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Master's Thesis

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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Social Sciences
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**The impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on
the formation of the energy policy in the
European Union**

Master's thesis

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Declaration

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2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on
18.7.2023

Ema Brunovská

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Abstract

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has caused substantial problems to the European Union's energy policy, disrupting the region's energy security and posing repercussions for the transition to a lowering the heavily carbon energy system. The purpose of this thesis is to assess the influence of the Russia-Ukraine war on EU energy policy and prospective changes as a result of the situation.

The study investigates the development of energy policy inside the EU using retrograde analysis and a historical institutionalism approach. It examines the implications of Russian gas and oil supply constraints, the possible implications on energy affordability and security, and the necessity for alternative energy sources.

The thesis gives insights into the evolving dynamics of EU energy security by analysing number of documents from Energy Council's meetings from April 2021 till June 2023 using content analysis. The thesis investigates how institutional structures, and the disruption of dynamic system in the terms of Russian invasion of Ukraine impact energy policy in the EU implementing theories of historical institutionalism and retrograde approach.

To detect patterns, trends, and key policy developments, the research combines content analysis of council meetings and interviews with energy experts. Energy specialists' findings and viewpoints contribute to a complete knowledge of the influence of the Russia-Ukraine war on EU energy policy. Finally, the study believes to influence policy discussions and decision-making processes in the European Union, allowing for the establishment of more strong and resilient energy regulations.

Keywords

Russia-Ukraine conflict, European Union energy policy, Energy Council, Historical institutionalism, Retrograde analysis, Content analysis, Changes in energy policy, Council meetings, Energy experts

Abstrakt

Rusko-ukrajinský konflikt spôsobil značné problémy v kontexte energetickej politiky Európskej únie, narušil energetickú bezpečnosť regiónu a má vplyv na doterajšie vízie v oblasti energetiky. Cieľom tejto práce je predostrieť vplyv rusko-ukrajinskej vojny na energetickú politiku EÚ a perspektívne zmeny v dôsledku vzniknutej situácie.

Práca skúma vývoj energetickej politiky v rámci EÚ s využitím retrográdnej analýzy a prístupu historického inštitucionalizmu. Skúma dôsledky obmedzenia dodávok ruského plynu a ropy, možné vplyvy na dostupnosť a bezpečnosť energie a potrebu alternatívnych zdrojov energie.

Práca poskytuje pohľad na vyvíjajúcu sa dynamiku energetickej bezpečnosti EÚ analýzou dokumentov zo zasadnutí Energetickej rady od apríla 2021 do júna 2023 s využitím obsahovej analýzy dokumentov. Práca skúma, ako inštitucionálne štruktúry a narušenie dynamického systému v podmienkach ruskej invázie Ukrajina majú vplyv na energetickú politiku v EÚ implementujúc teórie historického inštitucionalizmu a retrográdneho prístupu.

S cieľom predostrieť vývoj kľúčových zmien energetickej politiky na úrovni Európskej únie, práca využíva obsahovú analýzu stretnutí aktérov energetickej Rady EÚ a dodatočne prezentuje rozhovory s odborníkmi na energetiku, ktoré prispievajú k úplnému poznaniu vplyvu rusko-ukrajinskej vojny na energetickú politiku Európskej únie. V neposlednom rade má práca za cieľ, ovplyvniť politické diskusie a rozhodovacie procesy na úrovni Európskej únie, čo umožní vytvoriť silnejšie a odolnejšie energetické predpisy.

Kľúčová slova

Rusko-Ukrajinský konflikt, Energetická politika Európskej únie, Energetická Rada EU, Historický inštitucionalizmus, Retrográdna analýza, Obsahová analýza, Zmeny v energetickej politike, Zasadnutia Rady, Energetickí experti

Title

The impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the formation of the energy policy in the European Union

Název práce

Vplyv rusko-ukrajinskej vojny na formovanie energetickej politiky v Európskej únii

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Lastly, I would be remiss in not mentioning my family, especially my parents, partner, and close relatives. Without their tremendous understanding and encouragement in the past two years, it would be impossible for me to complete my study.

Abbreviations

EU – European Union

IEA – International Energy Agency

LNG – Liquefied natural gas

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization Headquarters

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

TTE – Transport, Telecommunications, Energy Council

US – United Nations

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Introduction

As the world faces the difficulties of climate change and energy security, the influence of the Russia-Ukraine war on European Union energy policies has become a major concern. For years, the European Union has been developing energy regulations, and the war between Russia and Ukraine has prompted changes in these policies (Kuzemko et al., 2022). The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the changes in energy policy in response to Russia's war in Ukraine, using a retrograde analysis and a perspective grounded in historical institutionalism. The thesis will analyse potential changes in energy policy and goals within the EU in response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and answer the main research question: What impact does the Russia-Ukraine conflict have on the energy policy and possible changes to this policy in the European Union?

When there are global tensions and conflicts, the connection between energy policy and public policy is more evident. Energy policy is a major component of public policy, determining nations' and regions' security and stability (John, 2013). The present Russia-Ukraine war is one such conflict that has had far-reaching repercussions for energy policy. The crisis, characterised by a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, has produced a dynamic and destabilising climate, with significant implications for the European Union's energy sector (*Impact of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine on the Markets*, 2023).

War, as a dynamic destabilising factor, has negative consequences that go beyond the realm of military combat. It has the capacity to transform policy frameworks and modify long-standing alliances by disrupting social, economic, and political institutions. The Russia-Ukraine crisis has reached a tipping point, necessitating a thorough examination of its implications for EU energy policy (McKee et al., 2022).

The war caused that the Russia's gas and oil supplies have been limited, forcing member nations to seek alternate sources as soon as possible. This disruption in gas supplies has the potential to have a significant impact on the EU's energy security and affordability. Furthermore, the EU was largely reliant on Russian gas at the start of the conflict and decreasing Russian gas and oil supplies forced member nations to seek alternate sources swiftly. This reliance on imported fossil fuels may jeopardise the EU's efforts to lower the carbon levels within the energy system (Matlárý, 1997). Furthermore, any supply shocks induced by the invasion in Ukraine will very certainly have a large impact on Europe and on the whole international order and context. Service and goods prices might scope significant

and devastating amounts. Moreover, in the case of the export of Russian gas and oil to European continent would almost certainly need governmental measures, perhaps leading to energy restriction in energy-dependent industries (Kuzemko et al., 2022).

As a regional bloc primarily reliant on energy imports, the EU has been forced to promptly react to the geopolitical conflict occurring in its immediate neighbourhood. The EU's response, both institutionally and at the member state level, has resulted in considerable changes in energy policy. Understanding these policy shifts and their repercussions is critical for understanding the emerging dynamics of EU energy security (*Impact of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine on the Markets*, 2023).

By incorporating the retrograde analysis framework, historical institutionalism, and content analysis as research approaches and methods, this thesis will provide a complete and unique understanding of the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on energy policy within the EU.

In the beginning of the thesis, I identify the energy policy and public policy, particularly in the context of energy security. The vulnerability of the dynamic system during the ongoing war in Ukraine will be unravelled, with a focus on the critical juncture of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The negative implications of the war on society will be discussed, as well as the response of the EU. The last part of the theoretical framework presents the literature review will examine the changes in energy policy in response to the Russian war in Ukraine.

By adopting a historical institutionalism and retrograde approach, the research will delve into the historical context leading up to the conflict and tracing the evolution of energy policy in the EU. Through the application of historical institutionalism, this thesis will highlight how historical legacies and institutional structures shape energy policy in the EU. It will explore the interplay between historical institutionalism and the energy sector, shedding light on the institutional factors that influence policy responses to external shocks and crises. This approach will provide valuable insights into the vulnerabilities exposed by the ongoing conflict and help identify the drivers behind the policy changes.

The analysis will focus on the EU energy framework, the decision-making processes within the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council, and most importantly the thesis will provide in-depth analysis of key topics and issues discussed in various council meetings. By analysing a range of council meetings from June 2023 to April 2021, the thesis provides a

detailed examination of the meetings and content changes within the meetings and output documents prior and after to the Russia-Ukraine war which began in February 2022. Hence, this research aims to identify patterns, trends, and significant policy developments of energy policy at the EU level.

Additionally, the closing section about the discussion of the results, provides perspectives and insights of the Slovak, Austrian and Czech energy experts based on the interviews conducted by the author.

The findings of this research and perspectives of energy experts will contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on energy policy in the EU. This study will give vital insights into the challenges and prospects for energy security in the midst of geopolitical tensions by evaluating policy changes and dynamics inside the EU. Ultimately, the purpose is to influence policy discussions and decision-making processes, allowing the European Union to build more strong and resilient energy policies.

Analysing the Impact of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on Energy Policy in the European Union: A Retrograde Analysis and Historical Institutionalism Perspective

The main goal of the thesis is to present the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the policy results of energy ministers of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council of the European Council and Council of the European Union, and possible changes to this policy, utilizing the retrograde analysis framework and historical institutionalism. This thesis aims to explore the period from June 2023 to April 2021.

In order to be able to present in-depth analysis I will conduct a content analysis of relevant documents, policy papers, press releases from energy ministers to assess the energy policy before and after the outbreak of the conflict.

The aim is to identify and analyse potential changes in energy policy and goals within the EU in response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and answer the main research question: What impact does the Russia-Ukraine conflict have on the energy policy and possible changes to this policy in the European Union? Besides the main research question, this thesis aims to answer relevant sub-questions: How has the energy policy of the European Union developed within these two years? (Utilizing retrograde analysis), What factors influence the energy policy of the European Union? (Applying historical institutionalism).

The proposed hypothesis of this thesis suggests that the Russia-Ukraine war caused changes in the energy policies at the level of the European Union. This thesis will give a thorough and deep assessment of the influence of the Russia-Ukraine crisis on European Union energy policy by using the retrograde analysis framework, historical institutionalism, and content analysis as research methods.

Lastly, I will be conducting interviews with energy experts from Austria, Slovakia, and Czechia. The objective is to showcase their insights regarding the crucial matters and subjects deliberated and endorsed by the Energy Council of the EU.

I chose the topic of energy policy of the EU in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war as the topic for a diploma thesis for the reason of the general worldwide importance, importance in the terms of public policy, the significance of the climate crisis mitigation and the relevance of energy policy Framework of the EU.

Firstly, the general worldwide importance includes that fact that the energy policy is a major problem for the EU as it strives to make the switch to low-carbon energy economy whereas guaranteeing energy security and affordability for its inhabitants. To attain these aims, the EU has enacted a variety of policy initiatives, giving it a rich and intriguing topic for study. Considerable amount of the EU's natural gas supplies come from Russia and transit via Ukraine, hence the war between Russia and Ukraine has had a significant impact on energy security in the EU. This thesis will help in understanding diversification attempts by the EU its energy resources (Di Lucia & Nilsson, 2007). Secondly, energy policy is a perfect example of a public policy problem since it involves government decisions and actions that affect the whole population (Flammer, 2020). This interplay between public policy and energy policy is further developed in next chapter.

Followingly, the topic is highly relevant for its importance of mitigation the climate crisis. The EU has set high goals for decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to a low-carbon energy system. The study of EU energy policy will provide insights into the strategies and procedures being used to achieve these goals, as well as the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on these efforts (Rinfret & Pautz, 2014). Lastly, the relevance of the EU's Framework is substantial to mention and will be discussed as it is part of EU Council and the institution of the energy ministers. The framework entails the integration and coordination of energy policy throughout numerous nations, therefore the EU offers a unique context for researching energy policy (Schleich, 2019).

Finally, selecting energy policy in the European Union in the context of Russia-Ukrainian war as a diploma thesis topic provides a fascinating, thought-provoking field of study that is strongly connected to public policy issues. The thesis will discover how EU is dealing with energy security and challenges and it highlights vulnerability within their energy supplies as well as the necessity of diversification away from Russia for greater independence and diversification in energy supply sources.

The interplay of Energy Policy and Public Policy Energy Security

Public policy and energy policy are interconnected fields which profoundly influence societies (Greenberg, 2009). This chapter will explore the interdependence of energy policy and public policy based of the terms classification.

In order to understand and define terms such as public policy and energy policy in this context, scientists have adopted a method of classifying terms according to their "genus" or "species" (Ochrana, 2015). When classifying terms in the context of this diploma thesis on the impact of the Russian war in Ukraine on the energy policy of the European Union, I applied this method. The Genus and Species Method will be used to define the relationship between public policy and energy policy and can be visualised (Figure 1).

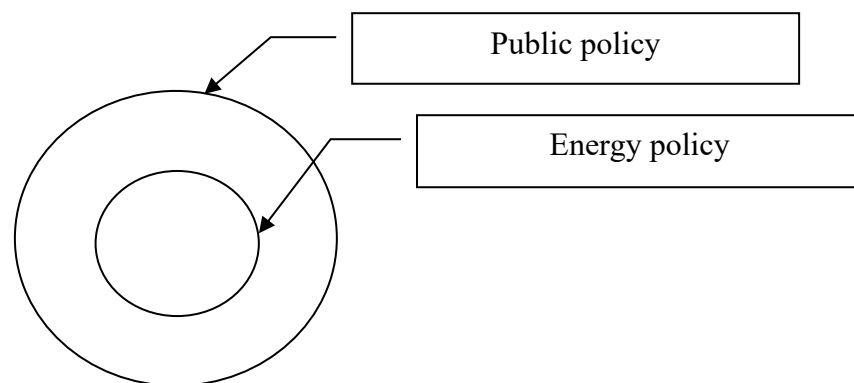


Figure 1

According to, Ochrana, F. (2015). *Methodology of Social Sciences*. Charles University in Prague, Karolinum Press. 37-38.

I classify term as a genus by considering "public policy". Public policy is a broad term that includes a variety of policies developed by government and regulatory agencies to address social issues and meet the needs of citizens. It serves as a framework for making decisions and taking actions to improve the wellbeing and welfare of citizens (John, 2013).

Energy policy is defined as "species" because it is within the category of public policies. At the same time, the energy policy is an aspect of public policies that deals with energy resources regulation and management. Its unique definition highlights its relationship to the public policy as a field focused on energy challenges and opportunities (Allcott & Mullainathan, 2010;

Greenberg, 2009; Matlárý, 1997b). Moreover, energy policy is the strategy and measure implemented by government and regulatory agencies to respond to energy-related issues to achieve specific goals. These decisions include production and distribution of energy, environmental sustainability, and consumption (Matlárý, 1997). Public policy is a broader term that includes policies to meet societal needs and issues in areas such as healthcare, education, transportation, as well as energy (John, 2013).

In addition, Ochrana in his book described the genus and species approach on the example of tax (Ochrana, 2015). When defining indirect taxes, the closest generic term is “tax.” While defining the species term of “indirect taxes,” the corresponding definition may in turn take the following form: “indirect taxes are a species of taxes which impacts a consumer indirectly” (Ochrana, 2015). In this thesis, energy policy are the species of public policy that impacts an end user obliquely. This classification highlights the relationship between energy policy and public policy, emphasizing that energy policy is a subset of public policy that focuses on energy-related issues. In other words, energy policy is a part of the public policy, and it allows us to see how decisions and actions are closely linked with societal goals and economic and environmental concerns. Furthermore, energy policy is not an independent entity, but rather contributes to the governments' overall goals for managing energy resources, ensuring affordability, sustainability, and security (Wüstenhagen & Bilharz, 2006).

Public policy and energy policy have a complex and multifaceted relationship. Energy policy decisions can have a wide-ranging impact on the public, since they impact availability, affordability, impact on the environment, and overall impact (John, 2013; Michoud & Hafner, 2021). Public policies also play an important influence in defining the climate in which energy policies are formulated and executed. Economic growth, environmental protection, and social fairness policies, as well as technology innovation, all have a substantial impact on its direction and efficacy (Allcott & Mullainathan, 2010; Greenberg, 2009). They touch on multiple policy areas and include multiple stakeholders, such as government agencies and industry players, environmental groups, academic institutions, and the general population. Policymakers are constantly challenged to find ways to balance different interests and perspectives, while implementing policies that promote energy security, economic development, environmental sustainability, and social well-being (Manne et al., 1979; Matlárý, 1997).

Moving forward, security is the state of a system characterized by the absence (or minimization) of a real threat threatening the functioning of the system. Therefore, energy security implies to the state of implementation of energy policy (Cherp & Jewell, 2014; Esfahani et al., 2021). For this reason, the same approach of defining the genus and species is applied, when I define the energy security and security domains. For a better understanding of the interplay between security and energy security, I again provide a visual Figure 2.

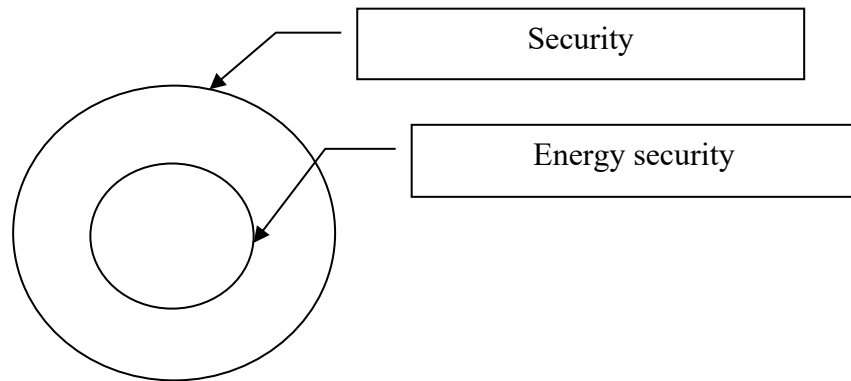


Figure 2

According to Ochrana, F. (2015). *Methodology of Social Sciences*. Charles University in Prague, Karolinum Press. 37-38.

In this thesis, "security" is classified as a genus term and "energy security" is its species term. This definition defines energy security as a type of security that ensures the availability, reliability and resilience of energy infrastructure and resources (Gökgöz & Güvercin, 2018) to meet European Union requirements despite any disruptions caused by Russian aggression towards Ukraine (Berger et al., 2022).

Furthermore, energy security is a critical area of public policy that deals with the availability and stability of energy supplies (Rinfret & Pautz, 2014c). Governments all across the world have implemented a variety of policies to ensure a steady and low-cost supply of energy. These policies include investments in renewable energy sources, the implementation of energy efficiency requirements, and the promotion of energy conservation activities (Salamon & Siegfried, 1977).

Energy policy, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), is to secure a dependable, cheap, and sustainable supply of energy to fulfil the requirements of an expanding population. It covers a wide variety of topics, including energy security, environmental protection, market

structure and regulation, and the adoption of innovative and renewable technologies (International Energy Agency, 2022).

As a result, energy security is a crucial concern for governments worldwide (Rinfret & Pautz, 2014). It has an impact on the economy, national security, and environmental sustainability. Having a consistent and inexpensive source of energy is critical for a country's economic growth and development (Rinfret & Pautz, 2014). Moreover, energy security is crucial for national security since it may lessen a country's reliance on foreign energy supplies while also ensuring that it has the resources to satisfy its own energy demands (Di Lucia & Nilsson, 2007). In other words, the energy industry is critical to the formation of public policy. It is responsible for supplying the energy required to keep the economy functioning and is also an important role in environmental sustainability. Because it works closely with the government to guarantee that energy is available and cheap to everybody, the energy industry may be viewed as a public policy. Government initiatives, such as tax breaks and subsidies, can assist the energy industry become more efficient, resulting in cost savings for consumers (Hernández & Bird, 2010).

Further, the energy industry may collaborate with the government to develop sustainable energy sources such as solar and wind, which can help to minimize pollution and reliance on fossil fuels (Rinfret & Pautz, 2014a). Lastly, the energy industry may contribute to employment creation. Investing in innovative technologies, such as renewable energies can help to create employment in the energy sector. This has the potential to eliminate unemployment and open up new economic possibilities (Stavins, 2020).

Energy policy is frequently debated in academic literature as a branch of environmental policy, as energy consumption and production are important drivers of emissions of greenhouse gases and other environmental concern. Scholars have also investigated the political and economic aspects that impact energy policy decisions, such as the influence of major energy interests, public opinion, and the interaction of international and national policies (Salamon & Siegfried, 1977). To summarize, energy policy is significant field of public policy (Rinfret & Pautz, 2014c). Although, energy policy is also very important issue for the EU and has significant impacts on the economic, political, and environmental well-being of the European citizens (Héritier, 2002).

Unravelling the Dynamic system: Understanding the vulnerability amidst the ongoing war in Ukraine

Before delving into the discussion of the critical juncture – the Russian full-scale invasion, it is pertinent to address the concept and current state of a dynamic system and its susceptibility to fluctuations resulting from destabilizing or shock events, one such event is the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Studying society as a dynamic system provides new methodological paths that go beyond the standard Cartesian rationality and epistemology employed in social sciences. Although dynamic systems were originally coined for use in natural science research, their application has spread into economics, sociology, geopolitics, et cetera (Ibáñez, 1999; Ivanička, 1993; Mira, 1996; Zhang, 1990, Prigogine & Stengers, 2001).

Society, with all its subsystems, was often seen as an equilibrium system revolving around an ideal state of balance based on Newtonian science (Ochrana, 2015). However, the society presents itself as an aggregate dynamic system with both non-dynamic and dynamic aspects within its various subsystems. The fact that the world and society are evolving continually serves as the beginning point (Ochrana, 2022). Energy policy, one of its subsystems, is likewise evolving.

Recognizing society as a dynamic system is the cornerstone of studying it as such, presuming system theory can assist in understanding most social phenomena and objects (Ochrana, 2015; Prigogine & Stengers, 2001).

