EU’s energy policy is too narrow and should not aim only climate protection. With this speech act he explicitly prioritises the energy security as the priority referent object over the climate goals/policy, it is the most important issue among all others, though he does recognise the importance of the climate protection as well but this comes with a lower importance. Another referent object that he brings in is people’s living standard that needs to be protected; this could be linked with his purpose to achieve lower energy prices. He is also involving other member states to get more strength and validity to his message towards the EU. At the same speech act, he also wrote:

*“The green transition cannot come at the cost of basic security. And if the situation forces us to do so, then we must not hesitate to return temporarily to traditional sources of energy. Even if a short-term return to coal means postponing our ambitious climate goals, it may be a necessary condition of maintaining a strong European community capable of resisting Russia and supporting Ukraine.” (Ibid.)*

In Morawiecki’s speech act, which is persuasive and forceful by its tone, all elements of securitization are visible. Energy security is a clear referent object for him similarly to his colleagues. There is a dual threat, energy crisis on the background and more concretely an ambitious EU climate policy as the latter is an obstacle for the energy security, is hindering current living standards and altogether could cause fractions in the unity of European community. Moreover, Prime Minister also lets his audience know that the threat towards energy security is urgent and there is a need to act immediately. Based on that, fight with climate change and the

need to continue with the green transition can be left aside as less value have been admitted to them. In his article he is presenting the solution(s), which are leaning towards emergency measures as they are taking the priority above others and are conflicting with the current EU's climate policy and targets. The speech act could be seen in a light of justification for Polish decisions during the energy crisis as the coal demand has been growing and Poland is planning to keep its coal power plants to operate longer than initially planned. And as a term "coal" has been used, not more general term like fossil fuel, it is rather Polish-centred opinion piece as coal does not have a big role in other European economies. It is also important to notice the context as the opinion piece was published early summer, where the possibilities to stock enough gas for winter was yet uncertain, and in addition, it was published at the leading English language business outlet in Europe – its target audience is business and political sector representatives and English language makes the message easier to spread. The speech act demonstrates the conflict between energy security and climate protection and is a securitization move.

Similar message was the centrepiece of President Duda's state speech during the COP27 high-level segment:

*"Let us remember: transition is there to serve man, not man to serve transition. (...) now I am saying this on behalf of millions of my compatriots who are not going to ask us, during the upcoming winter, how many of our ambitious climate goals we have achieved. What they are going to ask is why the energy resources are so expensive and why their living standards have dropped so dramatically. Transition that puts man at the center of changes has to be cost-effective and serve energy security. (...) In the light of the above, we must provide a strong response, caring first and foremost for the people (...) We need to work out innovative solutions that will ensure energy security and climate protection."* (The Chancellery of the President, 08.11.2022)

It echoes a lot with the Prime Minister's speech act above. Similarly, President is also highlighting Polish people's living standard and energy prices as referent objects that are threatened by the climate goals and needs to be saved at the expense of ambitious climate action, even if the latter is not precisely said out.

Both utterances, but in general many Polish speech acts, are mirroring well the conflict that Copenhagen School brought out as the main issue under the environmental security - the relationship between nature and human civilization, where Polish leaders lean towards to follow

the beaten track. Still, the President does mention solutions that could combine energy security and climate protection, but they are yet indefinite, he is not offering anything concrete, not as technology nor a timeline. All of the Polish utterances above are prioritising energy security based on fossil fuels and climate action has been presented mainly as an obstacle for achieving this. As energy and climate sectors are intertwined, the impact for climate by those proposed decisions has not been presented. When climate issues are mentioned, the worry about them is conditional – dealing with climate issues can be parked as its urgency has been downplayed, the focus is to safeguard the energy security and current standards of living. The climate and energy challenges are not seen as the two faces of the same coin, but separate and often opposing each other. It is consistent with the finding of Copenhagen School as when the urgency of an environmental threat is not clear it could be overtaken by other threats that are seen to be more urgent (Buzan & Waever, 2009, p. 274).

