

TÜRKİYE'S CYPRUS POLICY AND LEGAL STANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF ENERGY GEOPOLITICS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Neşet ŞAVAMREH* & Jalal TS SELMI**

Abstract

This study examines Türkiye's geopolitical objectives in the Eastern Mediterranean in relation to hydrocarbon reserves discovered through offshore drilling, as well as its legal stance on the Cyprus issue. The study aims to analyze how Türkiye delineates its maritime jurisdiction areas in the Eastern Mediterranean and its relations with other regional actors within the framework of the Blue Homeland geostrategy. In this context, the study covers the historical origins of the Cyprus issue in light of energy geopolitics; the hydrocarbon reserves discovered in the region; Türkiye's relations with Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Israel, Lebanon, Egypt, and Libya; and the implications of these relations for the region. This study contributes to the literature by addressing the Cyprus issue through the lens of energy geopolitics from a legal perspective and by offering a comprehensive analysis of Türkiye's position in the Eastern Mediterranean in terms of energy competition with other regional actors. This study employs a qualitative case study design based on document analysis to examine Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy and the role of the Blue Homeland strategy in shaping regional maritime dynamics. The data were obtained from primary and secondary sources, including books, articles, and internet resources. The findings indicate that Greece's and the Greek Cypriot Administration's policy of restricting Türkiye to the Gulf of Antalya is against international law; that Türkiye adopted a policy of redefining its maritime jurisdiction areas in the Eastern Mediterranean after 2011; and that the bilateral agreement between Türkiye and Libya on the maritime boundaries (or continental shelf delimitation) of the Eastern Mediterranean, signed in 2019, changed the regional balance.

Keywords: Cyprus Dispute, Eastern Mediterranean, Türkiye, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), The Geopolitics of Energy.

* PhD. Candidate, Sakarya University, Middle East Institute, Middle Eastern Studies, shawamreh.nashat@gmail.com , <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0502-8438>

** Doctoral Federal University of São João del-Rei, j.selmi.1992@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1788-8969>

DOĞU AKDENİZ'DEKİ ENERJİ JEOPOLİTİĞİ BAĞLAMINDA TÜRKİYE'NİN KIBRIS POLİTİKASI VE HUKUKİ DURUŞU

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin Doğu Akdeniz'deki jeopolitik hedeflerini, açık deniz sondaj faaliyetleri yoluyla keşfedilen hidrokarbon rezervleriyle ilişkili olarak ve Kıbrıs sorununa ilişkin hukuki tutumu çerçevesinde incelemektedir. Çalışma, Türkiye'nin Doğu Akdeniz'deki deniz yetki alanlarını nasıl tanımladığını ve Mavi Vatan jeostratejisi kapsamında diğer bölgesel aktörlerle ilişkilerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışmanın kapsamı, enerji jeopolitiği kavramı ışığında Kıbrıs sorununun tarihsel kökenlerini, bölgede keşfedilen hidrokarbon rezervlerini, Türkiye'nin Yunanistan, Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimi, İsrail, Mısır, Lübnan ve Libya ile ilişkilerini ve bu ilişkilerin bölgesel dengeler üzerindeki etkilerini içermektedir. Çalışma, Kıbrıs sorununu enerji jeopolitiği perspektifinden ve hukuki bir çerçevede ele alması; ayrıca Türkiye'nin Doğu Akdeniz'deki konumunu bölgesel aktörlerle yürütülen enerji rekabeti bağlamında kapsamlı biçimde analiz etmesi bakımından literatüre katkı sunmaktadır. Yöntemsel olarak bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin Doğu Akdeniz politikasını ve Mavi Vatan stratejisinin bölgesel denizcilik dinamiklerini şekillendirmedeki rolünü incelemek amacıyla belge analizine dayalı nitel bir vaka çalışması tasarımı benimsenmektedir. Çalışmanın verileri, kitaplar, makaleler ve internet kaynakları dâhil olmak üzere birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan elde edilmiştir. Bulgular, Yunanistan ve Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimi'nin Türkiye'yi Antalya Körfezi ile sınırlandırmaya yönelik politikasının uluslararası hukuk açısından tartışılmalı olduğunu; Türkiye'nin 2011 sonrasında Doğu Akdeniz'deki deniz yetki alanlarını yeniden tanımlamaya yönelik bir politika benimsediğini; ayrıca Türkiye ile Libya arasında 2019 yılında imzalanan Doğu Akdeniz'deki deniz yetki alanlarının sınırlandırılmasına ilişkin mutabakatın bölgesel dengeyi değiştirdiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kıbrıs Sorunu, Doğu Akdeniz, Türkiye, KKTC, Enerji Jeopolitiği.

Introduction

The Eastern Mediterranean has emerged as one of the most contested geopolitical regions in contemporary regional politics, driven by the discovery of significant hydrocarbon resources, the intensification of maritime jurisdiction disputes, and the protracted Cyprus question. Cyprus's location at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa has historically made the island a focal point of regional and international competition. However, since the early 2000s, the discovery of natural gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean has transformed the Cyprus issue from a primarily political and territorial dispute into a broader legal, geopolitical, and energy-related conflict.

For Türkiye, the Eastern Mediterranean is not merely a zone of energy competition but also a strategic space directly linked to national security, maritime jurisdiction, and the protection of rights claimed by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Türkiye has interpreted the unilateral

proclamation of an Exclusive Economic Zone by the Greek Cypriot Administration and its maritime delimitation agreements with regional actors such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Israel as efforts to exclude both Türkiye and the Turkish Cypriots from the region's emerging energy architecture. In response, Türkiye gradually shifted from a policy centered on diplomatic objection to a more assertive maritime strategy, characterized by drilling, naval presence, and maritime delimitation initiatives.

This article examines how the discovery of hydrocarbon resources in the Eastern Mediterranean has reshaped Türkiye's Cyprus policy and its legal position in maritime jurisdiction disputes. It analyzes how Türkiye has interpreted, asserted, and defended its rights in the Eastern Mediterranean through the lens of energy geopolitics, the Blue Homeland strategy, and international maritime law. Accordingly, the study focuses on the legal and geopolitical consequences of the Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral EEZ policies, the role of the TRNC, and the 2019 maritime delimitation agreement between Türkiye and Libya.

The primary objective of this study is to examine Türkiye's Cyprus policy and legal position in the Eastern Mediterranean within the broader context of Eastern Mediterranean energy geopolitics. More specifically, the study examines how Türkiye's approach to maritime jurisdiction has evolved, how the Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement has influenced regional power dynamics, and how Türkiye challenges the policies of Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration based on equitable maritime delimitation.

Accordingly, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How has Türkiye's policy for determining and defending maritime jurisdictional areas been shaped by the Blue Homeland strategy?
2. What are the geopolitical and legal implications of the 2019 Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement for the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean?
3. How does Türkiye assess the policies of Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration that seek to exclude Türkiye and the TRNC from the Eastern Mediterranean energy equation?