In order to clarify the relationship between the society and the Russian invasion in Ukraine, this thesis uses the approach of the dynamic system. It claims that the society is seen as an integrated whole made up of many interrelationships and components which work together seamlessly (Prigogine & Stengers, 2001). Although, as a result of the Russian invasion, the dynamic system has been shaken and many measures (discussed below) had been implemented in order to prevent the junction of the system. Therefore, the dynamic social systems, which comprise most forms of society, tend to exhibit non-equilibrium behaviours over time and exhibit signs of instability (Ochrana, 2015; W.-B. Zhang, 1990). Examples include disintegration of social structures, economic cycles and unpredictable financial markets which show dynamic nature inherent to many social systems (W.-B. Zhang, 1990).

In this case the considered external power that shaken the whole dynamic system and created an instability is the Russian launch of the full-scale invasion in Ukraine.

Regarding to that, security is a vital component of dynamic system. It ensures its smooth operation by reducing or eliminating real threats. The effectiveness of an organisation's or system's energy policy is what determines the degree of energy safety (Esfahani et al., 2021). External influences can seriously threaten our sense of security and cause the system to shake (Borell, 2022). One such influence that has long-term effects on the security is the Russian-Ukraine War. The conflict has had a significant influence on the energy system and its operation. Supply interruptions, geopolitical conflicts, and economic instability have resulted. (Ratten, 2023; Szulecki & Overland, 2023). These factors highlight the vulnerability of energy to external shocks. Other external shocks that also influenced and shaken the dynamic system are described in the next chapter.

Critical juncture

Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine

After months of preparation and cautious signals Vladimir Putin, on 24th of February 2022 Ukraine became under a full-scale attack from Russia (Beaumont & Jones, 2022). It is a conflict that continues between Russia and Ukraine since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 (Van de Graaf & Colgan, 2017). Many experts immediately after the attack started to claim that this is the largest conflict since the World War 2 (Bilefsky et al., 2022), and they might be right. The conflict transformed to long ongoing war that mobilized the whole international community (McKee et al., 2022). The US together with the EU responded by implementing sanctions on all different kind of sectors in Russia from merchandises, exports of goods and energy to sanctioning public officials or billionaires and also by sending weapons and equipment (European Council, 2023).

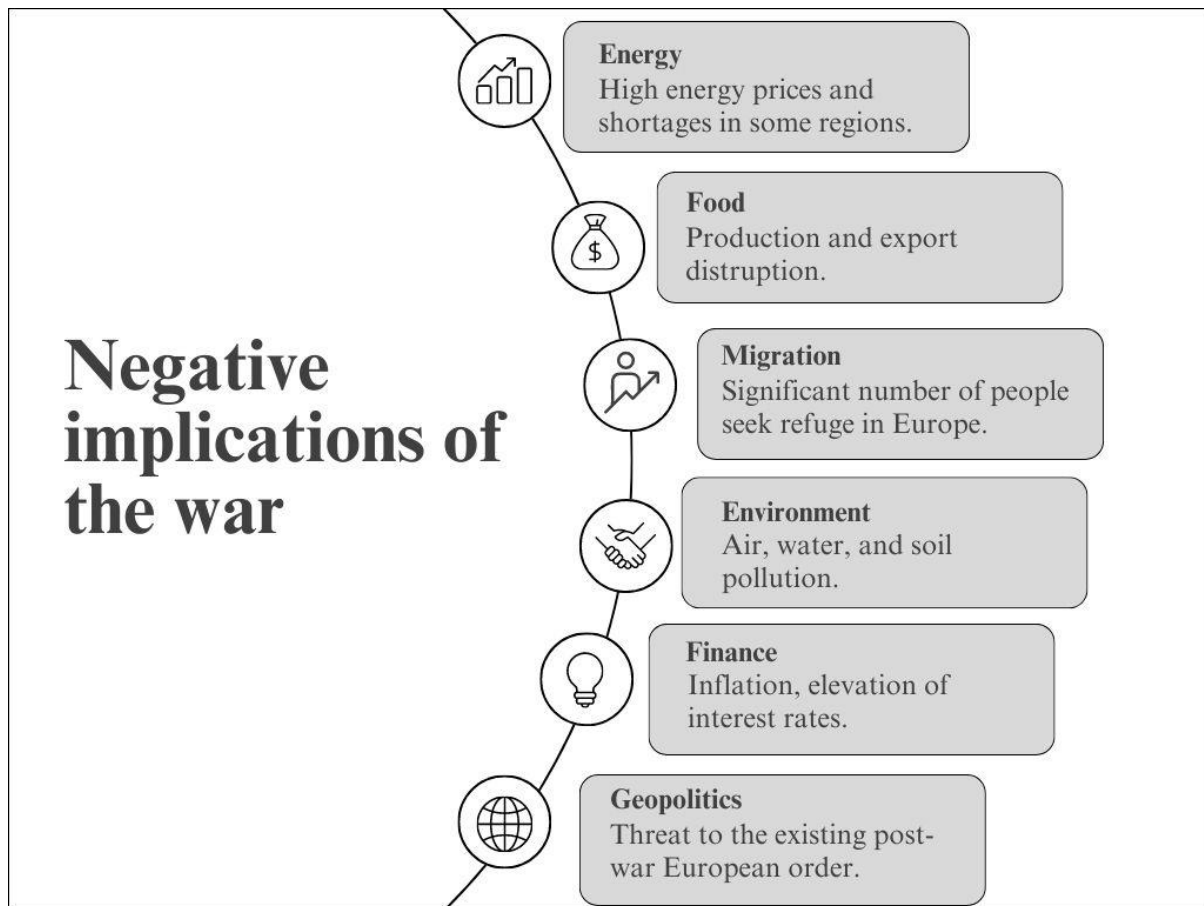
The war has caused mobilization of international community that keeps supporting Ukraine and fight Russia (*Russian Forces Launch Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine*, 2022). I consider this event as a critical juncture in dynamic system that has caused many negative implications.

The war has already claimed thousands of lives already and played an integral part in Ukraine's ongoing political unrest and disruption of international order (Bilefsky et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the world community has strongly denounced Russia and Ukraine's ongoing conflict and there have been calls for peaceful resolution (Gaur, 2022). Numerous rounds of diplomatic discussions involving both countries have failed to resolve it (Chessa, 2022).

Moving forward, the subsequent description negative impacts of the war presents both external and internal shock affects that significantly influenced the stability of the dynamic system.

War as a dynamic destabilizing factor of society



Source: Author

Negative implications of the war

The war in Ukraine has a significant impact on various aspects of politics, economy, and society. Sustained inflation, elevated energy costs, limited growth in household income, migration, environmental challenges and more stringent financial conditions are all anticipated to hinder economic growth. I briefly discuss the negative implication of the conflict, in order to outline all the factors that pressured the EU to change its energy policy.

Energy

Before the war, Russia supplied a significant portion of the EU's natural gas, coal, and oil. Russia is the world's largest natural gas exporter (International Environmental Agency, 2022). Before the Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, Europe purchased 150-180 billion cubic metres of Russian gas, which is approximately 40% of its total gas supply.

According to economic think-tank Bruegel, EU members utilized 412 billion cubic meters of gas in 2021, which will be cut by 11% in 2022 (McWilliams & Zachmann, 2023).

In accordance with the IEA, Russia is the world's biggest supplier of crude and processed oil products after only Saudi Arabia. European nations in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) purchased 34% of their oil from Russia in November 2021 and Russia sent 7.8 million barrels per day during that month (International Environmental Agency, n.d.).

The war on energy has had far-reaching negative implications on the energy sector. It has resulted in a dearth of investment in new energy projects, resulting in stagnant or falling energy output levels. This has directed to higher energy prices and shortages in some regions. Moreover, Ukraine is an essential travel route for Russian natural gas exports to Europe (Statista, 2022). The war has also caused delays in the development of new, more efficient energy sources, such as renewable energy sources, which could potentially provide a more sustainable and cost-effective long-term solution (European Council, Council of the European Union, 2023). Furthermore, the conflict has hampered energy sector investment as well as the construction of new energy infrastructure. The battle has contributed to a drop in energy supply dependability, resulting in a rise in energy instability causing many other secondary issues affecting millions of people (Sovacool & Brown, 2010).

The EU is committed to decrease the reliance of gas from Russia. Until mid-2021, Russia held a market share of around 50%. However, its share has since declined rapidly and other suppliers' shares have increased, especially in 2022. Russia's proportion in EU gas imports was 12.9% in November 2022, accounting for less than a quarter of overall imports. Furthermore, the numbers suggest that Russia accounted for less than 25% of the EU's gas imports from January to November 2022. The remaining import was divided among other countries, with Norway supplying 25%, Algeria 11.6%, and LNG imports from the US, Qatar, and Nigeria making up 25.7% (European Council, Council of the European Union, 2023).

This thesis on the shift in energy policy of the EU as a response to the Russian invasion in Ukraine is relevant and timely, and it also allows to contribute to the expanding body of information on energy policy and the possible EU's role in diversifying energy providers.

Food

The war in Ukraine is having a global effect due to the region's significant role in food and energy production (European Council, Council of the European Union, 2023). This has led to difficulties in food production and export, resulting in reduced availability and higher prices. The cost of food and energy imports is already at an all-time high and is expected to continue to rise, causing widespread effects, particularly for the poorer and more vulnerable populations. The shortage of agricultural inputs has made it difficult for food producers. The livelihoods of many food producers, especially small farmers, are also being affected as they struggle to access the necessary resources for their operations, exacerbating the market disruptions that may last through 2023 (OECD, 2022).

Migration

The war has also caused a significant number of people, mostly women and children, to flee and seek refuge in Europe. As of mid-September 2022, approximately 5 million Ukrainian refugees have been documented in the EU and other OECD countries (OECD, 2022).

Most of the refugees seek safety in Poland, it means that nearly 3.5 million individuals arriving between February 24th and mid-May 2022, Poland has taken on the major role in hosting Ukrainian migrants. It is because of the two nations' closeness, as well as the long history of labour mobility (Duszczuk & Kaczmarczyk, 2022). The Secretary-General of the OECD, Mathias Cormann, stated that the countries in the OECD responded promptly and effectively to the Ukrainian refugee crisis, providing unparalleled aid to the refugees seeking protection (OECD, 2022).

Environment

The environmental impacts of war can be significant and far-reaching. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has resulted in a number of environmental hazards, including air, water, and soil pollution due to strikes on chemical plants, energy facilities, pipelines, and other industrial sites. This has led to potential health risks such as the risk of cancer and respiratory illnesses for those exposed. Water supply infrastructure destruction has left more than 1.4 million people without clean drinking water. The military operations have also resulted in a significant increase in waste, including toxic materials such as shell fragments and medical waste, which will require proper handling and disposal. The war has also had a negative impact on nature and ecosystems, with around 30% of all areas of Ukraine being disturbed. The use of weaponry has led to the release of hazardous substances into the soil, which can cause direct public health

risks and potential contamination of surface and groundwater. The abandoned or damaged military vehicles also pose a risk to the environment and civilians due to the toxic materials they contain (OECD, 2022).

Finance

The rate of inflation in the OECD region is expected to stay elevated, reaching above 9% in 2023. As monetary policy becomes stricter and factors such as energy prices and transportation costs return to normal, the pressure on inflation will ease, resulting in a decrease to 6.6% in 2023 and further to 5.1% in 2024 (OECD, 2022). However, it is anticipated that restrictive monetary policy, elevated real interest rates, constant high energy costs, insufficient growth in household income, and decreasing confidence will reduce economic growth (OECD, 2022b).

Geopolitics

At the latest the war poses a significant threat to the existing post-war European order established by multilateral organizations, meaning the EU and NATO, which is supported by the US. The future outcome of this situation is uncertain, with the potential for either the collapse of these structures or their rejuvenation. It is also unknown how China will react, as it has taken steps to prepare for geopolitical unrest by building up a reserve of oil and commodities, and maintaining friendly ties with Russia (Pantuliano, 2022) .

Response of the European Union

„The EU strongly condemns Russia’s unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Ukraine’s Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions. It also condemns Belarus' involvement in Russia’s military aggression“ (European Council, 2023).

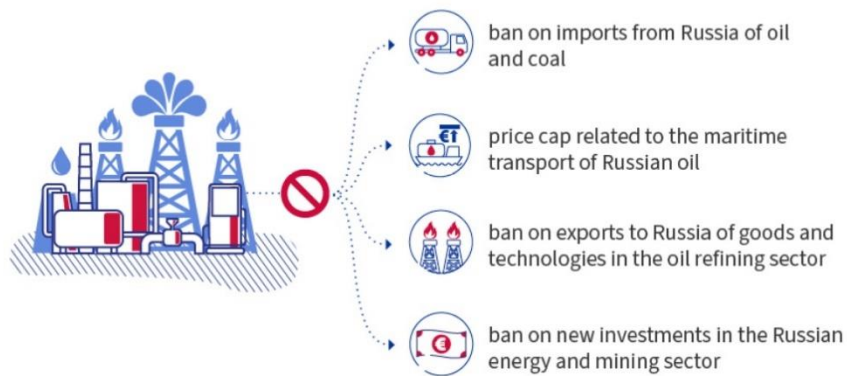
The EU has responded in accordance with its ideals, norms and principles. The EU has supplied humanitarian and also weaponry help to people in need while also attempting to address the underlying causes of the problem. The EU remains committed to finding a comprehensive solution to the crisis that meets the needs and protects the rights of all those affected.

The EU to the war by calling for an urgent ceasefire and the resolution of the conflict through diplomatic methods. In reaction to the Russian-Ukraine war, the EU has adopted a strong position, supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty while sharply denouncing Russia's behaviour. The EU has adopted first, second, third and the ninth, the most recent, sanction package from 16th of December 2022 (European Council, 2023). Individual and economic sanctions have been placed on Russia by the EU, involving limitations on some banking operations, franchises, weapons hardware, and energy supplies. The sanctions are intended to limit Russia's influence on the economy in Ukraine while also signalling the EU's commitment to the region's security and stability. The EU has also supplied Ukraine with very much political, humanitarian, financial and armed assistance (European Council, 2023).

As mentioned, the war has resulted in constraints on Russia’s energy supplies to the EU. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has had a significant influence on EU energy security, with restrictions placed on Russia’s energy supplies to Europe. The EU is now seeking to alternate energy producers such as Norway, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan to fill the hole left by Russia’s energy supply disruption.

In sum, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has resulted in a dramatic change in the EU’s energy security and the EU has reacted by diversifying its energy supplies and reducing its reliance on Russia (European Council, 2023). Table 1 displays a visual European Union’s response to the conflict in Ukraine.

→ Energy



Picture 1, European Council, Council of the European Union, 2023

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/eu-sanctions-russia-ukraine-invasion/>

The key goals of the EU's response to the energy crisis are to offer inexpensive and efficient energy to EU residents, improve energy security and disaster preparedness, and reinforce EU states' energy independence and sovereignty. To achieve these objectives, EU states are working together to reduce extraordinarily high gas prices, increase solidarity and supply sharing, cut energy costs for individuals and businesses, ensure gas supply, and accelerate the renewable transition (European Council, Council of the European Union, 2023).

Examining the Energy Policy Changes in Response to the Russian War in Ukraine: A Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the changes in energy policy that resulted from Russia EU's invasion into Ukraine. These studies specifically examined their impact on energy policy, specifically, the impact of the Russian invasion on Europe EU's energy policy, opportunities for renewable energy development and carbon emission reduction, as well as their possible effects on EU-integrated energy markets or an increased state involvement in energy matters and the uncertainty caused by war in relation to natural gas have been studied.

Early literature suggests that the war in Ukraine led to a radical change in European energy policy in terms of decreasing dependence on fossil fuels and hastening the shift to renewable sources. This issue has already been examined and studied by many scholars and researchers. This war, according to evidence, has brought into focus the need for more coordination and mobilization of resources in order to address its crisis. The war and its uncertainty about natural gas supplies could be an opportunity to move toward a decarbonized system. However, previous literature suggests that it is important to take into consideration possible challenges, lack coordination, and difficult assessments (Kuzemko et al., 2022).

According to 2006 forecasts, worldwide energy consumption is anticipated to grow by 80% between 2000 and 2030. Moreover, the main energy consumers will be developing countries, not industrialised ones (Dorian et al., 2006). Natural gas will be one of the fastest growing fuels due to its environmental friendliness and availability. Its transportation is expected as one of its main drivers. And renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass production could begin producing electricity (Dorian et al., 2006). The projection is still considered to be valid in terms of its timeliness, but the invasion by Russia into Ukraine hastened the transition.

Scholars claim that the war in Ukraine could be crucial for setting European energy policies due to Europe's reliance on Russian gas and oil. Steffen and Patt claim that the conflict in Ukraine offers an opportunity for Europe to implement new energy and environmental strategies, including an acceleration of renewable energy deployment and a reduction in fossil fuel consumption (Steffen & Patt, 2022).

Osička and Černoch (2022) claim that Russia's invasion in Ukraine has made natural gas as unreliable and expensive as renewable energy sources like wind power (Osička & Černoch,

2022). The energy policy will be transformed, with a greater emphasis on transitioning away quickly from fossil fuels and decreasing dependence. This could lead to the suspension of the current EU integrated market (Žuk & Žuk, 2022). The EU can benefit by taking advantage of the current crisis. However, if left unchecked it could lead to political chaos and legitimate concerns (Osička & Černoch, 2022).

Moreover, Kuzemko et al. (2022) assert that a review of the EU's energy policy adjustments following Russia's invasion of Ukraine shows both the significant potential for development in renewable energy sources across Europe as well as possible challenges in the phase-out of fossil fuels. They contend that these changes could have a negative impact on sustainable transitions in other nations due to increased and growing coal consumption both within and outside the EU (Aljazeera, 2022), major consequences for energy equity both in Europe and globally as a result of enormous increases of electricity bills, and an increase of the role of the state in the energy sector. They further argue that in order to achieve global and economic sustainability changes, greater levels of government intervention are necessary (Kuzemko, 2013).

Another research suggests that as a result of the energy crisis caused by the Russian invasion, Central European nations could transition towards a carbon-free economy and achieve both economic and strategic sustainability by finding cleaner sources of energy, lowering consumption rates, and switching over to renewables (Rabbi et al., 2022). On the contrary, transition might not be that even. A noticeable decrease in Russian supplies have already caused significant price increases across Europe due to obstacles that prevent LNG from crossing from West to East. According to modelling scenarios, even if Russian sales in Europe drop by nearly half, Gazprom's profits won't decrease substantially; their profits might just dip 14% without further actions by EU regulators (Rabbi et al., 2022).

As a result, there is worry that Europe may start paying nearly as much for half as much gas from Russia (Selei et al., 2022).

Followingly, Žuk and Žuk noted the war has presented both a challenge and an opportunity for the EU in terms of transitioning towards more secure and sustainable energy system; accordingly, they proposed that individuals countries and the EU increase involvement in energy affairs and coordinate efforts so as to take full advantage of this crisis (Žuk & Žuk, 2022).

Prior to the war, several researchers conducted studies analysing EU's decreased dependency on Russian fossil fuel supplies. Mitrova and Boersma investigated how Gazprom would respond to US LNG entering its European market under various scenarios; their results suggested that even with increased competition in place, Russia still managed to protect its presence (Mitrova & Boersma, 2018). Other authors used game theory analysis of interactions among US LNG sales, sanctions against Russian prices and European diversification strategies as well.

Lastly, Richman & Ayyilmaz (2019) concluded that while US gas and global markets reduce Gazprom's pricing power, Russia still retains the ability to take advantage of its role as primary energy supplier for Europe (Richman & Ayilmaz, 2019). They concluded that without any major changes to policy Russia will remain an influential player in EU gas sector (Mitrova et al., 2016).

This section highlights the knowledge and research on the modifications to energy policy brought about by the Russia-Ukraine war. Researchers have looked at a number of issues, including how the war will affect Europe's energy policy, how renewable energy can be developed, how carbon emissions can be reduced, how EU-integrated energy markets will be affected, how states will become more involved in energy issues, and how the war will affect natural gas prices. However, there is still a research gap that needs to be filled despite the significant study done on how the war between Russia and Ukraine has affected energy policy inside the European Union.

Hence, this thesis aims to present comprehensive analysis and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on the policy results of energy ministers in the institution of Transport, Telecommunications, and Energy Council focusing on the Energy Council's meetings. It utilizes the retrograde analysis framework and historical institutionalism to provide a comprehensive understanding of the changes in energy policy and goals within the European Union. The research gap is lacking the in-depth analysis which this thesis will provide by conducting a content analysis of relevant documents, policy papers and press releases to assess the energy policy before and after the outbreak of the conflict. The thesis intends to offer a nuanced view of the conflict's influence on energy policy by using the retrograde analysis framework, historical institutionalism, and content analysis as research and technique methods. The validity and dependability of the study findings are strengthened by this multi-method approach. The thesis topic was ultimately selected because of its global significance, relevance

to public policy, importance in tackling the climate issue, and relevance to the EU's framework for energy policy.

Methodology

This study aims to examine the energy policies of the European Union (EU), and any changes that may have been triggered by conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Data will be taken for this purpose from EU websites, particularly the European Council and Council of the EU and the Energy Ministers institution, within the Transport Telecommunications and Energy Council in order to collect exclusive qualitative data. I will analyse the meeting solely from the Energy Council excluding the meeting and session of Transport and Telecommunication Council. I will apply historical institutionalism and retrograde approach in my analysis of the agenda of energy ministers.

I will examine energy policies, publications and statements developed by energy ministers from June 2023 to April 2021 and provide a detailed examination and present the changes of their meetings and output documents after the Russia-Ukraine war began in February 2022. I will analyse the policy results, policy papers, written documents, press releases and statements of energy ministers that were published within this time framework. In other words, I will examine historical trends and the development of energy policies over time.

