
Chapter 19

Energy in the External Relations of the Czech Republic

Lukáš Tichý

ENERGY IN EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC: BACKGROUND AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

In 2015, the main agenda of the internal and external dimension of the energy policy of the Energy Union was developed in token of the strong continuity of the previous year 2014 focused especially on the Union energy security, which represented one of the most frequently used words of the energetic discourse of the EU. Like in 2014, also in 2015 the Union energy security was characterized by the concurrent operation of two important factors.¹

Firstly, the energy policy and security of the EU was developing in 2015 especially under the influence of the crisis in the relations with the Russian Federation (RF) together with strained Russian-Ukrainian energy relations, which were caused among the member states by fear concerning ensuring stable supplies of Russian oil and gas through the Ukrainian territory to Europe. These concerns were reinforced during the year 2015 by repeated interruptions of gas supplies in July and November from Russia to Ukraine. It happened despite the fact that in late September 2015, a preliminary agreement was concluded with the support of the EU, so-called winter package about supplies of Russian gas to Ukraine in the following winter period, i.e. from 1 October to the end of March 2016.² At the same time, in the middle of January 2015 the chief of the Russian company Gazprom Alexej Miller warned the EU states to search for new paths for gas transit because the RF planned to stop the transport of gas through Ukraine by 2019.³ Nevertheless, the interest of the EU headed mainly by Central European and East European states and the European Commission (EC) represented by its Vice-Chairman responsible for the Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič is, on the contrary, the effort for preserving Ukraine as a transit country and strengthening its energy security.⁴ It was reflected in 2015 for example by criticism of the planned Russian gas pipeline Nord Stream 2 bypassing Ukraine⁵ and, at the same time, increased reversing of supplies of natural gas from Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary to Ukraine.⁶

Despite the fact that during the year 2015, the gas supplies to the EU countries were not interrupted, Russian President Vladimir Putin assured the EU about the in-

terest of Russia in preserving the gas transit through Ukraine and the chairman of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and the Vice-Chairman of the European Commission M. Šeřčovič proposed to restart the energy relations with Russia, the energy interaction remained considerably impaired and weakened.⁷ It was also enhanced for example by the start of the investigation of the Russian company Gazprom by the EC⁸ or the decision about the renewal of the EU sanctions against the RF.⁹

Secondly, under the influence of such facts, during the year 2015 the EU was focused on a series of measures with the objective of strengthening the energy security and decreasing energy dependency on Russia. These measures concerned both internal and external dimensions of the energy security. On the external level, the EU paid attention to energy relations with potential suppliers, especially with the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) and the USA, with which the EU negotiated the new agreement on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), where energy was one of the chapters. At the same time, TTIP that could limit the US customs barriers for export of energetic raw materials and extend the possibilities of supplying the EU, was one of the main topics on 7. 5. 2015 in the session of the Council for Foreign Affairs in the format of ministers of trade of the member states in Brussels.¹⁰ Even if during the year 2015 the export of US shale gas in the form of LNG or the supplies of the Iranian gas with the use of gas pipelines or in the form of LNG to the EU countries were not too probable, in case of Iran that had the biggest reserves of gas and the fourth biggest reserves of oil in the world, there was a major event in 2015, which had a positive impact on the negotiations of the EU with the IRI. On 14. 7. 2015, the representatives of six powers and Iran managed to conclude the *Final Agreement on Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action*, on the basis of which the West should gradually withdraw the sanctions.¹¹ The cancellation of the sanctions shall enable the IRI to renew the supplies of oil to Europe and commence talks with the EU about gas supplies, as it happened for example on 28. 7. 2015, when this issue was discussed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini with the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zaríf.¹² On the internal level, the EU was focused on the project of the Energy Union, which was officially presented by M. Šeřčovič on 25. 2. 2015. In addition to ensuring energy security, the Energy Union is focused especially on the completion of the liberalized and fully integrated electricity and gas market, energy efficiency, low-carbon economy and, last but not least, on research and innovations in the priority areas of utilization of renewable resources.¹³

In the context of these events, in 2015 internal and external dimensions of the energy policy of the Czech Republic were also developing, which accepted a majority of the topics and issues of the EU within its energetic discourse. Therefore, in 2015 the Czech Republic was repeatedly dealing with possible impacts of the interruption of gas supplies from Russia to Ukraine on energy security; according to the statement of the Minister of Industry and Trade Jan Mládek (ČSSD), it should not be in jeopardy because “*We have [...] supplies from Norway...*”. Already before, on 17. 2. 2015, Jan Mládek (ČSSD) negotiated about the security of the transit of Russian oil and natural gas with the Ukrainian Minister of Energy and Coal Industry Volodymyr Demčyšyn,

who assured him that Ukraine was a reliable partner in the transit of oil but also gas because: *"We did not take gas from the transit gas pipelines."*¹⁴

In this respect, the Czech Republic together with the other countries of V4 emphasized the need to *"preserve transit through Ukraine"*¹⁵ and, on the contrary, it spoke negatively against the construction of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2, which, according to the Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka (ČSSD), *"could destabilize Ukraine"*. The chairman of the opposition KSČM Vojtěch Filip expressed a similar opinion; he considers the agreement to be destabilizing in the effort to *"sink not only Ukraine but also us"* when it threatened as a consequence that *"Czechia would pay transit fees to Germany."*¹⁶ Last but not least, in 2015 the Czech Republic repeatedly supported the creation of the Energy Union, which *"would bring higher security and reliability of supplies to the Czech Republic"*¹⁷ and agreed to the extension of sanctions against the RF.

In the effort to strengthen energy security, in the sector of natural gas the Czech Republic focused on increasing the volume of underground gas tanks in September 2015, which, according to J. Mládek, should be *"increased to approximately 50 percent of annual consumption"* from the current capacity ensuring approximately 37% of consumption.¹⁸ Simultaneously with it, on 4.–7. 9. 2015 Minister of Foreign Affairs Lubomír Zaorálek (ČSSD) negotiated with the representatives of Iran, including President Hassan Rouhani, about the improvement of economic and energy co-operation.¹⁹ In addition to it, in 2015 the Czech Republic focused on strengthening the energy security in the oil sector when for example on 16. 9. 2015 President Miloš Zeman negotiated about diversification of oil suppliers in Azerbaijan, which was pursuant to J. Mládek *"a very important alternative oil supplier to us..."*²⁰ In the coal sector, in 2015 an intensive debate was taking place about breaking or preserving the coal mining limits in North Bohemia. Finally, on 20. 10. 2015, the Government of the Czech Republic decided about breaking the mining limits of the surface mine Bílina and preserving the mining limits in the mine ČSA. Consequently, the decision of the government caused an intensive discussion among the political representatives of the Czech Republic. While J. Mládek emphasized that *"coal for the Czech heating industry is ensured"*²¹ and Minister of Agriculture Marian Jurečka (KDU-ČSL) appreciated that *"coal will be used primarily for heating plants"*,²² Minister of Defence Martin Stropnický (ANO) was more sceptical because according to his opinion *"the decision of the government [...] would not influence energy security of the Czech Republic too much"*.²³ Breaking the limits was also supported by President Zeman or former Prime Minister Miroslav Topolánek; on the contrary, the government was criticized by Miroslav Kalousek (TOP 09), according to whom *"our country did not deserve further damaging"*,²⁴ or the chairperson of the Green Party Jana Drápalová, who said that *"the government was returning to the communist practice of plundering the country"*.²⁵

A similarly intensive debate was also taking place in 2015 in the sector of nuclear energy, where the Government of the Czech Republic, having cancelled the tender for the construction of two blocks of the nuclear power plant Temelín by the company ČEZ on 10. 4. 2014, decided about the construction of two new blocks in the nuclear power plants Dukovany and Temelín, which should be commissioned at the latest

by 2037 with the objective of ensuring energetic self-sufficiency and security of the Czech Republic. Pursuant to B. Sobotka, “*the construction of the first block should start in Dukovany*”²⁶ and the tender for the supplier of the new block could be started as early as in late 2016. While there was political consensus regarding the issue of the construction of new nuclear blocks, in case of financing the additional construction of the nuclear power plants Dukovany and Temelín the opinions of the political representatives differed. For example, J. Mládek emphasized that “*new nuclear blocks in Czechia should be built by a special state-owned plant*”.²⁷ On the contrary, pursuant to Minister of Finance Andrej Babiš (ANO) “*financing of the first new block in Dukovany should be ensured by the company ČEZ*”.²⁸ Similarly B. Sobotka assumes that: “*the preparation of the investment shall be financed by ČEZ. I am not a supporter of the concept that the government should guarantee purchase prices...*”²⁹

The company ČEZ expects that the construction of each nuclear block in the Czech Republic would cost approximately 120 to 150 billion. CZK and after the declaration of the tender in the upcoming years, the supplier should be selected approximately in 2020. During the year 2015, in addition to the firms from France, USA and Russia that had declared their interest before, the companies from Japan, China and South Korea also declared their interest. On the contrary, the decision of the Government of the Czech Republic about the construction of new nuclear reactors was criticized by political representatives of Austria and Germany but also some non-governmental and ecological organizations, for example Hnutí Duha, association Calla or Alliance for Energetic Self-sufficiency.³⁰

The decision about the construction of new nuclear reactors is based on the document called *National Action Plan of Nuclear Energetics in the Czech Republic* (NAP JE), which was prepared by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in co-operation with the Ministry of Finance and which was approved by the Government of the Czech Republic on 3. 6. 2015. From the perspective of the state, NAP JE considers desirable to “*immediately start the preparation for the location and construction of one nuclear block in the locality of Temelín and one block in the locality of Dukovany*”.³¹

NAP JE is based on the *Update of the State Energy Concept of the Czech Republic* (ASEK), which was approved by the government on 18. 5. 2015 and which replaced the previous SEK document from 2004. ASEK, like the previous version, counts on the growth of electricity production from nuclear energy from the current 33% up to approximately 50% in 2040. For this purpose, other reactors should be built in the nuclear power plant Temelín and in the nuclear power plant Dukovany. In addition to this internal level of energy policy of the Czech Republic, the new ASEK also mentions its external dimension, where it recommends “*strengthening energy co-operation of the V4 countries and trying to co-ordinate the attitudes in the field of energy within the EU...*”³² At the same time, ASEK supports diversification of the European transport routes and source territories, liberalization and integration of the energy market and the within European negotiations, it emphasises the necessity to defend national sovereignty over the selection of the energetic mix.

