

NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING AND ENERGY SECTOR - SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES

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Executive summary

This policy paper analyzes the relevance of energy security in the Georgian energy sector and its proper reflection in energy planning and the security of the country in general. The first section of the paper discusses the conceptual development of energy security, definitional changes, and its relevance in the current political context of the country. Energy policy is examined from the perspective of long-term planning and national security strategy. Consequently, this policy paper reviews all important national and agency-level documents, as well as energy security challenges in times of crises and war. Several international cases are analyzed that provide important examples of proper energy policy and energy security planning and implementation. The paper concludes with specific recommendations to ensure strategic planning and implementation in the energy sector.

Key words: Energy security; energy policy; security strategy; crises.

Introduction

Despite its complex content and abundance of the related explanations, the effective definition and implementation of state security policy requires two fundamental components. These are the availability of mechanisms for strategic (long-term and short-term) security planning at the state level and the continuous use of formats and tools of close interagency cooperation both at the planning and implementation/monitoring stages. The energy sector is vital to state functioning and survival, both in peacetime and, especially, in times of crisis and war. The functioning of a country's critical infrastructure, such as transport, communications, and private business, depends entirely on this sector. Consequently, integrating the energy sector into the strategic planning of state security is a natural necessity, which, on the one hand, contributes to the rapid growth of the national economy and, on the other, ensures a high degree of state and societal resilience.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the energy sector and energy security in Georgia in the context of a unified national security strategy and (non-)existing strategic planning and institutional mechanisms. Despite the small size of its territory (and other limitations), its geographic location allows Georgia to connect Europe with Asia. Its location also means there is strong economic interest from global actors and an array of existing energy and transportation projects, further boosting the geopolitical importance of the country. This strongly necessitates the routine use of strategy and planning mechanisms. As the energy sector is closely linked to other sectors of the economy, such as transportation, critical infrastructure, environmental protection, cultural heritage, and defense, it is crucial for the country to have a proper conceptual understanding of energy security (in the context of state development) and fully integrate it into the process of national security planning (to formulate security strategy and security policies). This, naturally, implies finding out what interagency (institutional) mechanisms are in place and how effectively they are being utilized to incorporate energy and energy security issues into the overall security architecture of the country. It becomes extremely relevant during crises, when energy supplies become significantly limited, and thus, pre-developed emergency plans for crisis response need to be in place.

Energy Security: Definition and Conceptual Understanding

The linkage between the concepts of energy and security is usually manifested in the notion of *energy security*. The historical roots of this term relate to the uninterrupted supply of oil (to France and Great Britain) during the First World War and thereafter, but it became even more relevant in 1973 when the Organization of Arab Petroleum Countries (OAPEC) imposed an

embargo on oil exports (Energy Charter Secretariat 2015). Over time, along with the necessity of uninterrupted energy supplies, a set of mechanisms have taken shape that significantly help a country to address emergencies caused by energy supply interruption. These mechanisms are: diversification of supply routes and sources; increase of energy supply; demand control (energy efficiency); and fair pricing (a financial mechanism to ensure public access to energy) (Energy Charter Secretariat 2015).

By no means should the geographical and geopolitical factors be underestimated, as a modern understanding of energy security cannot objectively ignore where a country is geographically located and via what territories it exports or imports energy resources. Moreover, it is clear that export and import countries approach the issue of energy security differently. Nevertheless, the geopolitical dimension of energy security makes fossil fuel supply the key priority, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines energy security simply as “the availability of sufficient supplies at affordable prices” (Jones and Dodds 2017). This approach is further refined through four criteria: *Availability, Reliability, Sustainability, and Affordability*.

The relevance of the above-mentioned criteria is further increased by the impact of energy on economic development, wealth distribution, power shifts in international politics, national security instruments, and social transformation in general. Consequently, energy security directly influences socio-economic development (more Western type) and security in general (Energy Charter Secretariat 2015). For example, the power grid is part of the critical infrastructure of every country, the technical failure or destruction of which has harsh and cascading effects not only on the well-being of the population but on the economic and social prospects of the country, multiplying the impacts of such factors as conflicts, wars, and natural or man-made disasters through their impact on supply and logistical chains (Gitelman et al 2023). From this perspective, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has identified the resilience of the energy sector as one of the defining criteria for determining a country’s overall resilience and has included a resilient energy supply as one of its seven baseline requirements for member states during military and other crises (NATO, 2023). As for the European Union, due to its organizational and functional difference from NATO, along with resilience, its approach includes the monitoring of energy security and support for the transition to renewable energy resources and decentralized local energy markets (Wilson and Dobрева 2019).