This step will include examination how energy policies have evolved over time and identifying the crucial changes of energy policy of the EU and exploring the key influences that have influenced their outcomes. Additionally, first step of the analysis will be short presentation of the current EU energy policy framework.

By applying the historical institutionalism, I will analyse the institution of energy ministers and identify the key players within institutions that have played a significant role in influencing energy policies throughout the past years. I will examine the impact of this war on dynamics of energy ministers and present their goals, plans, and methods for making decisions.

Followingly, I will apply retrograde approach to examine the evolution of energy policies developed by energy ministers. Retrograde approach is a way to work backwards to determine what actions led to a certain state. The historical-evolutionary and retrograde approach is proposed as a means to uncover the significance of events in historical development and understand their developmental logic (Ochrana, 2022). As I go further back in time, I will consider the prior decisions and acts that contributed to the present, most importantly the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

I will begin by conducting an in-depth analysis of the energy ministers' meetings and the documents published on the website of the TTE Council, specifically focusing on the most recent gathering held at the end of June 2023. By examining the outcomes of these documents, I can gain valuable insights into the current state of affairs in the energy sector and identify any emerging trends or challenges. Followingly, I will analyse all the meetings throughout the year 2023 till the 24th of February 2022 when the Russian invasion has started, and which is considered to be the breaking point for the post-war period. The analysis of this period will present substantial changes and dynamic within the Energy Council and its ministers because the invasion significantly disrupted energy supply chains, causing concerns about global energy security and stability. At this critical juncture, energy ministers and policymakers grappled with the immediate ramifications of the invasion, which included disruptions to natural gas supplies and increased tensions among key energy-producing nations. As I backtrack in this analysis, it is crucial to recognize that the Energy Council has been engaged in ongoing efforts to address long-standing energy challenges. For this reason, I will provide analysis of the meetings prior to the February 2022 in order to be able to present the evolution of the energy policies and subsequent changes that might have happened before the Russian invasion.

In summary, by starting with the analysis of the most recent energy ministers' meeting in June 2023 and gradually delving into the February 2022 and till the April 2021 this thesis will present a comprehensive understanding of the energy sector's current state, challenges, and ongoing efforts. This chronological approach allows us to observe the progression of energy discussions, from the latest developments to the earlier stages, and provides valuable insights into the sector's response to global challenges.

As a method of research, content analysis allows me to interpret data from written and spoken text. In this thesis, content analysis will require studying documents from Energy Council's meetings from both time periods (pre-war and post-war) in order to detect changes over time in energy policies. According to the retrograde approach and historical evolutionarism theory, the impact of previous evolution on social phenomena shapes the concept of upcoming events. Therefore, I examine the era preceding the Russian invasion and the era subsequent to the invasion.

Content analysis of EU energy ministers makes use of historical institutionalism and retrograde analysis in analysing their policies' evolution over time, including how institutional arrangements such as EU's energy policies have changed due to Russia-Ukrainian conflicts. These shifts in policies provide valuable information on the effects of war on Europe's experiences with it. In the end of analysis, I will compile a summary table highlighting the key topics and issues identified through document content analysis. In the discussion section, I will present an overview of the analysis results and share valuable insights obtained from interviews conducted with energy experts from Austria, Slovakia, and Czechia.

Historical Institutionalism

In this section on methodology, I will argue that historical institutionalism is the best suitable method to explore my research question as it allows me to examine the impact over time. Recent advances in political science have given rise to a new approach called historical institutionalism. This approach emphasizes the role of institutional structures and history in influencing political results (Steinmo, 2008). By examining how institutions have evolved over time and impacted political behaviour, historical institutionalism provides a deeper understanding to complex political phenomena.

Historical institutionalism is the study of institutions, such as laws, regulations and policies, that have changed through time, and their impact on social and economic outcomes (Rixen, Viola, & Zürn, 2016). This approach is mainly linked to the works of political scientist Theda Skocpol. Skocpol believed that institutions such as bureaucracies and political parties are formed by historical events. The formation and evolution of institutional structures in societies is a result of historical events (Skocpol, 1995).

Historical institutionalism has also its roots in the work of the German sociologist Max Weber, who argued that institutions had a lasting impact on social behaviour and the development of social systems (Fioretos et al., 2016). Moreover, Keohane took this further by proposing that the key to understanding behaviour is understanding political actors (Fioretos et al., 2016). This theoretical framework was also applied to the EU institutions by scholars such as Mark Johnson, who argued that the institutional structures of the EU had an important influence on the behaviour of actors within the system (Meunier & McNamara, 2007a).

Furthermore, historical institutionalism distinguishes formal from informal institutions. Formal institutions refer to “institutions, contracts, and form of government rules” (Kaufmann et al., 2018) and government structures while informal ones refer to "traditions, customs, moral principles, religious convictions, and all other accepted codes of conduct" (Kaufmann et al., 2018) to ideologies and cultures (Lauth, 2015). These norms and practices are often seen as informal rules of behaviour that have developed over time but are not explicitly written down in official documents (Remuss, 2018).

In my thesis I focus on formal institutions rather than informal ones, since formal ones capture rules and government structures that impact policy outcomes while informal institutions used to concentrate more on ideology and culture. Formal institutions tend to be easier and more visible for analysis than informal ones, which may be difficult to detect and measure (Lauth, 2015). By focusing on formal institutions, I will provide a more tangible and objective analysis of the institutional environment within which energy policies are developed and implemented.

The historical institutionalism has also been used to study a variety of matters, including the evolution of social welfare systems and labour union formation, as well as functioning democracies (Mahoney, 2017). The use of historical analysis to study international relations has been highly successful. It is also examined how international organizations like the United Nations were created, and how historical rivalries between states can be a result of past decisions (Immergut & Anderson, 2008). The research is closely related to public policy as it examines how institutions influence its development and implementation. Historical institutionalism holds that both the decision-making process and outcomes are influenced by institutions (Skocpol, 1995). Moreover, this theory also seeks to comprehend the role institutions play in shaping policy, and how they develop over time – an essential tool both for understanding policy development as well as their place within society (Fioretos et al., 2016).

The application of historical institutionalism in my thesis is particularly relevant when it comes to energy policy where policies and institutions often change as a result various external influence. Historical institutionalism also helps to explain why certain outcomes are achieved and how they influence political processes (Skocpol, 1995). This is especially true in energy policy, where institutions play a key role in determining outcomes and allocating costs and benefits (Becker et al., 2016). Historical institutionalism is a way to focus on the interactions between actors and institutions, including politicians, interest groups and bureaucrats, which are fundamental for understanding energy policy outcomes (Rixen, et al., 2016).

Additionally, historical institutionalism and path dependence theory are closely linked. Historical institutionalism analyses how past decisions and events determine future opportunities. This is relevant to energy policy, as previous decisions may limit future policy options (Fioretos et al., 2016).

Historical Institutionalism in the European Union

It is often used in the study of European Union affairs to explain how institutions have affected economic and political processes (Immergut & Anderson, 2008). Historical institutionalism, by examining its development and analysing the roles played by its energy ministers throughout history, can shed light on its factors of evolution, as well as on any impact that institutional structures may have had on policy or development. Moreover, this theory has been used successfully to explain a variety of issues related the EU's development, including its political system and its policy-making process, as well as member state decision making dynamics (Meunier & McNamara, 2007).

Energy policy innovation has long been a priority for the European Union. Numerous institutions have been developed inside it throughout the course of its lengthy history to monitor this activity. The European Union established the European Commission, Parliament, and Council among other institutional entities to aid in the shift to a low-carbon energy system (Tagliapietra et al., 2019). These organisations have been essential in determining how Europe's energy policies have turned out and have made it easier for new technologies and approaches to be adopted (Bertoldi et al., 2021). The results of energy policy in Europe have also been influenced by informal organisations, such as industrial associations and other interest groups (*Interest Groups in EU Decision-Making*, n.d.).

Study looked at the development of EU energy security policies, specifically gas, using historical institutionalist concepts to understand what institutional factors had facilitated or hindered policy development (The Europeanisation of Energy Policy – What Scenario for Effective Institutionalism?, 2020).

The authors used a historical institutionalist approach in their research to investigate the shift from feed-in tariffs to auctioning as a renewable energy policy instrument, emphasising how institutional change impacts policy results. Another study identified several institutional factors that have had an impact on energy policy outcomes within the European Union, such as the development of regulatory agencies, the credibility of political commitment to transition

policies, power dynamics, incumbency dynamics, and institutional systems of capitalism such as institutional systems of capitalism that support regime stability or instability, policy feedback effects, or gradual institutional change processes (Uzar, 2020). Therefore, historical institutionalism was utilized for providing a more thorough analysis of institutional environments where energy policies are developed and implemented within EU.

Historical Institutionalism and Energy Sector

Historical institutionalism can provide researchers and policymakers with a useful analytical tool for studying the evolution of energy policies, the origin of specific energy sources, and market development within the energy sector (Becker et al., 2016). Looking back through history can shed light on why certain energy sources have proven more successful than others, markets have grown, or specific policies were put into effect; by considering historical context more researchers and policymakers can gain a clearer picture of today's energy landscape and its development (Andrews-Speed, 2016a).

Lockwood et al. (2017) propose that historical institutionalism can help explain why some countries have been more successful than others in transitioning to sustainable energy systems. They suggest that the development of energy institutions and policies over time has created path dependencies which facilitate or impede adoption of new technologies and policies (Lockwood et al., 2017). Rixen et al. (2016) take this view further by suggesting path dependency as one factor that hinders or facilitates transition efforts (Rixen, et al., 2016).

Furthermore, institutions have participated in a critical role in the development of renewable energy technology and are essential to expedite the transition to low-carbon energy systems. According to literature, historical institutionalism provides invaluable insight into energy security and sustainable transition politics; by looking backward at historical development of energy institutions and policies scholars gain a better understanding of any path dependencies or institutional constraints limiting policy outcomes and this helps policymakers design more effective policies or institutions to aid this transition towards sustainability (Lockwood et al., 2017). Newell et al. (2022) explore the politics of sustainable energy transition in the UK by exploring how historical institutional factors have influenced energy policy development and technology adoption (Newell et al., 2022). Another research paper which explores institutional factors which have had an effect on the expansion of sustainable energy technologies in Denmark and Germany (Li & Shao, 2021).

The history of energy policy is another way to understand its effects (Becker et al., 2016). Understanding past policies and their legacy in the present will help researchers make better decisions about current and future policies (Andrews-Speed, 2016). As Lockwood et al. (2017) argue, the historical development of energy institutions and policies creates path dependencies that can either facilitate or hinder the adoption of new technologies and policies (Lockwood et al., 2017). For instance, the shift from feed-in tariffs to auctions in Germany's renewable energy policy can be explained by the historical development of the country's energy institutions and the changing political context (Wüstenhagen & Bilharz, 2006). Similarly, the institutional history of electric utilities in the United States has played a key role in shaping the politics of climate inaction (Stokes, 2020).

Retrograde Approach

Retrograde provides a framework that is effective for understanding and explaining change and its development over time (Ochrana, 2022). The retrograde approach views change as a gradual but incremental process that is driven by the interaction between internal and external factors over time. This method also helps to provide insights into the historical development of specific events or phenomena (Ochrana, 2022). František Ochrana developed this approach using both historical approaches and evolutionary ones - similar to historical institutionalism theory. Researchers examine historical evolution by examining how events, social systems, and institutions have evolved over time, their influences and interactions, and any possible interactions between them. Timeline analysis provides a framework to understand change in time and helps explain the historical context of events and phenomena. Combining an evolutionary and retrograde approach allows us to evaluate EU energy policy as a result war. This allows us to look at the evolution of this trajectory and how it has influenced current conditions (Ochrana, 2022).

Ochrana describes retrograde as a method of retrospective analysis that allows you to trace a trajectory back to its original status (P_0) by going from its current state (S) over time. He describes this approach by looking at the historical events that occurred along this trajectory (Ochrana, 2022). This thesis specifically studies Russia-Ukraine War as one of these changes along this trajectory. This thesis analyses the Russian-Ukraine War as a change along its trajectory.

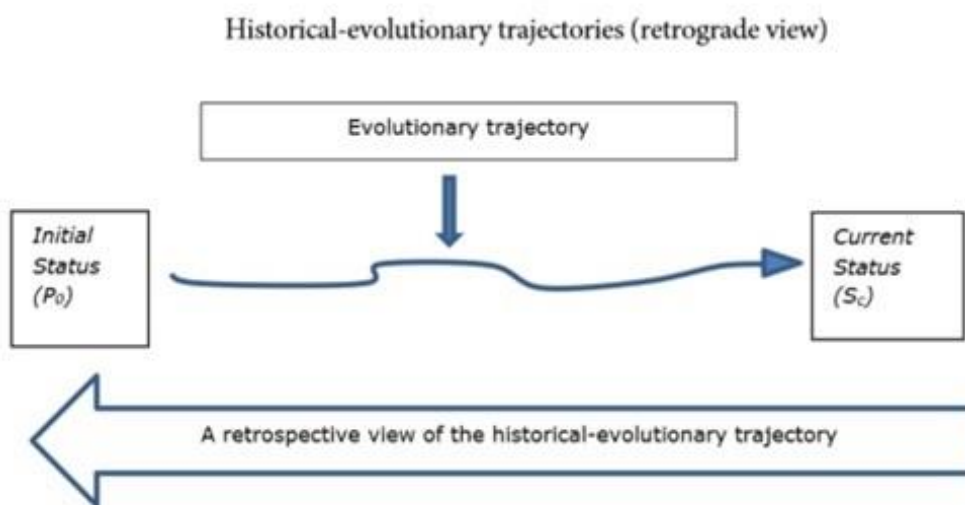


Figure 3

Ochrana, F. (2022). Historical-evolutionary and Retrograde Approach to the Study of Social Phenomena and Public Administration. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy*, 15(2), p.6. <https://doi.org/10.2478/nispa-2022-0011>

Reversing events to review an evolutionary trajectory provides a method for reviewing past evolution. Along the trajectory, events and occurrences such as historical turning points, adaptations, and initial states may be identified. It defines historical nodes as key points along an evolutionary trajectory where branching in different directions may occur, potentially marking significant events that alter its course and changing it permanently. Breaking Point refers to this event which changes course. Furthermore, potential evolutionary pathways also existed at this historical node (Ochrana, 2022).

By analysing the events in reverse order, starting from the current status (SC) and going back to P0, this approach provides a method of reviewing a completed evolutionary trajectory. Along the trajectory, various events and occurrences can be identified, such as historical turning points, adaptations, and the initial state (Ochrana, 2022).

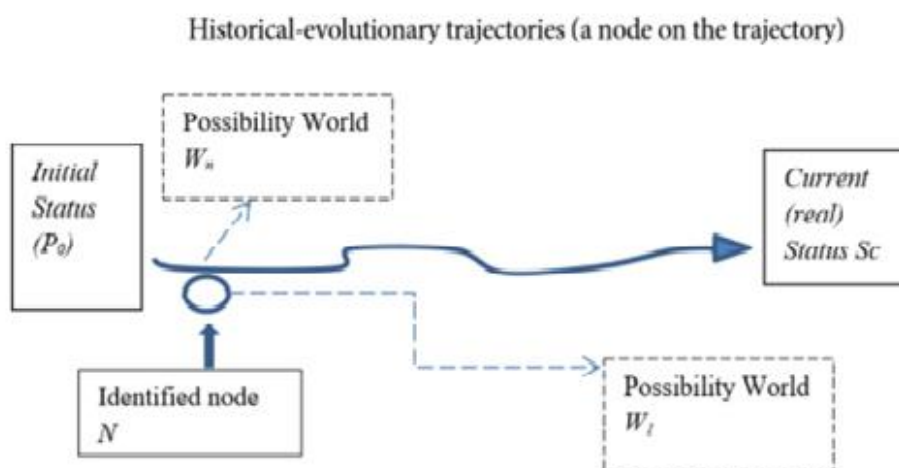


Figure 4

Ochrana, F. (2022). Historical-evolutionary and Retrograde Approach to the Study of Social Phenomena and Public Administration. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy*, 15(2), p.7. <https://doi.org/10.2478/nispa-2022-0011>

Turning points, also referred to as breaking points, are significant events which lead to a shift in the course of events and phenomena's evolution. They appear as nodes along an historical-evolutionary timeline where there has been an abrupt deviation from an established path (Ochrana, 2022) The Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24th February 2022 marked a turning point in European politics, with far-reaching consequences for the EU's energy policy.

Overall, retrograde content analysis is used in this thesis to gain insights into policies and perspectives from the past by looking back through historical records and documents (Ochrana, 2022). When applied to energy ministers of the EU, retrograde analysis would involve looking back through documents related to energy policies and initiatives to gain an understanding of how policies, regulations, directives and priorities have altered as a result of Russia-Ukrainian conflict.

Analysis

EU Energy Framework

The energy framework of the EU has changed throughout time to reflect shifting objectives and difficulties the EU is now facing in terms of energy security, sustainability, and integrating member states' energy markets (European Parliament, 2022).

In order to avert additional wars between France and Germany by integrating their economies, the European Coal and Steel Community was founded in 1951, according to a brief chronology of the EU Framework. The free movement of goods was established by The Treaty of Rome in 1957, but three decades later, the internal energy market was still fragmented. In the 1990s, EU climate- and related energy policies started to emerge, which led to the creation of the European Green Deal (EGD) (European Commission, n.d.-b). In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, which set binding targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Renewable Energy Directive, first established in 2001 and revised in 2009 and 2018, the Renewable Energy Directive establishes legally-binding goals for raising the amount of renewable energy in the EU's energy mix (da Graça Carvalho, 2012). In 2005, due to the ability of businesses to buy and sell emissions permits, a market for emissions reductions has been created. The EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), which created a market for trading emissions and the second aims is to lower greenhouse gas emissions. (Y.-J. Zhang & Wei, 2010). The Energy Efficiency Directive, established in 2012 and updated in 2018, seeks to present a guideline for 2020 and 2030 energy efficiency goals (Rosenow et al., 2016).

The 2020 Climate and Energy Package, enacted by the EU in 2007, set legally enforceable goals for lowering greenhouse gas emissions, raising the percentage of renewable energy, and raising energy efficiency. The Third Energy Package, which was introduced between 2009 and 2014, sought to improve energy security and create a fully integrated internal energy market. In addition, the Juncker Commission unveiled the Energy Union in 2014 with the goal of ensuring that Europe has access to reliable, reasonably priced, and environmentally friendly energy (Oberthür & von Homeyer, 2023). It is a strategy to address energy integration and security inside the EU. Energy source diversification is a goal of the Energy Union, which attempts to lessen the reliance of the EU on outside energy providers. Furthermore, the Energy Union promotes energy-efficient technology and practises in order to rise energy efficiency in the EU and seeks to establish a fully integrated market for energy within the EU, allowing for the free flow of energy within the EU with the aid of a sufficient infrastructure and devoid of

any technological or legal constraints. At the same time, Energy Union seeks to improve the energy security and reduce its reliance on foreign energy supplies. In the end, the Energy Union is an extensive strategy for addressing energy integration and security in the EU (Herranz-Surrallés et al., 2020).

Additionally, the European Green Deal, which seeks to make the EU climate-neutral by 2050, was then introduced in 2019. The EU seeks to adopt various policies and initiatives across multiple sectors, including energy, transport, agriculture, and industry. Its goal is to increase renewable energy output, improve energy efficiency, promote sustainable mobility, and facilitate the transition to a circular economy (Oberthür & von Homeyer, 2023).

Dependence of Europe on Russian Natural Gas Although energy policy reform has helped Europe reduce greenhouse gas emissions, they still rely largely on Russian natural gas imports. The need to lessen reliance on fossil fuels has become even more urgent in light of recent spikes in oil prices (Yang et al., 2021).

The "Fit for 55" package - The European Commission's Plan for a Green Transition - was published in July 2021 as part of recent reforms to the EU's energy strategy. The package includes a range of activities aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% from 1990 levels by 2030. The package deals with a variety of policy concerns, including land use, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). Overall, the EU's energy policy has evolved from a focus on energy security and integration to a more comprehensive plan that now considers climate change and sustainability (Fit for 55, 2021; LaBelle et al., 2022; Vela, 2021).

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (TTE) Council is a crucial institutional arrangement for the EU's governance structure. The historical institutionalism perspective illuminates the factors that have influenced the TTE Council's role in the EU's policy environment and aids the understanding of the development, decision-making processes and key players of the TTE Council within the framework of historical institutionalism.

The combination of three policy areas—transportation, telecommunications, and energy—led to the creation of the TTE Council in June 2002. This unification was a reaction to the old Industry and Energy Council's ineffectiveness, which had distinct agendas for industry and energy concerns. By integrating these policy areas under a single council structure, the EU

sought to improve coordination, integration, and coherence in tackling the possibilities and problems (Europa Nu., n.d.).

The Ministers of Transport, Telecommunications, and Energy from the EU Member States are representatives of the TTE Council. The number of meetings and the number of the attendees change based on the purpose of the agenda. The representatives present at the meeting also change based on the national governments. Transport ministers typically meet four times per year, energy ministers three to four times per year, and telecommunications ministers twice each year. Participation from relevant European Commissioners is also included in these sessions, emphasising the EU's multi-level governance architecture. In addition, the TTE Council collaborates with other EU institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Commission. The Council works closely with the European Parliament to pass laws underscoring the significance of interinstitutional collaboration and discussion in the EU's decision-making process (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2022).

The TTE Council's primary mission is to achieve EU objectives in the fields, such as secure unified transport strategy, energy market operation, and telecommunications network interoperability, all of which are subject to legislative adoption by the Council. Its decisions have a considerable impact on the internal market, the EU's relationships with other countries, and its agenda in relation to other international entities (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2022).

