

Chapter 15

Analyzing the Impact of Geopolitical Implications of Gas Dependency on the European Union and Russia Due to the Ukrainian Conflict

Akash Bag

Amity University, India

Samieekcha Subba Limboo

North Bengal University, India

Ashika Pradhan

Symbiosis Law School, Symbiosis International University (Deemed), Pune, India

ABSTRACT

The European Union (hereinafter EU) has grown more reliant on Russian gas in recent decades. Multiple geopolitical disputes in Ukraine simultaneously affected gas relations and placed the country's independence under stress. This chapter aimed to examine the connection between reliance and geopolitical conflicts. This fascinating relationship was given a fresh perspective by examining it in the context of the interdependency and asymmetry theories. A unique case study, an abductive research method, was used to approach this challenge. As a result, the geopolitical problems in Ukraine are utilized to explain how reliance and conflict relate to one another. The primary factors examined were trade, reliance, and sanctions. According to the analysis, there is a significant connection between an actor's economic and political goals and how they affect reliance. It can be concluded that there is a connection between the geopolitical unrest in Ukraine and the EU's reliance on Russian gas.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-8521-7.ch015

INTRODUCTION

The European Union's (EU) energy policy has recently undergone numerous modifications. The new priority is to lessen reliance. It was previously impossible to adopt a different approach in this area, but with the deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia, everything became possible. Due to its two aspects, energy is an intriguing topic in international relations. It serves as both a geopolitical tool and an essential commodity. Energy is another difficult topic, particularly gas. This commodity is essential to our economies, yet its supply poses serious challenges on a global scale. Geopolitically speaking, the world appears to be a real chess game where national security and interest are set against external threats and reliance. The liberal market perspective emphasizes the business game of supply and demand, which also applies to energy (Scharpf, 2010, p. 222). In this situation, the corporations who fulfill contracts to serve states' domestic demand are in charge. As a result, the supply and demand principles should govern the interaction between Europe and Russia in the energy sector. By importing a third of its current gas usage from Russia, not just Europe exposes itself to risk in this situation. In that light, Russia would also be putting itself at risk by growing financially dependent on Europe, its largest market. Due to reciprocal dependence, an interruption in the gas supply is not immediately obvious from that liberal market standpoint. Energy politics has long engaged in a rhetorical struggle between the geopolitical and free market axes.

To defend European unity, the EU appears to position itself as the guardian of Eastern European nations. They also suggest a second Cold War between two fronts in their geopolitical reasoning (Nycz, 2021, p. 21). This appears to be supported by the Russian reinforcements at the Ukrainian border and the aggressive rhetoric used to portray NATO and the EU as divided and threatening. At the same time, we observe notable changes since the Cold War. It's interesting to note that a similar energy relations issue centered on the Urengoy gas pipeline happened in 1981–1982. While at the time, the heads of government in Western Europe formed a unified bloc opposing US sanctions, geopolitical considerations did not favor them (Stern, 1982, p. 22). But this happened amid the Cold War, at least ten years before the EU was founded.

BACKGROUND

Provide The date is Thursday, February 24, 2022. Russia and Belarus are both entry points for Russian armed forces into Ukraine. It is the beginning of a geopolitical confrontation that will cause numerous casualties. In response, the Western world, especially the EU, acts against Russia, the war's aggressor. Around the same time as this response from the west, fresh thought was given to commerce relations between the two fronts. Even during times of tension in their relationship, the EU and Russia continue to trade in energy, namely oil and gas (Siddi, 2020, p. 5). The EU has grown more reliant on Russian goods, yet historically crises and wars have not frequently impacted trade. Because the EU lacks significant energy resources, it depends on natural gas imported from third-party partners. It mostly imports natural gas from nations outside the European Union, with Russia accounting for most of these imports. The EU member states buy 41.1% of their natural gas from Russia (Eurostat, 2019). Natural gas exports from Russia, one of the top exporters of this energy source globally, account for 13% of that country's GDP (Osipov et al., 2018, p. 227). The major routes for import into Europe are through Belarus, Ukraine, and the already-existing Nord-Stream pipeline in the Baltic Sea (figure 2, appendix). The recently completed

29 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/analyzing-the-impact-of-geopolitical-implications-of-gas-dependency-on-the-european-union-and-russia-due-to-the-ukrainian-conflict/327814

Related Content

Towards a Successful E-Government Implementation

Mehdi Sagheb-Tehrani (2016). *Politics and Social Activism: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 341-364).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/towards-a-successful-e-government-implementation/139976

Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in Africa Through Lessons From East Asia's Experience

Ehizuelen Michael Mitchell Omoruyi (2021). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-38).

www.irma-international.org/article/harnessing-the-demographic-dividend-in-africa-through-lessons-from-east-asias-experience/279130

Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in Africa Through Lessons From East Asia's Experience

Ehizuelen Michael Mitchell Omoruyi (2021). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 1-38).

www.irma-international.org/article/harnessing-the-demographic-dividend-in-africa-through-lessons-from-east-asias-experience/279130

Ethical Implications of Identity Politics for Good Governance in 21st Century Nigeria

Essien D. Essien (2020). *Political Identity and Democratic Citizenship in Turbulent Times* (pp. 129-155).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/ethical-implications-of-identity-politics-for-good-governance-in-21st-century-nigeria/257976

Working Poor in Decommodification Between Belgium and China

Jinghong Liu (2021). *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* (pp. 32-62).

www.irma-international.org/article/working-poor-in-decommodification-between-belgium-and-china/272583