Overall, the fact that the topic of energy is one of the factors that defines national and international security cannot be denied. Energy security has long gone beyond the notion of ensuring stable supplies. And, with the example of the 1973 embargo as well as the Russian attempt at building an “Energy Empire” through the use of its energy resources as a geopolitical tool an example of this evolution. Georgia is no exception in this respect. The securing of stable and diversified energy sources and the need to foster and protect interregional energy projects is core to Georgia’s security. Russia’s energy sabotage against Georgia in the winter of 2006, Russia’s military aggression against Georgia in 2008, and against Ukraine first in 2014 and then,

at full-scale in February 2022 have once again emphasized the need for strategic, state security planning, the effective use of institutional (agency and interagency) planning mechanisms, and the full integration of the energy sector (its development and resilience) into national security and strategic security planning.

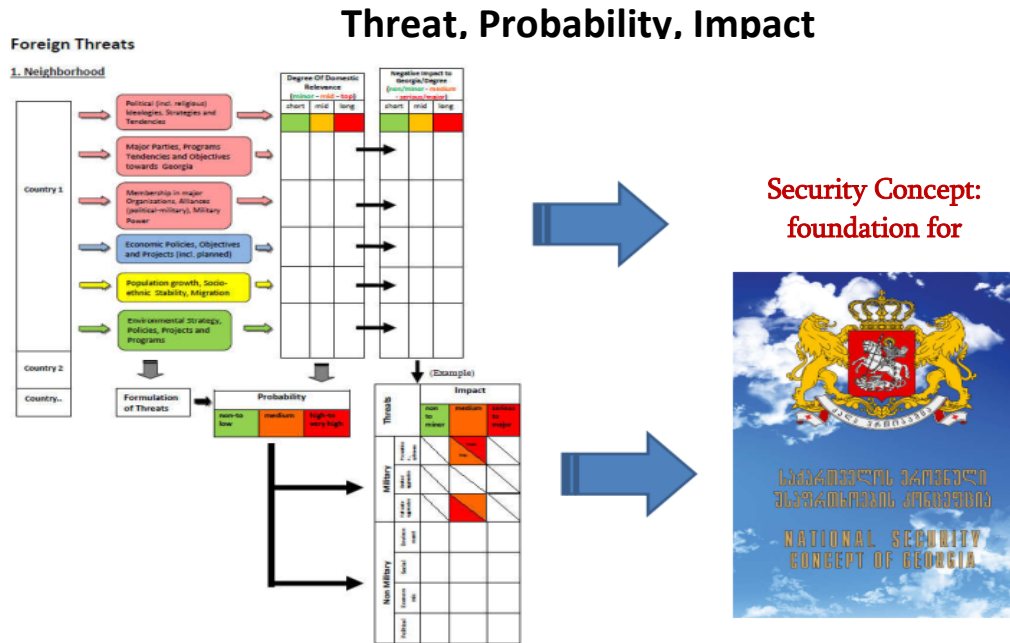
The National Security Planning System and the Importance of the Energy Sector

Sustainable development fundamentally depends on the effective functioning of national (strategic) planning mechanisms, which at its core is a process of interagency cooperation and collaboration upon which the national (strategic) long-term documents (concepts and strategies) are created. These documents are accompanied by detailed action plans with corresponding deadlines to be implemented. As Georgia's **National Security Concept** (which was drafted back in 2011 and has not been revised since) makes clear, the above-mentioned collaborative process is called the National Security Review and includes:

"...coordination among state security related institutions, enhanced cooperation degree between military and civil components, and the development of specific agency level strategies for those institutions involved in national security." (MFA 2011).

