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The importance of Ukraine in the process of ensuring the energy security of Central European countries in the political thought of Polish political parties during the Russian-Ukrainian war. Selected issues

Znaczenie Ukrainy w procesie zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa energetycznego państw Europy Środkowej w myśli politycznej polskich partii politycznych w okresie wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia

Abstract: Ukraine has played an extremely important role in ensuring the energy security of Central European countries over the years, mainly due to its position as a transit state. Past energy crises (2006, 2009) have affected the perception of the country in Europe and led to Russian-German energy projects that reduce the level of regional security (e.g., Nord Stream 1, Nord Stream 2). In Poland, various political parties (Law and Justice, Civic Platform, the Left Party, Polish People’s Party) have referred differently to regional co-operation and the function Ukraine might offer in this type of process. In this context, the aim of the article was to analyse the political thought of selected Polish parliamentary parties regarding the importance of Ukraine in ensuring the energy security of Central European countries during Russia’s armed attack on Ukraine in 2022. The starting point of the analyses was the general thesis that political parties in Poland treated Ukraine as a key state in efforts to limit the negatively perceived energy policy of the Russian Federation in the region.

Keywords: Central Europe, political thought, political parties, Ukraine

Streszczenie: Ukraina przez lata odgrywała niezwykle ważną rolę w zapewnieniu bezpieczeństwa energetycznego państw Europy Środkowej, z uwagi na pełnienie funkcji państwa tranzytowego. Mające miejsce w przeszłości kryzysy energetyczne (2006, 2009) wpłynęły na postrzeganie tego państwa w Europie

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oraz doprowadziły do realizacji rosyjsko-niemieckich projektów energetycznych ograniczających poziom bezpieczeństwa regionalnego (m.in. Nord Stream 1, Nord Stream 2). W Polsce poszczególne partie polityczne (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, Platforma Obywatelska, Lewica, Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe) w odmienny sposób odnosiły się do regionalnej kooperacji oraz funkcji, jaką mogła w tym procesie odegrać Ukraina. W tym kontekście celem artykułu była analiza myśli politycznej wybranych polskich ugrupowań parlamentarnych w zakresie znaczenia Ukrainy dla zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa energetycznego państw Europy Środkowej w okresie zbrojnej napaści Rosji na Ukrainę w 2022 r. Punktem wyjścia analizy była generalna teza, że partie polityczne w Polsce traktowały Ukrainę w kategoriach państwa odgrywającego kluczowe miejsce w staraniach ograniczających negatywnie postrzeganą politykę energetyczną Federacji Rosyjskiej w regionie.

Słowa kluczowe: Europa Środkowa, myśl polityczna, partie polityczne, Ukraina

Introduction

For years, the energy security of Central European countries was determined by the importing of crude oil and natural gas from the Russian Federation through the territory of Ukraine. This country was one of the major players on the energy map of Europe, and the events shaped there affected its ability to overcome potential energy threats. In the past, energy crises (in 2006 and 2009) have played an important role in the public debate on the importance of Ukraine for the security of Central European countries as well as Europe as a whole. The situation in that country and energy disputes with the Russian Federation have influenced public opinion in the context of the construction of the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 pipelines.

In Poland, Ukraine was viewed in different ways, although the approach of individual political parties to potential cooperation was based on the country's unique location and importance for relations and the balance of power in Central Europe. Serving as a transit state and a buffer against the Russian Federation, geographically Ukraine was an important element of the political debate. Among politicians of different political parties, however, there was a different vision of Ukraine as a country that could strengthen energy security in Central Europe. The importance of Ukraine for regional cooperation increased with Russia's armed assault on Ukraine in 2022.