The issue of internal and external dimensions of the energy security also features in the new *Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic* (hereinafter only re-

ferred to as the Concept), which was approved by the Government of the Czech Republic on 13. 7. 2015. Pursuant to the Concept, the Czech Republic strives for diversification of supplies of strategic raw materials, transport routes and source territories, but “*also for the limitation of dependency of the energetic sector on [...] regions, on which it has been dependent dominantly...*”,³³ which means especially the Russian Federation. Furthermore, pursuant to the Concept the Czech Republic realizes its energy policy and security within the EU, where “*it strives for better interconnection of energetic systems of member states, for ensuring the possibility of reverse flows, completion of the development of the internal energy market*”.³⁴

The issue of internal and external dimensions of energy security is also covered very similarly in the updated *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic* (hereinafter only referred to as Security strategy), which was approved by the Government of the Czech Republic on 4. 2. 2015. Pursuant to the Security strategy, major threats include “*interruption of supplies of strategic raw materials or energy*”;³⁵ therefore, to ensure energy security the Czech Republic strives for “*maximum possible diversification of the transport infrastructure with emphasis on preserving the transit position of the Czech Republic*”.³⁶ Furthermore, the Czech Republic supports the realization of energy security “*within the EU and NATO...*”.³⁷ Last but not least, the energy security and threats to it are mentioned both in the document called *Long-term Perspective for Defence 2030* approved by the Government of the Czech Republic on 15. 6. 2015, according to which “*Europe would compete with South-East Asia*” for world reserves of raw materials and in the mid-range horizon and “*a considerable long-term decrease of supplies from the Russian Federation*” cannot be excluded.³⁸ At the same time, on 21. 12. 2015 the Government of the Czech Republic approved the document called *Concept of Development of the Army of the Czech Republic 2025*, where “*ensuring energy security and functionality of critical infrastructure*”³⁹ is interconnected with the issue of crisis management and with the international fight against terrorism.

The above-mentioned topics of the Czech political discussion, together with the key events in the energy area had a major impact in 2015 on the direction of external energy relations of the Czech Republic. Like in the previous year, also in 2015 the active actors of the external energy relations of the Czech Republic were especially the Prime Minister, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic (MIT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (MFA), Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic (ME) but also the President of the Czech Republic. From the perspective of the external dimension of energy security and policy, on the multilateral level, the area of the EU and co-operation with other Central European countries within the Visegrad Group was crucial for the Czech Republic in 2015. In the case of bilateral energy relations, the Czech Republic was mainly oriented on Germany, Austria, USA, and France in 2015. On the contrary, as a result of the military engagement of Russia in Ukraine and the imposed EU sanctions against the RF, the Czechia-Russian energy relations only reached a minimum level reached in 2015, like in the previous year.

In the context of the aforesaid facts, the Czech discourse about the external dimension of the energy policy and security during the year 2015 can be labelled as *limited* in terms of the level of *politicizing*. On one hand, the topic of external energy policy

and thereto related issues were present in the documents of the type of ASEK, Concept and Security strategy in 2015. On the other hand, the issue of external energy relations of the Czech Republic is not a frequent topic of lectures and speeches of the political representatives of the Czech Republic. Similarly in 2015, like in 2014, it is possible to speak about the *limited polarization* of the Czech discussion about the external dimension of energy policy and security. On one hand, there was accord among the main institutional and political actors concerning the meaning of a majority of the energy issues related to the issues of external relations and need of strengthening the energy security of the Czech Republic. On the other hand, a differing but not contradictory position of institutional and political actors can be identified in relation to the issue of financing the new tender for the construction of one block of the nuclear power plant Dukovany and one reactor of the nuclear power plant Temelín and especially in the issue of breaking the coal mining limits in the Czech Republic. Last but not least, in 2015 like in the previous year, on one hand, the Czech Republic supported *creating a common policy*, which was based on the *proactive actions* and *co-operating position* in case of the issue of ensuring energy security, for example in the case of the Energy Union, where the Czech Republic enforced additional modifications. On the other hand, the Czech Republic accepted an *adaptation to an external policy*, which was a result of *reactive actions* and *neutral position* in case of increasing energy efficiency and support of renewable energy resources in the area of energy production.

THE EXTERNAL ENERGY RELATIONS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC: AGENDA AND EVENTS

The Multilateral Dimension of External Energy Relations of the Czech Republic

Energy security of the Czech Republic and the EU

The activity and position of the Czech Republic both in the process of negotiating about energy issues within the EU and in relation to the individual objectives of the energy policy of the EU remained unchanged in 2015.

While in case of the objective of energy security, which includes the issues such as the right of the member states to decide about the composition of the energy mix, utilization of nuclear energy, diversification of transport routes, sources and suppliers etc., and the objective of competitiveness, which includes for example the issues of support for the completion of liberalization of the internal energy market, interconnection of transport routes and transmission systems among the member states within the EU etc., the Czech Republic actively supports their achievement within the EU; on the contrary in case of the objective focused on sustainability, i.e. support of OZE, energy efficiency and reduction of CO₂ emissions etc., the Czech Republic stands rather sceptically against it and either independently or together with other states, it expresses its comments critically. Nevertheless, the Czech Republic neither vetoes decision-making about the main environmental objectives within the EU, nor blocks

the further progress of the Union energy policy in this area by its actions but, on the contrary, it tries to be and is consistent in a majority of the cases.

In 2015, this position of the Czech Republic was obvious in the example of the project of the Energy Union, which was officially presented on 25. 2. 2015, when a package concerning the Energy Union was published, by which the EC wanted to support the co-operation of the member states in the energy area. The basic document is the so-called *Strategy for the European Energy Union* (hereinafter only referred to as the Energy Union Strategy) or the statement called *Framework Strategy for Creating Resilient Energy Union with Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy*. The Energy Union represents an ambitious plan for the integration of the energy policy in the EU beyond the framework of the proposal of the chairman of the European Commission Donald Tusk from April 2014, who presented the proposal for the co-ordination of gas supplies and other initiatives presented by the actual Commission till that time. In addition to it, the European Commission drew attention to the problems, which were faced by the European Union and the member states, within the Energy Union.

In this context, the European Commission emphasized that the EU was the biggest world importer of energy, the member countries of the EU ensured over 50% of their energy consumption by imports from countries outside of the EU and they paid approximately 400 billion EUR for such energy. Furthermore, the EC brought to mind in the document that the energy infrastructure in the EU grew older and it would be necessary to modernize it, national energy policies were uncoordinated and the consumers could not take advantage of the size and variety of the European energy market, which was practically fragmented on the level of national markets. Last but not least, the EC warned that six member states were relying on only one supplier of natural gas, which made them very vulnerable in case of violations of gas supplies. The European Union imports 90% of its annual consumption of oil and 66% of gas.⁴⁰

According to the Energy Union Strategy, the solution would be facilitated by five mutually strengthening and closely interconnected dimensions, the purpose of which is to achieve a greater level of energy security, competitiveness, and sustainability. It concerns the following: (1) ensuring security of energy supplies, solidarity and trust, including for example ensuring greater transparency in concluding long-term contracts for gas supplies and security of energy supplies; (2) fully integrated European electricity and gas market; (3) energy efficiency contributing to mitigation of demand; (4) low-carbon economy in the EU in connection with climate protection and (5) research and innovations in the priority areas of utilization of renewable resources, *smart grids* etc.⁴¹

Therefore, the European Commission proposes in the Energy Union Strategy, for example, the intergovernmental energy agreements of the member states with third countries to be verified by or consulted with the Union executive before being concluded. The effort is based on the fact when six countries – Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, and Austria – signed agreements with the Russian company Gazprom in the past, which were not in compliance with the EU rules for the state support, public procurement, and economic competition, which resulted in the

follow-up cancellation of the Russian project for the construction of the gas pipeline South Stream in 2014. Furthermore, the Commission proposes to the member states to cumulate their demands and try to reduce the prices of gas imported into the EU, however, only on condition that any common purchasing is realized on the basis of voluntariness and with respecting the rules of the World Trade Organization and legal standards of the EU in the area of the economic competition. Nevertheless, while the western member states are of the opinion that such pretending to be one customer would violate the free market rules, the member countries from Central and Eastern Europe, which are considerably more dependent on the Russian supplies, welcome these tactics. At the same time, the EC establishes an objective in the Energy Union Strategy to ensure interconnecting the energy systems among the member states at the volume of min. 10% of the total production capacity of any particular state by the year 2020 (15% by the year 2030), and by means of the implementation of the current legislation, i.e. so-called projects of public interest and financial tool TEN-E.⁴²

The position of the Czech Republic in relation to the Energy Union was firstly formulated on 25. 2. 2015 by the Chamber of Commerce the Czech Republic (HK ČR), which expressed a consent to the basic objectives of the Energy Union and supported the effort that the EU “*would play a certain role in negotiating agreements for energy supplies*”.⁴³ Furthermore, HK ČR recommended that the EC would engage “*by means of acceleration of the proceeding about a failure to meet the obligations in the area of the third liberalization package*”⁴⁴ in the effort to make the member states, which did not comply with it, implement it fully. At the same time, however, HK ČR emphasized the need of respecting the *Treaty of Lisbon* in the achievement of the objectives of the Energy Union, pursuant to which “*the energy mix and responsibility for it was in the competence of the member states*”.⁴⁵ For the Czech Republic and other member countries, this issue is related especially to the possibility or, as the case may be, right of further development and efficient utilization of nuclear energetics as a tool for the transition to low-carbon economy.