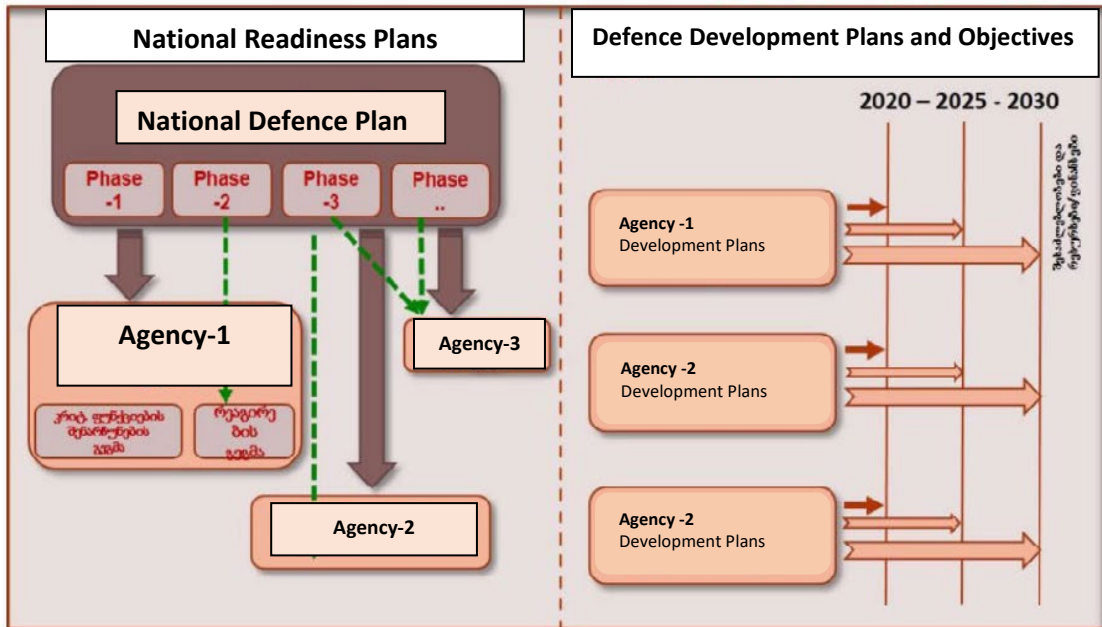
The Concept itself is based on the **National Threat Assessment Document** which is also the result of interagency collaboration. The document analyzes all types of threats and risks faced by the country over a certain period of time and determines the respective degree of their probability and destructiveness. This, logically, serves as a basis for drawing up development plans (strategies) and action plans of relevant agencies in accordance with the priorities defined in the Security Concept (Georgian Herald 2015). In addition to the clear identification of objectives in various policy areas and ways to address existing or potential problems, a necessary feature of the collaborative security review process is the full mutual compatibility of agency level strategies and action plans in attaining national security and development goals (see graphs below). Moreover, **action plans represent a unity of specific efforts to achieve specific objectives within specific timeframes and with defined means, that are implemented by specific responsible structural units** (Georgian Herald 2015). Together, action plans in the form of a program and the financial-budgetary format are reflected in medium-term budgetary programs and the annual state budget as budgetary allocations to respective agencies.

Graph 1. Threat Assessment Process and the National Security Concept



Source: Prepared by the author

Graph 2. Readiness/ Action and Development Plans



Source: Prepared by the author

For the purpose of a simpler visualization, the second graph above shows the principle of compatibility of the plans (both action and development plans) of various agencies for the defense of the country. For example, in times of war, the key agency for ensuring the defense of the country is the General Staff, which commands the defense forces in accordance with the defense plan. However, the defense plan in times of war, naturally, includes actions (i.e., plans) to be taken by other agencies within their respective fields of authority to support the defense forces, which markedly increase the effectiveness of national defense. Furthermore, if the Ministry of Defense approves the National Military Strategy document for the development of the defense forces (for a certain period, for instance, five or ten years) by defining its combat capabilities, structure, strength, infrastructure, and other aspects of the armed forces, other agency level strategies and action plans must be linked and compatible with this Strategy and its action plan. Specifically, if the country's defense plan focuses primarily on autonomous defensive operations for six months in operational zones isolated by the enemy, this task directly indicates the need to carry out preparatory measures in advance. These measures include the procurement of necessary technical equipment and materials to maintain the functioning of the military and civil infrastructure in operational areas in the event of energy

supply interruptions and system failure during combat operations. Naturally, similar requirements apply to other agencies as well.

Since the security (defense) and socio-economic development of a country are core national interests, the energy sector is rightly assigned a decisive role in achieving these interests. For example, energy security is defined as a “policy area” in the context of national security planning and requires that energy infrastructure to become interoperable with defense objectives and that material reserves be created. In terms of ensuring socio-economic development, the priorities are to identify energy threats, risks, and challenges and develop appropriate protection mechanisms (Georgian Herald 2015). The National Security Concept, in turn, requests further diversification of energy resources and suppliers, as well as the maximization of the use of local hydropower resources, in order to become an energy exporter (MFA 2011). As the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development is the agency responsible for developing and implementing sectoral strategy and action plans in the energy sector, it has formulated energy policy objectives as follows (MESD n.d.a):

- **To enhance the energy security of the country**, to ensure national interests are achieved through the sufficient and uninterrupted supply of various types of high-quality energy at affordable prices.
- **To form a common, long-term state vision of energy sector development**, and elaborate short, medium, and long-term strategies for the sector’s development, and consequent energy related programs.