Furthermore, the TTE Council is in charge of creating regulations that regulate how the energy market operates, ensuring energy supply security, fostering energy efficiency, renewable energy, and the integration of energy networks (European Commission, n.d.-b; European Council and Council of the European Union, 2022).

In addition, the TTE Council is a crucial institutional arrangement for the EU's governance structure. The historical institutionalism perspective illuminates the factors that have influenced the TTE Council's role in the EU's policy environment and aids the understanding of the development, composition, and decision-making processes of the TTE Council within the framework of historical institutionalism. This thesis exclusively concentrates on the meetings of the Energy Council while disregarding the meetings of the Transport and Telecommunication Council that are not relevant.

Decision-making process

The EU Member States' ministers reach a consensus on the policies to be executed inside the EU. TTE is then assisted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER), which drafts decisions and monitors policy implementation and adherence. Furthermore, the working groups are in charge of formulating Council decisions and verifying that policies are consistent with EU objectives. Following that, at the meetings, the ministers discuss and make decisions on transport, telecommunications, and energy policy (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2022; Wallace et al., 2020). The decision-making process within the TTE Council is similar to that of other Council configurations in the EU. The ministers of the EU member countries make a common decision on the policy to be adopted inside the EU, and the Council is backed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives, that formulates decisions and monitors policy implementation. In the end, the decision making process fosters also conversations and agreements between EU Member States to align laws, create uniform standards, and handle problems that traverse international borders (Wallace et al., 2020).

Key player

The dynamic nature of involvement in meetings, makes it difficult to identify essential players. Meetings frequently feature a variety of ministers from EU member states who could represent several organisations, nations, or stakeholder groups. It is therefore difficult to conclusively identify the important actors since they might vary from meeting to meeting due to the fluidity of roles based on the national governments (European Commission, n.d.).

However, the European Commissioner for Energy is connected to the TTE Council and is present at every meeting that is related to the Energy. The Energy Commissioner is appointed by the President of the European Commission. Therefore, the European Commissioner for Energy is a representative of the European Commission, and Kadri Simson has been serving as the commissioner from the start of 2019 (European Commission, n.d.).

As the EU's Energy Commissioner, Simson is in responsibility of developing a unified, networked, and functioning European energy market, ensuring that legislation on energy efficiency and renewable energy is rapidly implemented, and aiding Member States in attaining their goals. Furthermore, the European Union's energy policy, including Euratom, is shaped by the Commissioner for Energy and more importantly, the continuing gas issues between Russia and Ukraine, which endanger European energy supply, are addressed by the Commissioner for Energy as well. Overall, Commissioner for Energy is the main player within

the energy field of the EU. She is held responsible for every policy that is agreed at the level of Energy Council and actively participates at each meeting and decision-making process.

In the end, Miguel Arias Cañete from (2014–2019), Günther Oettinger (2010–2014) and Andris Piebalgs (2004–2010) served as a Commissioners for Energy prior to Simon and shaped the energy policy of the EU (European Commission, n.d., n.d.; European Council and Council of the European Union, 2022).

This content analysis employs a qualitative approach to analyse the European Council's meetings that include policies, documents and press releases on energy prices from 30.6.2023 till 1.2.2021. This time period was selected in order to be able to analyse sufficient number of meetings before the Russian invasion in Ukraine and similarly to be able to reflect on the possible impact and changes of policies after the outbreak of the war. Applying the retrograde analysis, I start with the latest meeting of the TTE Council which was held on 19 June 2023 and the analysis goes back to the last meeting held on 11 June 2021.

The analysis focuses on identifying key discussed, topics, policies, regulations and directives related to the energy sector and its impact on citizens, businesses, and the broader energy system.

Each document was analysed separately without a possibility to identify key codes based on which I would proceed with the analysis. Every meeting of the Energy Council was unique and various topics has been discussed. Hence, every content analysis is special and reflect the evolution of energy policies over time.

The recording of sessions and documentation related to provisional agenda or statements of current Presidency of the Council of the EU were not analysed. However, the analysis includes some citations of the current ministers represented at the Council meeting. Within the analysed period of time, Portugal, Slovenia, France and Czechia held the Presidency and currently Sweden is hosting the Council of the EU Presidency. In addition, the informal meetings (Total number of 4) of TTE ministers were also not analyses because no written official documents are available from these meetings.

The following part contains exclusive content analysis of the outcomes of the Energy Council meetings, press releases, approved regulations, background briefs and proposals starting with the most recent meeting held on 19 June 2023 till the last analysed meeting from 11 June 2021 that is the first meeting held in the period from April 2021.

The content analysis of documents presents a unique set of data without a possibility to code and find a common characters, because each meeting of the Energy Council was different and specific. Hence every meeting is analysed separately and the content analysis of key topics and issues discussed during the meeting is provided.

Analysis of the Energy Council's meetings from June 2023 till April 2021

19 June 2023, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹:

1. Reform of the Electricity Market

- The REMIT legislation prohibits trading based on inside knowledge and is intended to discourage market manipulation.
- Other aspects of the reform seek to minimise reliance on fluctuating fossil fuel prices, safeguard customers from price increases, speed renewable energy deployment, and improve consumer protection.

2. Other Topics Covered

- The Commission offered an overview of external energy relations trends and planned actions in international energy relations.
- The Commission provided ministers with an update on preparations for the forthcoming winter season (2023/2024).

¹ Council of the EU. (2023). *Council reaches agreement on parts of electricity market reform*. European Council, Council of the EU. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/06/19/council-reaches-agreement-on-parts-of-electricity-market-reform/>
General Secretariat of the Council. (2023). *Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/65191/st10872-en23.pdf>

The primary focus of this meeting was the design of the electricity market, specifically the proposal for regulation on wholesale energy market integrity and transparency (REMIT). The Swedish Minister for Energy, Business, and Industry, Ebba Busch, expressed pleasure with the REMIT regulatory agreement and emphasised the significance of openness and integrity in the EU's energy sector.

March 28 2023, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications, and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues²:

1. Hydrogen and Gas Package

- The ministers reached an agreement on the Council's negotiating positions on two measures aimed at establishing uniform internal market regulations for renewable and natural gases, as well as hydrogen.
- The objective of this law is to convert the gas sector towards renewable and low-carbon gases like biomethane and hydrogen, in accordance with the EU's goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

2. Reduced Gas Demand

- Member countries obtained a political agreement to prolong the voluntary 15% reduction in petrol demand objective for one year.
- This reduction objective attempts to save money while also preparing for probable gas supply shortages.

3. Design of the Electricity Market

- Ministers had their first policy debate on a proposal to change the framework of the EU's power market.

² Council of the EU. (2023a). *Background brief, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy) Brussels, 28 March 2023*. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/63333/background-brief-energy-council-28-march_en.pdf

Council of the EU. (2023b). *Member states agree to extend voluntary 15% gas demand reduction target*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/28/member-states-agree-to-extend-voluntary-15-gas-demand-reduction-target/>

Council of the EU. (2023c). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy), 28 March 2023*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2023/03/28/>

- The proposal's goal is to strengthen the EU energy market's resilience and stability, safeguard consumers and businesses from short-term price volatility, and encourage investment in renewable energy.
- Ministers discussed how to strike a balance between needed reforms and keeping effective parts of the current market framework.

4. Other subjects

- The European Commission provided updates on winter readiness, Denmark provided information on the nature restoration policy, and Greece provided data on the EU electrical system.

The content analysis highlights the agreement and debate linked to the gas and hydrogen package, decreasing gas demand, designing the electricity market, and updates on other energy-related concerns. The focus is on transitioning to renewable and low-carbon gases, ensuring gas supply dependability, enhancing the power market, and addressing Ukraine's energy crisis.

19 December 2022, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues³:

1. Mechanism of Market Correction

- European Union energy ministers have reached a political agreement on a proposal for a Council regulation establishing a market correction mechanism.
- The mechanism's goal is to safeguard citizens and the economy against exorbitant petrol costs.

2. Preliminary Emergency Measures

- The market correction mechanism regulation is defined as a temporary emergency remedy.

³ Council of the EU. (2022). *Background brief, TTE Energy Council Brussels, 19 December 2022.* <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/60745/background-brief-energy-19122022.pdf>

Council of the EU. (2022). *Council agrees on temporary mechanism to limit excessive gas prices.* <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/12/19/council-agrees-on-temporary-mechanism-to-limit-excessive-gas-prices/>

Council of the EU. (2022). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy), 19 December 2022.* <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/12/19/>

- It aims to resolve instances of exorbitant petrol prices that do not correspond to global market pricing.

3. Increased Solidarity and Coordination

- Ministers have formally accepted a Council regulation to improve solidarity through cross-border petrol exchanges and consistent pricing standards. During the Energy Council meeting, this regulation was agreed upon.
- The goal is to encourage collective petrol purchases and to build a solidarity mechanism among EU member states.

4. Deployment of Renewable Energy

- Ministers have struck a political consensus on a Council legislation to boost renewable energy installations.
- The law intends to make renewable energy projects more accessible and to speed up the approval process.

5. Reducing Methane Emissions

- EU energy ministers have reached an agreement on a basic approach to reducing methane emissions in the energy sector.
- Methane emissions from the oil, gas, and coal sectors will be measured, reported, and verified under this strategy.

6. REPowerEU Directive

- The Council has taken a broad stance on the idea for a REPowerEU directive. This directive calls for specific changes to EU renewable energy policy.
- In low-risk environmental regions, member states will establish special zones for renewables with simpler permitting processes.
- The Council maintained the goal of attaining at least 40% of the Union's gross final spending from renewable sources by 2030.

7. Petrol Package

- The presidency has offered an update on the gas package, which includes ideas for a directive and a regulation on uniform internal market rules for renewable and natural gases, as well as hydrogen.
- The goal is to make it easier to integrate renewable and low-carbon gases into the energy system, allowing for a move away from natural gas and contributing to EU climate neutrality by 2050.

8. Other subjects

- The Commission presented updates on the reform of the architecture of the electricity market as well as current developments in external energy relations.
- Various nations also offered information on themes such as the Janaf oil pipeline, the possibility for short-term energy savings in data centres, and the work programme of Sweden's impending president.

Overall, the content analysis reveals that EU energy ministers are actively addressing issues such as energy pricing, renewable energy utilisation, methane emissions reduction, and the absorption of low-carbon and renewable gases. As the Swedish Minister for energy, business and industry stated: “we have found a balanced agreement on the gas package. Europe is on a journey to shift away from fossil natural gas to renewable and low-carbon gases and we have to create the right market conditions for that to happen, in a way that promotes competitiveness, protects consumers and advances our climate-neutrality objective for 2050” (Ebba Bush, Council of the EU, 2023). These agreements indicate the EU's commitment to meeting its climate goals and ensuring its energy supply, while also underlining the need of collaboration and unity among its member countries.

Member States reach agreement on new measures to reduce methane emissions by December 19, 2022

Content analysis of key topics and issues⁴:

1. Emissions of Methane and Climate Action

- Methane has been discovered as a powerful greenhouse gas that is responsible for around 30% of current global warming.
- Given methane's huge impact, the accord is viewed as a critical contribution to climate action.
- The law is intended to aid in the achievement of the Global Methane Pledge, which promises to decreasing methane emissions by 30% by 2030.

⁴ Council of the EU. (2022). *Member States agree on new rules to slash methane emissions*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/12/19/member-states-agree-on-new-rules-to-slash-methane-emissions/>

2. Measuring, Reporting, and Verifying

- The plan requires the oil, gas, and coal industries to measure, record, and verify methane emissions (MRV) at the highest level.
- To avoid and limit methane emissions, operators must document wells and mines, track emissions, and implement mitigating measures.

3. Oil and Gas Sector

- Operators in the oil and gas sector will be obliged to measure and report methane emissions, with checks conducted by independent qualified verifiers.

4. Coal Industry

- Member states will be required to measure and report methane emissions from operational underground and surface coal mines on a continuous basis.

5. Emissions of Methane outside the EU

- The new limits apply to methane emissions caused by the EU's energy imports. Global monitoring tools will be created to enhance transparency of methane emissions from oil, gas, and coal imports.

The overall findings of the content analysis underline the need of reducing methane emissions in the energy industry to address climate change. The agreed-upon legislation highlights emission monitoring, reporting, and verification, as well as leak prevention and repair. The rule applies to the coal, oil, and gas sectors, as well as methane emissions associated with energy imports.

REPowerEU: Council agrees on expedited renewables permitting regulations, effective December 19, 2022

Content analysis of key topics and issues⁵:

1. REPowerEU Strategy

- The arrangement is part of the European Commission's bigger REPowerEU strategy in response to energy market disturbances initiated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

⁵ Council of the EU. (2022). *REPowerEU: Council agrees on accelerated permitting rules for renewables*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/12/19/repowereu-council-agrees-on-accelerated-permitting-rules-for-renewables/>

- The initiative goal to lessen the EU's dependence on Russian fossil resources while also advancing climate goals.

2. Identifying Renewables Areas to Visit

- Within 18 months of the directive's implementation, member states will be expected to map regions suitable for renewable energy projects.

3. Streamlined Permitting Procedures

- The permit-granting procedure for renewable energy projects in renewables go-to areas should not go beyond one year (two years for offshore projects), facilitating speedier implementation.

4. Exclusions and Environmental Evaluation

- Because of their unique characteristics, member states may exclude biomass combustion facilities and hydropower plants from the identification of renewables go-to zones.

5. Timetables and Grid Integration

- Permitting processes for locations outside of go-to areas should not take more than two years.
- The procedure for solar equipment should not take more than three months.

This meeting's content analysis explains the Council's agreement on expedited authorisation requirements to expedite the implementation of renewable energy projects. The emphasis is on identifying essential areas with streamlined regulatory procedures, establishing timetables for various project types, and taking into account environmental issues. The objective is to advance climate goals while simultaneously speeding up the transition to renewable energy and decreasing reliance on Russian fossil fuels.

13 December 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues⁶:

1. Mechanism for market correction

- The ministers debated a Council Regulation proposal aimed at establishing a market corrective mechanism. This system is meant to safeguard individuals and the economy from overly high energy prices.

2. Cooperation and solidarity

- The meetings emphasised the importance of greater petrol purchase coordination, cross-border exchanges, and trustworthy pricing standards.
- The purpose is to strengthen member-state unity and increase coordination of gas-related operations.

3. Excessive energy costs and emergency actions

- The ministers acknowledged the issue of people' high energy costs, particularly in view of the considerable price increases observed in August 2022.
- They emphasised the significance of finding real answers and garnering widespread support for emergency measures in the energy industry.

4. Political consensus and regulatory adoption

- The goal of the Council is to obtain a political consensus on the recommendations that will be presented at the forthcoming Energy Council.
- Ministers also focused on the official ratification of two Council regulations: one targeted at improving solidarity and cooperation in the gas sector, and the other at establishing a temporary framework for the faster distribution of renewable energy projects.

⁶ Council of the EU. (2022a). *13 December 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/12/13/>

Council of the EU. (2022b). *Background brief, Extraordinary TTE Energy Council Brussels, 13 December 2022*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/60743/background-brief-energy-13122022.pdf>

5. The switch to sustainable energy

- The talks also emphasised the significance of hastening the shift to renewable energy sources.
- The emphasis is on enacting legislation to hasten the deployment of renewable energy projects.

Finally, among the major issues discussed by EU energy ministers were the establishment of a market correction mechanism, increased cooperation and solidarity in the gas sector, addressing high energy costs and emergency measures, reaching a political agreement, passing regulations, and hastening the transition to renewable energy sources.

24 November 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues⁷:

1. Gas Market Indicators

- EU energy ministers have reached an agreement on the text of a Council rule aimed at improving solidarity and coordination in petrol purchases, cross-border exchanges, and trustworthy pricing benchmarks.
- The law attempts to operationalize the European energy buy platform by establishing interim regulations on demand aggregation, joint purchasing, trustworthy LNG benchmarks, petrol price volatility control, and cross-border solidarity measures.
- The goal is to guarantee and share gas supplies across the EU.

2. Renewable Energy Initiatives

- Ministers reached an agreement on the text of a Council legislation to promote renewable energy deployment.
- The law prioritises the streamlining of regulatory procedures for selected technologies and projects with a high potential for rapid adoption and little environmental effect.

⁷ Council of the EU. (2022a). *Extraordinary Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*, 24 November 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/11/24/>
Council of the EU. (2022b). *Extraordinary TTE Energy Council Brussels*, 24 November 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/60254/background-brief-energy-241122.pdf>

3. Solidarity and unity

- The article highlights Member States demonstrating unity and solidarity as key European Union ideals.
- The purpose is to increase resistance to the use of energy as a weapon.

4. Mechanism for Gas Market Correction

- EU energy ministers debated a Council Regulation on a gas market corrective mechanism.
- The proposal is a short-term emergency solution based on Article 122 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The meeting focused on methods to improve collaboration and coordination in gas purchases, boost renewable energy programmes, and deal with potential gas market challenges. As fundamental guiding principles, the EU prioritises unity, flexibility, and supply security. As the Czech minister of Industry and Trade Josef Síkela stated: "The Member States have once again demonstrated that unity and solidarity are not mere rhetoric but fundamental values of the European Union" during this exceptional summit. Working together strengthens our collective resilience, ensuring that energy is never used against us again" (Josef Síkela, Council of the EU, 2022).

The Council agrees on the content of new measures on shared petrol purchases and a solidarity mechanism for November 24, 2022

On the same day, the council secured an agreement on the principles of new laws, including group petrol purchases and a solidarity system.

Content analysis of key topics and issues⁸:

1. Collaborative Purchasing

- The new regulations allow member countries and energy corporations to buy petrol on worldwide markets as a group.

⁸ Council of the EU. (2022). *Council agrees on substance of new measures on joint purchases of gas and a solidarity mechanism*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/11/24/further-measures-to-tackle-the-energy-crisis-council-agrees-on-joint-purchases-of-gas-and-a-solidarity-mechanism/>

- Countries inside the EU may negotiate better rates while avoiding competition among themselves by aggregating demand at the EU level.

2. New Gas Price Reference

- The rule directs the Agency for Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) to create a new supplementary pricing benchmark to offer stability and predictability for LNG transactions.

3. Mechanism for Market Correction

- The initial regulatory proposal provided a conceptual structure for a potential temporary "market correction mechanism" to manage TTF petrol prices.

4. Additional Solidarity Measures

- The law adds extra solidarity measures to existing requirements in true gas supply scarcity circumstances.

To sum up, the EU energy ministers have agreed on a preliminary Council regulation proposal that includes additional short-term emergency measures to decrease energy costs and increase supply security. These initiatives aim to improve collaboration during genuine emergencies and gas supply shortages, to make coordinated joint gas purchases easier, to minimise the volatility of gas and power prices, and to establish reliable gas pricing benchmarks.

The EU will speed up the approval procedure for renewable energy projects from November 24, 2022

Furthermore, the EU determined to expedite the approval process for renewable energy projects.

Content analysis of key topics and issues⁹:

1.Solar Energy Devices

- Member states have agreed that the procedure for awarding permits for solar energy projects should not take more than three months.

⁹ Council of the EU. (2022). *EU to speed up permitting process for renewable energy projects*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/11/24/eu-to-speed-up-permitting-process-for-renewable-energy-projects/>

- Installations of solar energy equipment with a capacity of up to 50 kW, including those used for personal use, will obtain tacit permission one month after application if there are no concerns about grid safety, stability, or dependability.

2. Renewable Energy Power Plant Repowering

- The Council has decided on a six-month maximum timeline for awarding permits for repowering projects, including all relevant environmental evaluations.
- Grid connections will be approved within three months if repowering results in a capacity gain of up to 15% for the power plant.

3. Heat Exchangers

- Member states have imposed a one-month deadline for installing heat pumps under 50 MW and a three-month deadline for installing ground source heat pumps.

4. Predominant Public Interest

- The Council has agreed that the development, building, and operation of renewable energy facilities and installations are deemed to be in the public interest.
- Each member state will have their own level of flexibility.

Overall, EU energy ministers agreed on the idea of the Council regulation, which sets a temporary framework for speeding licence issuance and the deployment of renewable energy projects. The law would suggest specific, time-sensitive measures directed at projects and technologies that have the highest potential of being adopted swiftly and with little environmental damage.

25 October 2022, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁰:

1. Building Energy Performance Directive

- EU energy ministers agreed on a broad approach to a proposal to establish new benchmarks for building energy performance.
- The amended guideline intends for all new buildings to be zero-emission by 2030, and for existing structures to be converted to zero-emission by 2050.
- This agreement is critical for the EU's energy and climate goals, as well as increasing citizens' quality of life and lowering energy costs and energy poverty.

2. Gas Package

- Ministers had a policy discussion on the gas package, which contains a directive proposal and a regulation proposal on uniform internal market rules for renewable and natural gases, including hydrogen.
- Discussions centred on hydrogen markets, cross-border tariffs, blending, and unbundling strategies to help build an efficient internal market for renewable, low-carbon gases and hydrogen.

3. Emergency Energy Measures

- The Commission submitted its proposal for a Council Regulation on increasing solidarity in petrol purchases, cross-border exchanges, and consistent pricing standards.

4. Other Agenda Items

- Lithuania and Belarus exchanged information on nuclear safety at the Ostrovets nuclear power station in Belarus.
- Following Russia's recent devastating actions, the Commission provided information on the energy sector situation in Ukraine and Moldova.
- Ministers voiced concern, reaffirmed their support for Ukraine, and reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen energy cooperation in the midst of the present energy crisis.

¹⁰ Council of the EU. (2022a). *25 October 2022, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/10/25/>

Council of the EU. (2022b). *Background brief, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy) Luxembourg, 25 October 2022*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/59708/background-brief-energy-october-2022.pdf>

According to the content analysis, among the topics discussed were the adoption of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, discussions of the Gas Package, the presentation and exchange of opinions on Energy Emergency Measures, as well as updates on nuclear safety and the state of the energy markets in Ukraine and Moldova.