Therefore, on 6. 3. 2015 the Czech Republic together with Great Britain, France, Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined the letter challenging the European Commission to a greater support of the nuclear energetics in the European Union. The main argument of ministers of the member states for support of nuclear energy is the fact that many countries would not be economically able to achieve the objectives in the area of climate protection and energy security of the EU without the support for preserving the current nuclear power stations or for the construction of new blocks. At the same time, the signatories asked for the creation of new mechanisms in the EU for financing nuclear energetics because increasing the financial assistance to nuclear energetics could facilitate meeting the climatic objectives of the EU.⁴⁶

On the contrary, within the Energy Union, the European Commission challenged the member states to greater diversification of supplies of nuclear fuel. Among other things, it also concerns the Czech Republic, where all the fuel for the domestic nuclear power stations is supplied by the Russian firm Tvel from the Rosatom Group, when the only possible competitor to the company Tvel concerning supplies for reactors of the Russian type VVER, which stand in the Czech Republic, has been the US com-

pany Westinghouse from the group of Japanese Toshiba. Nevertheless, while in the power station Temelín, a possible replacement of the Russian fuel with the American one is well imaginable, in the case of the power station Dukovany it would be much more complicated. The reason is that Westinghouse has stopped producing fuel for older blocks of the Russian type VVER-440.⁴⁷

Furthermore, the Energy Union was one of the main topics of the session of the European Council in Brussels on 18. and 19. 3. 2015, where the opinion of the Czech Republic was defended by Prime Minister B. Sobotka. In the session, the Prime Minister repeated the Czech interest in the Energy Union, which was considered by him *“a very important step towards the modern, competitive and diversified energetics”*,⁴⁸ and he supported the proposal for transparency of the contracts for gas supplies. At the same time, the Czech Republic managed, in co-operation with the partners from the V4, to introduce significant modifications into the current proposal of the Energy Union, which counted on strengthening the energy infrastructure with emphasis on availability of energy prices for households and industry with the objective of preventing from energy poverty and supporting competitiveness of the European firms. However, the Czech Republic will, according to Prime Minister Sobotka, *“keep insisting on the own creation of the energy mix, including the nuke”*.⁴⁹ The positive approach of the Czech Republic and its support of the Energy Union was repeated again by Prime Minister Sobotka together with Minister of Foreign Affairs L. Zaorálek, Minister of Industry and Trade J. Mládek and State Secretary for European Affairs Tomáš Prouza during the meeting with the Vice-Chairman of the European Commission M. Šefčovič at Kramář’s villa on 2. 4. 2015, where the Prime Minister stated that the Energy Union would bring *“bigger interconnection and capacity of the networks”* to the Czech Republic.⁵⁰ At the same time, after the meeting with M. Šefčovič on 26. 5. 2015, B. Sobotka emphasized that in the project of the Energy Union *“the Czech priority was to complete the internal energy market”*.⁵¹

On 18. 11. 2015, the EC published the *First Report about the State of the Energy Union*, which analysed progress achieved during the last nine months, identified the key areas of activity for 2016 and formulated political conclusions on the level of the member states, regional and European level. According to M. Šefčovič, several tasks await the EU within the Energy Union in 2016: *“Firstly, the EU should play the leadership role in the transition to the low-carbon economy further on [...]. And thirdly: geopolitical problems, which have been faced by us this year, will not disappear.”*⁵² Simultaneously with it, the EC published a list of altogether 195 key projects in the area of energy infrastructure known as projects of common interest, which would help meet the European objectives in the area of energy and climate and would form the basic building stones of the European Energy Union. The list of projects also included Czech projects, for example the gas pipeline STORK II interconnecting the Czech Republic and Poland, bi-directional interconnection between the Czech Republic and Austria (BACI) and connection to Oberkappel between the Czech Republic and Austria, but also the extension of the oil pipeline from Litvínov to the refineries in German Spargau, which should facilitate strengthening the energy security of the Czech Republic.⁵³

The results of the *Report about the State of the Energy Union* were followed up a month later, i.e. on 18. 12. 2015, by the session of the European Council, where the Czech Republic fully supported building the project of the Energy Union and emphasized its importance to energy security. According to Prime Minister Sobotka: “*We welcome proposals of the projects aimed at diversification of sources and routes. Together with other states of the Visegrad Group, we consider important the continuation of the construction of the North-South interconnection, which will greatly enhance the security of our region.*”⁵⁴ The Czech Government is prepared, according to B. Sobotka, to keep furthering solidarity with other states of the region, the energy security of which could be threatened. The negotiations about the Energy Union in the session of the European Council also partially considered the outputs of the climatic conference COP21 that took place in Paris from 30. 11. to 12. 12. 2015, where the new global agreement on climate protection was reached, which would replace the Kyoto Protocol after 2020. In its contribution, the European Union committed to reduce the emissions by 40% by the year 2030 (in comparison with the year 1990).⁵⁵

In other words, the project of the Energy Union shall ensure available, safe, sustainable, and cheap energy for citizens and firms, reduce the European dependency on gas imports from the Russian Federation and strengthen the European position in negotiating energy contracts. Meeting the said objectives of the Energy Union related to strengthening the energy security should be facilitated for example by diversification of the sources, suppliers, where the European Commission counts on supplies of natural gas, in addition to Iran and USA, for example from Algeria, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and other countries of the Near East and North Africa, as well as of transport routes, especially within the so-called South energy corridor or the Mediterranean. Some member states and the Vice-Chairman of the European Commission M. Šeřčovič considered the proposed plans of the Russian company Gazprom, which tried to find new routes in 2015 for supplies of gas to Europe by means of new gas pipelines bypassing Ukraine hit by the conflict, to be controversial and against the logic of meeting the objectives and tools of the Energy Union. While the construction of the gas pipeline Turkish Stream, which was supposed to supply gas to Turkey and from there to Europe, was stopped at the end of 2015 by Gazprom as a result of rapid deterioration of Russia-Turkey relations, in mid-June 2015 Gazprom concluded a preliminary agreement with its biggest European gas customers on doubling the capacity, i.e. to the level of 55 billion m³ per year, of the gas pipeline Nord Stream, which supplied gas from Russia to Germany along the bottom of the Baltic Sea. Gazprom will work on this project, which should contribute to strengthening the energy security of the EU according to Russia, with the German concern E.ON and BASF/Wintershall, Austrian company OMV, French ENGIE and British-Dutch Group Royal Dutch Shell.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, M. Šeřčovič emphasized that the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2 raises some questions, namely with respect to the current capacity for transport of gas from Russia to Europe, which is utilized only to 50%. At the same time, Šeřčovič pointed out the negative impact of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2 on the gas transit through Ukraine.⁵⁷ A similar opinion was also expressed by ten member states of Central and

Eastern Europe, which sent a letter to the EC on 27. 11. 2015, in which they challenged for careful examination of the project. The ten states pointed out in the letter that the extension of Nord Stream for the purpose of supplies of a bigger volume of gas directly to Germany should limit transit of gas to Europe through Ukraine, while *“preserving the transit route through Ukraine was in the strategic interest of the EU”*.⁵⁸ Then the Czech Republic demonstrated a perfect political turnaround in this context, when it joined the letter at first, but in early December it refused to sign it,⁵⁹ just to stand again in the session of the European Council on 18. 12. 2015 against the realization of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2, which *“meant the diversification of the routes, indeed, but it did not mean diversification of the sources”*.⁶⁰

Another disputable issue in the energy relations of the European Union and the Russian Federation was the decision of the European Commission from 22. 4. 2015 about the commencement of the investigation of the company Gazprom due to an alleged abuse of its dominant position in Central and Eastern Europe and a violation of the rules of the economic competition.⁶¹ According to the Czech Government’s Special Envoy for Energy Security Václav Bartuška, the decision of the EC to accuse Gazprom was one the most important events of the year 2015 in the relations between Europe and the Russian Federation because *“it was a dispute if European laws would be complied with in the territory of the EU...”*.⁶² Last but not least, in 2015 the energy relations of the EU and the Russian Federation were negatively influenced by the decision of the European Commission, with the support of the member states, including the Czech Republic, to extend the sanctions against the Russian Federation by January 2016, which also concerned the Russian energy sector to a limited scope. In other words, energy relations between the EU and the RF in 2015, like in 2014, reached nearly the freezing point in the area of co-operation.⁶³ Therewith the year 2015 confirmed continuity of the energy agenda from 2014 in the form of an emphasis of the EU on the process of strengthening energy security, negatively impacted by strained relations between the RF and Ukraine and continuing crisis in energy interaction with Russia, which kept highlighting the need for reducing the energy dependency. Therefore, in 2015 the European Union paid a big attention to the new project of the Energy Union, within which it was focused on a series of measures for ensuring energy security. Firstly, the EC repeatedly called for accelerating the process of creating unified and mutually interconnected market with energies. Secondly, the EC supported diversification of transport routes, sources, and suppliers. Thirdly, the EC called for reducing energy demands and increasing energy efficiency. At the same time, the EC started the investigation of the company Gazprom, by which it clearly demonstrated to the Russian firm that it had to comply with the Union rules of economic competition. On the contrary, the EU was split into two camps by the Russian project of the construction of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2, which should bypass the territory of Ukraine and therewith reduce its importance of a transit country in the future. While the western member states headed by Germany and France supported the project, the member states from Central and Eastern Europe opposed it for example because of the concern about energy security and loss of its position of the transit country, for example Slovakia.

Energy security of the Czech Republic and the V4 countries

Like within the European Union, the Czech Republic presents its activities, opinions, and interests also within the co-operation of Central European countries of the Visegrad Group, and the year 2015, like the previous year 2014, was not an exception in this respect. This procedure of the Czech Republic is then represented with a very similar emphasis and interest of the V4 states in energy security and related issues and, at the same time, the commitment of these countries to act in a unified way in furthering their energy interests or enforcing critical comments on the EU level.

In 2015, the V4 states applied the common attitude especially in relation to the project of the Energy Union, which was one of the main topics of mutual energy co-operation in the context of strengthening the energy security and reducing energy dependency on the RF. The importance and support of the project of the Energy Union were expressed for example on 23. 3. 2015 in the meeting in Bratislava by the ministers of foreign affairs of the V4 countries, when according to L. Zaorálek *“the topic of the Energy Union would be one of the main topics of our presidency”*.⁶⁴ It was confirmed by B. Sobotka during the meeting with other prime ministers of the V4 and the French president François Hollande in Bratislava on 18. 6. 2015, but especially when starting the Czech presidency of the V4 on 1. 7. 2015, when he emphasized that the priorities of the Czech Republic would be *“[...] the co-operation in the energy area especially with the consideration of building the Energy Union...”*,⁶⁵ but also the energy and climate policy. The importance of the Energy Union was pointed out by the V4 countries by two common declarations.

