Anticipatory Strategies for Eastern European Natural Gas Security

By Ryan T. Brown

ABSTRACT

In recent years, the European Union (EU) and its member states have taken steps to reduce vulnerability to natural gas supply disruptions from Russian sources. Disputes between Russia and Ukraine in 2006, 2009, and 2014 affected natural gas transmission security and spurred EU member states to take appropriate action. The EU policy measures and the infrastructure projects that ensued will be highlighted to show successful anticipatory strategies that can be employed by other European countries to reduce natural gas vulnerability. These strategies differ depending on geography, domestic resource endowment, and dependence on Russian supply and include reversing the flow of current pipelines, LNG import facilities, underground gas storage and inter-state transmission interconnections. Russian strategies to maintain this dependence, market share, and thus revenues will also be described to give an understanding of the threat to European political and economic security.

Overall, the successful infrastructure improvements employed by EU member states, such as the Baltic and Central European states, will be examined to provide a strategic framework to be used by countries still vulnerable to Russian supply disruptions and coercion. These frameworks will then be applied to Bulgaria, Finland, and the Balkan region to quantify potential anticipatory strategies and determine which is most cost effective.

Advisor: Eugene Gholz
(Signed Name)
(Printed Name)