The article's central argument is that Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy has evolved from diplomatic objection to active defense of maritime jurisdiction rights. This transformation has been shaped by the discovery of hydrocarbon resources, the unilateral actions of the Greek Cypriot Administration, the strategic significance of the TRNC, and Türkiye's interpretation of the principle of equitable delimitation in international maritime law. The 2019 Türkiye-Libya agreement marks a significant turning point, strengthening Türkiye's legal and geopolitical position in the Eastern

Mediterranean and challenging initiatives to confine Türkiye to the Gulf of Antalya.

Methodologically, this study adopts a qualitative case study design. It employs document and foreign policy analyses to examine Türkiye's legal and geopolitical position in the Eastern Mediterranean. The study draws on primary and secondary sources, including international legal documents, United Nations documents, maritime delimitation agreements, official statements, academic books, peer-reviewed articles, policy reports, and international news coverage. These sources are thematically analysis across three main dimensions: Türkiye's Blue Homeland strategy, the Cyprus-centered maritime jurisdiction dispute, and the geopolitical implications of the Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement. The selection of actors is based on their direct relevance to Türkiye's maritime jurisdiction claims and Cyprus-related energy disputes. Therefore, the study focuses primarily on Türkiye, the TRNC, Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Libya, Egypt, Lebanon, and Israel. These actors are central to Eastern Mediterranean energy dynamics because their policies, agreements, and legal claims have shaped the dispute over regional maritime jurisdiction. The first dimension concerns Türkiye's Blue Homeland strategy and its role in shaping Türkiye's maritime jurisdiction policy. The second dimension concerns the Cyprus issue and the dispute over Turkish Cypriots' rights to offshore hydrocarbon resources. The third dimension concerns the legal and geopolitical consequences of the 2019 Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement. Through this analytical framework, the article aims to explain how Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy has shifted from diplomatic objection to active defense of maritime jurisdiction.

The article is structured as follows: the first section outlines the conceptual framework of energy geopolitics, followed by a summary of the Eastern Mediterranean's geopolitical and geoeconomic environment in the second section. The third section, focusing on the Cyprus issue, the Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral EEZ policies, the escalation of regional tensions through drilling operations, and the maritime delimitation agreement between Türkiye and Libya, examines Türkiye's policies and legal position in the Eastern Mediterranean. The conclusion outlines the article's contribution to the current literature and summarizes the findings.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on the Eastern Mediterranean energy landscape has grown substantially since the discovery of major hydrocarbon reserves in the region. Existing studies generally approach the issue from four perspectives: energy geopolitics, the Cyprus question, maritime jurisdiction disputes, and Türkiye's regional strategy. Taken together, these perspectives explain the transformation of the Eastern Mediterranean from a relatively peripheral

maritime space into a competitive geopolitical arena shaped by energy resources, legal claims, security concerns, and regional power rivalries.

The first group of studies focuses on energy geopolitics and security in the Eastern Mediterranean. These studies argue that the discovery of natural gas reserves around Israel, Egypt, and Cyprus has reshaped regional alignments and intensified competition among littoral states. From this perspective, energy resources are not merely economic assets but strategic instruments that influence foreign policy, alliance formation, and regional balances of power. Notable studies in this regard include Prontera and Ruszel (2017) and Proedrou (2021). However, while these studies highlight the strategic importance of hydrocarbon discoveries, they tend to place less emphasis on the legal foundations of maritime claims and the broader geopolitical logic shaping the positions of regional actors, particularly Türkiye.

The second group of studies examines the Cyprus question in light of hydrocarbon discoveries. This literature suggests that the island's unresolved political status has directly affected the management of offshore energy resources. Türkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus have contested the Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral licensing activities and maritime delimitation agreements, arguing that they disregard the rights of Turkish Cypriots. Accordingly, the Cyprus issue has become inseparable from the broader debate over maritime jurisdiction and energy governance in the Eastern Mediterranean. Key contributions to this literature are provided by Özgür (2017), Dangubić (2024), and Olgun (2019). Nevertheless, much of this scholarship remains focused on the hydrocarbon dimension of the Cyprus problem and does not sufficiently integrate the historical, legal, security, and geopolitical factors shaping Türkiye's position. Nevertheless, much of this literature remains centered on the hydrocarbon dimension of the Cyprus problem and insufficiently integrates the historical, legal, security, and geopolitical factors that shape Türkiye's position.

The third group of studies examines the legal dimension of maritime jurisdiction disputes. These works focus on the delimitation of Exclusive Economic Zones and continental shelves, the role of islands in maritime delimitation, and the principle of equitable solutions in international maritime law. Within this literature, the Eastern Mediterranean is treated as a complex legal case due to overlapping claims, semi-enclosed-sea conditions, unresolved political conflicts, and competing interpretations of international law. Relevant works include Hattendorf (2000), Bardakçı (2023), and Yüksel and Baran (2020), which provide valuable legal insights, yet a purely legal approach remains insufficient to explain the political behavior of regional actors. In practice, states' maritime policies are also shaped by geopolitical, military, economic, and security calculations. Therefore, the legal dimension must be analysis alongside the strategic interests that influence state behavior in the region.

The fourth group of studies focuses on Türkiye's Blue Homeland strategy and its increasingly active maritime policy since 2011. This literature argues that Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy has gradually shifted from diplomatic objections to a more assertive strategy that includes drilling, a naval presence, and maritime delimitation agreements. From this perspective, the 2019 Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation memorandum is widely regarded as a turning point that challenged the regional maritime and energy initiatives of Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Egypt, and Israel. Prominent studies within this approach include Çubukçuoğlu (2023) and İnat et al. (2020). However, some of these studies tend to approach the issue primarily from a Türkiye-centered perspective. While this perspective is important for understanding Turkish strategic thinking, it may narrow the analysis if not connected to the broader regional context, including competing maritime claims, energy partnerships, legal disputes, and alliance formations across the Mediterranean.

Overall, the existing literature offers important insights into the Eastern Mediterranean. Still, it often treats energy geopolitics, the Cyprus question, maritime law, and Türkiye's Blue Homeland strategy as separate fields of analysis. This fragmentation limits the ability to develop a comprehensive explanation of Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy. Energy-centered studies explain the strategic value of hydrocarbon discoveries, but they do not always engage sufficiently with international law or geopolitical theory. Cyprus-focused studies highlight the centrality of the island's unresolved status, yet they often remain limited to the hydrocarbonization of the Cyprus problem. Legal studies clarify the principles of maritime delimitation, yet they sometimes understate the extent to which security and geopolitical interests shape state behavior. Finally, studies on the Blue Homeland strategy help explain Türkiye's more assertive maritime posture, but they need to be situated within the broader regional competition among multiple actors.