### **3.4. Coal, the main element of Polish energy security**

Due to its large share of Polish energy mix and because most of the coal is mined domestically, coal is a sensitive issue for Polish government. In 2022 around 79 000 people worked in Polish coal mining sector (Lipiński *et al.*, 2022, p. 19) and many more are related indirectly. In addition, close to 3 million households (around 35%) are using coal-fired stoves for heating, a unique type of heating no longer used basically nowhere else in Europe (Kuraszkiewicz *et al.*, 2022, p. 15).

All of this makes the domestic coal the main element to guarantee a successful energy security in Poland and its government has been vocal to show its support to the ongoing and prolonged usage of it. Before the war natural gas was planned to be used as the energy transition's bridging fuel, but as the reliability of gas is no longer guaranteed, domestic coal has now taken also partly a form of the bridging fuel and it will be used until the transition to the nuclear power and beyond. Minister Moskwa (2022) utters in her interview that “energy security has always been our priority, that is why we decided to phase out coal 2049 and to make the transition gradual.” Poland has not changed the phase-out date during the energy crisis and it remains 2049 as was previously agreed with miners, but according to the Deputy Prime Minister Jacek Sasin government needs to “revise the schedule” for when each power plant will be closed (Tilles, 2022) and Climate Minister Moskwa (2022) said that government is not planning to “shut down any coal-fired power plant” until the planned nuclear power plants are operational.

During the EU's Council meeting in June 2022 Polish Prime Minister said that coal is offering an alternative to Russian gas and Poland wants "to increase coal extraction, and we are already starting today, in order to avert crisis in autumn and winter" (The Chancellery of the Prime Minister, 24.06.2022). Deputy Prime Minister Jacek Sasin follows the same line as Poland needs "more coal and we'll need it for much longer (...) it would be best to replace it with home-based coal rather than imports from other countries" (Polskie Radio, 05.04.2022). Pursuant to the Minister of Climate and Environment government is planning to increase the coal production and they are also "planning new [mining] locations" (Tilles, 2022). Also, Minister of Justice, Zbigniew Ziobro, from junior coalition Eurosceptic Solidary Poland party, has recently said that

*"we demand real investment from the state in this [mining] sector. (...) coal guarantees our energy security, our energy sovereignty and it guarantees the cheapest electricity for Poles."* (The First News, 13.03.2023)

In those speech acts coal is presented as the long-term as well as short- and medium-term solution for the energy security. The speech acts focusing to coal show that Polish government speaks with one voice when it comes to energy security as all of the securitizing actors confirm the firm support to the energy security via the continued usage of domestic coal. Similarly to the previous sub-chapter, none of those statements are saying anything about the impact of those decisions to climate nor mention anything related to climate goals.

Coal is very important for the private household heating, but the ongoing war paralysed the Polish commodity market. Thus, the Prime Minister Morawiecki took a step further and declared the need to use extraordinary measures when it comes to the coal distribution as on his 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2022 statement, he refers that the commodity market is not functioning during the ongoing energy crisis. Due to this central government is now purchasing coal, they have tasked local governments to do the distribution and to guarantee the fixed price for citizens, the central government also created coal allowance and lowered energy prices. The Prime Minister announced that

*"There are certain times in history when the government has to take the helm very firmly in its own hands to propose its own solutions and then implement them effectively. The commodity market has descended into chaos and confusion after Russia's attack on Ukraine. No normal market mechanisms were present there. It was necessary to replace them with the mechanisms of a functional state."* (The Chancellery of the Prime Minister, 05.12.2022)



A strong securitization statement with what he admits that because of the threat, the energy crisis caused by Russia, the government took over the role of commodity market as an emergency measure to safeguard the welfare of their citizens. Looking his previous forceful speech acts, where energy security and living standards have been referent objects, his supportive stance on coal and fossil fuels, his earlier suggestions on solutions, and combining this with the actions described above, this could be considered as a successful securitization move of energy security.