The article aimed to analyse the political thought¹ of selected Polish parliamentary parties regarding the importance of Ukraine in ensuring the energy security of Central European countries during the period of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022². Specifically, the positions of Law and Justice, Civic Platform, the Left Party, and the Polish People's Party were examined. In this context, it was crucial to answer three research questions: 1) how did the politicians of the aforementioned parties evaluate the role of Ukraine in serving as a transit state for the supply of energy resources to Central European countries; 2) what arguments were raised by political actors in the context of the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline; 3) in what categories did the politicians of the analysed political formations treat Ukraine for ensuring regional security during the war. The considerations in the article reveal the main arguments formulated by politicians of these political parties on the importance of Ukraine in the process of building and strengthening energy security in Central Europe.

1 Nord Stream 2 pipeline: preparations for war

One of the key elements of the Russian Federation's active efforts to make Ukraine politically and energetically dependent was the construction of the Nord Stream 1, Nord Stream 2, and Turk Stream/Balkan Stream pipelines. The emergence of such infrastructure limited Ukraine's role in Europe and thus its ability to ensure the energy security of other countries in the Central European region. In the opinion of politicians of the various political parties, the suspension of the construction of Nord Stream 2, in particular, on the one hand, was an expression of solidarity with Ukraine in favour of strengthening the security of the country, and on the other hand, an important

1 Political thought should be understood as any form of reflection on political reality, regardless of the degree of development, internal consistency, and systematization as well as theoreticalization and concretization. J. Jachymek, W. Paruch, *Wstęp*, [in:] eidem (eds.), *Więcej niż niepodległość. Polska myśl polityczna 1918-1939*, Lublin 2001, p. 11.

2 The analysis of political projects to ensure the energy security of the country is an issue under study of the political thought of political parties. M. Paszkowski, *Specyfika badań politologicznych nad myślą polityczną w zakresie bezpieczeństwa energetycznego państwa*, "Humanities and Social Sciences" 2015, no. 2(22), pp. 99-109, DOI: 10.7862/rz.2015.hss.22.

aspect of limiting the possibility of energy influence by the Russian Federation on Central Europe countries.

For Law and Justice, the issue of stopping the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline was fundamental to the energy security of Central European countries. Representatives of this party negatively assessed the impact of the Russian-German project on the regional situation. In this context, several arguments were raised that determined the position towards the initiative, and thus the direction of support for Ukraine. First – it was assessed that the construction of the natural gas pipeline would negatively affect the gas market of Central European countries, due to the possibility of political and economic pressure from the Russian Federation³. Thus, it was feared that the Russian Federation would further the energy dependence of other countries in Central Europe. The Nord Stream 2 pipeline was treated as an instrument of political pressure as this type of pipeline would reduce the transit of natural gas through the territory of Ukraine while changing the routes of transport of the same volume of natural gas to European countries. As Jan Warzecha, a Law and Justice MP, stressed, “the existing system of natural gas pipelines running through Ukraine will become redundant soon after Nord Stream 2 is completed and put into operation”⁴. Thus, it was believed that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline “will increase domination and pressure on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, off-balance the natural gas market throughout Europe”⁵. Secondly – the pipeline did not lead to the diversification of natural gas supply sources to Central European countries, but only the direction of natural gas imports. It was stressed that the Russian-German pipeline served to increase dependence on one already dominant supplier. In the opinion of the Law and Justice Party, the already existing pipelines (operating on Ukrainian territory) allowed free ac-

3 M. Małecki, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 46 pos., 13 January 2022, https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=46&dzien=2&wyp=12&symbol=PYT_WYP [28.04.2023].

4 J. Warzecha, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 35 pos., 22 July 2021, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=35&dzien=2&wyp=265&view=S> [20.04.2023].

5 M. Małecki, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 63 pos., 6 October 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=63&dzien=2&wyp=49&view=S> [29.04.2023].

cess to natural gas produced in the Russian Federation⁶. Thirdly – it was claimed that the pipeline would reduce the role and importance of Ukraine for the transportation of natural gas to Central Europe and thus lead to a lowering of the country's rank in the region. It was argued that by building the pipeline, there would still be an opportunity to ensure the supply of this commodity to Central European countries and bypass Ukraine. Such an assessment prompted some politicians – back in 2021 – to formulate views that "the implementation of the Nord Stream 2 project (...) opens the way for Russia's aggression against Ukraine"⁷. Thus, it was correctly assessed what role the natural gas pipeline played in the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine⁸.