It must be noted that a policy objective cannot be the elaboration of a strategy (especially a short-term strategy) or an action plan, since both strategies and action plans are documents that define ways and means to achieve policy objectives. Furthermore, the use of general phrases such as “improvement of energy security,” does not express a time-defined specific objective (since stable and uninterrupted energy supply is a permanent requirement). Hence such terms do not provide the necessary details about the nature of an objective’s complementarity to existing economic or security/defense plans. Interestingly, the stated mission of the Strategic Development Department of the Ministry of Economy is pretty vague in this regard. For example, instead of stating the necessity of developing and monitoring a strategy and action plan, it says:

“... Developing/updating and implementing the methodology of the strategic planning process... Organizing planning, plan discussion, and plan quality improvement process... Developing/applying methodology for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of plans... Monitoring plans quarterly and annually, preparing monitoring reports.” (MESD n.d.b)

The lack or absence of specificity is a serious obstacle for the strategic planning process and, is indicative of a serious lack of understanding about institutional cooperation by involved agencies and the practice of mechanical, formal aggregation of objectives. Similarly, in the strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 2019-2022, the need to support the implementation of energy and investment projects is mentioned without specificity in the form of a general statement (MFA 2019). The government's "Vision 2030 – Development Strategy of Georgia," approved in 2022, can be reviewed as a strategic planning document which should clearly define specific and measurable goals in all areas of the country's strategic development. Leaving other sectors aside, the section of this document that deals with the development of the energy sector does not provide anything specific about the projects, infrastructure, or transport facilities that are linked to energy sector development (i.e., with no specific goals). Conversely, it is not clear what results the energy sector must achieve to increase its resilience during crises and wars, especially given the Russian aggression in 2022 (Georgian Herald 2022).

Energy Sector And National Security Planning in Times of Crises

The relevance of strategic security planning and the integration of vital spheres (especially energy) of a states functioning into it is particularly evident during crises or war. As Benjamin Franklin famously said, "*By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.*" - this is exactly what happens in the absence of crisis situation planning. The Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine is a vivid example of the need to ensure the resilience of national security and the energy system, in particular, in an extremely negative scenario in which the system is subjected to massive military attack. The importance of strategic planning is especially high in such crises when it is impossible to protect all critical facilities and junctures from physical destruction. At the same time, the system must be able to re-configure supply routes and grids, maintain service, and increase the potential of more decentralized local energy sources (Jermalavičius et al. 2023).