Unlike previous studies, this article contributes to the literature by integrating legal, geopolitical, and maritime dimensions into a single analytical framework. It examines Türkiye's Cyprus policy and legal position through the lens of energy geopolitics. It analyzes how Türkiye's maritime jurisdiction strategy has evolved in response to shifting regional balances in the Eastern Mediterranean. In doing so, the article offers a more comprehensive understanding of Türkiye's actions, alliances, and disputes in the region. It provides an integrated explanation of the legal and strategic foundations of its Eastern Mediterranean policy.

2. ENERGY GEOPOLITICS AS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The relationship among geography, power, security, and foreign policy is commonly conceptualized as geopolitics. It describes how states view geographical areas not only as physical territories but also as strategic arenas that shape national interests, security considerations, economic objectives, and

regional influence. In this way, geography becomes an active determinant of foreign policy and strategic behavior rather than a passive component of international politics. According to Klaus Dodds, geopolitics is closely linked to how states translate geographic advantages into foreign policy goals, security assessments, and power projection (Dodds, 2007, p. 18).

Classical geopolitical thought offers a robust conceptual foundation for understanding the strategic value of geographic space. Rudolf Kjellén conceptualized the state as a political and geographic organism whose behavior is shaped by its spatial environment. This approach underscores that states act in response to the opportunities and constraints created by their geographic position (Buhidl, 2020; Tunander, 2001). Similarly, Halford Mackinder emphasized the strategic significance of controlling key geographic areas and argued that the relationship among land, sea, and political power is central to the global balance of power. Although Mackinder's theory was developed in a different historical context, his emphasis on strategic location remains useful for understanding regions such as the Eastern Mediterranean, where maritime access, energy interests, and geopolitical competition converge (Gray & Sloan, 2014; Mackinder, 1904).

In contemporary international relations, geopolitics has become increasingly intertwined with energy security. Energy geopolitics encompasses the interplay among energy resources, geography, transportation routes, state interests, and regional power competition. Energy resources, particularly oil and natural gas, are not merely economic commodities; they are also strategic instruments that shape alliance formation, foreign policy behavior, maritime security, and regional balances of power. Consequently, the politics of energy is inseparable from questions of national security, economic capacity, and diplomatic influence (Shaffer, 2009). Likewise, Michael Klare argues that competition over strategic resources has become a major source of international rivalry in the post-Cold War period (Klare, 2001).

Energy security is a central pillar of energy geopolitics. The International Energy Agency defines energy security as the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price. This definition underscores that energy security encompasses not only access to resources but also affordability, reliability, and continuity of supply (International Energy Agency [IEA], n.d.). For energy-importing countries, energy security requires diversifying suppliers, reducing external dependence, and protecting transportation routes. For energy-producing or transit countries, it entails controlling resources, securing export routes, and leveraging geographic location for political and economic advantage. Thus, energy security establishes a direct relationship among geography, the economy, and foreign policy.

The Eastern Mediterranean has emerged as one of the most significant contemporary arenas of energy geopolitics. The discovery of offshore

hydrocarbon reserves around Palestine, Israel, Egypt, and Cyprus has transformed the region into a site of energy competition, legal contestation, and geopolitical rivalry. The U.S. Geological Survey estimated that the Levant Basin Province contains approximately 1.7 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas (Schenk et al., 2010). These discoveries have increased the strategic value of maritime jurisdictional areas and placed the delimitation of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and continental shelves at the center of regional politics.

The Eastern Mediterranean is particularly important because of the convergence of several strategic factors. First, it contains significant offshore hydrocarbon reserves. Second, it lies at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa, making it a strategic corridor for maritime trade and energy transport. Third, it includes unresolved political disputes, especially the Cyprus question, which complicates the legal and political management of offshore resources. Fourth, the region is marked by overlapping maritime jurisdiction claims involving Türkiye, Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Libya, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. As a result, the Eastern Mediterranean is not only an energy basin but also a geopolitical space where states compete over maritime boundaries, energy routes, and regional influence.

From this perspective, legal concepts such as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the continental shelf, equitable delimitation, and the role of islands in maritime delimitation have become closely intertwined with geopolitical competition. Articles 74 and 83 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) emphasize that the delimitation of the EEZ and continental shelf between states with opposite or adjacent coasts should be achieved by agreement to reach an equitable solution (United Nations, 1982). Although Türkiye is not a party to UNCLOS, it frequently invokes the principle of equitable delimitation. It argues that maritime boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean should not be based exclusively on the median-line principle, especially when that principle disproportionately favors islands near Türkiye's mainland coast.

This conceptual framework is directly relevant to Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy. Türkiye's approach to the region is shaped by its extensive coastline, energy dependence, security concerns, and its political commitment to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. From Türkiye's perspective, the unilateral Exclusive Economic Zone declarations and maritime delimitation agreements of the Greek Cypriot Administration, along with Greece's maximalist interpretation of island-generated maritime zones, are not merely legal disputes but geopolitical actions that may restrict Türkiye's access to maritime jurisdictional areas and exclude the Turkish Cypriots from the regional energy order. Therefore, Türkiye's Blue Homeland strategy can be understood as a geopolitical response to the shifting energy and maritime balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Blue Homeland strategy reflects Türkiye's effort to link maritime jurisdiction, energy security, and regional power projection. After 2011, Türkiye gradually shifted from a diplomatic objection strategy to a more active maritime approach that included maritime delimitation agreements, drilling operations, hydrocarbon exploitation, and a naval presence. In this context, the 2019 maritime delimitation agreement between Türkiye and Libya is significant because it challenged Greece's and the Greek Cypriot Administration's attempts to confine Türkiye to the Gulf of Antalya and strengthened Türkiye's legal and geopolitical position in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In this article, energy geopolitics serves as the primary conceptual lens for analyzing hydrocarbon discoveries and explaining how they have transformed both the Cyprus issue and Türkiye's regional policy. The concept explains why maritime jurisdiction disputes have become central to Türkiye's foreign policy, why the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus occupies a strategically significant position within Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean approach, and why the 2019 Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement has generated significant geopolitical consequences. Accordingly, energy geopolitics provides the analytical foundation for examining the relationship among energy resources, maritime law, regional competition, and Türkiye's legal-political stance in the Eastern Mediterranean.

3. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE GEOPOLITICAL AND GEOECONOMIC LANDSCAPE IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The Eastern Mediterranean occupies a central place in the geopolitical and geoeconomic landscape of the broader Middle East, North Africa, and Southern Europe. Situated at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the region has long served as a corridor for trade, military movement, energy transport, and political interaction among regional and global powers. Its strategic importance stems not only from its geography but also from its role in linking critical maritime routes and energy corridors, and in addressing unresolved regional conflicts. As Cyprian Broodbank argues, the Mediterranean has long been a zone of intense commercial and civilizational interaction, while Fernand Braudel conceptualized it as a space of movement shaped by interconnected sea routes, port cities, and political networks (Broodbank, 2013; Braudel, 2015).