At first, within the V4–Korea Summit in Prague on 3. 12. 2015, the Prime Ministers of the V4 countries adopted the *Joint Statement of the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group Countries*, where they emphasized the need for the European Council to *“prepare the ground for the full realization of the Energy Union”*.⁶⁶ At the same time, the Prime Ministers of the V4 countries adopted another *Joint Statement of the Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group Countries* on 17. 12. 2015 before the start of the European Council, where they welcomed a discussion about the project of the Energy Union, which *“represented a key priority for the Visegrad Group countries”*.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the Prime Ministers of V4 supported the completion of the internal energy market of the EU, building strong energy infrastructure as a means of strengthening the energy security and challenged the EC to ensure full compliance of any new infrastructure in the territory of the EU *“[...] with the objectives and principles of the Energy Union, which include for example reducing the energy dependence and diversification of sources, suppliers and routes”*.⁶⁸

For the V4 countries, within the Energy Union focused especially on ensuring energy security it is crucial both to preserve the right of the member state to decide about its own energy mix, including the utilization of nuclear energy, and the need to complete the fully liberalized and mutually interconnected energy market of the EU. These facts were confirmed on 15. 7. 2015 in the Brussels conference called *Geopolitics, Energy and Central Europe: what next?*, organized in connection with the commencement of the Czech Presidency of the V4, by Prime Minister B. Sobotka, according to whom the V4 states *“wanted to develop nuclear energy further on”*,⁶⁹ and,

at the same time, *“they wanted to have a really functional market in the EU”*.⁷⁰ The topic of interconnection of the national gas markets already became one of the sector areas of co-operation of the new multilateral format between the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, and Austria called “Slavkov”, which was started by the Prime Ministers of these countries on 29. 1. 2015.⁷¹

In addition to it, the V4 states also put a big emphasis within the Energy Union on the need for diversification of the transport routes and suppliers, but also on the necessity of building the interconnection of the energy infrastructure among the member states. It was reflected on 17. 4. 2015 in the conclusions from the meeting of the European Committees of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, the Senate and Sejm of the Republic of Poland and the National Council of the Slovak Republic in the attendance of the representatives of the Committee for European Integration of the Parliament of Georgia, which highlighted the necessity of *“further diversification of energy supplies”*, called for *“building strategic energy partnership with significant producers and transit countries”*⁷² and supported the *“completion of the North-South gas corridor”*.⁷³ In this respect, on 11. 12. 2015 the start of the operation of the LNG terminal in the Polish Świnoujście, where the first tanker with LNG from Qatar, became the key event. This terminal and the LNG terminal at the Croatian island of Krk represent two main inputs to the North-South gas corridor.⁷⁴ The realization of the project, which should interconnect the energy infrastructure of the countries of Central, Eastern, and South-eastern Europe, would result in the diversification of gas supplies to those states, including the Czech Republic, and thereby also to strengthening the energy security.

At the same time, strengthening the energy security of the states of Central and Eastern Europe would be also facilitated, according to the joint statement of the ministers of the V4 responsible for energy from 5. 10. 2015, by preserving Ukraine as a transit country. This attitude was confirmed further on in the summit in the Hungarian Balatonfüred on 8. 10. 2015 by the Presidents of the V4 and the President of Croatia, who stood, at the same time, against the extension of the gas pipeline Nord Stream, which, according to the Slovak President Andreja Kiska *“threatened security of Ukraine”*⁷⁵ and in the case of its realization, *“Russia could simply blackmail Ukraine”*.⁷⁶

While the Slovak Republic was afraid, in this context, especially of the loss of financial revenues from transit of the Russian gas to western countries of the EU, which could be replaced in the future by the realization of the planned gas pipeline Eastring leading from the Slovak Republic to Turkey, in case of the Czech Republic the attitude to this issue was rather ambivalent. On one hand, J. Mládek assured his Slovak counterpart Vazil Hudák on 4. 12. 2015 about *“the need to preserve the transit role of Ukraine as economically the most efficient way of gas transport to Europe...”*⁷⁷ and, at the same time, he assured him that the construction of the Czech-Austrian gas pipeline BACI was not intended as bypassing the Slovak Republic. On the other hand, despite the original criticism the Czech Republic refused to join the call against the extension of the gas pipeline Nord Stream, which was justified by the Czech Minister of Industry and Trade on 2. 12. 2015 by saying that the letter was too strong and *“the*

extension of the gas pipeline Nord Stream had its positives and negatives”,⁷⁸ when “*nowadays the gas pipeline TANAP, which was an Azerbaijan-Turkey project, seemed to have the best perspective...*”.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the Czech Republic finally reconsidered its attitude again through the Prime Minister B. Sobotka and stood against the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2.

Bilateral dimension of external energy relations of the Czech Republic

The energy relations between the Czech Republic and Austria

Contrary to the energy relations of the Czech Republic with the V4 countries, where there is a mutual agreement about a majority of the energy issues, including the nuclear energy, nuclear energy in the energy interaction between the Czech Republic and the long-term opponent of the nuke, Austria, remains the issue of differing opinions. On one hand, in its position the Czech Republic supports nuclear energy in the long-term, but it does not force it to its neighbour in any way; on the other hand, the Czech Republic expects its decision to develop nuclear energy to be respected by Austria. In comparison with 2014, when slight improvement of mutual energy relations occurred as a result of the decision about the cancellation of the tender for the construction of two new blocks of the nuclear power station Temelín, in 2015 the nuclear energy was again the main topic at issue in the energy interaction of the Czech Republic and Austria.

At first, on 25. 1. 2015 the Upper Austrian organizations fighting against nuclear energy entered a lawsuit against the construction of the nuclear power station Temelín, and then, on 20. 2. 2015, the ecological organization Global 2000 handed over a petition to the Austrian Minister of the Environment Andrām Rupprechter, in which it appealed to the Austrian Government to generate pressure on the Czech side and make it review the impact of the nuclear power station Dukovany on the environment. Pursuant to the organization Global 2000, Dukovany belonged to the most dangerous nuclear power stations in Europe because only water from the Jihlava River was used for cooling the reactors and there could be a shortage of it in the case of landslides or an earthquake. In response to this call, A. Rupprechter highlighted the fact that the Czech Government faced the review of the impact of Dukovany on the environment positively on principle but, at the same time, he pointed out the fact that Austria could not apply pressure on the Czech Republic to leave nuclear energy because “*it was not our task to meddle in the energy mix of other member states*”.⁸⁰

Three months later, on 24. 5. 2015, the spokesperson of the Austrian Governmental Social Democrats (SPÖ) for the issue of the environment Hannes Weningner and the Minister of the Environment of Upper Austria Rudolf Anschober criticized the plans of the Czech Government to build new nuclear reactors in Dukovany and Temelín.⁸¹ Furthermore, R. Anschober challenged the Austrian Government to oppose the financial support for the British project of the construction of the nuclear power station Hinkley Point because “*if we manage to stop the support of the project Hinkley Point, there would be no subventions for Temelín either. And, therefore, there will be no construction of the nuclear power stations in Czechia.*”⁸²

The Czech Minister of the Environment Richard Brabec (ANO) tried to mitigate criticism of nuclear energy in the meeting with his Austrian counterpart A. Rupprechter in Hardegg on 21. 7. 2015. In defence of the utilization of nuclear energy, the Minister of the Environment R. Brabec clearly emphasized that with respect to the geographic conditions of the Czech Republic “*we could not achieve the same share of renewable resources as Austria*”.⁸³ However, the emphasis on nuclear energy pursuant to R. Brabec does not mean that “*we would play down renewable energy sources*”.⁸⁴

The importance of nuclear energy for the Czech Republic but also for the development in the area of the energy dialogue, especially the integration of the gas market, was also dealt with on 21. 8. 2015 by Minister L. Zaorálek during the visit to Linz, where he met the Austrian department colleague and governors of the border-area regions of both countries.⁸⁵ Last but not least, the energy issue was one of the topics of the two-day visit to the Czech Republic (from 5. to 6. 11. 2015) of the chairman of the Austrian Federal Council Gottfried Kneifel, who gradually met the President, Prime Minister, Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies Jan Hamáček (ČSSD) and the chairperson of the inter-parliamentary group of the Czech Republic and Austria Jana Fišerová.⁸⁶

The energy relations between the Czech Republic and Germany

Like in the case of the Czech-Austrian energy relations, also in the case of energy interaction between the Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, there have been different opinions concerning many energy issues in the long-term. Firstly, while the Czech Republic defends the importance of nuclear energetics and requires Germany to acknowledge its decision, the FRG refuses nuclear energy and criticizes the Czech Republic for utilizing it. Secondly, the Czech Republic faces the support of using OZE and its more extensive representation in the energy mix rather critically, also because of the German overflow of energy produced from OZE. On the contrary, the FRG relies much more on the utilization of OZE in the production of electricity and promotes the utilization of OZE within the EU. The energy relations between the Czech Republic and the FRG developed in the context of the aforesaid facts in 2015 too. From the beginning of 2015, like in previous year 2014, the Czech Electric Transmission System (ČEPS) was repeatedly dealing with overflows of electricity from neighbouring Germany resulting from the German support of production of electricity from renewable resources, decommissioning of nuclear power stations in Germany, slow construction of grids and the unified German-Austrian zone, through which huge quantities of electricity were transmitted. In response to these overflows, the electricity distribution staff from ČEPS had to take extraordinary measures repeatedly in 2015 because the electricity volume of approximately 3400 MW was heading through our transmission system to South Europe, which was more than a three-fold of the output of the nuclear power station Temelín, and without an adequate intervention, a critical situation would threaten the transmission system. In this context, the chairman of the Board of Directors of ČEPS, a.s., Vladimír Tošovský, highlighted the main problem consisting in the fact that this increase of output and production of OZE in Germany was not accompanied by the adequate construction of the transmission

lines. *“While the original plan was 1887 kilometres of lines by the year 2015, the reality in the third quarter of the last year was less than one third.”*⁸⁷

Therefore, Adolf Schweer from the company Mitnetz, which manages the transmission system in Saxony, Thuringia, Brandenburg, and Saxony-Anhalt, promised on 17. 2. 2015 that the FRG would invest 300 million EUR in 2015 both in the construction of the new high voltage lines and transformers in the effort to deal with the fluctuating output and transmission of electricity and in the modernization of the current technologies. Furthermore, the operators of the German transmission systems are afraid of a bigger load of their own system in the situation, when the Czech Republic and Poland will switch on the transformers that shall stop the uncontrolled overflows of German electricity.⁸⁸