'Fit for 55': Council agrees on stronger criteria for building energy performance, 25 October 2022

As part of the 'Fit for 55' package, the Council agreed to tighten criteria for building energy performance.

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹¹:

1. Overall Goal

- By 2030, all new buildings shall be zero-emission, and existing structures should be converted to zero-emission by 2050.

2. New Structures

- New public-sector buildings would be zero-emissions beginning in 2028.
- All new buildings would be zero-emissions by 2030.
- Historical structures, houses of worship, and defence-related structures are exempt.

3. Existing Residential Buildings

- Minimum energy performance criteria based on a national trajectory will be implemented by member states.
- From 2025 to 2050, the national trend corresponds to a reduction in average primary energy usage in the residential construction stock.

4. Existing Non-Residential Buildings

- Member states will establish maximum energy performance targets based on primary energy use.
- The first barrier is 15% of the worst-performing non-residential buildings' primary energy usage.

5. Solar Energy and Sustainable Transportation

- Requirements for optimising the potential for solar energy generation in new structures.

¹¹ Council of the EU. (2022). *'Fit for 55': Council agrees on stricter rules for energy performance of buildings*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/10/25/fit-for-55-council-agrees-on-stricter-rules-for-energy-performance-of-buildings/>

- By set timeframes, adequate solar energy systems must be installed on public, non-residential, and residential structures.
- Requirements for long-term mobility infrastructure, such as charging stations for electric vehicles and bicycles, future infrastructure cabling, and bicycle parking places.

6. Plans for National Building Renovations

- Member states will produce plans outlining national goals for 2030, 2040, and 2050.
- Plans include objectives for energy renovation rate, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emission reduction.

30 September 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹²:

1. Government Regulation to Address High Energy Prices

- EU energy ministers have secured a political agreement on an emergency intervention law to combat excessive power costs.
- The rule contains steps to lower peak electricity usage and share surplus revenues from the energy sector to help consumers who are having difficulty paying their bills.

2. Policy Options in the Face of High Gas Prices

- Ministers reviewed further policy measures for reducing excessive petrol costs.
- They emphasised the significance of an EU-wide coordinated action to assure energy supply security, safeguard consumers, and address the underlying causes of the current situation.

3. Demands for Immediate Action

- Ministers demanded that the Commission offer further measures, including potential legislative proposals, as soon as possible.
- The priority is to minimise Russia's dominance in the European gas market, diversify suppliers and routes, reduce price volatility, and ensure a seamless energy transition.

¹² Council of the EU. (2022a). *Background brief, Extraordinary TTE Energy Council Brussels, 30 September 2022*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/09/30/>
 Council of the EU. (2022b). *Extraordinary Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy), 30 September 2022*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/09/30/>

4. Leaks in the Nord Stream Gas Pipeline

- Denmark alerted ministers about recent gas breaches from the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines near the island of Bornholm, with the backing of Germany and Sweden.
- Member states emphasised that there is presently no imminent impact on the EU's gas or energy supply security.

To sum up, EU energy ministers have taken important actions to address excessive energy prices and guarantee that customers can pay it. The approved law includes steps to lower peak power demand and distribute excess energy sector earnings to help consumers who are having financial difficulties. Ministers have considered policy measures to curb the growing costs of petrol in addition to addressing excessive energy prices. In order to guarantee the security of the energy supply, safeguard consumers, and address the underlying causes of the current crisis, they emphasise the significance of concerted action across the EU.

The Council decides on emergency steps to lower energy prices on September 30, 2022

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹³:

1. Decreased demand for power

- The Council established a voluntary overall reduction target of 10% of total power use and a mandatory peak-hour reduction target of 5%.
- Member states are allowed to select appropriate actions to meet both reduction objectives throughout the defined time period.

2. Market revenue cap

- The Council agreed to set a market income ceiling of 180 euros/MWh for energy generators using infrared technologies, including renewables, nuclear, and lignite.
- The cap is intended to protect operator profitability while encouraging investment in renewable energy.

¹³ Council of the EU. (2022). *Council agrees on emergency measures to reduce energy prices*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/09/30/council-agrees-on-emergency-measures-to-reduce-energy-prices/>

3. A solidarity tax for the fossil fuel industry

- Member states decided to levy a temporary solidarity payment on the revenues of companies operating in the crude petroleum, natural gas, coal, and refinery sectors.
- It will be in addition to the ordinary taxes and levies imposed by member nations.

4. Retail metrics for small and medium-sized businesses

- To assist SMEs during periods of high energy prices, member states may temporarily establish pricing for the supply of power to them.

In rare situations, member states may also temporarily set tariffs for power delivery below cost. The Council also authorises immediate efforts to reduce energy prices. These policies aim to reduce electricity demand, set market revenue ceilings for specific power producers, implement retail policies for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and levy a solidarity fee on the fossil fuel sector.

9 September 2022, Extraordinary meeting Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁴:

1.Reducing High Energy Prices

- Energy ministers of the EU addressed policy alternatives for mitigating the impact of rising energy prices on individuals, public services, enterprises, and sectors.
- Ministers indicated a desire for EU-level emergency measures to be adopted as soon as possible.

2. Emergency Response Options

- The conversation focused on short-term solutions to rising power and gas prices.

¹⁴ Council of the EU. (2022a). *9 September 2022, Extraordinary Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/09/09/>
Council of the EU. (2022b). *Background brief, Extraordinary TTE Energy Council Brussels, 9 September 2022*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/58893/background-brief-energy-220909.pdf>

- Four key areas of concentration have been identified: income caps for power producers with low production costs, a potential petrol price cap, coordinated electricity demand reduction across the EU, and steps to address diminished liquidity.

3. Winter Preparation

- Ministers presented reports on their nations' readiness for the impending winter.
- EU member states have taken national and EU-level initiatives, such as enacting laws to fill gas storage tanks and pledging a 15% decrease in gas usage.

In general, the meeting focused on lowering high energy prices, preparing everyone for winter, and moving promptly to reduce the impact on families and businesses. Throughout the conversations, the need of collaboration and quick decision-making was highlighted.

26 July 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁵:

1. Voluntary Natural Gas Demand Reduction

- EU energy ministers have struck a political agreement to reduce natural gas usage by 15% over the coming winter.
- The goal is to store gas in anticipation of future disruptions in Russian gas supply, which has been using energy resources as a weapon.
- The legislation permits the Council to issue a 'Union Alert' on supply security, making gas demand reduction necessary.

2. Solidarity and unity

- The EU member states exhibited unity and solidarity in the face of Russian attempts to fracture the EU through manipulation of energy supplies.
- The idea to reduce greenhouse gas emissions was quickly adopted, bolstering the EU's energy security.

¹⁵ Council of the EU. (2022a). *Background brief, TTE Energy Council Brussels, 26 July 2022.*

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/58411/final-background-brief-energy-july-26.pdf>

Council of the EU. (2022b). *Extraordinary Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy), 26 July 2022.* <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/07/26/>

3. Discussion of the current energy situation and contingency plans

- Ministers reviewed Europe's energy predicament in light of Russia's assault against Ukraine.
- National contingency plans and strategies were shared and debated.
- Short-term steps to boost the EU's energy security were discussed.

4. Increasing Demand Reduction

- Ministers discussed ways to encourage protected consumers to reduce their use before winter.
- The purpose is to limit the possibility of a petrol shortage for key clients who are not covered by insurance.
- Priority was given to measures to improve energy security while assuring steady energy supply to business and residents.

5. 'Save Gas for a Safe Winter'

- Ministers examined the measures provided by the Commission in the 'Save petrol for a safe winter' package.
- The emphasis was on how member states propose to use these measures to guarantee equitable distribution of available gas resources.

6. Power Market Design and Price Decoupling

- Greece gave information on the architecture of the power market, which intended to decouple electricity pricing from skyrocketing natural gas prices.

Member states agree to reduce petrol usage by 15% next winter, on July 26, 2022

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁶:

1. Voluntary Natural Gas Demand Reduction

- Member states have pledged to voluntarily reduce natural gas use by 15% in winter.

¹⁶ Council of the EU. (2022). *Member states commit to reducing gas demand by 15% next winter*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/07/26/member-states-commit-to-reducing-gas-demand-by-15-next-winter/>

- The goal is to save gas while also preparing for future disruptions in gas supply from Russia, which has been using energy resources as a weapon.
- The legislation allows for the potential of issuing a 'Union alert' on supply security, making a decrease in gas demand mandatory if required.

2. Solidarity and unity

- The decision to embrace the gas reduction proposal in record time illustrates the unity and solidarity of the EU member states.
- The purpose is to repel any Russian effort to fracture the EU by utilizing energy supply as a weapon.

3. Gas Demand Reduction Measures

- Energy ministers committed to lower their petrol use by 15% relative to their five-year average usage.
- Exemptions and derogations are provided for member states with special conditions in order to ensure the efficacy of petrol reductions while taking their circumstances into account.

4. Initiating a 'Union Alert'

- The Council's role in initiating a 'Union alert' will be expanded.
- In the event of a significant risk of simple gas scarcity or particularly high gas demand, a 'Union alarm' can be activated.

5. Measures to Reduce Demand

- Members are urged to prioritise actions that have no effect on protected consumers, such as homes and vital businesses.
- Reduced petrol usage in the electrical sector, promotion of fuel switching in sectors, information campaigns, and market-based policies are all possible solutions.

Overall, the content analysis highlights member states' attempts to increase the EU's energy supply security by voluntarily reducing their natural gas use. In order to improve energy security, EU nations have voluntarily agreed to reduce their usage of natural gas by 15% this winter. Because Russia has a history of using energy as a weapon, the goal is to be prepared for future Russian gas supply disruptions.

27 June 2022, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁷:

1. Package 'Fit for 55'

- Under the 'Fit for 55' package, the Council approved negotiation positions on the modification of the energy efficiency directive and the amendment of the renewable energy directive.
- This adoption is seen as a big step forward in the fight against global warming, and it is vital to reaching climate targets.
- In the backdrop of the Ukraine war, the move to renewable energies and energy conservation will also assist reduce reliance on Russia for electricity.

2. Carbon reduction

- The agreed-upon increased objectives contribute to the EU's aim of lowering net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.
- The relevance of building energy performance in accomplishing decarbonisation goals is emphasised.

3. Emissions of Methane

- Ministers took notice of a report on the status of an EU plan to decrease methane emissions.
- Emphasising methane's enormous influence on climate change and cost-effective reduction prospects in the energy sector.

4. Gas storage

- Adoption of gas storage laws to guarantee that EU gas storage facilities are fully stocked before winter and may be shared among member states

According to the content analysis, the key topics covered by the energy-related talks in the 'Fit for 55' package are the revision of the energy-efficiency and renewable energy directives. Decarbonization, decreasing methane emissions, and the need of building energy performance

¹⁷ Council of the EU. (2022a). *Background note—TTE (Energy) Council of 27 June 2022*.

<https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9898-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

Council of the EU. (2022b). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*, 27 June 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/06/27/>

are all being highlighted. The execution of gas storage legislation is also highlighted as a means of ensuring collaboration among member states. This meeting aimed to provide answers to two critical questions: *How do you assess your current situation and that of the EU in light of recent changes in the natural gas sector? And what further activities would be beneficial to bolstering the EU's preparation in this sector, including those that should be included in the integrated European contingency plan for demand before and during a supply crisis, with a view to the coming heating season?* As the result, the French Minister for Energy Transition Agnès Pannier-Runacher claimed that: "The agreement of the member states on these two proposals marks a major step forward in the fight against global warming," said a French minister for energy transition. Decarbonizing our energy systems through major renewable energy deployment and considerable energy conservation measures is critical to meeting our climate goals. It will also help us lessen our reliance on Russia for energy in the wake of the Ukrainian conflict" (Agnès Pannier-Runacher, Council of the EU, 2022).

Council adopts regulation on gas storage, 27 June 2022

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁸:

1.Regulation of Gas Storage

- The rule mandates member states to have appropriate winter gas storage, with stated filling objectives of 80% capacity for the winter of 2022/2023 and 90% capacity for successive winters.
- The rule also requires all underground gas storage site operators to be certified, as well as a fast-track certification system for particular storage facilities.

2. The EU and Ukraine's Energy Situation

- Ministers discussed the EU's energy position in the context of the Ukraine conflict.
- The discussions centred on current changes in the natural gas business and each country's degree of readiness for the impending winter.
- The Commission's REPowerEU proposal, published in May 2022, and the establishment of the EU Energy Platform were both praised.

¹⁸ Council of the EU. (2022). *Council adopts regulation on gas storage*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/06/27/council-adopts-regulation-gas-storage/>

According to the content analysis, the major focus of the text is the ratification of the gas storage regulation, which aims to secure the security of the EU's energy supply in light of the war in Ukraine. There were also updates on the projected gas storage facility, international energy relations.

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Energy Performance of Buildings, 10 June 2022, progress report

Content analysis of key topics and issues¹⁹:

1. Zero-emission structures

- Member states debate renewable energy and technological neutrality, the rejection of specified thresholds, and worries about the Global Warming Potential (GWP) indicator.

2. Minimum energy performance requirements

- Energy ministers ask for flexibility and transparency, and raise concerns about implementation challenges, cost-benefit ratios, and property rights.

3. Certificates of energy performance

- Energy ministers object to the mandated distribution of certificate classes, shorter validity periods, rising prices, and on-the-spot certifying visits.

4. Plans for national renovations

- The majority of energy ministers states favour this item, although they want better alignment and less administrative burden.

5. Long-term mobility

- Energy ministers largely approve the rules, but they want more leeway in terms of prices, development speed, and permission to establish charging stations.

6. Building smart readiness indication

- Energy ministers debate the indicator's obligatory character for the non-residential sector and suggest conditional adoption based on a testing period.

7. Financing for fossil fuel systems

- Member states appreciate the prohibition on public financing for fossil fuel energy systems and propose moving the implementation date forward.

¹⁹ Council of the EU. (2022). *Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the energy performance of buildings (recast)—Progress report*. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9894-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Methane Emission Reduction, 10 June 2022, progress report

Content analysis of key topics and issues²⁰:

1. Methane Emissions Reduction Regulation

- As part of the 'Fit for 55' climate package, the paper analyses the idea for a Regulation on methane emissions reduction in the energy industry.
- The goal is to execute the European Green Deal and attain Union climate neutrality by 2050.

2. Methane's Role in Climate Change

- According to the paper, methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that is responsible for one-third of current climate warming.
- It emphasises the significance of lowering methane emissions, with the energy sector providing cost-effective and realistic reductions.

3. Proposed Regulation Measures

- The proposed Regulation focuses on increasing data accuracy, measuring methane emissions, finding and correcting leaks, and defining requirements for venting and flaring limits.
- It delegated inspection and verification of emissions data to relevant agencies and verifiers.

4. Methane Emissions Transparency

- Measures Importers from outside the EU are obligated to give information, and a transparency list is produced.
- To exchange information on methane emitters, a worldwide monitoring mechanism based on satellite data is proposed.

5. Penalties, Delegated Acts, and the Reconsideration Clause

- The plan provides provisions for fines, with their imposition being a matter of national jurisdiction.

²⁰ Council of the EU. (2022). *Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on methane emissions reduction—Progress report*. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10161-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

2 May 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

TTE Council held another meeting 2 months after the Russian invasion.

Content analysis of key topics and issues²¹:

1. Ukraine Solidarity and Support

- Ministers underlined their support with Ukraine and member countries affected by Gazprom's suspension of gas supply.
- Recognised the significance of assisting Ukraine in the context of the conflict and existing contracts.

2. Energy Situation Assessment

- Energy ministers provided their view of the EU's energy position, taking into account the most recent events.
- Evaluation of the status of readiness for a future supply crisis.

3. Instruments and Measures of Solidarity

- In response to the energy issue, there is a discussion on promoting solidarity measures and mechanisms at the EU level.
- Concentrate on improving and coordinating information interchange, particularly about national consumption levels.

4. Supply Security Measures

- Evaluation of potential extra activities to ensure supply security, such as gas transit and stock management.
- Recognised progress in discussions on the "gas storage" rule and the hope that it would be completed.

5. Gradual Demise of Reliance on Russian Fossil Fuels

- Ministers underlined their determination to reduce the EU's reliance on Russian fossil resources.
- With considerable anticipation, the Commission will propose the REPowerEU initiative in May.

²¹ Council of the EU. (2022). *2 May 2022, Extraordinary meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/05/02/>

6. Agreement on Coordinated connections and Gas Purchasing

- Platform to maintain coordinated connections with international partners and dependable suppliers.
- The intention is to quickly develop the European Gas Purchasing Platform to assure inexpensive energy supply.

The content analysis emphasised the meeting's core issues of solidarity with Ukraine, an examination of the energy situation, preparation for potential supply emergencies, and actions to ensure supply security. A pledge was made in advance of the REPowerEU effort to gradually lessen dependency on Russian fossil fuels. It was also highlighted that coordinated interactions with international partners and the establishment of the European Gas Purchasing Platform were critical for ensuring a reliable supply of low-cost energy.

28 February 2022, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

This meeting took place four days after Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24th. Unfortunately, the meeting did not give any other papers, only the meeting report. The webpage provides no background information or other extra sources. However, beginning on February 24, 2022, the TTE Council was functioning with the European Council Conclusion.

Content analysis of key topics and issues²²:

1.Help for Ukraine

- Recognise the harm done to Ukraine's energy capacity as a result of Russian military activity.
- Energy ministers' willingness and readiness to give aid to Ukraine.
- Proposals to help the Ukrainian government consolidate and synchronise its power network with the Union network.
- Willingness to intervene at the national level to provide further financial or material help.

²² Council of the EU. (2022). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*, 28 February 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2022/02/28/>

2. Europe's Energy Situation

- Petrol prices in the EU and worldwide oil prices have risen as a result of military activities in Ukraine.
- Demand that work be carried out at all levels and that contingency plans, particularly those relating to energy, be developed.
- Focus on improving the resilience of the European energy system and controlling future energy price patterns.
- The green transition is being emphasised in Europe in order to attain energy independence and carbon neutrality.

3. Energy Supplies and Preparedness

- Views on the current situation of energy supply, stockpiles, and movements in separate countries are presented.
- Assurance that the European Union's petrol or gasoline supply are not immediately jeopardised.
- Coordination of the European Union's involvement in oil supply operations.
- Member states' readiness to mobilise strategic supplies if required.
- Need for contingency planning, supply security, improved stock management, and improved cooperation among member states.
- Increase energy imports from countries other than Russia.
- Close monitoring of the situation, boosting interactions with foreign partners, and acting to stabilise energy flows and prices are all priorities.

4. Consumer Impact and the European Green Deal

- Options for reducing the impact of energy prices on consumers and companies are being considered.
- Adoption of national consumer protection measures, including tax and tariff measures.
- Acceptance of the Commission's suggested 'toolbox' for coordinating national initiatives.
- A fresh Commission communication on developments to regulate energy costs in the context of the crisis is expected.
- The relevance of the European Green Deal and the 'Fit for 55' legislative package in reducing the Union's reliance on hydrocarbons is emphasised.

The conclusion of this content analysis highlights the emphasis on assisting Ukraine, coping with Europe's energy crisis, ensuring the resilience of the energy supply, and reducing energy

costs. It underlines the importance of teamwork, emergency measures, and the green transition in order for Europe to become energy independent and carbon neutral.

Conclusions of the European Council, February 24, 2022

Content analysis of key topics and issues²³:

1. Russian Military Aggression Is Condemned

- Russia's unjustified and illegal military aggression on Ukraine is severely opposed.
- Violations of international law and UN Charter values, as well as compromising European and global security and stability.
- The emphasis is on Ukraine's right to determine its own fate.
- Russia must be held totally accountable for its aggression, damage, and loss of life.

2. Demands and Action Requests

- Demand for a quick halt to Russian military operations and unconditional departure from all of Ukraine's territory.
- Demand that Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence be fully respected.
- Berates Russian aggression for the loss of lives and human misery.

3. Involvement of Belarus

- Belarus' role in the attack against Ukraine is strongly condemned.
- Demand that Belarus abstain from such activities and uphold its international duties.

4. Sanctions and other punitive measures

- The EU reacted swiftly and firmly to Russia's recognition and deployment of armed forces in Ukraine's self-proclaimed separatist entities.
- Agreement on more restrictive measures imposing heavy penalties on Russia in the financial, energy, and transportation sectors, as well as dual-use items, export control and finance, visa policy, and individual lists.
- Fast arrangement and approval of a new set of economic sanctions on Belarus.

²³ European Council. (022). *Conclusions of the European Council, February 24, 2022*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/02/24/european-council-conclusions-24-february-2022/>

5. International Cooperation and Support for Ukraine

- Support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its recognised boundaries.
- The EU's unity and solidarity with Ukraine, as well as its commitment to support Ukraine and its people through political, financial, humanitarian, and logistical assistance.
- Belief that tensions and disputes can only be resolved via communication and diplomacy.
- Support for Georgia's and the Republic of Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- Cooperation with partners and allies within the United Nations, OSCE, NATO, and the Group of Seven.

6. Readiness and Preparedness

- Demand that efforts on preparedness and readiness be advanced at all levels.
- Invitation to the Commission to provide contingency plans, particularly those involving energy.

The content analysis highlights the European Council's passionate condemnation of Russia's military aggression, as well as demands for immediate action, the imposition of sanctions, and support for Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. It emphasises the need of communication, diplomacy, and international engagement in resolving issues, as well as the willingness to assist Ukraine in a number of ways. The need for emergency measures, particularly those connected to energy, demonstrates an emphasis on preparedness and stability in critical businesses.