Cyprus holds a particularly important place in this regional landscape. Because of its proximity to Türkiye's southern coast, the Levant, Egypt, and the Suez route, the island has long been viewed as a strategic hub in the Eastern Mediterranean. Its position at the intersection of maritime routes linking the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe has made Cyprus a persistent focus of geopolitical interest. In this context, the characterization of Cyprus as a so-called "fixed aircraft carrier" reflects the strategic perception

that the island can serve as a military, logistical, and political platform in the wider Eastern Mediterranean (Yaycı, 2012; Kedikli & Çalağan, 2017).

Since the early 2000s, the discovery of offshore hydrocarbon reserves has increased the geostrategic significance of Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean. The region became a new geoeconomic arena following the discovery of the Tamar, Leviathan, Aphrodite, and Zohr gas fields. These discoveries heightened the importance of offshore maritime zones and prompted coastal states to expedite their claims to the continental shelf and the Exclusive Economic Zone. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates the Levant Basin Province contains 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas and 1.7 billion barrels of recoverable oil (Schenk et al., 2010). These estimates reinforced the idea that the Eastern Mediterranean may become a major energy basin for regional players and external markets.

Nevertheless, an inclusive framework for regional cooperation has not emerged despite the economic opportunities created by hydrocarbon discoveries. Conversely, these discoveries have exacerbated existing legal, political, and security conflicts. The unresolved Cyprus issue has hampered the development of a stable energy governance structure, as well as the lack of diplomatic ties between some regional entities, conflicting maritime border claims, and divergent interpretations of international maritime law. As a result, energy cooperation and geopolitical rivalry now coexist in the Eastern Mediterranean (Özekin, 2020; Hava, 2020).

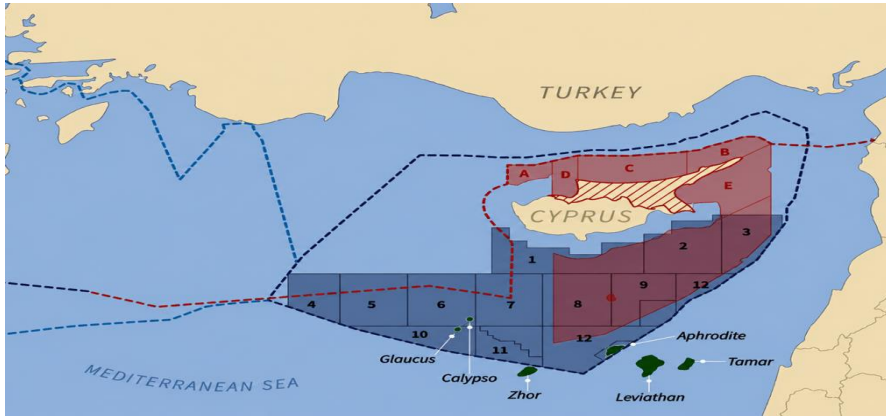
The Eastern Mediterranean is strategically important to Türkiye for several reasons. First, Türkiye views itself as a key player in any maritime delimitation exercise because it has the longest mainland coastline in the Eastern Mediterranean. Second, energy security is a significant foreign policy priority given Türkiye's heavy reliance on imported energy. Third, Türkiye's regional policy directly affects the rights and political standing of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Fourth, according to Ataman and Güler (2020), Avcı (2021a), and Yaycı (2012), Türkiye considers Greece's maritime policies and those of the Greek Cypriot Administration as attempts to limit its maritime jurisdiction.

According to this viewpoint, the technical problem of natural gas exploration cannot be understood solely in terms of the Eastern Mediterranean energy landscape. It is also a geopolitical struggle over regional influence, alliance formation, maritime jurisdiction, and sovereignty claims. Competitive regional alliances have emerged as a result of the policies of Egypt, Israel, Libya, Greece, and the Greek Cypriot Administration. Therefore, it is important to understand Türkiye's response within this broader geopolitical and geoeconomic environment, especially in light of the Blue Homeland policy and the 2019 maritime delimitation agreement between Türkiye and Libya (Acer, 2020; Paralı, 2020; Özekin, 2020).

Consequently, the Eastern Mediterranean is a complex case where regional power politics, maritime law, oil resources, and the Cyprus issue

converge. This convergence explains why the nautical and legal aspects of Türkiye's Cyprus policy have become more prominent in recent years. It also illustrates why disputes over maritime jurisdiction have become a key factor shaping Türkiye's foreign policy in the region. The following figure illustrates part of the complexity in the Eastern Mediterranean basin, where the division of energy field blocks under overlapping maritime boundaries among the basin countries clearly demonstrates the extent of that complexity.

Figure 1. Overlapping Continental Shelf (CS) and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, in the Vicinity of Türkiye and the Island of Cyprus, in Particular



Source: Erciyes, 2019.

4. TÜRKİYE'S POLICIES AND LEGAL POSITION IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Türkiye's policies in the Eastern Mediterranean should not be understood merely as reactions to hydrocarbon discoveries. Rather, they emerged from the interplay of the unresolved Cyprus issue, competing interpretations of maritime delimitation, and the increasing politicization of regional energy projects. The Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral EEZ initiatives and offshore drilling activities, supported by international energy companies and regional alignments perceived by Ankara as exclusionary, transformed questions of maritime jurisdiction into broader issues of sovereignty, security, and regional influence. Türkiye consequently shifted from primarily diplomatic and legal objections toward a multidimensional strategy combining the principle of equitable maritime delimitation, the protection of Turkish Cypriot rights, operational activities at sea, and the maritime delimitation agreement with Libya. This section examines how these instruments strengthened Türkiye's bargaining position while simultaneously contributing to heightened geopolitical polarization in the Eastern Mediterranean.

4.1. The Cyprus Issue and Energy Disputes in The Eastern Mediterranean

The Cyprus issue is a central political and legal dimension of the Eastern Mediterranean energy landscape. Although the dispute originally emerged as a political and territorial conflict between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, the discovery of offshore hydrocarbon resources added a new maritime and geoeconomic dimension to the problem. In this sense, the Cyprus question can no longer be analysis solely as an intercommunal or territorial dispute; it must also be understood as part of the broader struggle over maritime jurisdiction zones and energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean (Ataman & Güler, 2020; Türkiye, 2020).

The island remained politically divided after the events of 1974 and the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983. The United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 541, rejected the proclamation of independence and urged governments not to recognize the newly established entity, despite Türkiye's recognition of the TRNC (United Nations Security Council, 1983). As a result of this asymmetrical legal and diplomatic environment, the Greek Cypriot Administration gained international recognition as the representative of the Republic of Cyprus. At the same time, Turkish Cypriots remained largely excluded from formal international decision-making processes (Güner, 2020).