Politicians of the Civic Platform were of a similar opinion in the context of the harmfulness of the Nord Stream 2 project to the energy security of Central European countries, including Ukraine. According to this political party, the pipeline could pose a real threat to the security of the countries in the region. However, the politicians of this political formation primarily raised one fundamental argument against the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline; they believed that it would be a tool of political pressure, and therefore "will serve to further expand the pressure of the Russian Federation on the EU and NATO countries"⁹. Thus, they perceived that the construction of the pipeline could be a tool that would limit the ability of Central European countries to pursue an active policy of diversifying the sources and directions of natural gas supplies. To a limited extent, they raised the argument of reducing the importance of Ukraine for energy markets in the region, although they were more concerned about the

6 J. Kowalski, *Poselski projekt uchwały w sprawie wezwania rządu Republiki Federalnej Niemiec do natychmiastowego zaprzestania budowy gazociągu Nord Stream 2*, druk 620, <https://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Druk9ka.nsf/0/60E34DA42BDF040FC12585E500534BF6/%24File/620.pdf> [22.04.2023].

7 J. Kowalski, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 31 pos., 15 June 2021, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=31&dzien=1&wyp=34&view=S> [15.04.2023].

8 A. Łukaszewska-Trzeciakowska, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 63 pos., 6 October 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=63&dzien=2&wyp=44&view=S> [29.04.2023].

9 P. Kowal, *Poselski projekt uchwały w sprawie wezwania rządów państw Unii Europejskiej, w tym szczególnie rządu Republiki Federalnej Niemiec do podjęcia pilnych działań na rzecz przerwania budowy Gazociągu Nord Stream II*, druk 1213, <https://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Druk9ka.nsf/0/5069DCB8D5ADAC3FC12586E2004E4629/%24File/1213.pdf> [12.04.2023].

possibility of political pressure on the government in Kyiv from the Russian Federation. Nonetheless, they did not believe that the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline could, contrary to Law and Justice politicians, provide an ascendant to war on the European continent¹⁰.

Other opposition parties in parliament also stressed the lack of legitimacy of the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. In the opinion of the Polish People's Party, the pipeline harmed the interests of Central European countries and posed a real threat to the security of Ukraine. At the same time, it was believed that it was an instrument that limited the ability of Central European countries to reduce their dependence on natural gas supplies from the Russian Federation, and at the same time was a manifestation of a lack of energy solidarity among EU countries. In this context, it was believed that the pipeline made Germany dependent on the supply of energy resources, and thus it was claimed that through the project there was the possibility of influencing political decisions in the EU by the Russian Federation¹¹. In the opinion of the PSL, the gas pipeline posed a real threat to Ukraine, as it was a source of financing for Russian armaments and, in a way, "authorized" the Russian Federation to pursue its aggressive policies. On the other hand, for the Left party, the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline was an important element of political pressure on European Union states. In these realities, it was argued that the pipeline posed a threat to energy security and was a manifestation of the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation. In this context, Maciej Konieczny, MP for the Left, claimed that Russian actions undermined security in Europe, including in the energy dimension, and that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline itself was a manifestation of "Russian imperialism"¹². At the same time, politicians were aware of the important role Germany played in the process. Thus, it was argued that the project was a manifestation of

10 S. Nitras, *Pełny zapis przebiegu posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych*, 5 kadencja, nr 51, 11 June 2021, p. 13, <https://orka.sejm.gov.pl/zapisy9.nsf/o/FEC8DB1A0F1BC83BC12586F8005098E8/%24Ffile/0135609.pdf> [18.04.2023].