2 December 2021, Regular meeting of Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues²⁴:

1. Energy Costs

- The impact of the recent increase in energy costs is being discussed.
- Investigating mitigating strategies at the national and EU levels.
- The European Union Agency for Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) presents a preliminary study on excessive energy costs.
- The importance of evidence-based policy debates is emphasised.

2. Fit for 55 Package Compatibility

- Policy discussion on the Fit for 55 package, with a focus on renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.
- Evaluation of progress and identification of lingering issues.
- Consideration of renewables while taking into account national conditions and starting points.

3. Trade Approval of the WTO Joint Statement Initiative on Domestic Regulation of Services

- Recognised the need of clear norms on transparency and authorisation for enabling service commerce.

4. Agriculture

- Adoption of the revised Common Agricultural Policy for the period 2023-2027.
- Concentrate on making policy that is fairer, greener, and more performance based.
- The goals include guaranteeing a balanced future for European farmers.

5. Other subjects

- Negotiations with the European Parliament on the modification of the trans-European networks for energy (TEN-E) legislation have progressed.
- Information exchange on the cohabitation of renewable energy and biodiversity.
- Consideration of the 70 percent rule's impact on offshore hybrid projects.

²⁴ Council of the EU. (2022a). *Extraordinary Energy Council Brussels, 2 December 2021*.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/53210/background-brief-energy-20211202.pdf>

Council of the EU. (2022b). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy), 2 December 2021*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2021/12/02/>

The Fit for 55 package, specifically the directives on renewable energy and energy efficiency, and the question of rising energy prices and potential mitigating measures were the two main subjects of this meeting. As Slovenia's Infrastructure Minister, "The proposals of the "Fit for 55" package have been a major priority for the Slovenian Presidency, which has done everything possible to make as much progress as possible while ensuring the package's coherence." The rise in energy prices highlights the significance of a climate-neutral and energy-independent Europe. Our top aim is to accelerate the green energy transition towards more renewable energies flowing across grids and fully linked energy systems" (Jernej Vrtovec, Council of the EU, 2022).

26 October 2021, Regular meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

Content analysis of key topics and issues²⁵:

1. Energy Costs

- Due to the large increase in energy costs, the Council Presidency agreed to convene an exceptional Council of energy ministers, taking into account political debates on possible remedies.
- This decision was made as a continued work on the talks conducted by the European Council on October 21-22, which required the Energy Council to continue addressing this issue.
- Furthermore, during the meeting, ministers discussed potential medium- and long-term solutions to the energy pricing crisis.
- They emphasised the need of investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy system integration in improving the resilience of the EU's energy systems.

2. The Commission's "Toolbox"

- The Commission's investigation into the causes of the rise in energy costs got considerable support.
- In terms of immediate actions, ministers agreed that urgent national action is required to safeguard the most vulnerable consumers.

²⁵ Council of the EU. (2022). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)*, 26 October 2021. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2021/10/26/>

- The toolbox offered was recognised as a helpful foundation for coordinating similar national efforts at the European level.

To summarise, energy ministers agreed to examine energy prices and progress in implementing measures indicated in the Commission’s toolbox in December, identifying next steps to be taken. The goal of this meeting was to look into how EU-level action may help and supplement the swift efforts by member states to face and deal with the consequences of increasing energy prices on EU people and also businesses.

11 June 2021, Regular meeting of Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy)

The Energy Council conference in Luxembourg acted as a physical gathering, with energy ministers meeting for the first time since December 2019 owing to Covid-19.

Content analysis of key topics and issues²⁶:

1. Revision of the Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E) Regulation

- The ministers agreed on a broad approach to the anticipated amendment of the TEN-E legislation.
- This approach’s principal purpose is to modernise and integrate the EU’s cross-border energy infrastructure while supporting the EU’s 2050 climate-neutrality target.
- The strategy also seeks to guarantee market integration, competitiveness, and supply security.

2. The Evolution of Europe’s Hydrogen Strategy

- Energy ministers held a discussion on the progress of Europe’s hydrogen policy.
- The policy intends to build a climate-neutral economy by creating a favourable environment for increasing hydrogen supply and consumption.
- Furthermore, the Council emphasised the need of member-state collaboration in fostering hydrogen markets and regulating end-use technologies to enhance hydrogen uptake, particularly in difficult-to-decarbonize sectors.

²⁶ Council of the EU. (2021). *Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy), 11 June 2021*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2021/06/11>

3. Fit for 55 Package Compatibility

- The Fit for 55 package is a comprehensive series of policy initiatives designed to align the EU with its carbon neutrality objectives.
- The ministers deliberated on whether to approve Council conclusions in response to the renovation wave plan, which aims to boost rehabilitation activities across Europe.
- The ministers discussed the initiatives that must be taken to achieve a fair and just green transition, including tripling energy-related renovation rates by 2030 and establishing new construction work possibilities.

4. Renovation Wave Planning

- The ministers accepted the Council findings on the renovation wave strategy, which aims to meet the construction sector's urgent need for rehabilitation.
- The policy intends to boost renovation activities across the EU, making a significant contribution to the 2050 climate-neutrality target.

5. Other subjects

- The European Commission also updated ministers on recent advances in external energy relations, such as energy diplomacy, the IEA net-zero effort, IRENA, the Energy Charter Treaty, and the forthcoming EU-US Energy Council.
- Furthermore, the Lithuanian delegation stressed the urgent need for action on safety recommendations at Belarus's Ostrovets nuclear power station, while the Czech mission requested that ministers consider the EU taxonomy for sustainable economic activities and potential future measures.

The meeting's major conclusions included a commitment to renovate and decarbonize the EU's energy infrastructure, promote market integration and competitiveness, increase hydrogen supply and demand, increase building industry renovation efforts, and address significant external energy relations and safety concerns. According to Portuguese Minister for Environment and Climate Action Mr. Fernandes, "to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, we need modern, interconnected energy infrastructures that are ready for clean energy technologies." More smart grids and renewables are needed in our systems. "Today's agreement invests in a green and climate-neutral future that ensures efficiency, competitiveness, and supply security while leaving no one behind" (Joo Pedro Matos Fernandes, Council of the EU, 2021).

Council approves conclusions on an EU renovation wave, 11 June 2021

Content analysis of key topics and issues²⁷:

1. The operation of the gas and electricity markets, as well as the EU ETS market

- Request for Commission probe and engagement with ESMA.
- The goal is to determine whether more regulatory action is required to address certain trading behaviour.

2. Measures to assist vulnerable consumers and European businesses

- Measures indicated in the toolkit must be implemented immediately.
- Considered the variety and unique situation of each Member State.

3. Medium and long-term energy price-control measures

- The Commission and the Council must act quickly.
- Priority should be given to encouraging cheap energy rates for individuals and businesses.

4. Investment in energy transformation and global connection

- Encouragement for the European Investment Bank to investigate potential options.
- Accelerating energy transition investment and aligning with Europe's global connectivity goals
- Mitigating future disruption risks within the constraints of available funding.

To sum up, the conclusions of the EU renovation wave plan were supported by the Council in an effort to revitalise the economy and build future green infrastructure. Member countries also endorse the strategy's objective of tripling energy-related renovation rates by 2030, emphasising the importance of combatting energy poverty, creating new jobs, increasing resource efficiency, and embracing the circular economy.

²⁷ Council of the EU. (2021). *Council approves conclusions on an EU renovation wave*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/06/11/council-approves-conclusions-on-an-eu-renovation-wave/>

11 June 2021, the Council agrees on new regulations for cross-border energy infrastructure

Content analysis of key topics and issues²⁸:

1. Corridors of Priority and Thematic Areas

- For development and integration, the agreement outlines 11 priority routes and three priority theme areas. As a result, the amended Regulation updates the qualifying infrastructure categories, emphasising decarbonization and including offshore energy networks, hydrogen infrastructure, and smart grids.

2. Hydrogen Asset Transition Period

- The Council's stance includes a transition time until December 31, 2029, during which dedicated hydrogen assets created from natural gas can be utilised to transport or store a preset hydrogen-natural-gas or biomethane blend.
- The goal is to gradually decarbonize the industry and increase the proportion of renewable gases in pipelines.

3. Emphasis on Renewable Energy Sources and Easier Permitting

- The Council emphasises the importance of renewable energy in all assets, including smart gas networks, in this case.
- To support the development of energy infrastructure projects, Member States committed to streamline and speed permission and authorisation procedures.

4. Market Cooperation and Integration

- The amended Regulation intends to guarantee that new projects meet market integration, competitiveness, and supply security goals.
- It also funds projects that connect regions that are now cut off from European energy markets, enhances existing cross-border interconnections, and encourages cooperation with nations beyond the EU.

With an emphasis on decarbonization and encompassing offshore energy networks, hydrogen infrastructure, and smart grids, the Council has agreed to revise the TEN-E Regulation, which outlines 11 priority routes and three theme areas to support development and integration.

²⁸ Council of the EU. (2021). *11 June 2021, the Council agrees on new regulations for cross-border energy infrastructure*. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/06/11/council-agrees-on-new-rules-for-cross-border-energy-infrastructure/>

Dedicated hydrogen assets developed from natural gas may be used to transport or store a hydrogen-natural-gas or biomethane mix during the transition period until December 31, 2029, in order to gradually decarbonize the sector and enhance the share of renewable gases in pipelines.

Results of research and discussion

Main identified topics and issues	Summary
1. Reforming the electricity market and securing agreement on the wholesale energy market integrity and transparency (REMIT) rule.	Discussions focused on reforming the electricity market and reaching an agreement on the REMIT rule to ensure integrity and transparency in the wholesale energy market.
2. Assessing external energy relations and international energy measures.	The council assessed external energy relations and discussed measures related to international energy cooperation.
3. Updating preparations for the upcoming winter season.	Preparations for the upcoming winter season were updated, with a focus on ensuring energy supply reliability and mitigating potential challenges.
4. Agreement on the Gas and Hydrogen Package to regulate renewable and natural gases and hydrogen in the internal market.	The council reached an agreement on the Gas and Hydrogen Package, which aims to regulate renewable and natural gases as well as hydrogen in the internal market.
5. Focus on modifying the EU power market architecture to improve resilience, stability, and consumer protection while promoting investments in renewable energy.	Discussions centred around modifying the EU power market architecture to enhance resilience, stability, consumer protection, and encourage investments in renewable energy.
6. Political agreement on policy measures to accelerate renewable energy deployment and streamline approval processes.	A political agreement was reached on policy measures to expedite the deployment of renewable energy and streamline approval processes.
7. Addressing methane emissions in the energy sector with measurement, reporting, and verification standards.	Measures were discussed to address methane emissions in the energy sector through the establishment of measurement, reporting, and verification standards.

Main identified topics and issues	Summary
8. Adoption of the REPowerEU directive, targeting reforms in renewable energy law and simplified regulatory procedures.	The council adopted the REPowerEU directive, focusing on reforms in renewable energy law and simplified regulatory procedures.
9. Market adjustment mechanisms to safeguard against high gas prices and ensure fair pricing benchmarks.	Discussions centred around implementing market adjustment mechanisms to protect against high gas prices and establish fair pricing benchmarks.
10. Solidarity and cooperation in gas purchases, exchanges, and accurate pricing benchmarks.	The council emphasized the importance of solidarity and cooperation in gas purchases, exchanges, and the establishment of accurate pricing benchmarks.
11. Emergency interventions to combat excessive power and gas costs and redistribute revenues to support consumers.	Emergency interventions were discussed to address excessive power and gas costs and redistribute revenues to support consumers.
12. Urgency in reducing reliance on Russian gas, diversifying suppliers and routes, and facilitating the energy transition.	The council stressed the urgency of reducing reliance on Russian gas, diversifying suppliers and routes, and facilitating the transition to alternative energy sources.
13. Emphasizing energy security, solidarity, and coordination in the face of geopolitical challenges.	Discussions focused on the importance of energy security, solidarity, and coordination in dealing with geopolitical challenges.
14. Focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, decarbonization, and building energy performance standards.	The council placed emphasis on energy efficiency, renewable energy, decarbonization efforts, and building energy performance standards.
15. Mitigating energy price volatility, ensuring energy supply reliability, and controlling costs.	Measures were discussed to mitigate energy price volatility, ensure energy supply reliability, and control costs.

Main identified topics and issues	Summary
16. Assistance to Ukraine and efforts to connect its electrical network to the EU's network.	The council discussed providing assistance to Ukraine and efforts to connect its electrical network to the EU's network.
17. The creation of the European Gas Purchasing Platform for coordinated communication and economic energy supply.	Discussions focused on the creation of the European Gas Purchasing Platform to facilitate coordinated communication and ensure economic energy supply.
18. Support for Ukraine, sanctions against Russia, and contingency planning in response to Russian aggression.	The council expressed support for Ukraine, discussed imposing sanctions against Russia, and engaged in contingency planning in response to Russian aggression.
19. Fit for 55 package negotiations on renewable energy and energy efficiency directives.	Negotiations on the Fit for 55 package, which encompasses renewable energy and energy efficiency directives, were discussed.
20. Rising energy prices and potential mitigation measures at the national and EU levels.	The council addressed the issue of rising energy prices and explored potential mitigation measures at both national and EU levels.
21. Evidence-based policy debates on energy costs.	Discussions focused on evidence-based policy debates regarding energy costs.
22. Redesign of trans-European energy networks, renewable energy and biodiversity coexistence, and offshore hybrid projects.	The council discussed the redesign of trans-European energy networks, the coexistence of renewable energy and biodiversity, and offshore hybrid projects.
23. Tackling increasing energy costs through wholesale market changes, joint gas purchase plans, and energy system integration.	Measures to address increasing energy costs were discussed, including wholesale market changes, joint gas purchase plans, and energy system integration.

Main identified topics and issues	Summary
24. Investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the resilience of EU energy systems.	The council emphasized the importance of investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and enhancing the resilience of EU energy systems.
25. Addressing energy pricing crisis, protecting vulnerable customers, and discussing medium and long-term measures for reasonable prices.	Discussions centred around addressing the energy pricing crisis, protecting vulnerable customers, and exploring medium and long-term measures for reasonable prices.
26. Accelerating investment in the energy transition by the European Investment Bank.	The council discussed accelerating investment in the energy transition through the involvement of the European Investment Bank.
27. Focus on energy infrastructure, hydrogen strategy, Fit for 55 package, and EU renovation wave plan.	The council placed emphasis on energy infrastructure, the hydrogen strategy, the Fit for 55 package, and the EU renovation wave plan.

Source: Author

EU energy ministers addressed several critical topics in the energy sector and made major achievements in promoting a sustainable and low-carbon future during a series of regular and extraordinary meetings of the Energy Council held between June 2021 and June 2023. This section of discussion about results from the analysis of the Energy Council meetings will be supplemented by energy experts' perspectives from Austria, Slovakia and Czechia.²⁹ These sessions covered a wide variety of topics, including energy costs, energy security, renewable energy deployment, energy efficiency, and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. The meetings were mostly about reforming the energy market, regulating gas and hydrogen, deploying renewable energy, cutting methane emissions, ensuring energy security, ensuring solidarity

²⁹ I have prepared several sets of questions in both English and Slovak, tailored to the specific profession of the individuals. The questions were always customized and well-suited for the respective positions and roles. I contacted multiple energy organizations and actors in Austria, Slovakia, and the Czechia, but unfortunately, the response rate was disappointingly low. Specifically, out of the 8 actors I reached out to in Austria, only 1 responded. In Slovakia, I approached 10 individuals and received 2 responses. The most challenging experience was in Czechia, where despite contacting over 15 people, only 1 responded. In addition to my initial outreach, I have also sent several reminders to follow up with the energy actors or organizations.

with Ukraine and reducing high energy costs. During the Council's meetings, the significance of cooperation, unity among the members, and the shift to a sustainable and low-carbon energy future were persistently emphasised.

Starting backwards, the main topic of discussion during the regular meeting on the last meeting on June 19, 2023, was the reform of the structure of the electricity market, with an emphasis on REMIT (regulatory framework for the integrity and transparency of the wholesale energy market). The Council reached a consensus on REMIT, which forbids insider trading and fights market manipulation in order to foster fair competition (Council of the EU, 2023). From the perspective of the Slovak energy minister Mr. Hirman, the REMIT reform has to ensure that the development of renewable energy sources does not create additional risks to the availability of electricity (Appendix 3, Mr. Karel Hirman, Slovak minister for Economy and Energy Expert). Other energy-related topics covered at the meeting included external energy relations, getting ready for the winter, and informing ministers on global energy policies (Council of the EU, 2023).

Significant, Gas and Hydrogen Package, which intended to establish uniform internal market regulations for renewable and natural gases as well as hydrogen, was considered during the regular meeting on March 28, 2023. The Council also concentrated on enhancing the structure of the EU power market, boosting investments in renewable energy, and informing ministers about winter preparedness and environmental legislation (Council of the EU, 2023).

Important discoveries and agreements were made during the meeting on December 19, 2022, in a number of energy-related industries. The Council came to agreements on methane emission reductions, market adjustment mechanisms, renewable energy deployment plans, and changes to EU renewable energy law. These successes demonstrated the EU's dedication to climatic goals, energy cost control, and member-state cooperation (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022).

The focus of the December 13, 2022 meeting was on reducing excessive energy costs and enhancing member states' cooperation and unity in regards to gas procurement and pricing standards. Ministers talked on transitioning to sustainable energy sources, deploying renewable energy, and disaster preparedness (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022).

On November 24, 2022, an extraordinary meeting was held to discuss a number of issues, including boosting member-state cooperation on gas purchases, trade, and benchmark prices.

The Council also reviewed measures to reduce methane emissions, update legislation governing renewable energy, and guarantee building energy efficiency (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022, 2022). Moreover, regarding to Mr. Hirman, as a result of the war the EU has increased its interaction with alternative energy suppliers, particularly for gas. This involves pipeline cooperation with countries like Algeria, Azerbaijan, and Norway, as well as increased importation of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from countries such as the United States and Qatar (Appendix 3, Mr. Karel Hirman, Slovak minister for Economy and Energy Expert). However, there are many risks when it comes to rapid and fast decisions. The hasty progress in the construction of LNG terminals helped to secure LNG supplies from outside Russia, but there is still the question of the economic return on these large projects, which can take up to 20 years. This may then be in contradiction with the decarbonisation objectives defined by the Green Deal. Furthermore, the import of LNG into Europe has led to supply problems in a number of third world countries. In other words, according to Mr. Knápek, energy expert from Czechia, Europe has siphoned off a significant part of the supply or raised the price of gas for third world countries as well (Appendix 5, Dr. Jaroslav Knápek, Czech Energy Expert).

Followingly, the topic of discussion during the extraordinary meeting on September 30, 2022, was reducing dependency on Russian fossil resources and addressing exorbitant energy expenses. The ministers reached consensus on emergency response plans, quick steps to lower energy prices, and steps to improve the security of the energy supply (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022). According to interviewed Dr. Leonardo Barreto from Austrian Energy Agency, the price cap on electricity and the impact on reducing windfall profits for electricity producers is positive. This measure helped redirect funds towards future investments in the electricity sector and received positive feedback from the population (Appendix 2, Dr. Leonardo Barreto).

The topic of solidarity with Ukraine and other member states harmed by the suspension of gas delivery was discussed in the extraordinary meeting on May 2, 2022. The development of the European Gas Purchasing Platform and reducing dependency on Russian fossil fuels were topics of discussion (Council of the EU, 2022).

According to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the critical juncture of the analysis, topics such as helping Ukraine, energy system resilience, and reducing dependency on Russian fossil fuels were discussed during the regular meeting on February 28, 2022. The European Energy Crisis, the European Green Deal, the value of cooperation, and the necessity of taking immediate

action were all topics covered by the Council (Council of the EU, 2022). Further in this section, the discussion of this meeting is provided.

The Fit for 55 vision, increasing energy costs, and various mitigation strategies were the main topics of discussion during the regular meeting on December 2, 2021. Discussions included developing a more equitable and environmentally friendly agriculture policy as well as progress on renewable energy and energy efficiency requirements (Council of the EU, 2021, 2021).

On October 26, 2021, the regular meeting discussed rising energy prices, the resilience of energy systems, and EU-level actions to aid member states. Ministers talked on market adjustments, group gas purchases, and financial investments in energy efficiency and renewable sources (Council of the EU, 2021).

The EU Renovation Wave Strategy, which seeks to treble energy-related renovation rates by 2030, was endorsed by the Energy Council at its meeting on the last analysed meeting from June 11, 2021. They also agreed to prioritise renewable energy sources, advance market integration, and revise the TEN-E Regulation. These choices demonstrated in that time the EU's dedication to a connected, sustainable energy future that supports its climate goals (Council of the EU, 2021, 2021, 2021).

Overall, prior to the war, meetings were held to assess progress, identify problems, and examine national circumstances and entry points for renewable energy aid (Council of the EU, 2021). Substantial, Gas and Hydrogen Package, which attempted to create standard internal market regulations for renewable and natural gases, as well as hydrogen, was one of the primary features of these sessions. EU ministers agreed on the Council's negotiating positions, indicating their commitment to transitioning the gas industry to renewable and low-carbon gases by 2050, in keeping with the EU's climate neutrality target.

In addition, member countries obtained a political agreement to prolong the voluntary 15% gas consumption reduction objective for another year in order to prepare for future gas supply interruptions (Council of the EU, 2023, 2023). Moreover, the Energy Council met to address the difficulties faced by rising energy bills. Various options, such as wholesale power market modifications, cooperative gas purchase agreements, and EU-level storage possibilities, were considered.

Investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and energy system integration have all been considered as critical for improving the resilience of the EU's energy systems (Council of the EU, 2021). Prior to that, the European Union established the Renovation Wave Strategy which intends to treble energy-related renovation and address the energy poverty, employment creation, and source efficiency till 2030.