This political asymmetry became more pronounced after the discovery of hydrocarbon resources around Cyprus. Türkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) have rejected the Greek Cypriot Administration's claim to represent the entire island in maritime delimitation agreements and offshore licensing activities. From Türkiye's perspective, the natural resources around the island belong to both communities on the island, and any unilateral exploration or licensing activity that excludes the Turkish Cypriots disregards their political equality and their rights to the island's natural resources (Çalik Orhun, 2017; Avcı, 2021b).

The energy dimension has therefore deepened the Cyprus issue rather than facilitating a solution. Instead of creating a shared economic incentive for cooperation, hydrocarbon discoveries have intensified the dispute over sovereignty, recognition, and maritime jurisdiction. The Greek Cypriot Administration's licensing of exploration blocks to international energy companies, together with its agreements with neighboring states, has been perceived by Türkiye as an attempt to consolidate the Greek Cypriot Administration's control over offshore resources before a comprehensive political settlement on the island (Örnek & Mızrak, 2016; Ercan & Kılınc, 2020).

For Türkiye, the Cyprus issue is directly tied to national security and maritime jurisdiction. Cyprus is geographically close to Türkiye's southern coast and occupies a strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, Türkiye considers the protection of Turkish Cypriots' rights an

essential part of its regional policy. In this context, Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean strategy is shaped by a dual objective: defending its continental shelf and maritime jurisdiction claims and protecting the rights of the TRNC regarding offshore hydrocarbon resources (Yaycı, 2012; Ataman & Güler, 2020).

Thus, the Cyprus issue serves as a bridge between energy geopolitics and international maritime law. It illustrates how unresolved political disputes can turn energy resources into sources of geopolitical rivalry rather than tools for collaboration. Consequently, the Cyprus question remains central to Türkiye's legal and geopolitical positioning in the Eastern Mediterranean.

4.2. The Greek Cypriot Administration's Unilateral EEZ Policy and Türkiye's Legal Objections

The maritime jurisdiction dispute in the Eastern Mediterranean became more prominent after the Greek Cypriot Administration declared an Exclusive Economic Zone in 2004 and began signing maritime delimitation agreements with neighboring coastal states. As the internationally recognized government of the Republic of Cyprus, the administration concluded agreements with Egypt in 2003, Lebanon in 2007, and Israel in 2010. These agreements enabled the Greek Cypriot side to divide offshore areas into exploration blocks and grant licenses to international energy companies (Çalik Orhun, 2017; Yılmaz, 2020).

Türkiye and the TRNC objected to these unilateral steps on both political and legal grounds. Politically, Türkiye argues that the Greek Cypriot Administration cannot represent Turkish Cypriots in decisions on the island's natural resources. Legally, Türkiye maintains that some of the maritime areas claimed by the Greek Cypriot Administration overlap with Türkiye's continental shelf claims and the maritime rights claimed by the TRNC. Therefore, from Türkiye's perspective, unilateral licensing and delimitation activities disregard the rights of both Türkiye and the Turkish Cypriots (Ercan & Kılınç, 2020; Özdemir, 2020).

Türkiye's legal position is primarily grounded in the principle of equitable delimitation. In maritime delimitation disputes involving opposite or adjacent coasts, international law emphasizes that boundaries should be determined by agreement and in a manner that yields an equitable solution. Articles 74 and 83 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea address delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf between opposite or adjacent states by agreement to achieve an equitable solution (United Nations, 1982). Although Türkiye is not a party to UNCLOS, it frequently invokes the principle of equitable delimitation as part of customary international law.

International judicial experience has also contributed to the development of the equitable delimitation norm. In the North Sea Continental

Shelf cases (International Court of Justice [ICJ], 1969), the International Court of Justice emphasized that delimitation should be carried out in accordance with equitable principles and with due regard for pertinent facts. The importance of proportionality, pertinent facts, and the avoidance of unfair outcomes in maritime delimitation was further developed in later cases, such as the Libya-Malta dispute and the Black Sea case (International Court of Justice [ICJ], 1985; International Court of Justice [ICJ], 2009). These cases are significant because they show that maritime delimitation is not a purely mechanical application of the median line, especially when special geographical circumstances exist.

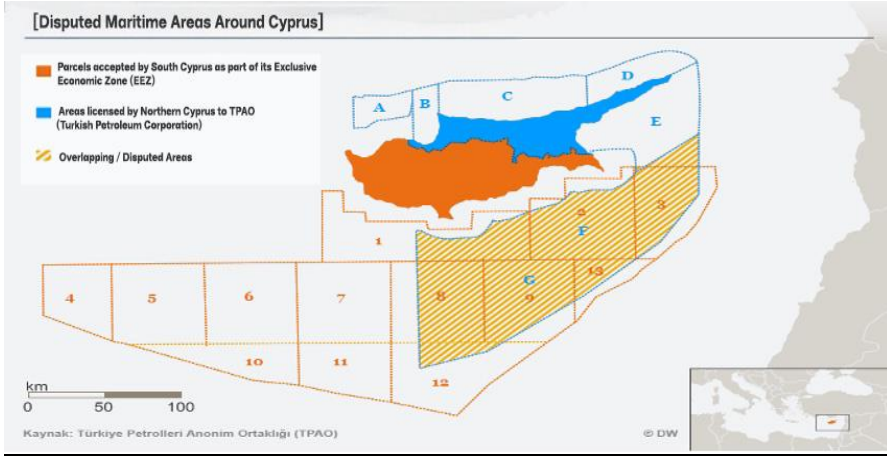
On this basis, Türkiye rejects delimitation approaches that grant full maritime effect to islands such as Cyprus or Meis, which would significantly restrict Türkiye's maritime jurisdiction zones. From Türkiye's perspective, the Eastern Mediterranean's geographical structure, the length of mainland coastlines, the location of islands, and overlapping claims must all be taken into account. Türkiye argues that a delimitation model that confines Türkiye to the Gulf of Antalya would be incompatible with equitable principles and would produce a disproportionate result (Yaycı, 2012; Özdemir, 2020).

The Greek Cypriot Administration's offshore licensing policy further complicated the dispute. The Greek Cypriot side internationalized the energy dimension of the Cyprus issue by dividing the claimed EEZ into exploration blocks and awarding licenses to international energy companies, including ENI, Total, ExxonMobil, and Qatar Petroleum. According to Ercan and Kılınc (2020), and DW Türkçe (2018a), Türkiye viewed this tactic as an attempt to establish de facto control over disputed maritime zones and to involve external parties in a way that would bolster the Greek Cypriot position.