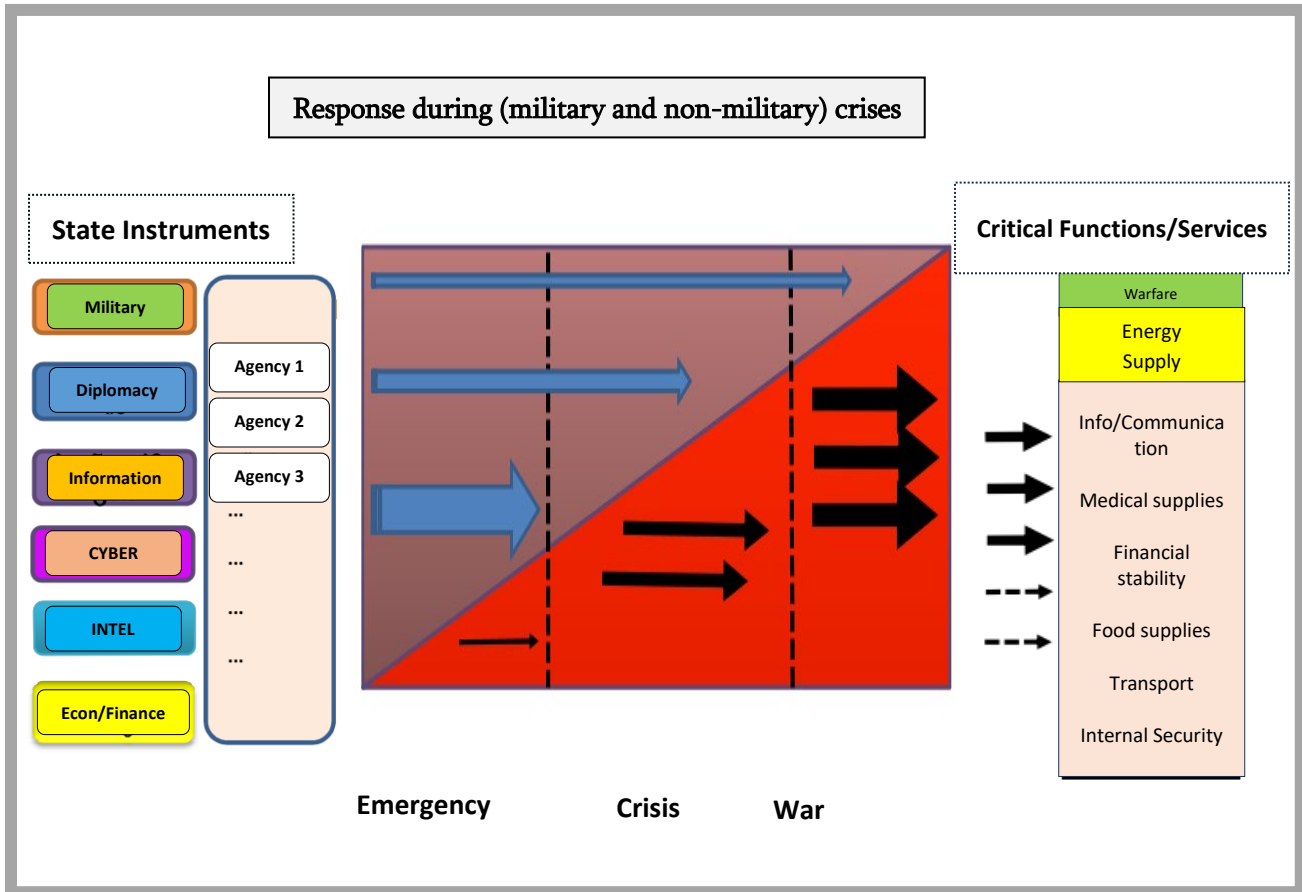
USAID assistance provided to Ukraine since February 2022 illustrates the scale of the stress regime created for the power grid during the military conflict and the extent of large-scale recovery to compensate the losses sustained. In particular, integration with the European electricity and gas grids was pursued. Other measures and analyses undertaken with the use of aid and technical assistance included supply analyses, cost calculations, long-term network planning, turbo generator testing, and transmission grid synchronization and isolation regime modeling (USAID 2023). As for logistical assistance, the list of aid-funded activities is quite impressive. For schools, hospitals, and other public facilities, 3,600 generators were delivered to Ukraine; 60 excavators and more than 80 km of pipes to repair the heating system. A 28 MW mobile power plant was provided to provide stable power supply to a settlement with 100,000 populations and more than 360 heated tents for temporary shelter were provided. Clearly, this is only a small part of the overall needs faced by Ukraine during the war situation, which could

have led to a very different reality if the rapid supply of this assistance had been delayed or stopped. Therefore, a high degree of resilience must be built into the country's security system in advance, which has a multiplayer effect and increases the effectiveness of military resistance in the face of an attack on the country (not to mention the positive impacts on the moral and psychological resilience of the population).

The growing role of energy in shaping security strategies and even greater importance in strategic planning (at all stages) has been reflected in the strategic stances adopted by both the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and the European Union. For example, NATO has identified three priority areas according to which: 1 - the impact of energy development on overall security should be continuously reflected, 2 - the protection of critical energy infrastructure, including tankers and coastal facilities, should be strengthened, and 3 - energy efficiency should be improved in the armed forces by reducing energy consumption (Valášek 2019). As for the European Union, the planned measures mainly imply the closer coordination of decisions between countries on energy issues to ensure solidarity action with neighboring countries, especially in times of crises (European Commission 2022). Despite the conclusions reached back in 2014, the steps taken by the EU have been criticized, especially due to a lack of strategic planning. For example, in a report prepared by two leading analytical organizations (GLOBSEC and Clingendael), we read that the European Union should avoid a reactive approach during emergencies and move towards long-term strategic planning to increase its own resilience; And this should include a comprehensive analysis of security implications during any energy project, assessing risk scenarios and planning actions to address them (Gretti et al., 2022).

Obviously, there is no alternative to strategic planning for war and crisis scenarios, especially for a small and resource-poor country like Georgia (see below for a general response framework). This conclusion is also supported by the recommendation of the World Experience for Georgia (WEG), according to which it is necessary, based on the needs of the security system, to conduct an in-depth analysis of the energy sector, and formulate and implement a strategic plan (on energy strategy), which requires political will (BMG 2019).