Another example of (extraordinary) measures where the interest of climate goals and energy security collided is Polish government's decision to temporarily suspend the coal burning quality standards at the end of June 2022. The government's spokesperson said

*"We have a difficult situation, not only in Poland but throughout Europe, in terms of elementary security when it comes to heating. Therefore, in this situation, when one chooses between safety and certain pre-existing regulations, the latter have to be adjusted."* (Ptak, 05.07.2022)

With this decision government tries to ease the present energy crisis while energy security prevails both climate goals and health hazards, but it could not be taken as an extraordinary measure by the securitization theory as this exemption was already written into the law and could be activated when the circumstances demand it.

### **3.5. Poland's special case: the struggle with the EU's Emissions Trading System**

Poland has been in dissent for many of the decisions made in the European Council and over the years it has been fighting alone against reducing the GHG emissions and Emissions Trading System (ETS) reform (Ćetković & Buzogány, 2019, pp. 129-130). According to Politico (2023) Anna Moskwa, Minister of Climate and Environment, has focused to weaken the EU's climate goals and to ensure that coal-reliant Poland has a secure access to energy. Polish reluctance to EU's climate policy might partially be caused by the fear that adapting national energy sector to the climate requirements will cause heavy burden to its whole economy and may lead to social unrest, especially in coal regions (Skoczkowski *et al.*, 2018, p. 1305) and deepen energy poverty.

Poland is exploiting the context of war and energy crisis to continue to oppose the ETS topic as they have been done for years. Minister Moskwa called other member states "for the suspension

of the ETS until energy prices normalize and the crisis is over” already on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February at the extraordinary EU’s Energy Council (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 28.02.2022). She continued ahead of the EU’s Energy Council in June that “ETS remains our [Polish] biggest challenge today, not just in terms of energy transition, but energy security” (Polskie Radio, 26.07.2022). Also, Prime Minister Morawiecki is repeatedly raising the same topic, for example in his Financial Times opinion piece:

*“Putin’s energy blackmail and the war in Ukraine are already contributing to a significant increase in electricity prices, and a significant increase in inflation. (...) It [EU] must drastically reduce the costs of CO<sub>2</sub> emission allowances, which are a decisive factor in energy prices and which have risen considerably in recent years. (...) Such high costs make it difficult for manufacturing companies to invest in the development of new green technologies, such as renewable energy or hydrogen. Rather than stimulating the development of green energy, the current Emissions Trading System drives inflation and threatens to send millions of citizens into fuel poverty.”* (Morawiecki, 2022)

In the light of the energy crisis and war, the Prime Minister is opposing himself with the EU’s climate policy cornerstone – ETS, and shows his strong discontent with the current situation and recent developments. Again, he is raising the high electricity prices and energy poverty, topics important to his electorate in Poland. He goes on and claims that the EU’s climate policy no longer serves the aim it should and warns it could economically backfire, and is offering a solution to overcome this:

*“The Polish proposal is to freeze the price of CO<sub>2</sub> emission allowances at €30 for at least one year, with the possibility of extending it for two. (...) The EU has to acknowledge that if it does not take a step in the right direction, it may compromise its energy policy completely.”* (Ibid.)

Polish political elite is exploiting the current energy crisis to strongly present its discontent with the EU’s ETS – old topic in a new wrapping. Changing the ETS is a recurrent theme in Polish ministers’ energy-climate discourse, both before and during the war. They are aiming to tame the high energy prices and to maintain low prices afterwards, thus too ambitious climate policy in the form of ETS, particularly at the present conditions of war, are projected as the main reason (a threat) behind high prices and it should be side-lined, at least for some period. Overall, Morawiecki’s article is a full securitization move: energy security and Polish people’s living

standard as referent objects, double threat by Russia (lack of supplies) and ambitious climate action and proposed solution to lower the CO2 emission allowances.