Türkiye and the TRNC responded with action. The TRNC granted the Turkish Petroleum Corporation exploration rights, and Türkiye expanded its naval and diplomatic operations in the region. These developments demonstrate that the conflict over the Greek Cypriot Administration's EEZ policy is not only a legal dispute but also a geopolitical struggle for recognition, sovereignty, maritime jurisdiction, and access to energy resources (Acar & Yılmaz, 2018; Avcı, 2021b).

Therefore, the Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral EEZ policies marked a turning point in Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean strategy. They contributed to Türkiye's shift from diplomatic objection to a more active policy to defend maritime jurisdiction, including exploration activities, drilling operations, and, later, the conclusion of the Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement.

Figure 2. Disputed Maritime Areas Around Cyprus



Source: Ayaz Avan, 2020.

4.3. Escalating Tensions from Offshore Drilling Activities by International Energy Companies

International energy corporations' participation in offshore exploration operations exacerbated the conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Cyprus-related hydrocarbon dispute became an international issue when the Greek Cypriot Administration awarded exploration licenses to corporations, including ENI, Total, ExxonMobil, and Qatar Petroleum. These companies became involved in exploration blocks that Türkiye and the TRNC considered to overlap with their maritime claims (DW Türkçe, 2018a; Ercan & Kılınç, 2020).

From Türkiye's perspective, the participation of international energy companies created two main problems. First, it strengthened the Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral control over offshore resources before a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue. Second, it created a de facto situation in which international companies operated in areas that Türkiye considered legally and politically contested. As a result, Türkiye viewed these drilling operations not only as commercial activities but also as actions that could influence the future distribution of rights and resources in the Eastern Mediterranean (Örnek & Mızrak, 2016; Avcı, 2021b).

One of the most prominent instances of this tension was the February 2018 incident involving the Italian energy company ENI. Türkiye claimed that exploration operations conducted without the Turkish Cypriots' approval infringed their rights to the island's natural resources; accordingly, it stopped an ENI drilling vessel from operating in a disputed area off Cyprus. This incident showed that Türkiye was prepared to use both operational and diplomatic means to halt unilateral drilling in disputed maritime zones (DW Türkçe, 2018b).

Tensions have escalated following ExxonMobil and Qatar Petroleum's announcements of discoveries in Block 10. These developments reinforced the impression that the Greek Cypriot Administration was strengthening its energy position through international alliances. In response, Türkiye increased its drilling and exploration activities by deploying drillships such as Yavuz and Fatih to the Eastern Mediterranean. These actions demonstrated that Türkiye had adopted a more proactive maritime strategy and had moved beyond a reactive diplomatic stance (Anadolu Ajansı, 2019; BBC Türkçe, 2019).

Energy firms can become indirect actors in geopolitical confrontations, as evidenced by the escalation over drilling activity. Their operations may bolster the political and legal claims of the states that issue licenses, even when their primary goal is commercial exploration. This dynamic has been particularly delicate in the Eastern Mediterranean, where offshore blocks intersect with unresolved claims to maritime jurisdiction and sovereignty (Shaffer, 2009; Özekin, 2020).

Drilling operations became a tool for Türkiye's geopolitical presence and legal positioning. To signal that it would not accept unilateral energy agreements excluding the TRNC or Türkiye, Türkiye deployed its own exploration and drilling vessels. These initiatives simultaneously bolstered Türkiye's broader Blue Homeland policy, which seeks to protect maritime jurisdiction rights by combining offshore development, naval presence, legal reasoning, and diplomacy (Yaycı, 2012; Hava, 2020).

As a result, the participation of global energy firms failed to ease tensions or establish a cooperative energy framework. Rather, it contributed to the internationalization and securitization of the Eastern Mediterranean oil dispute. This development strengthened Türkiye's perception that a more active maritime policy was necessary to protect its legal and geopolitical interests.

4.4. The Türkiye- Libya Maritime Delimitation Agreement and Regional Bloc Formation

The maritime delimitation agreement signed on 27 November 2019 between Türkiye and the Government of National Accord of Libya is one of the most significant turning points in the Eastern Mediterranean dispute. The agreement was concluded as Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Egypt, and Israel were deepening cooperation on energy projects and maritime delimitation initiatives. From Türkiye's perspective, these regional initiatives sought to exclude Türkiye from the Eastern Mediterranean energy order and to restrict its maritime jurisdiction (Acer, 2020; Paralı, 2020).

The Türkiye-Libya agreement established a maritime boundary between the two countries and strengthened Türkiye's legal and geopolitical position in the Eastern Mediterranean. By signing the agreement, Türkiye

sought to demonstrate that it could not be excluded from regional maritime delimitation processes. The agreement also challenged the claim that Greek islands, particularly Crete, Rhodes, and Meis, should generate full maritime jurisdiction areas that block Türkiye's access to the wider Eastern Mediterranean (Acer, 2020; Presidency's Directorate of Communications, 2020).

The agreement prompted immediate regional reactions. Greece rejected the memorandum, arguing that it violated the maritime entitlements claimed by Greek islands. Egypt and the Greek Cypriot Administration also opposed the agreement (BBC Türkçe, 2025), though Greece later signed a maritime delimitation agreement with Egypt in 2020. These developments indicate that the Türkiye-Libya agreement accelerated bloc formation in the Eastern Mediterranean and intensified the legal and geopolitical contest over maritime boundaries (Acer, 2020).

From Türkiye's perspective, the agreement had three main implications. First, it provided a legal basis for Türkiye's claim that its continental shelf extends into areas that Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration sought to include in their maritime delimitation arrangements. Second, it disrupted the regional strategy to connect Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Israel, and Egypt through energy cooperation while excluding Türkiye. Third, it strengthened Türkiye's position regarding potential energy transportation routes and offshore exploration activities (Paralı, 2020; Acer, 2022).

The agreement also affected the strategic feasibility of the EastMed pipeline project. The proposed pipeline, which aimed to transport Eastern Mediterranean gas to Europe through Israel, Cyprus, Greece, and Italy, already faced economic, technical, and political challenges. The Türkiye-Libya agreement added another maritime delimitation challenge to these difficulties by creating a legal and geopolitical barrier to projects that ignored Türkiye's claims (RT Arabic, 2022).

However, the Türkiye-Libya agreement should not be understood solely as a legal document. It also represents a broader foreign policy move through which Türkiye sought to reshape the regional balance of power. Türkiye expanded the geographic scope of its maritime claims. It strengthened its negotiating position vis-à-vis Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration by linking its Libya policy to its Eastern Mediterranean strategy. In this sense, the agreement became both a geopolitical instrument and a legal tool (Acer, 2022; Özdemir, 2020).

Overall, the Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement marked a shift from diplomatic objection to more proactive maritime diplomacy. It enabled Türkiye to challenge competing regional alignments, consolidate its Blue Homeland strategy, and assert that any sustainable energy and security architecture in the Eastern Mediterranean must include Türkiye and account for the rights of the TRNC.