Contrary to it, German ecologists indirectly stood against the completion of two Czech nuclear power stations, when on 24. 4. 2015 they decided to send a petition to the EC, which permitted the provision of public support for the construction of the British nuclear power station Hinkley Point in 2014 in the effort to prevent the construction of the said nuclear power station. According to Sebastian Sladek from the EWS association, there are concerns that this model could be also used by other states, for example the Czech Republic in the completion of the nuclear power stations Temelín and Dukovany, which *“could open the path to the nuclear renaissance in the whole Europe and to strengthening the energy dependency of the EU on Russia because a majority of the European nuclear sources use Russian uranium”*.⁸⁹ At the same time, according to S. Sladek in case that the new state-supported nuclear power stations would be built in Poland or the Czech Republic, *“their production could push German renewable sources, the support of which is paid by German consumers, out of the market”*.⁹⁰ In response to this criticism, the Prime Minister B. Sobotka emphasized on 23. 5. 2015 that the preparation of the extension of the nuclear power stations Dukovany and Temelín would undergo a due process of assessment and approvals, including the environmental impact assessment not only in the Czech Republic but *“of course, we would communicate about it with our neighbours, such as Austria or Germany”*.⁹¹

Not only nuclear energy but especially the problems with diesel oil, which was deposited by the Czech Republic at the now bankrupt firm Viktoriagruppe at the Bavarian Krailling, were one of the main topics of the meeting of the Czech Prime Minister with the Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin on 4. 5. 2015. The nature of the arisen problem consisted in the fact that the Czech Republic deposited strategic diesel oil reserves at the value of 1.2 billion CZK with Viktoriagruppe, but the bankruptcy administrator preliminarily rejected all claims of the Czech Republic against the firm in April 2015. Consequently, the Government of the Czech Republic announced that it was prepared to claim the diesel oil by means of a court proceeding. According to B. Sobotka, the Czech Republic was naturally interested in these reserves not to be threatened by the bankruptcy of the company Viktoriagruppe and *“it was prepared to demonstrate the ownership right to such material reserves”*.⁹² In this context, A. Merkel assured the Czech Prime Minister that *“Germany and the Czech Republic closely co-operated in improving the ownership position of the Czech state”*.⁹³

In addition to it, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and Germany Lubomír Zaorálek and Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in the effort to strengthen not only energy relations, signed a declaration of Czech-German strategic dialogue in Berlin on 3. 7. 2015. On the basis thereof, both countries want to deepen the co-operation in nine areas, including energy.⁹⁴

The energy relations between the Czech Republic and Russia

In comparison with the previous interactions, the agenda in energy relations between the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation was far more limited. Like in the previous year 2014, in 2015 the main cause of reducing the intensity of mutual energy interaction between the RF and the Czech Republic was also especially the Russian military engagement in Ukraine and extension of the sanctions from the EU against Russia. Nevertheless, a number of traditional topics focused especially on the area of nuclear energy and ensuring supplies of natural gas still remained in the centre of discussion between the Czech Republic and Russia in 2015.

In 2015, an important issue of energy relations between the Czech Republic and the RF was especially the nuclear energy, where in connection with the plan of the Government of the Czech Republic for the construction of two new blocks in the nuclear power plants in Dukovany and Temelín, the Special Envoy of the Government of the Czech Republic for Energy Security V. Bartuška emphasized in one of his interviews on 22. 4. 2015 that the Czech Republic should automatically exclude Russian Rosatom from the completion of two nuclear blocks because *“it was about what countries we would like to co-operate with in the following 30 years. It is a question of our survival. If some people have a feeling here that Russia will stop in Ukraine, they are desperately naïve.”*⁹⁵ At the same time, Bartuška appreciated the call of the EC for a greater variety of suppliers of nuclear fuel and, therefore, for smaller dependency on one, especially Russian supplier that was supplying fuel rods to Dukovany and Temelín at that time. The company Tvel makes the Czech Republic 100% dependent on its deliveries of nuclear fuel. Therefore, diversification is reasonable. On the contrary: *“If any power station ensures a considerable part of the profit to you, entrusting the whole fate into the hands of only one supplier is imprudent.”*⁹⁶ Therefore, V. Bartuška warned that *“people in ČEZ did not realize how much the relations between the EU and Russia had changed. The idea that we would hatch that conflict, that we would wait till it is over, is simply erroneous.”*⁹⁷ At the same time, however, he admitted that *“the Russians should be admitted”* to the future billion tender of the company ČEZ for the nuclear fuel for the nuclear power station Temelín. *“They know the nuclear power station best. Their participation has its justification.”*⁹⁸

In addition to it, the MIT came with a proposal for strengthening security in the area of nuclear energetics in the form of building a Czech plant for the production of nuclear fuel. Nevertheless, in connection with this project, the Czech Republic became suspected that in the nuclear energetics it intended to be oriented on the Russian Federation much more because the realization of such a plant in the Czech Republic would have to take place in co-operation with Russia, as its Tvel had considered a new plant in Central Europe in the past. The project of the plant for the production

of nuclear fuel was finally cancelled by J. Mládek and the chief of ČEZ Daniel Beneš by the end of May 2015.⁹⁹

Another important topic of the Russia-Czech relations in 2015 was the issue of the interruption of supplies of natural gas to Ukraine in July and especially in November, which, according to the Russian state-owned gas company Gazprom, represented a serious risk due to the violation of transit of Russian gas further to Europe during the winter period. Nevertheless, the RWE Group, the biggest Czech gas distributor, emphasized that the interruption of the Russian supplies of natural gas to Ukraine should not complicate its supplies to the Czech customers because the firm had their reservoirs full and even the European market, in which it purchased, had enough gas. The opinion of Prime Minister B. Sobotka was similar; according to him *“the Czech Republic is prepared like it was prepared in the past for similar more complex situations concerning the transit of gas through Ukraine”*.¹⁰⁰

Energetics was discussed, but rather as a marginal topic within the negotiations about economic co-operation, in the meeting of the Czech President Miloš Zeman with the Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on 9. 5. 2015 in Moscow at the opportunity of the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of victory over the Nazi Germany. Similarly, as a part of the efforts for the improvement of Russia-Czech trade relations, M. Zeman discussed energetics with V. Putin during the meeting in Beijing on 3. 9. 2015.¹⁰¹ Even before, J. Mládek, during his three-day stay from 8. to 10. 7. 2015 in the Sverdlovsk area, the administrative centre of which is Yekaterinburg, visited the exposition of Czech firms in the trade fair, met the Russian counterpart Denis Manturov and negotiated about the support of the Czech firms in the region with the Governor Jevgenij Kujvašev. During the visit to Yekaterinburg in the Urals, Minister Mládek tried to find a solution, which would enable to complete the suspended project of the construction of the fossil fuel power station at the city of Salekhard at the Arctic Circle and ensure its full payment. The construction of the power station at the city of Salekhard was started by the Czech firm PSG Zlín with financing by the Czech Export Bank and the insured value of 12 billion CZK from the state-owned company EGIC within a wider project for building the infrastructure in the north Urals in 2012 and now it threatens to the Czech Republic that *“the project would mean a loss of several billion crowns for it”*.¹⁰²

The energy relations between the Czech Republic and the USA

Very similarly, without major changes in comparison with the previous year 2014, the energy relations developed between the Czech Republic and the USA in 2015. In 2015, nuclear energy and negotiations about the supplies of the US gas to the EU also belonged to the main topics of the energy interaction of the Czech Republic and the USA, where the Czech political representatives acted actively.

In connection with the decision of the company ČEZ not to continue automatically with the supplies from the Russian producer Tvel after 2020, as it is enabled by the currently valid contract, and then to declare a new tender for the supplies of the nuclear fuel for the nuclear power station Temelín with a promise of the company ČEZ on 25. 4. 2015, the company Westinghouse repeatedly expressed its interest in sup-

plies to the Czech Republic in 2015.¹⁰³ Originally, the nuclear power station Temelín used the newly developed fuel from the firm Westinghouse for its reactors of the Russian type VVER, but the US-Japan company lost the tender in 2006 to the traditional Russian manufacturer of cells for the reactors VVER, company Tvel.¹⁰⁴ The fact that the fuel rods delivered by the company Westinghouse twisted and caused more frequent stoppages of the power station also played its role. The company Westinghouse, which modified the fuel according to its own statement, will be the only competitor of the Russian firm Tvel from the Rosatom Group, the fuel of which has also faced difficulties nowadays.¹⁰⁵ A chance for a possible victory is given to the company Westinghouse by the requirement of the EC within the Energy Union that the member countries should diversify the supplies of nuclear fuel. In this context, the firm Westinghouse pointed to the fact that its fuel for the nuclear power station Temelín would increase the security of supplies because the Czech Republic would not be dependent on the Russian Federation only. The older nuclear power station Dukovany has also secured supplies from the Russian firm Tvel up to the end of the service life of the source.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, in 2015 the US-Japan company Westinghouse indirectly expressed its interest in participating in the future tender for the construction of two blocks in the nuclear power stations Dukovany and Temelín. In addition to it, diversification of supplies of natural gas is also important for the Czech Republic but also for the EU as an alternative to the non-reliable import of gas and oil from Russia. In 2015, the possibility of importing of the shale gas in the form of liquefied gas (LNG) from the USA to the member states of the EU was also discussed, which was supported on 28. 4. 2015 in one of the interviews by the EU MP Miroslav Poche (ČSSD), who was a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Industry, Research and Energy. However, M. Poche also pointed out the barriers, which were preventing from the import of the US gas to Europe and which had to be eliminated. The problem consists especially in a higher price than in the case of gas supplied by the gas pipeline, which is caused by the costs for liquefaction, transport and repeated conversion into the gaseous state. Another barrier is the missing infrastructure, especially in South and Central Europe. Last but not least, very strict limitations apply to export of energy raw materials including oil and gas from the USA, and obtaining a licence is very lengthy and demanding for the firms.¹⁰⁷

This limitation could be eliminated within the forthcoming agreement TTIP, which should reduce export hindrances in the energy area and liberalize trade with energies between the EU and the USA. At the same time, an important part of TTIP should be the access to the US energy raw materials, when it should be simpler in case of gas than in case of oil.¹⁰⁸ For example, according to T. Prouza TTIP will bring the possibility to the Czech and European firms to get to the US market in a greater measure and profit from the increasing volume of trade between the EU and the USA also as subcontractors of European firms, which would also support the creation of new job opportunities.¹⁰⁹

The agreement on TTIP and energy belonged to the main topics of the visit (from 12. to 15. 5. 2015) of the Minister of Industry and Trade J. Mládek to the USA. In Washington, at first J. Mládek met the representatives of the US Department of En-

ergy, with whom he negotiated about the perspectives of further co-operation between the Czech Republic and the USA in the energy area. Both parties agreed that the teams of both countries would meet very soon to assess individual topics in more detail.¹¹⁰ At the same time, J. Mládek discussed with the United States Trade Representative (USTR) and the main US representative for TTIP Dan Mullaney about the issues of Czech priorities in TTIP. According to Mládek *“the Czech Republic strongly supports the TTIP agreement [...] not only due to economic reasons but also from the strategic perspective”*.¹¹¹

On 29. 9. 2015, Prime Minister Sobotka and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Zorálek partially discussed energetics with the US Vice-president Joseph Biden during the meeting in New York.¹¹² Like three months ago, on 18. 6. 2015, when during the visit to Prague the importance of the Czech Republic for energy security of the EU was highlighted by the Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland, according to whom *“Czechia was not important as a transit country only but also as a strong voice inside the EU, which strived for diversification of sources, finding new energy routes to Europe”*.¹¹³ V. Nuland, whose opinion is of considerable influence in Washington, clearly emphasized that the very Czech Republic could play a key role in the debates about the diversification of gas supplies to Europe.