11 W.T. Bartoszewski, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 31 pos., 15 June 2021, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=31&dzien=1&wyp=37&view=S> [22.04.2023].

12 M. Konieczny, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 31 pos., 15 June 2021, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=31&dzien=1&wyp=36&view=S> [22.04.2023].

a lack of solidarity in the EU, and at the same time towards Ukraine¹³. As emphasized, the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, in the opinion of politicians of the Left, “shatters European unity in the face of the aggressive actions of the Russian Federation” and constitutes a violation of the “principles of European solidarity”¹⁴. In doing so, they stressed that “the goal of the Russian Federation’s superpower policy is to fully subjugate Ukraine, to make Ukraine a vassal state to the Kremlin”¹⁵.

To sum up, it should be stated that in the opinion of all parliamentary parties, the Russian Federation pursued an active imperial energy policy towards Central European countries. An important tool in this process was the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project, which reduced the importance of Ukraine as a transit state. In the opinion of the various parties, only putting a halt to this project could have had any impact on limiting the Russian Federation’s aspirations to subjugate Ukraine and influence Central European countries in terms of energy. Thus, Ukraine was a key enabling state for strengthening regional energy security.

2. Reactions to Russia’s full-scale military aggression against Ukraine

Undoubtedly, the war in Ukraine represents the end of the regional security system based on energy resources imported from the Russian Federation. For years, the supply of crude oil and natural gas determined the level of energy dependence of Central European countries on the authorities in Moscow, and active measures taken to diversify the sources and directions of imports of these commodities were insufficient. In fact, only Poland and the Baltic states, aware of the threats, took measures to expand primarily the import infrastructure. At the time of the armed assault of the Russian Federation on Ukraine, the countries of the region were forced by the need to replace Russian commodities with those from other countries. The war led to a change

13 M. Konieczny, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 47 pos., 26 January 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=47&dzien=1&wyp=158&view=5> [28.04.2023].

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

in the perception of the aggressor and the need for even more intensified efforts to ensure regional security.

Ukraine, for Law and Justice politicians, was a key partner, and maintaining the country's energy independence was an important element of the foreign policy they pursued. The party's politicians saw Ukraine as an important link in strengthening the security of Central European countries, which was reflected in their negative stance toward the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. When the war began, Law and Justice politicians stressed the need to both continue efforts to diversify the sources and directions of energy supplies and reduce the importance of the Russian Federation in the region but also believed that active steps should be taken to improve the energy situation in Central Europe. Thus, it was recognized that a key aspect would be the development of a national infrastructure that would serve not only Poland's energy needs but also those of other Central European countries, including Ukraine.

According to Law and Justice, the most important aspect related to ensuring energy security in the region should be the construction of a natural gas transportation and trade centre (hub). The idea of such a solution has been presented by the Law and Justice government for many years, and in such a concept, Poland was to enable Central European countries to import natural gas through regasification terminals on the Baltic Sea (Swinoujście, Gdansk). The Russian-Ukrainian war has only strengthened the Law and Justice Party's belief in the need to build an energy hub in Poland. As Mateusz Morawiecki, Poland's prime minister, stressed, "Poland will be a donor of energy security, which will also strengthen its political position in this part of Europe"¹⁶ in the case of key infrastructure investments. The Law and Justice party was primarily betting on Poland's role in the region as a guarantor of natural gas security in Central Europe. The construction of the hub was fundamentally linked to the need to ensure the greatest possible liquidity of the market, which is why the implementation over the years of several energy projects, namely the LNG ter-