Conclusion

This article has examined Türkiye's Cyprus policy and legal position in the Eastern Mediterranean through the lens of energy geopolitics. The main argument of this study is that the discovery of offshore hydrocarbon resources in the waters surrounding Cyprus, Israel, and Egypt has transformed the Cyprus issue from a primarily political and territorial dispute into a broader geopolitical and legal conflict over maritime jurisdiction, energy resources, sovereignty claims, and regional influence.

The first key finding of the study is that Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy has gradually evolved from diplomatic objection to active defense of maritime jurisdiction rights. In the early stages of the dispute, Türkiye primarily objected to the Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral Exclusive Economic Zone policies through diplomatic notes and legal arguments. However, especially after 2011, Türkiye adopted a more assertive maritime policy centered on exploration licenses, drilling activities, naval deployments, and the protection of the rights of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This transformation reflects the growing importance of the Blue Homeland strategy, which links maritime jurisdiction, energy security, and regional power projection.

The second key finding is that the Cyprus question remains central to the Eastern Mediterranean energy landscape. The Greek Cypriot Administration's unilateral licensing activities and maritime delimitation agreements with regional actors have been contested by Türkiye and the TRNC, which argue that these actions exclude Turkish Cypriots from decisions about the island's natural resources. Accordingly, hydrocarbon discoveries did not automatically create a cooperative mechanism for resolving the Cyprus issue. On the contrary, they deepened the dispute by further linking the island's unresolved political status to maritime jurisdiction claims and offshore energy governance.

The third key finding is that the Türkiye-Libya maritime delimitation agreement, signed on 27 November 2019, marks a major turning point in the regional balance of power. Through this agreement, Türkiye sought to strengthen its legal and geopolitical position, challenge maritime arrangements that excluded it from the Eastern Mediterranean energy architecture, and prevent the emergence of a regional order shaped exclusively by the cooperation among Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Egypt, and Israel. In this respect, the agreement should be understood not only as a legal document but also as a strategic foreign policy instrument.

Additionally, the study demonstrates that the Eastern Mediterranean debate cannot be reduced to the technical or financial issue of natural gas exploration. International maritime law, sovereignty claims, recognition conflicts, security concerns, alliance formation, and regional power competition are all part of this multifaceted geopolitical struggle. From Türkiye's perspective, protecting its claims to the continental shelf, avoiding

maritime encirclement, and defending the rights of Turkish Cypriots are just as important as access to hydrocarbon resources.

This study's primary contribution is unifying three aspects-the Cyprus issue, energy geopolitics, and maritime jurisdiction disputes-that are often studied separately in the literature. By examining these factors collectively, the study shows how hydrocarbon discoveries have reshaped Türkiye's regional policy and the legal and political significance of the Cyprus question in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Nevertheless, this study has certain limitations. It does not offer an equally thorough examination of the legal arguments presented by Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration, Egypt, or Israel, instead focusing primarily on Türkiye's legal and geopolitical perspective. As a result, future research could conduct a comparative legal examination of the conflicting maritime rights in the Eastern Mediterranean. Further studies may also examine the role of external actors, such as the European Union, the United States, and international energy companies, in shaping the region's energy governance and security dynamics.

In conclusion, Türkiye's Eastern Mediterranean policy reflects a broader structural shift in which geopolitical rivalry, maritime law, and energy security are now closely intertwined. The Eastern Mediterranean is expected to remain a contested region as long as the Cyprus issue remains unsettled and overlapping maritime jurisdictional claims persist. In addition to the interests of recognized sovereign states, any sustainable mechanism for regional energy cooperation and stability must take into account Türkiye's position as a major coastal state and the rights asserted by Turkish Cypriots.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış Bağımsız

Yazar Katkısı: Neşet ŞAVAMREH: %50, Jalal SELMI: %50

Destek ve Teşekkür Beyanı: Çalışma için destek alınmamıştır.

Etik Onay: Bu çalışma etik onay gerektiren herhangi bir insan veya hayvan araştırması içermemektedir.

Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı: Çalışma ile ilgili herhangi bir kurum veya kişi ile çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

Peer Review: Independent double-blind

Author Contributions: Neşet ŞAVAMREH: 50%, Jalal SELMI: 50%

Funding and Acknowledgment: No support was received for the study.

Ethics Approval: This study does not contain any human or animal research that requires ethical approval

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person related to the study.

References

- Acar, İ., & Yılmaz, M. (2018, Ekim). *Doğu Akdeniz kıta sahanlığı sorunsalı üzerinden doğalgaz paylaşımı* [Bildiri sunumu]. TÜCAUM 30. Yıl Uluslararası Coğrafya Sempozyumu, Ankara.
- Acer, Y. (2020). Doğu Akdeniz’de Yunanistan-Mısır deniz sınırı antlaşması ve Türkiye. *Adalet Dergisi*, 65, 13-26.
- Acer, Y. (2022). Türkiye-Libya hidrokarbon mutabakatı: önemi ve hukuki yansımaları. *SETA Perspektif*, (346), 1-4.
- Anadolu Ajansı. (2019, 3 Haziran). *Sondaj gemisi Yavuz Akdeniz’e doğru yola çıktı*. Retrieved on June 3, 2025, from <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/sondaj-gemisi-yavuz-akdenize-dogru-yola-cikti/1511003/>
- Ataman, M., & Güler, M. Ç. (2020). The Cyprus dispute: The prerequisite for the Solution of the Eastern Mediterranean problem. In K. İnât, M. Ataman, & B. Duran (Eds.), *Eastern Mediterranean and Turkey: Political, judicial and economic perspectives* (pp. 33-58). SETA Publications.
- Avcı, H. İ. (2021a). Doğu Akdeniz deniz yetki alanları uyuşmazlığı: yaşanan krizler ve etkileri. *Journal of Diplomacy Research*, 3(1), 1-22.
- Avcı, R. (2021b). Doğu Akdeniz’de enerji kaynakları keşfedilmesinin Kıbrıs meselesine etkileri ve Türkiye’nin tavrı. *Working Paper Series*, 2(2), 75-87. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4958983>
- Ayaz Avan, E. (2020). Doğu Akdeniz deniz yetki alanları sorunu: Türkiye’nin politikası ve AB’nin yaklaşımı. *Avrasya Etüdleri*, 58(2), 87-112.
- Bardakcı, M. (2023). Doğu Akdeniz deniz yetki alanları uyuşmazlığının hukuki boyutu ve Türkiye. *The Boğaziçi Law Review*, 1(1), 69-97.
- BBC Türkçe. (2019, 10 Mayıs). *Doğu Akdeniz: Kıbrıs açıklarında doğalgaz arama krizi nasıl başladı, hangi ülke ne istiyor?*. Retrieved on June 29, 2025, from <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-48225246>.
- BBC Türkçe. (2025, 7 Temmuz). *Libya Temsilciler Meclisi Türkiye’yle anlaşmayı onaylayabilir: karar neden merakla bekleniyor?*. Retrieved on June 30, 2025, from <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/c1lj8zp34eno>
- Braudel, F. (2015). *Akdeniz: Mekân, tarih, insanlar ve miras* (Çev. N. Erkurt & A. Derman). Metis Yayınları.
- Broodbank, C. (2013). *The making of the middle sea: a history of the Mediterranean from the beginning to the emergence of the classical world*. Thames & Hudson.
- Buhidl, R. (2020). *Geopolitics of international competition over the African Sahel region*. Academic Book Center.