The energy relations between the Czech Republic and France

And finally, the energy relations between the Czech Republic and France also remained without greater changes in 2015, in comparison with the previous year 2014, and developed in the token of the efforts for strengthening energy co-operation and mutual activities. In 2015, the main topics of the energy interaction between the Czech Republic and France, like in the previous year, were especially nuclear energy and strengthening the energy security within the Energy Union. In the first half of 2015, the issues of energetics were discussed for example by the State Secretary for European Affairs T. Prouza during his visit to France on 29.–30. 4. 2015.

At first, the state secretary with the advisor to the French Prime Minister for Energy and the Environment Charles-Antoine Goffin focused on the issue of the newly initiated project of the Energy Union but also on the traditional topics, such as ensuring energy security or strengthening the European energy infrastructure. At the same time, both parties exchanged information about the national energy strategies during the meeting. In the final meeting of T. Prouza with the managing director for the EU of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pierre Lévy and his fellow workers, in addition to the European topics, the bilateral relations and projects of mutual Czech-French co-operation were also discussed, which also included the energy area.¹¹⁴

Less than two months later, on 3.–4. 6. 2015, Minister of Foreign Affairs Lubomír Zorálek attended the session of Ministers of the Council of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris. On the fringe of the session, he also discussed with the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development Laurent Fabius. The topic of the session of the ministers was mutual co-operation resulting from the Action Plan of Strategic Partnership for the Period 2014–

2018 (hereinafter only referred to as the Action Plan), including new possibilities of economic and energy co-operation.¹¹⁵

In turn, Lubomír Zaorálek welcomed L. Fabius on 23. 8. 2015 in the Czernin Palace. The ministers agreed that the relations between both countries were on a high level. In this context, they spoke about specific opportunities of realizing the Action Plan, which covered the activities of both countries.¹¹⁶ The French minister also stated that “*the Czech Republic and France shared opinions for diversification of energy sources within a wide range*”,¹¹⁷ whereby he highlighted the approach of both countries to the issue of energy security that was similar in the long-term and the tools for ensuring it. In connection with the planned declaration of the tender for the construction of two nuclear blocks in the nuclear power station Dukovany and nuclear power station Temelín, L. Fabius clearly emphasized during his visit that if “*a tender was declared again in the Czech Republic for the construction of the nuclear power station Temelín, the French side would submit a bid in it.*”¹¹⁸ At the same time, he pointed out that France had “reorganized” its policy regarding nuclear energy a short time ago and that everything would be newly dealt with by the energy company EDF.

A day later, on 24. 8. 2015, at the office of the MFA of the Czech Republic, a meeting of Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka and Laurent Fabius took place. One of the main topics of their meeting concerned mutual relations between the Czech Republic and France and a proposal for a specific realization of the Action Plan. The topic of discussion was also the co-operation in the area of nuclear energy and defence.¹¹⁹

Last but not least, on 30. 11. 2015 the Prime Minister met the French President François Hollande in Paris at the beginning of the Climate Change Conference, where he appreciated tremendous benefits and efforts, by which France supported the climatic negotiation process. At the same time, in his speech, B. Sobotka called the present representatives to adopt comprehensive legally binding treaties that would ensure that the increase of the average global temperature would not exceed two degrees Celsius in comparison with the pre-industrial level. Such a treaty shall include, according to Sobotka, all economies, both developed and developing, and all those contributing significantly to the production of emissions of greenhouse gasses. “*Only such universal participation within the new treaty can ensure a real change of the current growing trends of emissions of greenhouse gasses contributing to the climate change.*”¹²⁰

THE ENERGY EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC: IDENTIFYING AND CHARACTERISTICS OF KEY ACTORS

Energy represents a long-term and intensively discussed topic of the Czech political discourse and the year 2015 was no exception in this respect. In the monitored period, all aforesaid issues and topics of external energy relations significantly influenced the decision-making of individual institutional actors of the Czech Republic and within their framework of key political actors as well as the intensity of their activities and

they were present in their actions, speeches, and negotiations with foreign counterparts.

With respect to these facts, in external energy relations of the Czech Republic in 2015, like in the previous year, the most active was the Government of the Czech Republic through Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka, who also discussed the energy issues for example with the representatives of Serbia, Armenia, South Korea. Similarly, the activity in external energy relations of the Czech Republic was obvious from the side of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic in the form of Minister of Industry and Trade Jan Mládek, who also discussed energetics for example with the representatives of Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Oman, and his deputy Pavel Šolc and later Lenka Kovačovská, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic through Minister of Foreign Affairs Lubomír Zaorálek, political secretary of the Ministry Petr Drulák and especially Special Envoy of the Czech Republic for Energy Security Václav Bartuška and his secretary Jitka Holubcová and partially also the Ministry of the Environment through Minister of the Environment Richard Brabec, who also discussed energetics for example with the representatives of Georgia, and his deputy Jan Kříž. Last but not least, in external energy relations of the Czech Republic the President of the Czech Republic Miloš Zeman was also active, who also discussed energetics for example with the representatives of Jordan, Azerbaijan, and South Korea.

THE ENERGY EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND THE MEDIA

Like the decisive political actors of the Czech Republic, all domestic media were also dealing with a number of topics of internal and external dimensions of energy security and policy of the Czech Republic in 2015. With respect to the said topics, a majority of Czech daily papers (*Hospodářské noviny*, *E15*, *Právo*, *Lidové noviny*, *Mladá fronta Dnes* and *Haló noviny*), but also the Internet portal Česká pozice, *Euroskop*, and *Euractiv* paid increased attention especially to the project of the Energy Union. For example, the Internet portal *Euractiv* asked four Czech MPs and MEPs about the importance of the Energy Union for the Czech Republic and also about the problems of this project. All three MEPs, i.e. Pavel Poc (ČSSD), Evžen Tošenovský (ODS) and Luděk Niedermayer (TOP 09) and one MP, Michal Kučera (TOP 09), emphasized the benefits of the Energy Union especially in the form of the implementation of *smart grids*, strengthening energy security, completion of the energy market and completion of the energy infrastructure. At the same time, all of them agreed that a certain problem of the Energy Union could consist in its too ambitious plans and intentions but also in a big number and variety of subsidy programmes for renewable resources.¹²¹

Big attention was also paid by the Czech media to the issue of breaking or preserving the coal mining limits at the mines Bílina and ČSA. In addition to the advan-

tages and impacts related to breaking the coal mining limits, the Czech media were dealing with public discussion about this issue. While citizens of the affected municipalities, a part of the regional executive and a number of supporters of the so-called green energy were against mining in order to preserve coal for future generations, on the contrary trade unionists, people from the power sector and main representatives of industry favoured the mining of the remaining reserves of coal in order to strengthen energy security of the Czech Republic and limit its dependency on expensive imports of energy raw materials from politically and economically unstable regions of the world but also in order to preserve jobs etc.¹²²

Another big topic for the Czech media was the decision of the Government of the Czech Republic about the future construction of two new blocks in the nuclear power plants in Dukovany and Temelín and the plan of the company ČEZ to declare a tender for supplies of nuclear fuel for the nuclear power station Temelín. In addition to the opinion of the Czech political representatives, criticism from the ecological organizations and interests of foreign firms from Russia, USA, France, Japan and South Korea, the media also noticed the attitudes of the Czechs to nuclear energy in this context. According to the research of the Public Opinion Research Centre of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic from May 2015, a majority of the Czechs is for preserving or increasing the share of nuclear energy in the production of electricity. Nearly 50% of the people also favoured the construction of the third and fourth blocks of the nuclear power station Temelín. In other words, the extension of the production of nuclear energy was considered positively by 22% of people, according to 45% of people the share of nuke should remain on the same level. The group of people that would welcome reducing the share of nuclear energy was 22% and the remaining 11% did not know. Bigger concerns regarding the use of nuclear energy were shared by 1/3 of the Czechs.¹²³

Last but not least, the Czech media were focused on the Russian energy interests in the Czech Republic and on the level of the EU. In the case of the Czech Republic and energy interests of the RF, numerous Czech Internet portals and daily journals took over some results of the *Annual Report of the Security Information Services for 2014*, which pointed out in relation to energy that Russia did not consider the fight for the Czech nuclear energy lost. At the same time, according to the SIS report: *“The interest of the Russian power in the Czech nuclear energy in less prominent forms persists. Contrary to the previous period, the Russian interests in the Czech Republic expanded (Temelín, Dukovany, supplies of nuclear fuel). It is logically related to the Russian interest in the new energetic concept of the Czech Republic as a whole and in all subjects, which have at least mediated influence on the realization of the energy concept.”*¹²⁴ In case of energy interests of the RF in the European Union, the Czech media noticed especially the Russian project of the construction of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2, which divided the EU member states in two camps, opponents (especially the Central European and East European countries) and supporters (especially the West European countries).¹²⁵

CONCLUSIONS

Like in the previous year 2014, also the following year 2015 in the area of external energy relations of the Czech Republic reflected the *limited politicizing* of the Czech discussion about some issues related to the external dimension of energy security. While the topic of external energy policy and thereto related issues of energy security were present in 2015 in the political debate of the institutional actors of the Czech Republic, i.e. of the President, Prime Minister, the MIT, the MFA and the ME, a majority of the political actors, i.e. political parties and movements, did not care too much for the issue of external energy relations of the Czech Republic. At the same time, in 2015 there was a very similar or only partially differing opinion about a number of energy topics of external relations of the Czech Republic among the institutional and to a limited scope also political actors of the Czech Republic; therefore, only a *limited polarization* of the Czech discussion can be spoken about. In 2015, these two facts considerably influenced and determined the foreign policy position and actions of the Czech Republic in external energy relations, where it was necessary to differentiate the multilateral and bilateral levels.