The Council also agreed on a broad approach to updating the Trans-European Networks for Energy (TEN-E) Regulation, with a focus on renewable energy, streamlined licencing processes, market integration, and international collaboration. These actions demonstrated a commitment to a sustainable and integrated energy future that is consistent with the EU's climate goals, resulting in adopting measures before to the Ukraine war that highlighted the EU's commitment to tackling growing energy costs, encouraging green energy transitions, and guaranteeing fair and sustainable energy and agriculture policies (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022, 2022).

However, the Energy Council faces many obstacles while implementing and adopting these regulations throughout the analysed period that are described by the Austrian Energy expert Dr. Barreto who claims that “the Council has to overcome the political game, which for instance includes also the role of hydrogen. Hydrogen has a role in the long term, but it is still too expensive, and it does not have role in all sectors. Although, the gas lobby and other lobbies are trying to push the hydrogen, claiming that it could be used in most of the sectors. Although, hydrogen is applicable mostly in the industry, in heavy transport, in maritime transport in some areas. Hence, there are this kind of complex obstacles and conflicts between competing interests and also there are some lobbies at the EU level that may make the process more difficult” (Appendix 2, Dr. Leonardo Barreto, Austrian Energy Agency).

The start of the conflict in Ukraine in 2022 has important ramifications for the European Union's aims, vision, and energy strategies. Regarding to Mr. Hirman, the energy policy of the entire EU has radically changed, with the main objective being a significant reduction, and even a complete cessation, of the purchase of Russian energy raw materials. This shift was driven by the EU's realization of the threats posed by the war to its economy, particularly in the energy sector. The impact of the Russian war on the TTE Council has led to a fundamental reassessment of Russia's position as a strategic partner in the field of energy (Appendix 3, Mr. Karel Hirman, Slovak minister for Economy and Energy Expert).

The EU is now focused on eliminating Russia's influence on the EU energy market. Following, the commencement of the conflict, the Energy Council convened on February 28, 2022, for a critical meeting. First and foremost, the energy ministers reaffirmed their unflinching support for Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression, while recognising the negative consequences of Russian military activity.

The ministers expressed their willingness to assist Ukraine and made ideas for integrating Ukraine's electrical network with the Union's (Council of the EU, 2022). This displayed a willingness to strengthen Ukraine's energy infrastructure and ensure its resilience in the middle of the conflict. The war has shaken the stability of the dynamic system and pushed the EU together with the Energy Council to shift its focus on a rather different priorities than before the war. Furthermore, Mr. Garbiar claims that the conflict has prompted a reassessment of energy security and has led to changes in the pre-war agenda (Appendix 4, Milan Garbiar, Slovak Energy Expert).

For that reason, the meeting on 28th of February also addressed Europe's energy problem, including rising gas prices and the urgent need to strengthen the continent's energy system. However, as Dr. Barreto stated, the gas price crisis that started even before the war in 2021. The prices were becoming very high, but once the war started in February 2022, it became even worse. Hence, there is more pressure on adopting regulations and transposing regulations. But, there is also more financial means for particular sectors, particularly electro electrical mobility (Appendix 2, Dr. Leonardo Barreto, Austrian Energy Agency). Therefore, the contingency planning and cooperation efforts among member nations is being emphasised, with the goal of ensuring energy supplies and reducing reliance on Russian fossil resources. The meeting emphasised the need of minimising the crisis's impact on consumers, as well as the European Green Deal as a critical framework for pushing the transition to sustainable and independent energy sources.

On the same day as the Council meeting, the European Council met and issued a series of conclusions denouncing Russia's aggression, advocating an immediate cease of military activities, and urging respect for Ukraine's territorial integrity. The EU agreed to sanctions and restrictive measures while expressing its support for Ukraine and encouraging international cooperation and crisis preparedness. These include major aid to Ukraine, resolving the energy crisis through different ways, assuring energy supply dependability, and successfully controlling costs. Moreover, the debates emphasised the need of member-state coordination,

the execution of emergency measures, and the necessity of a green transition to attain Europe's energy independence and carbon neutrality (Council of the EU, 2022; European Council, 2022).

However, the regulations have to be implemented in a very short time and the targets until 2030 are very ambitious. The New Renewable Directive is being negotiated, but many member states will have difficulties with achieving the target that the Directive proposes. In regard to Mr. Barreto, many countries, including Austria, overlooked these risks, and a number of policies were derived from that (Appendix 2, Dr. Leonardo Barreto, Austrian Energy Agency). Moreover, Mr. Hirman also expressed some disagreements with the functioning of the Energy Council, claiming that many of the decisions often tend to be more ideological, narrowly political, and national, rather than accurately quantified based on relevant data and predictions. Regional and interstate economic, climate, and historical-social differences are not always adequately taken into account (Appendix 3, Mr. Karel Hirman, Slovak minister for Economy and Energy Expert). Hence, the ambitious agreements and plans of the EU might not be achieved. For instance, the target of biomethane is something its very ambitious and it is not going to be achieved, because of the reliance of some countries on the nuclear power (Appendix 2, Dr. Leonardo Barreto, Austrian Energy Agency).

Following the commencement of the Ukrainian war, these actions demonstrated the EU's willingness to stand in solidarity with Ukraine, address energy concerns, and develop sustainable energy policy. Hence, the Energy Council convened a series of meetings to address member nations' concerns. One of the primary goals of these meetings was to reduce dependency on Russian gas supplies. Hence, the EU decided to plan and build a standardised internal market for these energy sources and set a goal of transitioning to renewable and low-carbon emissions by 2050. This move was in line with the EU's greater aim of achieving carbon neutrality. The need for diversification of energy supplies is entailed by enhancing member-state collaboration in terms of gas purchases, cross-border exchanges, and the establishment of reliable pricing standards.

The ratification of the Gas and Hydrogen Package, which intended to establish consistent rules for renewable and natural gases, as well as hydrogen, in the internal market, was a significant outcome. In accordance with the EU's climate neutrality aim, this package intends to convert the gas industry towards renewable and low-carbon gases (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2023). However, Dr. Barreto expressed some

concerns overachieving all of the targets set up by the Energy Council. “For some technologies there are not enough supplies of heat pumps. There may be scarcity of chips for the heat pumps, there is also scarcity of the workforce and there are not enough installers for them. So, you can have a target, but if you do not have the people and you do not qualify the people, you cannot do it” (Appendix 2, Dr. Leonardo Barreto, Austrian Energy Agency).

In accordance with that, several measures were put in place to strengthen member-state solidarity and cooperation in gas purchases, exchanges, and pricing benchmarks.

Following the war, energy policy aimed to improve market integrity and openness. Market manipulation, insider trading, and price volatility were all addressed. In addition, the EU emphasised the importance of energy efficiency and lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Building energy efficiency was promoted, methane emissions were reduced, and the licencing procedure for renewable energy projects was streamlined.

Moving forward, reforming the architecture of the electrical market has been a main emphasis, with substantial progress achieved in strengthening market resilience, stability, and consumer protection, as well as boosting renewable energy investments gases (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2022, 2023).

Agreements were made on changing the EU’s power market architecture, reducing regulatory processes for renewable energy projects, and establishing renewables-specific areas with streamlined procedures. On the other hand, Mr Garbiar argues that at the level of the EU Council there exists different viewpoints exist, with one group advocating further investments in renewables and another arguing that renewables alone will not solve the problem (Appendix 4, Milan Garbiar, Slovak Energy Expert).

In other words, the war in Ukraine prompted substantial revisions in EU energy policies. The energy ministers have placed an emphasis on a coordinated EU-wide approach to improve energy security through the investigation of alternative energy sources and the establishment of trustworthy supply pathways. The objective is to establish a low-carbon energy future that ensured stability, resilience, and affordability for all member countries. More importantly, the Council aims to reduce the possibility of energy being used as a geopolitical weapon by supporting fair and open pricing arrangements.

Despite this rupture of stability of the dynamic system, throughout the meetings, EU Energy Council stakeholders remained persistent with their goals and expressed their commitment to

combating climate change and promoting a future powered by renewable energy. Their desire to address energy concerns, improve energy security, boost renewable energy deployment, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions was reflected in the approval of rules and resolutions. The debates also emphasised the significance of member-state collaboration, solidarity, and coordinated efforts to accomplish these goals.

To summarise, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has transformed the Energy Council's aims, goals, and perspectives. The Council has prioritised lowering reliance on Russian fossil fuels, hastening the transition to renewable energy, boosting market integrity and openness, and improving energy security and supply resilience. Measures and agreements have been put in place to provide standard laws for renewable and low-carbon gases, to simplify regulatory processes for renewable energy projects, and to alleviate excessive energy prices. These initiatives demonstrate the Council's commitment to a safe and sustainable energy future, while also increasing member-state collaboration and solidarity.

In addition, the insights of the Russian invasion of Ukraine provided by energy experts from Austria, Slovakia, and the Czechia highlights many important lessons. At first the risk assessment, the need for diversification, the crucial role of geopolitics and the presence of lobby and importance of transparency. Regarding to interview with Dr. Barreto, what is the lesson-learned from the response of the EU to the Russian invasion in Ukraine, in his view, it is evident that the transition from the fossil fuel system to a renewable system is a gradual process that will not be fully realized until 2030. There are significant challenges that need to be addressed, such as the shortage of installers, supply chain issues, and the availability of critical minerals like lithium and rare earths, which are crucial for electric mobility and solar PV applications. These risks must be thoroughly assessed. One key lesson learned from the war is that the risks associated with gas supply were overlooked in the past, and there was a lack of transparency in the political process. The influence of the gas lobby on the European Commission and governments played a role in this. It is imperative that these processes change to ensure objective risk assessment and greater transparency. It is crucial to communicate the risks involved in transitioning from one energy mix to another, including potential delays, scarcity of critical materials, and workforce-related risks. People need to be informed about these risks and the measures that can be taken to minimize or mitigate them (Appendix 2, Leonardo Barreto).

Followingly, the key lessons learned from the impact of the Russian war on the energy sector emphasize the necessity of diversification, the careful integration of RES, and the importance of interconnectivity and coordination among EU member states. By incorporating these insights into future energy policies and strategies, the TTE Council can work towards a more resilient and sustainable energy sector for the EU as a whole (Appendix 3, Mr. Karel Hirman, Slovak minister for Economy and Energy Expert). More critical view is provided by Mr. Garbiar, who stated that in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, the issues of energy policy should be dealt with at the level of nation states. I consider the EU energy framework and the TTE Council to be slow and ineffective; nation states are able to react much more quickly and in accordance with their specific needs (Appendix 4, Milan Garbiar, Slovak Energy Expert).

In the case of Czechia, Dr. Knápek claimed that as a basic lesson, there is a clear need to diversify the energetic resources, both in terms of their different types and the way they are obtained (imported) and the in light of the prevailing geopolitical risks, it becomes evident that developing strategies, selecting suppliers, and ensuring secure transport routes should not solely rely on economic factors that typically have short-term implications. It is crucial to consistently prioritize the diversification of sources, suppliers, and the establishment of alternative routes. Additionally, enhancing preparedness in legislative aspects, such as effectively managing crisis situations and implementing measures like heating restrictions, is equally important (Appendix 5, Dr. Jaroslav Knápek, Czech Energy Expert).

Conclusion

Finally, the purpose of this diploma thesis was to assess the influence of the Russia-Ukraine war on European Union energy policy. The current conflict between Russia and Ukraine has posed serious threats to the EU's energy security and stability, forcing reforms in energy legislation and policy. This thesis intended to provide light on the changes in energy policy in reaction to the war by applying a retrograde analysis and viewpoints anchored in historical institutionalism.

As indicated by the activities of the EU Energy Council, the war in Ukraine has spurred substantial adjustments in EU energy policies. The Council has emphasised the importance of a coordinated EU-wide effort to improving energy security through the exploration of alternative energy sources and the establishment of reliable supply lines. The goal is to establish a low-carbon energy future for all member nations that provides stability, resilience, and affordability. Importantly, through encouraging fair and transparent pricing structures, the Council hopes to decrease the possibility for energy to be exploited as a geopolitical weapon (Council of the EU, 2022, 2022, 2022).

Despite the interruption created by the conflict, actors in the EU Energy Council maintained their commitment to addressing climate change and supporting renewable energy. Their commitment to tackling energy challenges, strengthening energy security, expanding renewable energy deployment, and lowering greenhouse gas emissions was reflected in the adoption of regulations and resolutions. To attain these aims, the meeting emphasised the importance of collaboration, solidarity, and coordinated actions among member nations (Council of the EU, 2022, 2023).

To summarise, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has altered the EU Energy Councils objectives, ambitions, and perspectives. The Council has prioritised lowering dependency on Russian fossil fuels, hastening the transition to renewable energy, increasing market integrity and openness, and enhancing energy security and supply resilience. Standard standards for renewable and low-carbon gases have been established, regulatory processes for renewable energy projects have been streamlined, and exorbitant energy prices have been mitigated. These efforts show the Council's commitment to a secure and sustainable energy future, while also encouraging greater collaboration and solidarity among member states.

Furthermore, energy experts from Austria, Slovakia, and the Czechia shed light on key lessons learnt from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. These include the necessity of diversity, geopolitics, the existence of lobbying, and transparency.

The experts emphasised that the shift from a fossil fuel system to a renewable system is a long process fraught with difficulties such as installer shortages, supply chain constraints, and essential resource availability. To properly handle these difficulties, risk assessment and openness in the political process are required. Lessons learnt also emphasise the significance of diversity, cautious integration of renewable energy sources, and interconnection and cooperation across EU member states. While some experts express reservations about the EU energy framework and the TTE Council's speed and efficacy, others emphasise the necessity of national-level decision-making and subsidiarity in energy policy.

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Field of work: Public and Social policy

Thesis (Research project):

Delimitation research problem

The thesis focuses on examining the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on energy policy and the formation of energy policy within the European Union. This topic holds great significance due to the immediate disruption it has caused within the international system, affecting both the EU's energy policy objectives and the national energy policies of its member states. In addition, energy policy plays a crucial role in public policy, influencing various social aspects within the member states.

The outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war has had adverse effects on the development of the energy market, leading to substantial increases in energy and fuel prices. Additionally, the threat of potential disruptions in energy supplies from Russia further exacerbates the unfavourable situation. The EU's high dependence on gas imports from Russia intensifies the challenges faced.

In response to the war, the EU must adapt the challenges of energy policy actors and formulate strategies to address the new obstacles emerging in the energy sector. These changes in energy policy formation are significant in terms of the commitments and goals outlined by the EU in its energy framework. Alterations in the energy policies developed by key actors can either

positively or negatively impact the EU's environmental commitments and objectives. The Russia-Ukraine conflict poses challenges concerning energy supply, price increases, energy poverty, and may either threaten or expedite the attainment of environmental policy goals at the EU level.

Conducting an analysis of developments in energy policy at the EU level is crucial to comprehending the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war on energy policy within the international system. The research will involve scrutinizing various sources such as documents, press releases, and outcomes of EU Energy Council meetings prior the war. It will also present new directives, regulations, proposed changes, and measures introduced after the outbreak of the war, all aimed at maintaining the established energy policy goals. By examining these sources, the thesis aims to provide insights into the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on energy policy and assess the measures implemented to address the evolving energy landscape.

Objectives of the thesis

The main goal of the thesis is to present the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on formation of energy policy in the European Union.

The work will present energy policies before the outbreak of the conflict, which will be followed by a presentation of the impact of the war on the content of energy policies after the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The first goal of the work is a theoretical presentation of the interplay between energy policy and public policy, followed by the understanding of the dynamic system and the disruption of that system by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This will be followed by the short description of the war and negative implications of it. Additionally, response of the EU is presented and followed by the literature review of researches that have been already conducted in this field and presents a research gap for this thesis. The work will thus bring a complete overview of the EU's energy policy.

The second goal of the work is a qualitative content analysis of the documents from the Energy Council's meetings starting from June 2023 to April 2021. Hence, the work will point to possible changes in energy policy goals. The work is based on the assumption that these changes in EU energy policy occurred in response to the Russian war in Ukraine.

Lastly, the goal is to comprehensively present the impact of the Russian war on the energy policy of the EU. In order to do so, in addition the thesis will include interviews with several energy experts to present insights and perspectives on the development of energy policy deviation from the original framework of energy policy at the EU level.

Research questions

- What impact does the Russia-Ukraine conflict have on the energy policy and possible changes to this policy in the European Union?
 - How energy policy developed European Union over the years?
 - What factors influence the energy policy of the European Union?

Hypothesis

The Russia-Ukraine war caused changes in the attitudes of energy policy actors and possible changes in energy policy at the level of the European Union.

Theoretical background

Historical institutionalism

The key concepts of historical institutionalism are evolution and institutions, which are understood as a set of formal and informal procedures, routines, norms embedded in the organizational structure (Hall & Taylor, 1996) . Historical institutionalism includes a retrograde investigation of the trajectory of why it was created, for example. the given state or simply based on the assumption that social phenomena are influenced by their previous development ("Marx's Theory of Crisis", 1995) and that their development is influenced by path dependence (Rixen & Viola, 2016) , external factors and their own history. EU energy policy is directly dependent on institutional changes. Institutions dealing with the functioning of energy are strongly influenced by historical institutionalism. The work will draw in depth from the work of the authors: Plačel , Vaceková , Valentinov , Ochrana - Historical institutionalism : a tool for researching the nonprofit sector in times of pandemic (Plaček et al., 2022) .

Retrograde approach

The Retrograde approach provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and

explaining the process of change and its development over time. This approach offers valuable insights into the historical evolution of specific events or phenomena, shedding light on the factors that have influenced their trajectory (Ochrana, 2022).

Retrograde views change as a gradual and incremental process, driven by the interaction between internal and external factors over time. It recognizes that events and phenomena do not occur in isolation but are influenced by a complex web of historical circumstances, social systems, and institutional frameworks. By analysing the historical evolution of these elements and their interactions, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms of change (Ochrana, 2022).

In developing the retrograde approach, Ochrana drew from both historical and evolutionary theories, akin to the concepts found in historical institutionalism. By examining the historical trajectory of events and phenomena, researchers can discern how they have evolved, the influences they have encountered, and the possible interplay between them. This timeline analysis serves as a powerful tool for understanding change over time and elucidating the historical context surrounding events and phenomena (Ochrana, 2022).

By applying the retrograde approach, the thesis aims to analyse the war as a crucial event that has altered the trajectory of EU energy policy. By examining the historical context, interactions, and influences surrounding the war, the research seeks to shed light on how this conflict has impacted the development and current state of EU energy policy. By analysing the historical evolution of events and phenomena and their interactions, the retrograde approach offers insights into the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that shape the trajectory of change. Applying this approach to the study of the Russian-Ukraine War allows for a deeper understanding of its influence on EU energy policy and its current state.

Research plan

The thesis aims to analyse the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on energy policy in the European Union (EU) using retrograde analysis and a historical institutionalism perspective.

Energy security and the vulnerability of the dynamic system amid the ongoing war in Ukraine are key aspects to be explored at the beginning of the thesis. Followed, by the chapter dedicated to the interplay of energy policy and public policy presenting the connection between energy policy and public policy will be highlighted, emphasizing the role of energy security in

determining stability and resilience. Moreover, the ongoing war in Ukraine is a destabilizing factor with negative implications for society which will be also described and introduced in detail. Moving forward, the thesis in its theoretical part will present the response of the European Union to the crisis and it will shortly describe the initial reaction of the EU towards Russia because, the limitations on Russian gas and oil supplies have necessitated a shift in reliance and posed challenges to energy security and affordability.

Closing chapter of the theoretical framework of the thesis will focus on the literature review of already written research that will help the thesis to explore the research gap.

The thesis will be followed by the methodology, consistently applying the research theories of historical institutionalism and a retrograde analysis. Historical institutionalism is applied to understand how historical legacies, institutional structures, and actor behaviour shape energy policy. The retrograde approach is used to analyse the development of energy policy in the EU. Methodological part will also present detailed step-by-step framework based on which the analysis will be conducted.

In the analytical part, at first The EU energy framework, the decision-making processes and key actors within the Transport, Telecommunications, and Energy Council are examined. This is followed by the unique content analysis of key topics and issues discussed in council meetings provides insights into policy developments and changes. The analysis will highlight the changes in energy policy and the responses to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Lastly, the chapter about discussion of the results will be provided. The research findings will shed light on the evolving dynamics of EU energy policy and the insights from energy experts will provide additional perspectives on the lessons learned from the conflict.

Limitations

The topicality of the topic and the newly emerging issue is a significant limitation of the research. Sudden changes in the attitudes of government politicians can occur unexpectedly and at any time during the research process, when these changes can no longer be reflected in the work.

Ethical context of the project

The work does not identify obstacles related to ethical principles, because in its initial phase it works with publicly available sources and in its analytical part examines the statements of

government politicians in public sessions of the Chamber of Deputies. Politicians are public figures, and their statements are not subject to personal data protection. At the same time, the work deals only with the content analysis of the statements and does not collect any of their personal data or the data of other experts who commented on the issue in the work.

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Appendix no. 2: Dr. Leonardo Barreto, Austrian Energy Agency

Original interview transcript

1. What is your perspective on the energy-related resolutions and policies put forth by the Telecommunication, Transport and Energy (TTE) Council or the European Union in general since the war in Ukraine, and do you find them aligned with your views and objectives in the energy sector?