16 *Premier: Rozmowy z Kijowem dotyczą m.in. poszukiwania gazu na zachodzie Ukrainy; „Nasz plan to stać się hubem energetycznym Europy Środkowej”, wPolityce, 16 March 2023, <https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/638375-premier-nasz-plan-to-stac-sie-hubem-energetycznym-regionu> [22.04.2023].*

minal in Swinoujscie, the Baltic Pipe pipeline, the Poland-Lithuania interconnectors (GIPL pipeline), and Poland-Slovakia, was extremely important. As part of the creation of the hub, the development of import infrastructure (an LNG terminal in Gdansk of the FSRU type) and transport infrastructure (such as the Poland-Czech Republic interconnector) was also considered. All such solutions were intended to strengthen the energy security of Central European countries and support Ukraine in securing natural gas supplies. Already in 2018, Andrzej Duda, President of Poland, stressed that “diversification in the broadest sense [through the construction and expansion of infrastructure] is also an opportunity for our neighbours such as Ukraine”¹⁷.

The construction of the hub also involved the need to ensure adequate supplies of natural gas to the gas system. In this context, for years, Poland’s cooperation with the US and with Qatar has been a key aspect of strengthening energy security in the region. Through appropriate contracts, it has thus been possible to reduce dependence on natural gas supplies from the Russian Federation and to act as an important guarantor of future supplies. The Russian-Ukrainian war caused Poland’s position in the region to change. The importance of cooperation with the U.S. was particularly emphasized, and in the opinion of the Law and Justice Party (PiS), it is natural gas supplies from this direction that should guarantee the energy security of Central European countries. Thus, PiS’s reaction to the outbreak of war in the east was not only to condemn the aggressor and reduce energy dependence on the Russian Federation but also to present solutions to strengthen the energy security of Central European countries and Ukraine. In this context, the most important element of the measures taken was the construction and expansion of infrastructure, and these activities stemmed from the conviction of the importance of Ukraine for the energy security of Central European countries.

The reaction of the other political parties was comparable so, above all, the need to support Ukraine in these difficult war conditions was emphasized. In the opinion of Civic Platform politicians, the security of Poland and other Central European countries should be directed

17 *Prezydent: Hub energetyczny w Polsce to szansa dla Ukrainy*, BiznesAlert, 15 November 2018, <https://biznesalert.pl/prezydent-polska-hub-energetyczny-gaz-baltic-pipe-ukraina/> [4.05.2023].

towards cooperation within international structures (European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization)¹⁸. At the same time, they stressed the need for Poland to perform the function of a partner state for the other EU countries, which is adequate to its position¹⁹. Thus, PO politicians believed that Poland's foreign policy goal should be the accession of Ukraine to the EU and NATO, which would strengthen security in Central Europe²⁰. Thus, it can be assumed that Ukraine could play an important role in ensuring the security, including energy security, of the Central European countries in the region. A similar point of view was presented by representatives of parties of Leftist origin. In the opinion of politicians of the Left, the Russian-Ukrainian war has mainly shown the dependence of Europe on the supply of energy resources from the Russian Federation. Therefore, it was believed that "the success of the Ukrainian reconstruction will depend on the stability (...) of the region for years to come"²¹. Under these conditions, the need for greater and stronger cooperation within the EU was emphasized. It was believed that a key aspect to strengthen the energy security of Central European countries and support Ukraine would be the construction of an energy community. In the technical aspect, the creation of the possibility of introducing a mechanism for the joint purchase of natural gas and crude oil was postulated²². On the other hand, in the opinion of the Polish People's Party (PSL), the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine was one of the most important geopolitical challenges in recent years. Politicians of this party stressed above all the need for unity and solidarity towards the Ukrainian people while pointing out the legitimacy of limiting political disputes. As PSL MP