On the multilateral level within the EU and the V4, the Czech Republic supported in 2015, like in 2014, two attitudes in the external energy relations. On one side, in 2014 the Czech Republic defended *creating the common policy*, which was based on the *proactive actions* and *co-operating position*. In this respect, during the year the Czech Republic for example repeatedly supported the project of the Energy Union and together with partners from the V4 it pushed through significant modifications into the current proposal of the Energy Union, supported the negotiations of the EU with the USA about TTIP, together with other states of the EU it enforced the right of the member states to develop nuclear energy and decide independently about the composition of the energy mix, it emphasized the necessity of strengthening the energy security in the form of completing the fully liberalized mutually interconnected energy market and, last but not least, it stood against the realization of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2. On the other side, the Czech Republic assumed the *adaptation to the external policy*, which was a result of *reactive actions* and *neutral position*, when during the year 2015 it traditionally stood, together with the other V4 countries, rather critically to the issue of further support of OZE, reduction of CO emissions, some measures in the area of reducing energy efficiency, but by its conduct it did not block or veto these issues and, on the contrary, in the Paris Conference about climate changes in November and December it supported the process of climate negotiations and asked for adoption of a complex legally binding agreement. At the same time, after criticism by the V4 countries, the Czech Republic, despite the refusal to sign the letter against the realization of the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2, stood again on the side of the opponents to its construction.

Similarly, on the bilateral level, the Czech Republic adopted in 2015, like in the previous year 2014, *proactive actions* and *co-operating position* and strived for *creating a common policy* in its external energy relations. This attitude was probably most visible in the example of strengthening the Czech and Union energy security, for ex-

ample by means of a greater utilization of nuclear energy, which was supported by the Czech Republic in 2015 in its bilateral energy relations with Austria and the FRG and in case of the USA and France it even strived for co-operation with these states, but it did not impose it on any of the said states. In the case of the energy relations with Russia, in 2015 the Czech Republic assumed *adaptation to the external policy*, which was the result of *reactive actions* and *neutral position*. On one hand, the Czech Republic accepted the external energy policy of the EU towards the Russian Federation, supported strengthening the energy security of the EU and reducing the Union energy dependency on the RF and, at the same time, it agreed to the sanctions of the EU against Russia. On the other hand, the Czech Republic clearly emphasized that it would keep negotiating and co-operating with the RF in the energy area.

Endnotes

- ¹ Compare with Tichý, Lukáš (2015): Energetika ve vnějších vztazích České republiky. In: Kořán, Michal et al.: *Česká zahraniční politika v roce 2014. Analýza ÚMV*. Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, pp. 342–362.
- ² *Rusko zastavilo dodávky plynu na Ukrajinu, může to ovlivnit i tranzit*. E15.cz, 25. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/2BFZbQ.
- ³ Baret, Daniel (2015): *Rusko varovalo EU: Zastavíme tranzit plynu přes Ukrajinu a dodáme ho jinam*. Reflex, 15. 1. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/Qi2COL.
- ⁴ *Deset zemí včetně Česka: Omezit ukrajinskou trasu plynu není dobrý nápad*. ČT24, 27. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/SQcigZ.
- ⁵ *Podle ČR a dalších devíti zemí je Nord Stream 2 proti zájmům EU*. České noviny, 27. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/AcIMCI.
- ⁶ *Shell začal dodávat přes Slovensko plyn na Ukrajinu*. ČT24, 15. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/L7WRvC.
- ⁷ *Zpráva o situaci v oblasti vztahů mezi EU a Ruskem (2015/2001(INI))*. Evropský parlament, 13. 5. 2015. On-line: www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A82015-0162+0+DOC+XML+V0//CS.
- ⁸ *Gazprom zneužívá svého postavení na trhu, tvrdí Evropská komise*. Blesk.cz, 22. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/vGhbXp.
- ⁹ *Země EU se shodly na prodloužení a posílení sankcí proti Rusku*. Český rozhlas, 29. 1. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/7tZfGA.
- ¹⁰ The Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic: *Ministři EU jednali o TTIP a setkali se se svými protějšky ze země Východního partnerství*, 7. 5. 2015. On-line: www.mpo.cz/dokument157920.html.
- ¹¹ *Írán kývl na jadernou dohodu, žádnou bombu vyrábět nebude*. Novinky.cz, 14. 7. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/mQwzkk.
- ¹² *Začne Brusel spolupracovat s Íránem? Brzy zahájí jednání na vysoké úrovni*. E15.cz, 28. 7. 2014. On-line: goo.gl/3kla0k.
- ¹³ *Energie v březnu 2015*. Euroskop.cz, 9. 4. 2015. On-line: www.euroskop.cz/8440/25602/clanek/energie-v-breznu-2015/.
- ¹⁴ *Česko přerušení dodávek plynu na Ukrajinu neohrožuje. Evropa je zásobena dobře*. Aktuálně.cz, 27. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/v60veM; *Kyjev prý ministra Mládku ujistil spíše o tranzitu ropy, než plynu*. Deník.cz, 17. 2. 2015. On-line: [/www.denik.cz/ekonomika/kyjev-pry-ministra-mladka-ujistil-spise-o-tranzitu-ropy-nez-plynu-20150217.html](http://www.denik.cz/ekonomika/kyjev-pry-ministra-mladka-ujistil-spise-o-tranzitu-ropy-nez-plynu-20150217.html).

- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ *Česko se pod dopis proti rozšíření Nord Streamu nepodepíše*. TÝDEN.cz, 2. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/KLoHAp; *Plán Gazpromu destabilizuje Ukrajinu, miní Sobotka. Nechápe Brusel*. ČTK, 13. 9. 2015.
- ¹⁷ *Sobotka: Energetická unie zvýší spolehlivost dodávek*. E15.cz, 2. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/MTz-vNF.
- ¹⁸ *Mládek chce větší zásobníky plynu, mají pokrýt 50 procent spotřeby*. E15.cz, 17. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/kUOYjp.
- ¹⁹ *Zaorálek jednal s prezidentem Íránu. O konfliktech v regionu i o uprchlících*. ParlamentníListy.cz, 7. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/U6Os66.
- ²⁰ *Mládek chce větší zásobníky plynu, mají pokrýt 50 procent spotřeby*, op. cit.
- ²¹ *Vláda rozhodla o prolomení limitů na lomu Bílina. Těžba se zastaví 500 metrů od domů*. Aktuálně.cz, 19. 10. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/1MiuYy.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ *Sobotka: V Dukovanech i Temelíně budou nové bloky elektráren*. Aktuálně.cz, 23. 5. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/JfBwre.
- ²⁷ *At' Temelín staví zvláštní státní firma, chce Mládek. Babiš je ale proti*. Hospodářské noviny, 15. 6. 2015.
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ *Šéf ČEZ: Každý jaderný blok bude stát až 150 miliard*. E15.cz, 3. 6. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/MSRYZq.
- ³¹ The Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic: *Národní akční plán jaderné energetiky v České republice*, 30. 11. 2015. On-line: www.mpo.cz/dokument166679.html.
- ³² The Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic: *Aktualizace Státní energetické koncepce České republiky*, 19. 5. 2015. On-line: www.mpo.cz/dokument158012.html.
- ³³ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: *Koncepce zahraniční politiky ČR*, 13. 7. 2015. On-line: www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/zahranicni_vztahy/analyzy_a_koncepce/koncepce_zahranicni_politiky_cr.html.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ The Ministry of the Interior of Czech Republic: *Bezpečnostní strategie České republiky*, 4. 2. 2015. On-line: www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/brs/dokumenty/bezpecnostni-strategie-2015.pdf
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ The Ministry of the Interior of Czech Republic: *Dlouhodobý výhled pro obranu 2030*, 15. 6. 2015. On-line: www.mocr.army.cz/ministr-a-ministerstvo/odkazy/odkazy-46088.
- ³⁹ The Ministry of the Interior of Czech Republic: *Koncepce výstavby Armády České republiky 2025*, 21. 12. 2015. On-line: www.mocr.army.cz/ministr-a-ministerstvo/odkazy/odkazy-46088.
- ⁴⁰ *Energie v březnu 2015*. Euroskop.cz, 9. 4. 2015. On-line: www.euroskop.cz/8440/25602/clanek/energie-v-breznu-2015/.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ *HK ČR: Zodpovědnost za energetický mix by měly nést členské státy EU*. Tretiruka.cz, 25. 2. 2015. On-line: www.tretiruka.cz/news/hk-cr-zodpovednost-za-energeticky-mix-by-mely-ness-clenske-staty-eu-/.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ⁴⁶ *ČR chce s dalšími státy vybojovat v EU větší podporu atomovým elektrárnám*. Svobodnymonitor.cz, 6. 3. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/6ZP5wm.