### **3.6. Renewable energy in Poland**

The IEA's latest energy policy review for Poland suggests to increase the share of renewable energy sources, if Poland wants to achieve its energy transition goals (International Energy Agency, 2022, p. 12). The slow pace of renewable energy growth in Poland could be accounted for the availability of domestic coal, but also a lack of political will (Chalvatzis & Hooper, 2009, p. 2706) as for the populist right economy and economic growth are more important than climate protection and clean energy (Żuk & Szulecki, 2020, p. 7). In addition, Polish government and coal sector are closely entangled and miners' unions have a notably strong political influence (Biedenkopf, 2021, p. 393). They will be one of the biggest hurdles that Polish government needs to deal to achieve its climate and energy targets (Jermalavicius *et al.*, 2020, pp. 40-41).

Minister Anna Moskwa told at the end of April 2022 during her meeting with Commissioner Simson, that there is a plan to update the EPP 2040 and to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix:

*“One of the major elements of our work, in addition to strengthening the pillar of independence and sovereignty, is to increase the number of renewable energy sources operating in Poland. Although RES sources are developing very well in our country – we exceeded the target of 15% set for 2021, we want to accelerate their development even more, by increasing financing. At the same time, we need stable powers if these sources are to develop. Today, in Poland, these are coal and gas and ultimately – nuclear power.”*  
(The Ministry of Climate and Environment, 27.04.2022)

Deputy Prime Minister Sasin, responsible for state assets, confirmed that further investments are planned for both offshore and onshore wind (The First News, 27.06.2022) and has acknowledged the need to move away from fossil fuels, but prefers nuclear power as renewable energy is “erratic” (Tilles, 2022) and “not a stable source” (Polskie Radio, 02.11.2022). Minister Moskwa has said that to have renewable energy in the Polish energy mix “will be an important step towards energy security and it could be perceived as an element of derussification” and “this energy source has growth potential” (Moskwa, 2022). In summer President Duda stated that acceleration of the

deployment of renewables together with other energy related activities falls under “paramount priority” (The Chancellery of the President, 20.06.2022) and Prime Minister as well has mentioned renewable energy as one solution against the threat posed by Russia:

*“Thanks to these [renewable] energy sources we will make ourselves independent from Russian oil and Russian gas, but also from other countries that pose no threat to us as currently the only way to replace very expensive Russian gas was with very expensive Norwegian gas.” (Aljazeera, 2022)*

Renewables in the discourse of Polish political elite is not an unambiguous topic as when compared with coal, ETS or nuclear power. Politicians definitely see this energy source as part of the energy security, but renewable energy is not the preferred option number one as its volatile nature has been compared against the stability of conventional energy sources. Its positive aspects, like fight against climate change, emission free energy production, new jobs, etc has not been mentioned. The substance of the speech acts focusing to renewable energy are hollower as no concrete steps about further development have been presented when compared with coal, gas or nuclear. The topic is not so frequent in the political elite energy-climate discourse as other energy sources.

### **3.7. Nuclear power on the horizon**

Discussions to build a contemporary nuclear power plant to Poland have been alive more than a decade and the plant has also written into the EPP 2040. Nuclear power is gaining a momentum in Poland as at the end of 2022 Polish government has signed an agreement with the USA company Westinghouse to build its first power plant by 2033. Altogether Poland has decided to build three power plants. According to Szulecki & Kuszniir (2017, p. 122) nuclear plant fits well into the general framework of Polish energy system as it is similar to centrally governed coal-fired power system – it offers large, stable and conventional baseload.

Recent results of the survey commissioned by the Ministry of Climate and Environment at the end of 2022 showed that more than 86% of Poles were supportive for the nuclear powerplant to be built in Poland, and about 72% would not oppose if it would be built near to them (The First News, 15.12.2022). According to the Ministry it is the best result since the start of the survey from 2012 (Ibid.). The high support score is an interesting fact in the light that neighbouring Ukraine has had lot of problems with its nuclear power plants during the war, including occupation by Russian forces. Also, around 90% of respondent said the nuclear option is a good tool to fight against the

climate change and similarly the same percentage said it would be beneficial to secure Polish energy security (Ibid.). The statement of the Minister of Climate and Environment echoes the public opinion as she pointed that nuclear energy is “making a significant contribution to the fight against climate change” and at the same time it “will be essential due to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine – ensuring energy security” (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 27.05.2022) and she sees nuclear energy as the future for Poland (Tilles, 2022). The exact same has been emphasised by President Duda during his meeting with the President of United States, Joe Biden as the power plant is “essential from the climate protection angle, and also important for the development of state-of-the-art energy sector in our country” (The Chancellery of the President, 26.03.2022). Duda repeated more or less the same during his Independence Day speech saying that

