

Mediterranean Energy Theater and Its Stakes

So far the Mediterranean energy theater has been associated with the resource rich countries of North Africa, in particular Algeria and Libya. Nevertheless, the 2009 gas discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean, namely in Egypt, Israel and Cyprus, have turned out to be real game changers and significantly altered the region's energy environment. Our panel intends to analyze these geopolitical shifts of the Mediterranean and the effects of these changes on Europe's energy security.

The panel will focus on the question whether these new energy discoveries will contribute to peace and stability in the *Eastern Mediterranean* or rather lead to more tension and open conflict. On the one hand, we see a variety of promising projects, which advance the cooperation among nations of this region, like energy cooperation between Egypt and Israel, and the formation of an "energy triangle" between Greece, Israel and Cyprus (including the project for an East-Med pipeline). However, we will also need to discuss new incidents of resource competition, manifested in the Israel-Lebanon maritime border conflicts and well as the fuelling of the historical conflict between Cyprus and Turkey. In this context, a closer look at Turkey's new role will be necessary, which is striving to achieve the role of an energy hub by supplying Europe with gas and by turning into a key transit country for various producers. We will discuss to what extent the EU's energy dependencies will shift from Russia to Turkey as well as the implications of this shift. As a further energy theater, we will also look to the impact of Russia's plans to build up Syria's energy infrastructure to tap into the country's offshore and onshore hydrocarbon potential.

For *North Africa* we will focus on the question whether Algeria and Libya will be able to continue and retake their role in supplying Europe with gas and oil. An important aspect of our discussion will deal with the role of Libya's hydrocarbons for destabilization but also pacifying the war-stricken country. This discussion on this region will also be used to shift the attention on the necessity for an energy transition in order to mitigate the effects of climate change and the opportunities for North African countries to develop into major suppliers for renewable energy. The leading question for our discussion will be: "What are the problems and challenges of these North African producers to make the shift to exploiting their potential of renewable energy?"

In conclusion, the panel searches to understand shifts in the stakes of the Mediterranean energy theater and to comprehend the resulting consequences for Europe's energy security. We will invite experts from academia to shed light on these new developments as well as representatives of Europe's leading oil companies to learn more about the problems and challenges of their engagements in these hotspot projects of the Eastern Mediterranean region and North Africa.