Graph 3. Response during Military and Non-Military Crises



Source: prepared by the author

This of course implies taking complex measures, such as (Jermalavičius et al. 2023):

- developing specific plans to ensure sustainable energy supplies during crisis scenarios,
- preparing organizational structure and personnel,
- storing appropriate material resources,
- approving a national (energy) sustainability plan, to regulate (including through legislative acts) the actions of energy market actors during crises and war,
- Developing and permanently testing collaboration and communication mechanisms for crisis response and the proper use of material resources in case of energy infrastructure damage/destruction.

Obviously, the mentioned measures and, above all, the national energy resilience and crises response plans should incorporate the objectives identified in the strategic (long-term) vision elaborated in national security and planning documents. Unfortunately, Georgia has serious problems from this perspective, both in terms of the strategic planning process itself and in terms of relations and coordination between the entities involved in this process. There is no doubt that in time of national level crises and even more so in war, the management and coordination of state responses should be carried out in an inter-agency format within the framework of a respective governmental body, which typically, given international experience, is the National Security Council (NSC). This is natural, since the complex nature of large-scale crises and the need for a comprehensive response rule out the dominance of a single agency both in the formation of the national strategy (policy) and in the implementation of its action plan. Consequently, such a body in Georgia is the National Security Council, with the legal authority to coordinate the planning process of the national security policy, monitor its implementation, and manage crisis situations (Georgian Herald 2017).

Interestingly, however, when framed as the *national system of civil security*, which content-wise implies managing the same crises, we see a clear monopoly of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOI), in the formulation and implementation of national (strategic) policies. For example, while the National Security Council's "Crisis Management System" manual explicitly states the Council's (National Response Center) authority to coordinate national-level policy and crisis management, the regulation for the Emergency Management Agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs clearly states that (Georgian Herald 2017):

"... [The Agency] coordinates the functioning of the national civil security system, is responsible for planning and implementing civil security policy..."

And extends its missions to:

"...developing proposals to improve state policy on civil security and the development of the national system and submitting them to the minister and other actors of the national system..."

„...within the defined authority, to coordinate the development and implementation of agency level conceptual documents and action plans developed by government agencies based on the national level conceptual documents drafted in the area of civil security."

While the NSC recognizes the primary role of the MoI in crisis response and refers to it as the "major operational force," it is clear that the operational force and its subordinate structural unit can not serve as the coordinating body for shaping or implementing strategy and policy at the national level (NSC 2023). There is also a kind of uncertainty in how many levels of crisis management mechanism exist and how they interact. For example, while the National Security Council adopts a three-tiered (strategic, operational, and tactical) response and management system, the National Civil Security Plan establishes a four-tiered system (national, autonomy, provincial, and local) (NSC 2023). In the same plan, nothing is mentioned about the relationship with the NSC crisis response center to deal with energy crises (as opposed to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where respective individuals are assigned to the emergency operations center and the field headquarters) (GeorgianHerald 2015b). Despite the fact that the Ministry of Economy has developed a 2-tier crisis management model in the energy sector and responds quite effectively to emergencies within the framework of the interagency energy security group (e.g. in the electricity sector), it is unclear what formats and tools (e.g. those of NSC or MOI) will be used by the ministry of economy to respond to a larger national level energy crisis, due to the incompatibility between the levels of response defined by the Security Council and those defined by the MoI. This demonstrates that these frameworks must be adjusted to ensure their mutual compatibility.

The lack of general planning and strategic analysis in local government (and municipalities) is another dimension that undermines state capacity to respond to crises in a coherent and coordinated manner. The Government itself admits this and promises to help, especially (GeorgianHerald 2017):

"...in implementing a common integrated methodology at the national level for local risk assessment and in developing a local disaster risk reduction strategy and action plan."

Naturally, in the absence of a strong local governance (specifically the lack of technical, human, and financial resources) and long-term plans for regional development, it is at least highly unlikely that local governments will soon be able to present local strategies and plans compatible with national strategies and plans, no matter how effective the methodology central government wishes to introduce is.

In general, strategic planning in the Georgian reality, including in the energy sector, lacks not only a long-term, truly interagency, and well-coordinated process, but most importantly, it lacks specific goals and clear target indicators that would greatly facilitate the drafting and implementation of action plans. The reason for this can be found in the lack of initiative. In other words, a lack of willingness to take responsibility, because the clearer the goal of a strategic plan or action plan is, the easier it is to attribute responsibility in case of failure.

Western practice is much more rational and target oriented in this regard. For example, the UK's energy strategy, which is based on a 10-point plan, includes multiple figures and targets stretching to the year 2050. It also commits to specifics such as the purchase of 1,678 emission-free buses and 60,000 heat pumps, as well as a £5,000 subsidy for families (HM Government 2022). Similar sector specific information can also be found in the Irish Energy Security Framework (Government of Ireland 2022). It should be emphasized that the military dimension of security, i.e. the high probability of military confrontation, further increases the need for strategic planning in the energy sector, which has been acknowledged even by those countries whose military capabilities are not in question (the US and the EU) (FES 2023).

