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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENERGY STRATEGIES AND THEIR ECONOMIC OUTCOMES (A CASE STUDY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, CHINA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES)

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Abstract:
In the context of the global energy transition and geopolitical reconfiguration, a comparative analysis of the strategies pursued by the world's leading actors is of critical importance for forecasting economic and political trends. Contemporary energy policy has evolved beyond being solely a matter of domestic development and has become an instrument of strategic positioning in the international arena. The interaction of diverse approaches to ensuring energy security, diversifying energy sources, and achieving climate objectives is shaping a new architecture of international relations. This article presents a comparative analysis of the energy strategies of the European Union, China, the United States, and the Middle Eastern countries (with a focus on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) and evaluates their economic implications.

Relevance of the Research Topic

The relevance of this study is determined by the following factors:

1. Geopolitical instability: Conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East have exposed the vulnerability of global energy supply chains and compelled countries to fundamentally reassess their approaches to energy security.

2. Acceleration of the energy transition: Divergent rates and methods of decarbonization across key regions create both opportunities for cooperation and areas of technological and economic competition.

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3. Redistribution of economic influence: Energy strategies directly affect trade balances, investment flows, and industrial policy, determining new leaders in the emerging green global economy.

4. Formation of new alliances: The analysis demonstrates the growing convergence between China and the Gulf states, reshaping traditional patterns of interaction across Eurasia and posing new challenges to the transatlantic partnership [3].

Research Aim and Objectives

Research Aim:

To identify the key characteristics, driving forces, and direct economic implications of the energy strategies pursued by the European Union, China, the United States, and the Middle Eastern countries.

Research Objectives:

1. To conduct a comparative analysis of the priorities, instruments, and implementation mechanisms of energy strategies in the selected regions.
2. To assess the short- and medium-term macroeconomic effects of these strategies, including their impact on inflation, trade, investment, and industrial competitiveness.
3. To examine the emerging patterns of international energy cooperation and competition at the intersection of the interests of the major global actors.
4. To formulate recommendations for adapting energy strategies to the changing dynamics of the global environment.

Comparative Analysis of Energy Strategies and Their Economic Outcomes

The strategies pursued by the regions under consideration demonstrate fundamentally different approaches shaped by their resource endowments, economic models, and geopolitical ambitions.

Following 2022, the European Union has pursued a strategy of accelerated emergency transformation. At its core is the REPowerEU package, designed to rapidly eliminate dependence on Russian energy resources. The economic outcomes of this strategy are mixed. On the one hand, the EU has achieved significant progress in diversifying natural gas supplies through liquefied natural gas (LNG), particularly from the United States and Qatar, while accelerating the deployment of renewable energy sources. On the other hand, these measures have resulted in structurally higher energy prices compared with major competitors such as the United States and China, creating risks of deindustrialization for energy-intensive industries and intensifying inflationary pressures. Fragmentation of the internal market and the slowdown of integration processes have also emerged as challenges to the EU's common energy policy [2].

The Middle Eastern countries (Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) have adopted a strategy of dual transformation, balancing the monetization of hydrocarbon resources with ambitious diversification agendas, including Vision 2030 and the UAE Net Zero 2050

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initiative. Their national companies—Saudi Aramco**,** ADNOC, as well as green energy leaders such as ACWA Power and Masdar—serve as the principal instruments of this strategy. The economic outcome has been record revenues from oil and gas exports during 2022–2024, strengthening the financial foundation for future investments. More importantly, the region has evolved into a global investor and technological partner in the energy transition, particularly in Central Asia, where Middle Eastern sovereign funds increasingly co-finance energy projects alongside Chinese partners [3].

China pursues a strategy of comprehensive energy sovereignty and technological leadership. This strategy combines long-term contracts for the global supply of oil, natural gas, and uranium with dominant positions in the manufacturing value chains of green technologies, including solar panels, wind turbines, and batteries. Energy infrastructure has also become a key component of projects implemented under the Belt and Road Initiative. The principal economic outcome has been the creation of global value chain dependencies in which China controls critical stages of production. This provides Beijing with substantial strategic leverage while simultaneously exposing it to the Western policy of "de-risking" [1].

The United States follows a strategy of resource-based and technological leadership built upon energy self-sufficiency. The shale revolution has strengthened domestic energy security, while the adoption of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has directed hundreds of billions of dollars toward expanding domestic manufacturing capacity in clean energy, electric vehicles, and hydrogen technologies. The economic outcomes include the revitalization of the industrial sector through reindustrialization, increased investment from international corporations, and the strengthening of the U.S. dollar as the primary currency for energy transactions. In addition, LNG exports have become a powerful instrument of both economic growth and foreign policy influence [1].

Сравнительные данные по ключевым аспектам стратегий представлены в Таблице 1.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Energy Strategies and Their Economic Outcomes (2023–2025)

Criterion / Region	**European Union (EU)**	**China**	**United States (US)**	**Middle East (UAE, Saudi Arabia)**
Key priority	Rapid diversification and accelerated energy transition	Energy security combined with technological control	Energy self-sufficiency combined with technological leadership	Resource monetization combined with ambitions to become a global green energy leader
Primary instrument	Regulation, sanctions, and targeted funding (REPowerEU)	Central planning, overseas loans and investments, industrial policy	Large-scale subsidies (Inflation Reduction Act), LNG exports	Sovereign wealth funds, state-owned enterprises, and strategic partnerships
Key economic outcome	High inflation, risk of deindustrialization, increased investment in renewable energy	Dominance in renewable energy supply chains, vulnerability of supply routes	Reindustrialization, increased investment inflows, macroeconomic stability	Record revenues and transformation into a global investor
Approach to carbon regulation (CBAM, etc.)	Initiator and active supporter	Adaptive response through the development of domestic standards	Selective adoption with emphasis on domestic subsidies	Strategic adaptation and investment in green assets

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Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The energy strategies of the world's leading actors demonstrate profound divergence, driven by fundamental differences in resource bases, economic models, and geopolitical positioning.
2. The economic outcomes are multidirectional: the European Union bears a high short-term cost in exchange for security and energy transition; the United States strengthens its economy through self-sufficiency and technological advancement; China expands its structural influence through control over supply chains; and the Middle Eastern countries convert resource revenues into long-term strategic influence.
3. New axes of energy cooperation are emerging, with the most significant being the China–Middle East partnership, which is taking the initiative in the development of energy sectors in third regions (Central Asia and Africa) [3]. This challenges the effectiveness of traditional approaches pursued by the EU and the United States.
4. The global energy transition is becoming an arena of intense competition for technological leadership, standards, and control over critical raw materials rather than merely a framework for joint climate efforts.

Recommendations:

1. For the European Union: Short-term measures aimed at diversifying energy supplies should be complemented by long-term industrial policies focused on reducing the cost of green energy and restoring the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector. It is essential to strengthen alliances with reliable suppliers of critical raw materials (lithium, cobalt, and rare earth metals) beyond the current areas of dependency.

2. For the international community: It is necessary to intensify dialogue on establishing inclusive and transparent rules for the global market of green technologies and hydrogen in order to prevent its fragmentation into opposing blocs. This includes standards, subsidies, and trade conditions.

3. For developing energy-importing countries: Strategies should focus on leveraging competition among major global actors to attract investments and technologies under mutually beneficial conditions while avoiding the emergence of new forms of one-sided dependency.

4. For the academic and expert community: It is advisable to deepen research into the economic and social consequences of de-risking and the regionalization of energy supply chains, as well as models of a just transition under conditions of geopolitical confrontation.

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