*“we have [nuclear] energy whose supply will not only be stable, but which will also be compatible with the requirements of protecting the planet and the climate (...) This is also a question of the sovereignty, independence and existence of the Republic of Poland. To make sure that for all future generations it is by no means worse than it is today.”* (The Chancellery of the President, 11.11.2022).

It is remarkable from many angles – first, usually climate topics, especially with positive connotations, are not at the top of President’s agenda; secondly, millions of Poles are listening the Independence Day speech and the message is easily spread; thirdly, he brings out a future generation and climate protection link, a rare referent object by Polish political elite.

Heinrich *et al.* (2016, p. 3) note that two key threats about Polish nuclear programme were visible in media discourse – low societal acceptance and huge investment costs. In the current analysis, those did not occur as well as when looking the results of the public opinion polls and that Poland has already signed the agreement to start constructing its first nuclear power plant.

The speech acts, which are focusing to nuclear power, differ from speech acts focusing to other type of energies. Nuclear power is presented as a future technology and the preferred option number one. Energy security still prevails as a referent object, but politicians are also mentioning its positive role fighting with the climate change, which could be considered as a referent object here too. The speech acts bring out the energy-climate in conjunction, the so-called “different face of the same coin” as nuclear energy is contributing at the same time to both energy security and climate goals. It has been presented as a solution for both of the problems. This “joining forces” approach has not been visible for renewable energy, for example, which in general has the same aim.

### **3.8. Summary**

There are no big changes in Polish energy and climate policies when to compare pre- and post-war period. In essence, the post-war Polish political discourse is continuously and clearly bringing out the prioritization of the energy security via continuous use of fossil fuels, including domestic coal. Fight with the climate change and achieving climate goals is not something that Polish politicians are much concerned about. The war has made the energy security even more important and as the energy transition could threaten that, it would be good to postpone it.

The main referent objects are energy security and security of supply itself, and through that national security, but some other issues like living standards and affordable energy prices have been pointed out. But in some specific contexts also climate goals and future generation has been pointed out. Threats are not frequently concretely mentioned in the speech acts, but the main one looming on the background is the threat posed by the Russian energy policy and (EU's) ambitious climate policy, sometimes also presented together. Most of the speech acts also bring out solutions, and some examples of the emergency measures have been presented. Most of the political discourse is on the politicized level, but securitization moves towards energy security are present.

## 4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The energy-climate political discourse in both of the countries is vivid and while facing some similar fossil fuel dependencies, the debate shows that chosen paths to overcome the current energy crisis, caused by the Russian war in Ukraine, are different.

The centrepiece of German climate-energy nexus is the energy transition as the speech acts clearly show the preference of renewable energy as the energy of future for many different reasons (Table 4.1). The boost for this has come from both, from the new government and from the sudden energy crisis. The discourse points out the need to speed up the transition because of the war as well reaffirms that Germany will not abandon the 2045 climate neutrality goal because of the war, on the contrary. A number of presented solutions, like bringing forward the coal phase-out or labelling renewable energy by law as the “overriding public interest” confirm this. At the same time, the leitmotif of Polish climate-energy nexus is energy security as the speech acts reveal this as the priority number one for the Polish political elite, which aligns well with its Energy Policy of Poland 20240 adopted in 2021. The utterances show the preference towards the use of conventional energy sources – coal and nuclear power in the future, and suggestions to slow down the energy transition. Solutions made during the energy crisis, for example signed contract to build nuclear power plant and distribute coal centrally to citizens, are supporting this approach.