- ⁴⁷ *Brusel tlačí kvůli ruskému jádru*. Lidové noviny, 9. 3. 2015, p. 13.
- ⁴⁸ Vláda ČR: *Premiér Bohuslav Sobotka jednal na zasedání Evropské rady o podobě energetické unie*, 20. 3. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/3br78Q.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ *Sobotka: Energetická unie přinese ČR větší bezpečnost dodávek*. E15.cz, 2. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/cTHgrb.
- ⁵¹ ČSSD: *Premiér Sobotka po jednání s místopředsedou Evropské komise Šefčovičem: Prioritou české vlády je dokončení vnitřního trhu s energií*, 26. 5. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/pRVuwM.
- ⁵² *EU zveřejnila první Zprávu o stavu energetické unie*. Euroskop.cz, 23. 11. 2015. On-line: www.euroskop.cz/9007/26607/clanek/eu-zverejnila-prvni-zpravu-o-stavu-energeticke-unie/.
- ⁵³ *Plynovod ČR-Polsko a ropovod z Litvínova do SRN mezi projekty EU*. Finanční noviny.cz, 18. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/Lnl7IF.
- ⁵⁴ Vláda ČR: *Vláda schválila mandát pro premiéra na jednání Evropské rady*, 14. 12. 2015. On-line: www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=138110&tmplid=50.
- ⁵⁵ *Evropská rada bude dnes řešit jednotný digitální trh a energetickou unii*. Ekonomicky-denik.cz, 18. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/cxjAeD.
- ⁵⁶ *Gazprom rozšíří Nord Stream a dostane se k německému plynu*. TÝDEN.cz, 4. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/1KA6Yz.
- ⁵⁷ *Rozšíření plynovodu přes Německo ohrozí Kyjev, stěžuje si ČR i další země*. iDNES.cz, 27. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/u9mztx.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ Also cf. *Česko se pod dopis proti rozšíření Nord Streamu nepodepíše*. TÝDEN.cz, 2. 12. 2015. Online: goo.gl/KLoHAp.
- ⁶⁰ *Sobotka se postavil proti rozšíření plynovodu Nord Stream. Zastání před Merkelovou našel i u Tuska*. iHNed.cz, 18. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/rBYKGo.
- ⁶¹ *Gazprom zneužívá svého postavení na trhu, tvrdí Evropská komise*. Blesk.cz, 22. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/vGhbXp.
- ⁶² *Bartuška: Gazprom buď nakonec uzná pravidla EU, nebo opustí trh*. E15.cz, 28. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/fexqZz.
- ⁶³ *EU prodloužila sankce vůči Rusku do ledna 2016*. Kurzy.cz, 22. 6. 2015. On-line: www.kurzy.cz/zpravy/382115-eu-prodlouzila-sankce-vuci-rusku-do-ledna-2016/.
- ⁶⁴ Ministr Zaoarálek: *Energetická unie bude jedním z hlavních témat našeho předsednictví*. ParlamentníListy.cz, 24. 3. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/ueFmUx.
- ⁶⁵ The Government of the Czech Republic: *Předsednictví ČR ve skupině V4: Prioritami je energetika i vnitřní soudržnost*, 1. 7. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/UT6om6.
- ⁶⁶ The Government of the Czech Republic: *Premiéři V4 přijali společné prohlášení ke klíčovým tématům prosincové ER*, 3. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/xdwrpr.
- ⁶⁷ The Government of the Czech Republic: *V4 přijala společné prohlášení k tématům Evropské rady, jednání se zúčastnil i britský premiér Cameron*, 17. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/AnsljK.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid.
- ⁶⁹ *České předsednictví V4 a konference k energetickým otázkám*. Energetický regulační úřad, 16. 7. 2015. On-line: www.eru.cz/-/ceske-predsednictvi-v4-a-konference-k-energetickym-otazkam.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷¹ The Government of the Czech Republic: *Premiéři ČR, Rakouska a Slovenska založili ve Slavkově nový formát regionální spolupráce*, 29. 1. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/4wli9i.
- ⁷² The Senate: *Závěry z jednání evropských výborů parlamentů země V4*, 16. 4. 2015. On-line: www.senat.cz/zpravodajstvi/zprava.php?id=1890.
- ⁷³ Ibid.
- ⁷⁴ *Do Polska dorazil první tanker se zkapalněným zemním plynem*. E15.cz, 11. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/45Ssb7.

- ⁷⁵ *Prezidenti V4 a Chorvatska se shodli na potřebě posílit ochranu hranic EU. Český rozhlas,* 9. 10. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/CgH1Me.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ *Ukrajina musí zůstat hlavní trasou pro tranzit plynu, říká Mládek.* E15.cz, 4. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/pw2vW7.
- ⁷⁸ *Česko se pod dopis proti rozšíření Nord Streamu nepodepíše.* TÝDEN.cz, 2. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/KLoHAp.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid.
- ⁸⁰ *Rakouští ekologové se bojí Dukovan. Podepsali petici.* TÝDEN.cz, 20. 2. 2015. On-line: www.tyden.cz/rubriky/domaci/rakousti-ekologove-se-boji-dukovan-podepsali-petici_334061.html.
- ⁸¹ *Rakouští politici kritizují plány ČR postavit nové reaktory.* Novinky.cz, 24. 5. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/JCkMV2.
- ⁸² Ibid.
- ⁸³ *Ministr životního prostředí se v Thayatalu sešel se svým rakouským protějškem. Poprvé po šesti letech.* Správa Národního parku Podyjí, 22. 7. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/bhr73o.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid.
- ⁸⁵ *Ministr Zaorálek bude jednat s rakouským ministrem a hejtmany.* ParlamentniListy.cz, 18. 8. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/9j7UwQ.
- ⁸⁶ The Government of the Czech Republic: *Předseda vlády se sešel s předsedou Spolkové rady Rakouska.* 6. 11. 2015. On-line: www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/predseda-vlady-se-sesel-s-predsedom-spolkove-rady-rakouska--136729/.
- ⁸⁷ *Česko opět čelilo náporu přebytečné elektřiny z Německa.* Elektřina.cz, 10. 2. 2015. On-line: www.elektrina.cz/problemy-ceps-kvuli-nemecke-elektrine.
- ⁸⁸ *Německo investuje miliardy, aby vyřešilo problémy s přetoky elektřiny.* ČT24, 17. 2. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/t7TTMx.
- ⁸⁹ *Němečtí ekologové chtějí zastavit britskou jadernou elektrárnu.* Denik.cz, 24. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/EhLTSn.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid.
- ⁹¹ *Dukovany dostanou přednost před Temelínem při stavbě nového bloku.* ČT24, 23. 4. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/os360D.
- ⁹² *Sobotka u Merkelové: Jsme připraveni doložit, že nafta v kauze Viktoriagruppe byla naše.* iHNeD.cz, 4. 5. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/Tl56oI.
- ⁹³ Ibid.
- ⁹⁴ *Česko podepsalo s Německem dohodu o strategickém dialogu.* E15.cz, 3. 7. 2015. On-line: zpravy.e15.cz/domaci/politika/cesko-podepsalo-s-nemeckem-dohodu-o-strategickemdialogu-1206196.
- ⁹⁵ *Vládní zmocněnc Bartuška: EPH i ČEZ podceňují dopady konfliktu s Ruskem.* Hospodářské noviny, 22. 4. 2015.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹⁹ *Brusel tlačí kvůli ruskému jádru.* Lidové noviny, 9. 3. 2015, p. 13.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Česko přerušení dodávek plynu na Ukrajinu neohrožuje. Evropa je zásobena dobře.* Aktuálně.cz, 27. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/v60veM.
- ¹⁰¹ *Zeman se sešel s Putinem, jednali i o české pohledávce.* Aktuálně.cz, 9. 5. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/4Ps8W8; *Zeman se v Číně sešel s Putinem, řešili islamisty i protiruské sankce.* iDNES.cz, 3. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/DiCr0T.
- ¹⁰² *Mládek na Urále loboval za český projekt elektrárny na polárním kruhu.* E15.cz, 10. 7. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/qqQ2i2.
- ¹⁰³ *ČEZ plánuje strategický tendr na jaderné palivo.* Respekt, 25. 1. 2015. On-line: www.respekt.cz/fokus/cez-planuje-strategicky-tendr-na-jaderne-palivo.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Kdo zásobí Temelín? Bitva se vede i o jaderné palivo.* Euractiv.cz, 12. 1. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/v6WioA.

- 105 Ibid.
- 106 ČEZ plánuje strategický tendr na jaderné palivo. Respekt, 25. 1. 2015. On-line: www.respekt.cz/fokus/cez-planuje-strategicky-tendr-na-jaderne-palivo.
- 107 ČSSD: M. Poche: Bude do Evropy proudit plyn z USA? 24. 4. 2015. On-line: www.cssd.cz/media/cssd-v-mediich/bude-do-evropy-proudit-plyn-z-usa/.
- 108 The Government of the Czech Republic: Premiér Bohuslav Sobotka jednal na zasedání Evropské rady o podobě energetické unie, 20. 3. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/3br78Q.
- 109 Tomáš Prouza: TTIP není smlouva s ďáblem. ParlamentníListy.cz, 7. 6. 2015. On-line: www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/nazory-a-petice/Tomas-Prouza-TTIP-neni-smlouva-s-dablem-378526.
- 110 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Návštěva ministra Jana Mládka v USA, 18. 5. 2015. On-line: www.mzv.cz/washington/cz/obchod_a_ekonomika/novinky/navsteva_ministra_jana_mladka_v_usa.html.
- 111 The Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic: Ministr Mládek v USA podpoří český letecký průmysl, bude jednat s americkými investory a vystoupí na prestižním Atlantic Council, 13. 5. 2015. On-line: www.mpo.cz/zprava157969.html.
- 112 Sobotka a Zaorálek jednali s americkým viceprezidentem Bidenem. Novinky.cz, 29. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/6GTCQX.
- 113 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: MZV hostilo Strategický dialog ČR–USA, 18. 6. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/WQi67e.
- 114 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Návštěva státního tajemníka pro evropské záležitosti Tomáše Prouzy v Paříži, 4. 5. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/JefaWh.
- 115 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Ministr zahraničních věcí Lubomír Zaorálek navštívil Francii, 9. 6. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/w1gUzk.
- 116 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Ministr Zaorálek přijal ministra zahraničí Francie, 23. 8. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/v8fZpr.
- 117 Francie má stále zájem o dostavbu Temelína, oznámil Fabius. E15.cz, 23. 8. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/wRiADZ.
- 118 Ibid.
- 119 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Premiér jednal s francouzským ministrem zahraničí o strategickém partnerství a migrační krizi, 24. 8. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/Nq8rMH.
- 120 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: Předseda vlády se v Paříži zúčastnil zahájení klimatické konference, 1. 12. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/Nq8rMH.
- 121 ANKETA: Co přinese energetická unie České republice? Euractiv.cz, 19. 3. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/PJykKb.
- 122 Vláda rozhodla o prolomení limitů na lomu Bílina. Těžba se zastaví 500 metrů od domů. Aktuálně.cz, 19. 10. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/1MiuYy.
- 123 Průzkum: Většina Čechů je pro zachování a růst jaderné energie. E15.cz, 9. 6. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/p0m0Fy.
- 124 Dále srov. BIS vydala výroční zprávu, varuje před ruskými a čínskými špiony. ČT24, 4. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/hXiWCT; Výroční zpráva Bezpečnostní informační služby za rok 2014. BIS, 4. 9. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/Q8OpuW.
- 125 Rozšíření Nord Streamu jde proti zájmům EU, říká Česko a další země. E15.cz, 27. 11. 2015. On-line: goo.gl/XXFILN.