Nonetheless, despite the existing challenges, a positive process can be observed in the proper prioritization and identification of possible steps in energy sector strategic documents. For example, despite the unclear status of Georgia's Energy Strategy for 2020-2030, it identifies energy security risks and threats in a very precise and detailed manner. Alongside the standard issues of sustainability and diversification of imports and supplies, the document highlights threats emanating from the occupied territories, such as the physical security of energy facilities and the risk of losing control over them, as well as the problematic nature of supplying electricity to the occupied regions. Additional challenges remain such as the high probability of cyber attacks, lack of strategic reserves, high power consumption by crypto infrastructure, and the peculiar nature of the country's power system, (electricity is generated mainly in western Georgia and consumed mainly in the east where the capital Tbilisi is located), which particularly increases the vulnerability of the system. This document does an excellent job of analyzing the trends in certain areas of the energy sector, but significant shortcomings remain such as the lack of specific steps planned and approved that would clearly aim at minimizing and neutralizing specific threats/risks over a specific time period.

An even more detailed picture is presented in Georgia's National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (NECP-final draft) (MESD 2023). The document fully takes into account the approach adopted by the European Union and the requirements imposed on the participants of the Integrated EU Energy Market in terms of the analysis, forecasting, and application of standards in the energy sector. For a clear 10-year period forecast of energy security challenges, the TIMES Model (The Integrated MARKAL-EFOM System) is used to define long-term energy scenarios and involve the collection and analysis of detailed sector-specific information. The final draft of the NECP is an excellent document that provides comprehensive information on measures that ensure the diversification and sustainability of energy sources and supplies, as well as the modernization of domestic infrastructure. However, it is pretty obvious that these forecasts and plans are based only on a scenario of peaceful (economic) development and do not take into account more extreme scenarios or large-scale crises (be they natural or military) that would cause the radical limitation of energy supply by far more than the 20% limit taken into account in the document. Despite the fact that the very same document identifies a number of energy security objectives that are directly linked to the threat of military occupation (e.g. security of facilities close to occupation zones, excessive energy consumption, the resilience and

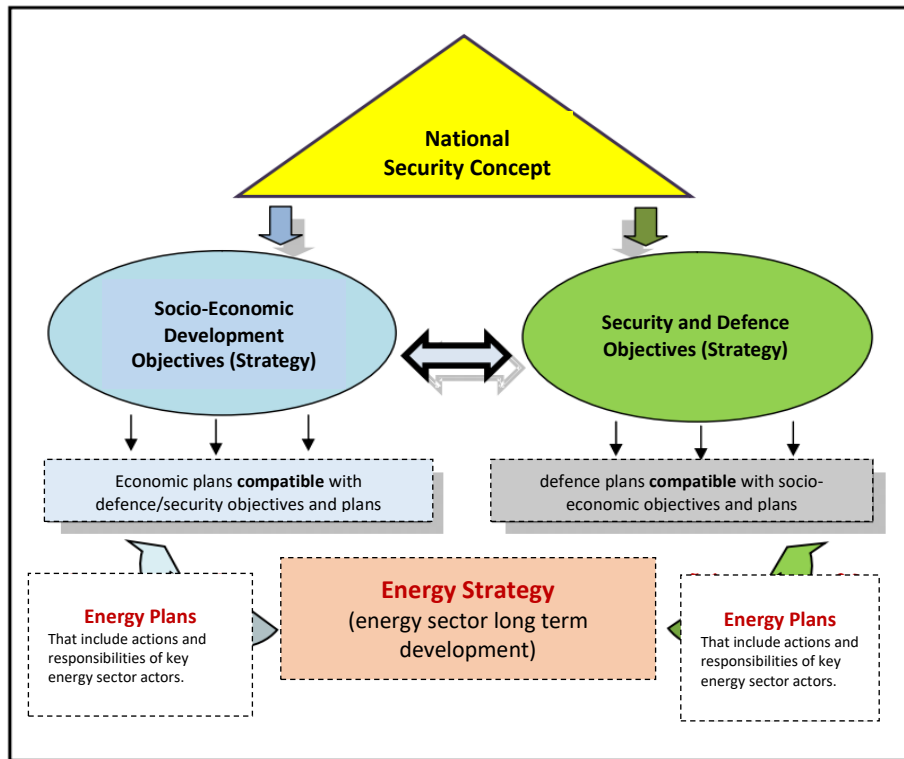
flexibility of the power system, and strategic reserves), the possibility of military confrontation (war) and the respective implication of a potential large-scale energy crisis are not analyzed at all.