The main threat for both of the countries has been posed by the energy crisis, caused by the Russian war in Ukraine as the weaponization of energy has materialised. The import dependency angle comes out a bit more from the German discourse. Most of the speech acts do not mention threat explicitly, but the situation caused by Russia is looming in the background, in the context where the utterances have been said. Polish speech acts also present ambitious climate policy as a threat during the time of ongoing war (Table 4.1).

In a way the referent objects are rather similar and overlapping (Table 4.1), however, there are some differences. Polish discourse has a dominant referent object, it is the energy security itself as the utterance “energy security is a top priority” is in frequent use. There are no such a dominance visible in German speech acts, it is more diffuse, thus national and energy security and climate goals could be considered the main ones. There are less mentions of climate in Polish utterances

when compared with German ones, while affordable energy and living standards has more relevance to Polish leaders. Also, Germany sees more renewable based solutions and Poland more conventional energy based ones.

Table 4.1 Comparison of Germany and Poland

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Poland</b>
Centrepiece of the climate-energy discourse	Energy transition	Energy security
Preferred energy source	Renewables	Coal; nuclear energy
Main threats	Russian energy policy (dependence on Russian energy import)	Russian energy policy Ambitious climate policy
Main referent objects	<b>National security</b> <b>Energy security</b> <b>Climate goals/neutrality</b> Security of supply Energy independence Future generation Affordable energy to people and businesses	<b>Energy security</b> Security of supply Affordable energy to society & living standards Future generation Climate goals
Examples of emergency measures	Easter Package Gazprom Germania & Rosfnet Deutschland Uniper	Coal distribution by government Lowering CO2 allowances Gazprom & Novatek Green Energy
Securitization moves	Yes	Yes

The political discourse of German climate-energy nexus is balanced as both topics get attention in the speech acts as well as the speech acts present a concern about them both, there is no supremacy to prefer one over the other. However, there are some colliding interests when it comes to a short- and medium-term period as there are investment needs to the conventional energy (gas and its infrastructure) and some coal-fired power plants have been agreed to operate longer than planned. In those speech acts the leaders try to explain why those decisions and short-term measures are needed (“the single aim of new investment are to substitute Russian gas supplies for a short period of time”). The Polish discourse is unbalanced and is leaning towards energy security as climate gets mentioned less often in the speech acts, it is also subordinate to the energy security, including in the Energy Policy of Poland 20240. Although the speech acts that discuss nuclear power bring out the benefits of it to fight with the climate change, it is not common in other Polish energy-climate nexus speech acts. Some of the topics, like ETS and EU’s ambitious climate targets, have



been long time problematic for Poles and its leaders use the context of war to push their previous agenda forward.

Most dissimilar views between the countries are in portraying a renewable energy, though the share of renewables in their energy mix is rather similar. Heinrich *et al.* (2016, p. 1) have already in 2016 pointed out that Germany and Poland have different understanding of the benefits and use of renewable energy. Renewable energy is Germany's number one choice, its main energy source – it comes clearly out from the speech acts, so-called freedom of energy and energy of future, as well from the coalition agreement. It is high on Germany's political agenda and gains a lot of attention. For Poland it is something as a supplementary source, it has a potential and a place in Polish energy mix, but Polish politicians point out its volatile nature in comparison with conventional energy sources. While Polish discourse shows more hesitant than positive aspects of it, German discourse displays positive and pro-security sides. Speech acts also present securitization moves as Germany has plans for a rapid acceleration of renewable energy (Easter Package) to ensure its energy security. From Polish speech acts basically no information came out what will be Polish plans with this energy source, as for example for conventional energy the next steps/concrete plans were mentioned.

The climate-energy nexus discourse displays well the main conflict under the CS securitization theory for the environmental sector - the relationship between nature and human civilization. Polish discourse follows mainly the current business-as-usual model without changing the society's behavioural patterns (“transition is there to serve man, not man to serve transition”), while German speech acts present green transition as a positive shift, something that needs to be done, but could only be done successfully if it will bring continuous prosperity to people (“we will only succeed if we think about climate change mitigation and prosperity in conjunction”).