- Çalik Orhun, F. (2017). Doğu Akdeniz enerji kaynaklarının Kıbrıs sorununa muhtemel etkileri. *Vakanüvis- Uluslararası Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(2), 36-54. <https://doi.org/10.24186/vakanuvis.351418>
- Çubukçuoğlu, S. S. (2023). *Türkiye's naval activism: maritime geopolitics and the Blue Homeland concept*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dangubić, M. (2024). *Effects of hydrocarbon discoveries on stability of the Eastern Mediterranean* [Yüksek Lisans Tezi]. Charles University.
- Dodds, K. (2007). *Geopolitics: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- DW Türkçe. (2018a, 12 November). *ExxonMobil's drilling ship in Cyprus*. Retrieved on June 29, 2025, from <https://www.dw.com/tr/exxonmobilin-sondaj-gemisi-kıbrısta/a-46266914>
- DW Türkçe. (2018b, 23 February). *Natural gas exploration ship left southeast Cyprus*. Retrieved on June 28, 2025, from <https://www.dw.com/tr/doğalgaz-arama-gemisi-kıbrısın-güneydoğusunu-terk-etti/a-42712793>
- Ercan, M., & Kılınç, M. C. (2020). Bölgesel ve küresel aktörlerin Ortadoğu merkezli Doğu Akdeniz politikaları: Kıbrıs çatışması ve Libya mutabakatı. *Anadolu Strateji Dergisi*, 2(2), 15-28.
- Erciyes, Ç. (2019, 20 Aralık). *Doğu Akdeniz deniz yetki alanlarının sınırlandırılması: Türkiye'nin siyasi ve hukuki tezleri ve sahadaki uygulamaları* [Bildiri sunumu]. *Doğu Akdeniz'de enerji, güvenlik ve uluslararası hukuk yuvarlak masa toplantısı*, İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Gray, C. S., & Sloan, G. (2014). *Geopolitics, geography, and strategy*. Routledge.
- Günar, A. (2020). Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimi'nin (Kıbrıs Cumhuriyeti'nin) Avrupa Birliği üyeliğinin Kıbrıs sorununa etkisi. *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları*, (37), 95-118.
- Hattendorf, J. B. (Ed.). (2000). *Naval policy and strategy in the Mediterranean: Past, Present and Future*. Frank Cass.
- Hava, H. T. (2020). Doğu Akdeniz'deki doğal gaz rezervlerinin ekonomik ve güvenlik boyutuyla Türkiye açısından değerlendirmesi. *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi*, 16(35), 675-706. <https://doi.org/10.17752/guvenlikstrjt.807021>
- International Court of Justice. (1969). *North Sea continental shelf cases (Federal Republic of Germany/Denmark; Federal Republic of Germany/Netherlands)*, I.C.J. Reports 1969, 3. Retrieved on April 13, 2026, from <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/51/051-19690220-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>

- International Court of Justice. (1985). *Continental shelf case (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya/Malta)*, I.C.J. Reports 1985, 13. Retrieved on April 12, 2026, from <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/68/068-19850603-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>
- International Court of Justice. (2009). *Maritime delimitation in the Black Sea (Romania v. Ukraine)*, I.C.J. Reports 2009, 61. Retrieved on April 10, 2026, from <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/132/132-20090203-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>
- International Energy Agency. (n.d.). Energy security. Retrieved on May10, 2026, from <https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-security>
- İnat, K., Ataman, M., & Duran, B. (Eds.). (2020). *Eastern Mediterranean and Turkey: political, judicial and economic perspectives*. SETA Publications.
- Kedikli, U., & Çalağan, Ö. (2017). Enerji alanında bir rekabet sahası olarak Doğu Akdeniz'in önemi. *Sosyal Bilimler Metinleri*, 2017(1), 120-138.
- Klare, M. T. (2001). *Resource wars: The new landscape of global conflict*. Henry Holt and Company.
- Mackinder, H. J. (1904). The geographical pivot of history. *The Geographical Journal*, 23(4), 421-437. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1775498>
- Olgun, M. E. (2019, February 23). *Can hydrocarbons catalyse new out of the box thinking on Cyprus? A Turkish Cypriot perspective*. Istituto Affari Internazionali. <https://www.iai.it/en/publications/c05/can-hydrocarbons-catalyse-new-out-box-thinking-cyprus>
- Örnek, S., & Mızrak, B. (2016). Bir güvenlik sorunu olarak Kıbrıs'ın enerji kaynakları ve uluslararası aktörlerin politikaları. *Bilge Strateji*, 8(15), 13-32.
- Özdemir, B. Z. (2020). Uluslararası deniz hukuku perspektifinden Türkiye'nin Doğu Akdeniz politikası. K. İnat, M. Ataman ve B. Duran (Ed.), *Doğu Akdeniz ve Türkiye'nin hakları içinde* (s. 323-348). SETA Yayınları.
- Özekin, M. K. (2020). Doğu Akdeniz'de değişen enerji jeopolitiği ve Türkiye. *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi*, 16(33), 1-51. <https://doi.org/10.17752/guvenlikstrjtj.719964>
- Özgür, H. K. (2017). Eastern Mediterranean hydrocarbons: regional potential, challenges ahead, and the 'hydrocarbon-ization' of the Cyprus problem. *PERCEPTIONS: Journal of International Affairs*, 22(2), 31-56.
- Paralı, Z. (2020). Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile Libya Devleti Ulusal Mutabakat Hükümeti arasında imzalanan Akdeniz'de deniz yetki alanlarının sınırlandırılmasına ilişkin mutabakat muhtırasının uluslararası politikaya etkileri. *Nazilli İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1(1), 49-64.

Yüksel, C., & Baran, D. (2020). Uluslararası hukukta Doğu Akdeniz krizi ve Türkiye ile Libya arasındaki deniz yetki alanlarını sınırlandırma mutabakatının değerlendirilmesi. *Public and Private International Law Bulletin*, 40(1), 519-556. <https://doi.org/10.26650/ppil.2020.40.1.0019>