Importantly, the plan devotes a lot of space to the renewal of gas infrastructure and identifies a series of steps until 2030 to replace the radial gas supply system with an interconnected circular supply system (as of the end of 2023, the final decision has not yet been made). This approach significantly increases the stability of the gas supply and the possibility of autonomous operation within a specific geographical area. However, in the same context, no concrete actions are formulated to create strategic gas storage facilities, which, along with the undoubtedly important measures mentioned above, would significantly improve the quality of stable gas supplies to the country, not least during a large-scale crisis. In general, the integrated plan, despite several shortcomings, is a clear step forward in the context of implementing the necessary measures that would bring Georgia institutionally very close to the EU energy market and its standards. Furthermore, it creates a very valuable mechanism for executing long-term planning, and achieving goals in the energy sector.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The existence of an energy strategy in the country essentially depends on the availability of a unified mechanism of strategic (national) planning. The application of this mechanism largely determines the mutual compatibility and coordination of sectoral strategies and policies (action plans), as well as the elaboration of appropriate response plans/mechanisms at the central, regional and local levels. Current tradition is, however, to present strategies in form of general, vague formulations, and largely technical aggregations of measures in the form of national action plans (e.g. the Action Plan of the Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction) (Georgian Herald 2017). In existing strategic documents, such as the National Civil Security Plan, the energy sector should go beyond the level of *function* (function-9 energy supply) and be upgraded to be one of the main areas regulated by the respective measures of the national plan (GeorgianHerald 2015b). However, in reality, the development and implementation of an effective energy strategy will not be possible unless critical steps are made, on the one hand, to improve the overall national security strategic planning process in Georgia and, on the other, to ensure energy security issues are integrated thematically and institutionally at the very beginning of this planning process (Graph 4).

Graph 4. Place of the Energy Sector in the Strategic Planning System



Source: prepared by the author

Only in the context of economic, defense and other (strategic) development plans adopted to respond to the national security strategy, should an energy strategy be developed. It is obvious that both the country's socio-economic development and basic chances of survival in times of major crises or military aggression largely depend on the energy sector. Accordingly, national and local economic development strategies, and sectoral energy strategic planning need to become an integral part of general planning from the very beginning. This implies a cascading effect, i.e. the need to develop and update regional and municipal level energy plans. Such clear formulation of objectives and targets in strategies and plans greatly facilitate the organization of activities, as well as human, financial or material resources. This significantly improves the quality of preparedness and response in times of crisis, both at the national and local levels.

Consequently, in addition to the important steps mentioned above, the following measures are necessary for the proper and effective planning and implementation of energy security:

- **Regular monitoring of regional and global processes in the energy sector, analyzing technological aspects and estimating likely outcomes for Georgia.** Although energy

security and resilience are among the country's top priorities, the coordination of government agencies in this area requires significant improvement. This means, first of all, a periodic exchange of the results of energy sector monitoring and analysis (a periodic analytical review by the Ministry) and an elaboration of relevant conclusions in an interagency format. Such a periodic review would fill an important gap in this regard and offers a number of advantages. In addition to capturing important trends and factors for energy security, it provides a very good analytical basis for discussing particular issues relevant to the energy sector in an interagency format (e.g. within the National Security Council), as well as for effective political decision making.

- **Use of the National Security Council as the main platform for organizing routine analytical processes** in the context of horizontal cooperation (between the structural units of the relevant agencies), as well as between state agencies for decision making and the elaboration and implementation of energy sector strategies and plans at the highest national level.
- **It is particularly important to regularly share energy sector analyses and conclusions developed by the Ministry of Economy** with the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Interior (and their respective structural units) in order to integrate the findings of these analyses into these institutions' threat assessment documents and national security concept papers.
- **Active involvement of other important energy sector actors in the development and effective implementation of energy policy and energy security.** The relevance of the Georgia National Energy and Water Regulation Commission (GNERC), the Georgian State Electric System (GSE), the Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation (GOGC), and the Georgian Gas Transmission Company (GGTC) is particularly evident here. Given the factors of both the resilience of energy infrastructure and the need for stable supply, it would be a step forward to fully involve at least these organizations in the discussion of the periodic energy sector review. Ultimately, their involvement in the development of the country's long-term energy security strategy and action plan should be as active (if not more) as that of other state agencies.

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