- 18 B. Budka, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 49 pos., 24 February 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=49&dzien=2&wyp=35&view=5> [28.04.2023]. The Civic Platform linked Poland's security with that of the EU. J. Sanecka-Tycyńska, *Racja stanu we współczesnej polskiej myśli politycznej (2001-2015)*, Lublin 2018, p. 443.
- 19 P. Kowal, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 74 pos., 13 April 2023, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=74&dzien=2&wyp=4&view=5> [28.04.2023].
- 20 G. Schetyna, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 74 pos., 13 April 2023, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=74&dzien=2&wyp=11&view=5> [28.04.2023].
- 21 M. Konieczny, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 74 pos., 13 April 2023, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=74&dzien=2&wyp=005> [28.04.2023].
- 22 B. Maciejewska, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Komisji do Spraw Energii, Klimatu i Aktywów Państwowych oraz Komisji do Spraw Unii Europejskiej*, 5 kadencja, 26 April 2022, <https://orka.sejm.gov.pl/zapisy9.nsf/o/BE88C35FD02CD343C1258839004658FC/%24File/0249009.pdf> [20.04.2023].

Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz stressed, “unity in Poland, unity with the European Union, extinguishing disputes, unity in NATO, and unity with the United States is the only chance to stop Putin”²³.

To recapitulate, it should be said that the reaction of the various parliamentary parties to the armed assault of the Russian Federation on Ukraine was comparable. In the opinion of politicians from Law and Justice, Civic Platform, the Left, and the Polish People’s Party, the 2022 war changed the optics of threats in Central Europe and made one of the key threats, in addition to the military dimensions of the conflict, those of an energy nature. In this changed environment, the need for unity and solidarity towards Ukraine and strengthening energy security was raised. The proposed solutions were diverse, as they included, on the one hand, the need to either build an energy hub in Poland and provide energy support to Ukraine or, on the other hand, to strengthen competencies and capabilities to counter threats at the EU level. The proposed solutions stemmed from a belief in the importance of Ukraine to the regional energy security system.

Conclusions

Over the years, Ukraine has played an extremely important role in energy relations between Europe, including Central European countries, and the Russian Federation. A key aspect of these mutual energy relations concerned the country’s geographic location and the infrastructure built back in the times of the USSR to transport energy resources, namely crude oil and natural gas (including storage for this commodity). Thus, Ukraine was perceived as an extremely important partner by the elites of Central European countries, as the transit position influenced the shape of mutual political and business relations. For the politicians of the various parties, Ukraine was an important partner, although the country was perceived differently due to changing geopolitical conditions.

23 W. Kosiniak-Kamysz, *Wypowiedź na posiedzeniu Sejmu*, 5 kadencja, 49 pos., 23 February 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=49&dzien=1&wyp=7&view=S> [4.05.2023].

In the opinion of the Law and Justice Party, the Civic Platform, the Left Party, and the Polish People's Party, an important element uniting the interests of Poland, Ukraine, as well as the countries of Central Europe, was the project for the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. While representatives of these parties were against the implementation of the Russian-German gas pipeline, only the politicians of the Law and Justice party saw in it a threat of a fundamental nature to regional energy security. They were rightly concerned that the construction of the pipeline could lead to a complete bypass of Ukraine and the elimination of this country on the energy map of Europe. Even the possibility of a war was raised, which eventually did occur in February 2022. Such an event redefined Ukraine's position in the region, and at the same time led to the strengthening of regional energy cooperation. In this changed geopolitical environment, representatives of the various parliamentary parties pointed to the need to intensify regional cooperation. In the opinion of the Law and Justice party, this changed architecture was a factor supporting the creation of a natural gas transportation and trade centre (hub) in Poland.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the politicians of Law and Justice, Civic Platform, the Left Party, and the Polish People's Party treated Ukraine as a valuable partner on the energy map of Europe, and the cohesive factor of the country's position in mutual relations was, among other things, its transit position, a similar perception of regional threats (expansion of the Russian Federation) as well as its importance for the energy security of Central European countries. Under these conditions, the need to take active measures in the international field against the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline was raised. In the opinion of these political parties, the Russian-German gas pipeline posed a real threat to the energy security of Poland and Central European states. Thus, it was believed that common threats and challenges should be a factor that unites the interests of Poland, Ukraine, and the countries of this region.

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