The war has speeded up some climate-energy nexus activities and most of it has been done in the framework of everyday politics, though much faster than in normal circumstances. Even if the urgency has been highlighted in the speech acts, the climate-energy nexus is still mainly politicized, not securitized issue when it comes to the original Copenhagen School of Security Studies as no undemocratic proceedings have been used, but some securitization moves are visible in both of the countries if to follow the widened concept of emergency measures. For instance, with a very short timeframe Germany worked out an Easter Package, the largest energy policy revision for decades, where renewable energy gets priority over other topics as “the use of renewable energy is in the overriding public interest and serves public security”. Also Germany

nationalised companies who had Russian connections, but who deliver vital services to German society like Uniper, and former Gazprom Germania and Rosneft Deutschland. Those are securitization moves as are breaking the norms of how things have been done beforehand and give more power to the state. Polish politicians have tried to securitize their energy policy to oppose the EU's climate policy to be able to use domestic coal longer for the security of supply and to keep the energy prices down. Concrete urgency measures as described by Copenhagen School, were used once, when Polish government took over the role of collapsed commodity market and started to coordinate the coal market for the benefit of the citizens. Similarly to Germany, Poland took over some companies with Russian connections who deliver vital services to its society.

The war and energy crisis has changed the energy policy of Germany to overcome its dependency from (Russian) fossil fuels import, but the first step towards this direction was already done before the war started. The crisis has not had that much of long-term impact to its climate policy as all the committed targets have remained unchanged and Germany sees the climate and energy as one package safeguarding both energy security and fighting with the climate change. In Poland, the impact is more visible towards climate policy as its politicians try to find ways to do the green transition in their own pace, while supporting the continuous use of (domestic) fossil fuels. The relationship between climate and energy policies in Poland is not so unambiguous as it is in Germany. The war has speeded up many things from legislation to construction, but in general it didn't make countries to abandon their earlier plans, just the timeframes will be adjusted.

## CONCLUSION

This paper set out to answer if and where the interests of climate policy and energy policy in the context of securitization are crossing each other after Russian invasion to Ukraine started in 2022. Germany and Poland were chosen as a case study examples as they both were very dependent on Russian fossil fuel import and have had opposing views when it comes to energy security in Europe as well as to ambitious climate policy. Securitization theory by Copenhagen School of Security Studies and its further development of widened emergency measures were applied as a basis for the discourse analysis as speech acts from the top Polish and German politicians were studied.

According to the study Germany and Poland represent two different approaches resulting from the current energy crisis as Germany is strongly prioritising the fast energy transition with the support of renewables, while Poland's top priority is energy security, which is mainly based on its domestic coal and in the future, nuclear power. German energy policy has changed because of the war and current energy crisis moving as fast as possible away from fossil fuels, in Poland its leadership try to do green transition in a slower pace because of the war. It also comes out when looking their main referent objects as the most important referent object to Poland is energy security, being paramount among all others, including climate protection. In Germany national and energy security, and climate goals came out as the main ones, but the referent objects are not presented as colliding ones, but they are supportive to each other. The main threat comes from the energy crisis caused by the Russian war in Ukraine, but in addition Poland also sees a threat in the ambitious (EU) climate policy, that should be less ambitious during the time of war. Germany sees the situation diametrically different as the insecurity caused by war and energy crisis has boosted their plans to achieve the climate neutrality as quick as possible. With this the climate-energy nexus speech acts present well the conflict between nature and human civilization, the core issue for the environmental security.

Most of the speech acts in energy-climate nexus are falling under the category of politicization, even if the urgency has been emphasised and full securitization moves for energy are visible, both in Germany and Poland, but it does not follow the "politicization opens up and securitization closes down" logic. The reason to securitize in the current context could be looked as a matter of

awareness raising, prioritization and speeding up, highlighting the issue to society and make quick decisions and actions as the situation demands, rather than close the issue down and make undemocratic decisions. For instance, the emergency measures implemented have followed the legal proceedings necessary. Thus, this thesis supports the further development of the definition of securitization as without Heinrich's & Szulecki's further development of emergency measures this thesis could not claim the full securitization moves.

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