I think my perspective is positive and they are aligned with the objectives and perspectives of the Austrian energy policy. Austrian energy policy has three pillars. One is renewable energy. The second is energy efficiency and the term energy security of energy supply. Um, as you may know, Austria had still is, but had been very dependent on gas imports, particularly Russian imports. In 2020. Those amounted up to 80% of the imports were from Russia. Now the picture is more differentiated, has been decreasing in some months, is still high. Imports and high imports from Russia in other months is not. But the crisis had led Austria to diversify its sources of gas. On the one hand and on the other hand to save gas. So one of the policies of the council, one of the emergency council regulations, was directed to have to lead member states to save gas by 15% on average between August 2022 and March 2023. And this objective has been achieved and Austria was had managed to save about 19% of gas during this period. That's perfect. Of course, there are a number of sectors that have more difficulties to switch from gas. There are some sectors in the industry that are still reliant on gas, and in the long term, they will have to move either towards electrification if electrification can achieve high temperatures or process heat or to hydrogen for the highest temperatures, probably hydrogen is going to be a way.

This is one one. One aspect, which was the energy savings. So in this case, gas. Energy savings. Yeah. Second aspect is the price cap on electricity. There is another council regulation that basically apply the cap on market revenues to electricity producers. The cap was set at €280 per megawatt hour. I think that was the cap that the EU proposed and of course member states had the possibility to be more stringent if they wanted to do that. This cap, basically it was transposed in Austria and basically helped to reduce the. Amount of, let's say, windfall profits that the producers, electricity producers had during this period, which were enormous, and also to redirect them towards investment also in the in the electricity sector in the future. So we think this gap has been positive. Mean the gap affected the number of producers. So renewable producers, of course, because gas is the price setting in the electricity market. But I think it was it was a positive measure to do. I mean, it's, of course, politically not an easy measure to do dealing with the energy suppliers, but it was a positive measure to do and it was in the right signal also towards the population because people were seeing people are making a lot of money. Prices are very high. What happens to these money and can these revenues be capped? This has led, of course, in the long term, this cap on the electricity prices is probably going to flow into the new market design of the electricity market.

That means there may be ways to ensure that there are not excessive profits from from companies at the moment. It is a it is a mechanism which is which is temporary, so to say. Although the council is already considering to extend the this regulation and other regulations, the period until the new directives are are adopted. Yeah. There is something else. Repower you, which was a very ambitious plan but had positive aspects. Heat pumps, solar PV. The solar strategy that I've enacted is also in line with what Australia is doing. Austria is providing very generous subsidies for solar PV and trying to move ahead with heat pumps. Heat pumps is a promising technology, but of course for existing buildings it can be challenging, particularly in Vienna, where there is no space to to do the drilling for the heat pumps. So this is another aspect which is which is positive and repower. You also have a target for biomethane. 35,000,000,000m³ by 2030 is a very ambitious target, but it has helped to move the biomethane in the right direction towards the future. Austria responding also with the will respond with a low on a quota for renewable gases to 2030, including biomethane and hydrogen. Yeah.

2. In relation to your work and agenda, do you experience any direct impact from the decisions made by the TTE Council and the European Union in the energy sector, especially after the Russian invasion in Ukraine?

We have more work on the one hand, but we also have received more mean issues, have become more pressing due to the crisis and due to the war. I mean, the gas price crisis that started before the war started already in 2021. The prices were becoming very high. But once the war started in February 2022, it became even worse. So there is more present, there is more pressure on adopting regulations, transposing regulations. There is also more more financial means for particular sectors, particularly electro electrical mobility. The agency manages a project on climate and you're familiar with that, but it's the climate protection campaign of the Ministry for Climate Action. We have the overall coordination of that campaign or initiative. You can say it's more than a campaign, much more than a campaign. It's an initiative. And then in electrical mobility, it is much more to do because it has become also a more pressing issue to move forward. We also see that in the solar PV sector, there is more money, there is more need also for actors to be to receive advice on what the measures should be. Measures have to be accomplished in a much shorter time and so on. And there is another aspect that I forgot to mention. Two aspects I will mention it now. One is permitting permitting procedures had also a regulation, an emergency regulation on accelerating the permitting procedures. And and this is a challenging issue in Austria due to the fact that permitting for renewable energy technologies is partly competence of the regional governments and even of the local governments.

The national government alone cannot achieve an acceleration of the permitting procedures. It can support it, it can provide a catalyzing role. So to say I can direct, but it needs an agreement with the regional governments to increase the amounts of renewable energy that should be installed, particularly electricity, and also to accelerate the permitting procedures. So the Minister is now working on a law to accelerate the permitting procedures and that is requires this requires negotiations and agreements with the regional governments and and the national and the national and the local governments. This is one aspect. Permitting is an important aspect because it's one of the main bottlenecks for the deployment of renewable

electricity. I mean, for a wind power plant, the permitting can last up to seven years. And this is with the current pressure that is now not acceptable to achieve the targets but doesn't hurt. And the other issue is the gas package. The gas package includes now hydrogen is being now negotiated, but also has already done some steps in this direction to incorporate hydrogen into the gas package. So the gas the gas directive and the the regulation that accompanies it and also towards the role of hydrogen. So Austria is moving towards preparing the the rain for for the role of hydrogen.

3. Have there been any noticeable changes after the 24th February 2022 in the agenda of the EU from your perspective? If so, could you provide insights into the areas where the European Union is from your perspective now focusing more attention and whether there are any specific energy sectors that have been unintentionally overlooked due to the conflict?

I don't say that they have been overlooked, but I think they are trying to tackle most of the aspects. I will say there are some issues that are more challenging than others. Diversifying the supply of natural gas on a tight market is not an easy thing to do. Also accelerating renewables, particularly due to the. To the permitting problem. I mean, the fact that the that the authorization of plants takes so long. It's also not as easy thing to do. You could say some of the. Some of the targets that the EU has put forward are very ambitious and may not be achieved through 2030. We have seven years to go and this is a very short time period. So some of them are for instance, the target of biomethane is something that it is. Sorry that it is. It's very ambitious. It's not going to be achieved. Mean, but think it goes in the right direction. There are, of course, some tensions in terms of. What is considered sustainable or not. I mean, the European Union, the European Commission allows the member states to determine freely their on. Energy mix and some countries are relying on nuclear or want to rely on nuclear. And this has affected, on the one hand, has affected the negotiations, particularly the renewable directive, because there have been some attempts by countries like France to to include nuclear in some way in the Renewable Energy Directive.

But it has no place, in our view. You may know Austria has a very strong stance against nuclear because it's a very expensive technology because extremely risky, because the issue of the waste not being defined and because it takes extremely long to build. So this is an issue that is attention in the EU and and it will have to be resolved in the long term. For the time being. It still has a place in the mix of several countries, but it may affect the discussion on renewables, for instance. So I wouldn't say that the issues have been overlooked. This has been a lot of proposals from the Commission coming in the last year. A lot of it's very difficult for Member states also to digest them and to implement them. I mean, the regulations have been have to be implemented in a very short time. The targets until 2030 are very high. The new renewable directive is being negotiated. I mean, the current target is with the current directive with the to is 32% is supposed to be increased up to 42.5%. So this is a large increase in the target and member states had difficulties achieving those targets. So maybe you may think it's. Unrealistic. Don't know. But. But it's difficult to achieve.

It's very hard to see because there are a number of obstacles on the side. So it's not just a matter of proposing targets and agreeing on targets. This is a positive step. But after comes the process of transposing the directives and implementing the directives and achieving the targets. And this there is where there are difficulties. Of course, there are also difficulties in the supply chains. For some technologies there are not enough supplies of heat pumps. There may be scarcity of chips for the heat pumps. There is also scarcity of the workforce. There are not enough installers for them. So you can have a target. But if you don't have the people and you don't qualify the people, you cannot do it. Also for solar PV, maybe a lack of installers, maybe particularly electricians. In the case of solar PV, you have installed solar PV, you can train the person in the number two months or six weeks to two months. But if you need an electrician, you need two three years to train this person. So I will say it's not that they overlook things, but mainly that on the one hand there is there's been a political game also to deviate from things that are important.

And on the other hand, there is also a a number of obstacles that have to be overcome. The political game also includes the role of hydrogen. Hydrogen has a role in the long term, but it first is long term. Second is still too expensive. And secondly, it doesn't have a role in all sectors. Partly the gas lobby and other lobbies are trying to push saying, okay, use hydrogen for the building sector, use hydrogen for the car, passenger car sector. And there is no no realistic applications there. So something like hydrogen has to be brought to the right dimension of application where it's made sense in the industry, maybe in heavy transport, in maritime transport in some areas, but not being proposed as a panacea for all possible sectors. So there are these kind of complex I will not say something is overlooked, but it's mainly conflicts between competing interests and also also there are some lobbies at the EU level that may make the process more difficult.

3. In your opinion, what are the key lessons or insights that can be derived from the impact of the Russian war on the energy sector, and how can they inform future energy policies and strategies?

I think one of the main lessons is that the risk assessment was not done correctly. Risks were not assessed. I mean, it was clear that if you rely on a single gas supplier, there is a risk. Many countries, including Austria, overlooked districts or decided to overlook these risks, and a number of policies were derived from that. I mean, Austria relied on the Russians did not diversify, although this problem is contracts were there from the 50s or the 60s were developed. It was clear that there was already a risk there, but still it was chosen politically not to develop alternative supplies, not to develop renewables sufficiently, not to develop energy efficiency sufficiently. And energy efficiency is a good hedging strategy against high prices and also against the scarcity in case of scarcity of gas. So you could see that the risk assessment has to be done right. You have to see the the risk and you have also to see the risks in the transition. I mean, transition from the fossil gas system to the renewable based system means also that you have to rely on critical minerals, critical materials, supply chains that may not be in the European hands. I mean, solar PV, for instance, most of the supply chain is in Chinese hands.

So this brings also a number of geopolitical risks and they have to be assessed correctly. At this moment, we are in a period of coexistence.

I mean, the fossil system hasn't gone away and it's not going to go away until 2030 and the renewable system is not able to deliver fully until 2030 because there are no installers. Supply chains are a problem. Critical minerals may not be available in sufficient amount, for instance, lithium for electrical mobility or rare earths for electric mobility or for solar PV or for other other applications, maybe in the hands of other countries or blocs. So these risks have to be assessed. But I think the main lesson was that the gas supply, the risks were overlooked and there was a political process that did not make it transparent. There was a lot of influence from the gas lobby on the European Commission and on the on the governments to some extent. And these processes have to change. They have to become more objective in the risk assessment and more transparent towards the. The risk assessment saying we are going from this. Energy mix to another energy mix implies this implies that we are also going to have risk, may have risk of delay. Risk of critical materials. Risk of workforce risk of this. And this is having to be explained to the people so that people know what are the risks and what are the measures then then that can be taken to minimize or mitigate the risk.

The planning has to change. I mean, the planning has become more urgent. Things have to be complex and shorter times, and the planning has to change. And also in terms of the long term perspective, it has to change what is what is mean. What that mean for the energy system in 2013, 2014, 2050? What are the steps that have to be taken?

I mean the LNG case, for instance, dependency is more now in the US and then well, there is a risk of the prices, there is a risk of competing needs in Asia or not, but also it has a number of consequences. Europe was paying a very high prices. So some countries which cannot afford, like Pakistan, countries in Latin America, they will not able to afford this LNG anymore. Right. So they have to switch to coal. And this also has has has consequences in the energy mix and the emissions and the cost, the affordability of the country. So it's not it's also taking into account that the LNG card, as flexible as it may be, has also a number of consequences, dependency in other in other countries on the one hand, and also it has an impact on how particularly low income countries may be, may have access to the to the to energy because Europe is not acting alone in the world. The policies that Europe is enacting have an impact on other countries, particularly developing countries.

4. Do you work in close relation with your energy minister?

Work, we work closely with Mrs. Cabinet and also with the ministry. I mean, our agency is organized as an association. That means we have about 50 members. Members are the, the ministry. On the one hand, the number of think tanks and institutions, energy suppliers and so on. And the president of this association is the minister. So she is directly involved. So we work closely with them. We don't get approached directly by the council because the council deals with the ministry.

Appendix no. 3: Mr. Karel Hirman, Slovak minister for Economy and Energy Expert

Original interview transcript

1. Došlo od vypuknutia ruskej vojny k zmene vízie a priorit Rady pre Telekomunikácie, Dopravu a Energetiku (Telecommunication, Transport and Energy Council, ďalej len TTE) v porovnaní s jej predvojnovou agendou? Ak áno, mohli by ste poskytnúť informácie o konkrétnych oblastiach, na ktoré teraz EÚ kladie väčší dôraz, a o tom, či sa v dôsledku konfliktu prehliadajú niektoré oblasti energetiky?

Vojna Ruska proti UA vypukla vo februári 2014, keď RU obsadilo a anektovalo Krym a neskôr aj východný Donbas. Na to sa neustále zabúda. Podľa mňa EÚ až do februára 2022, keď RU masívne zaútočilo na Kyjev a de facto na celé územie UA, vo svojej celkovej politike voči RU bolo veľmi slabé a nechápalo hrozby, ktoré z toho plynú pre EÚ hospodárstvo, osobitne energetiku (dodávky plynu, ropy, jadrového paliva atď). Typickým príkladom je súhlas DE na výstavbu plynovodu Nord Stream 2 v roku 2015.

Po februári 2022 sa zvlášť energetická politika celej EÚ radikálne zmenila a jej hlavným cieľom sa stalo výrazné obmedzenie a až úplné zastavenie nákupu RU energetických surovín. Napomohla tomu výrazne aj stratégia samotného RU, ktoré ešte v 2.polovici 2021 zásadne obmedzila dodávky plynu do EÚ (nezaplnené zásobníky plynu patriace Gazpromu v DE, Holandsku a Rakúsku, zastavenie dodávok plynu alebo výrazné obmedzenie cez plynovody Jamal-Európa a cez UA-SK tranzitný koridor).

2. Ako sa vyvíjal energetický rámec EÚ od začiatku ruskej vojny až po súčasnosť vo svojich prioritách? Stručne opíšte.

Viz.opdoveď vyššie: absolútnou prioritou sa stala diverzifikácia dovozov energet.surovín a následne aj ich sankčné obmedzenie (ropa, ropné výrobky).

3. Ako by ste stručne opísali vplyv ruskej vojny na Radu TTE?

Zásadné prehodnotenie postavenia RU ako strategického partnera v oblasti energetiky smerom k eliminácii jeho postavenia na energet.trhu EÚ

4. Aké úpravy alebo revízie by sa mali zvážiť v energetickom rámci EÚ a Rady TTE v súvislosti s ruskou vojnou na Ukrajine, aby sa zabezpečila väčšia odolnosť a udržateľnosť energetického sektora?

- 1. Pokračovanie v diverzifikácii, vrátane dlhodobých kontraktov a spoločného nákupu plynu, ak bude o to záujem.*
- 2. Uznanie jadrovej energetiky ako spoľahlivého a nízko-emisného zdroja na úrovni OZE (RES).*
- 3. Zásadná revízia pravidiel obchodovania na burzových (spotových) trhoch s plynom a elektrinou (zavedenie podobne prísnych regulačných mechanizmov, ako sú bežné na iných komoditných trhoch napr. LME). Eliminácia finančno-špekulatívnych operácií z trhu s emisnými povolenkami.*

4. Podpora energetickej efektívnosti a rozvoja OZE, ako aj zavádzanie nových emisných kvót s ohľadom na konkurencieschopnosť EÚ priemyslu.

5. Aké faktory a úvahy zohrávajú významnú úlohu v rozhodovacom procese Rady TTE pri formulovaní energetických politík a stratégií?

Bohužiaľ, často sú to viac ideologické a úzko politicko-štátne, namiesto precízne kvantifikovaných na základe relevantných dát a predikcií a s ohľadom na regionálne a medzištátne hospodárske, klimatické a historicko-spoločenské rozdiely.

6. Akú úlohu zohrávajú konzultácie so zainteresovanými stranami a podnety verejnosti pri formovaní rozhodnutí Rady TTE?

Cítiť výrazný vplyv rôznych NGO a záujmových zoskupení, avšak to sa skôr prejavuje na pozíciách jednotlivých ČK EÚ.

7. Ako súčasná ruská vojna na Ukrajine ovplyvnila energetickú diplomáciu TTE a jej vzťahy s inými krajinami alebo regiónmi produkujúcimi energiu? Mohli by ste poskytnúť stručný prehľad spolupráce medzi príslušnými subjektmi alebo krajinami pred vojnou a ako sa odvtedy vyvíjala alebo menila až do súčasnosti?

EÚ viac komunikuje s inými dodávateľmi energet.surovín, osobitne pri plyne (potrubný: Alžírsko, Azerbajdžan, Nórsko....LNG: USA, Katar a iní).

8. Aké sú vaše hlavné priority a ciele v oblasti energetiky vo vašej krajine a ako sú v súlade so širšími cieľmi Rady TTE?

Diverzifikácia dovozov kľúčových energet.surovín s cieľom zásadným spôsobom znížiť , resp.eliminovať dovoz z RU. Rozvoj jadrovej energetiky v synergickom rozvoji OZE. Zvýšenie podielu OZE v tepelnej energetike (sústavách centrálného vykurovania miest).

9. Ako ste spolupracovali s ostatnými ministrami energetiky v rámci Rady TTE s cieľom podporiť regionálnu spoluprácu v oblasti energetiky a riešiť spoločné energetické výzvy?

Veľmi dobre. Osobitne v rámci 15 krajín, ktoré presadzovali výrazné obmedzenia na spotových trhoch s plynom tak, aby sa obmedzili špekulatívne výkyvy cien.

10. Aké sú podľa vás kľúčové ponaučenia alebo poznatky, ktoré možno vyvodiť z vplyvu vojny v Rusku na energetický sektor, a ako môže TTE dostatočne informovať budúce energetické politiky a stratégie?

Akákoľvek dominantná závislosť EÚ, alebo nejakej jej regionálnej časti, od niektorého dodávateľa energet.surovín je neprípustná. Rozvoj OZE nesmie vytvárať ďalšie riziká s dostupnosťou elektriny s tým, že by neúmerne zvýšil význam plynu, ako regulačného zdroja na vykrytie výkyvov v sieti. Je nutná koordinácia a reálna vzájomná otvorenosť a prepojenosť medzi energet.systemami krajín a regiónov EÚ.

Translated interview transcript

1. Since the outbreak of the Russian war, has the vision and priorities of the Telecommunications, Transport and Energy Council (TTE) changed from its pre-war agenda? If so, could you provide information on the specific areas that the EU is now placing more emphasis on and whether any areas of energy are being overlooked as a result of the conflict?

Russia's war against the UA erupted in February 2014 when the RU occupied and annexed Crimea and later the eastern Donbas. This is constantly forgotten. In my opinion, the EU was very weak in its overall policy towards the RU until February 2022, when the RU massively attacked Kiev and de facto the whole territory of the UA, and did not understand the threats this posed to the EU economy, specifically the energy sector (gas, oil, nuclear fuel supply, etc). A typical example is DE's approval of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline in 2015.

After February 2022 in particular, the energy policy of the entire EU has radically changed and its main objective has become a significant reduction and even complete cessation of the purchase of RU energy raw materials. The strategy of the RU itself, which in the second half of 2021 had already substantially reduced gas supplies to the EU (unfilled gas storage facilities belonging to Gazprom in DE, the Netherlands and Austria, stopping gas supplies or severely restricting them via the Yamal-Europe pipelines and the UA-SK transit corridor), also contributed significantly to this.

2. How has the EU energy framework evolved in its priorities from the start of the Russian war to the present? Briefly describe.

See answer above: diversification of energy imports has become an absolute priority, followed by sanctions (oil, petroleum products).

3. How would you briefly describe the impact of the Russian war on the TTE Council?

A fundamental reassessment of the position of the Russian Federation as a strategic partner in the field of energy towards the elimination of its position on the EU energy market.

4. What adjustments or revisions should be considered in the energy framework of the EU and the TTE Council in the context of the Russian war in Ukraine in order to ensure a more resilient and sustainable energy sector?

- 1. Continued diversification, including long-term contracts and gas pooling, if desired.*
- 2. Recognition of nuclear power as a reliable and low-emission resource at the level of RES.*
- 3. A fundamental revision of the trading rules in the gas and electricity exchange (spot) markets (introduction of similarly strict regulatory mechanisms as are common in other commodity markets, e.g. LME). Elimination of financially speculative operations from the emissions trading market.*
- 4. Promoting energy efficiency and the development of RES, as well as the introduction of new emission allowances with a view to the competitiveness of EU industry.*

5. What factors and considerations play an important role in the decision-making process of the TTE Council in formulating energy policies and strategies?

Unfortunately, these are often more ideological and narrowly political and national, rather than accurately quantified based on relevant data and predictions, and taking into account regional and interstate economic, climate and historical-social differences.

6. What role does stakeholder consultation and public input play in shaping TTE Council decisions?

There is a strong influence of various NGOs and interest groups, but this tends to be reflected in the positions of the individual EU MS.

7. How has the current Russian war in Ukraine affected the TTE's energy diplomacy and its relations with other energy producing countries or regions? Could you provide a brief overview of the cooperation between the relevant actors or countries before the war and how it has evolved or changed since then until now?

The EU is interacting more with other energy suppliers, especially for gas (pipeline: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Norway....LNG: USA, Qatar and others).

8. What are your main energy priorities and objectives in your country and how do they align with the broader objectives of the TTE Council?

Diversification of imports of key energy commodities to substantially reduce or eliminate imports from the RU. Development of nuclear energy in synergistic development of RES. Increasing the share of RES in the thermal energy sector (urban central heating systems).

9. How have you worked with other Energy Ministers in the TTE Council to promote regional energy cooperation and address common energy challenges?

Very well. Particularly within the 15 countries that have pushed for significant restrictions on gas spot markets so as to limit speculative price fluctuations.

10. In your view, what are the key lessons or insights that can be drawn from the impact of the war in Russia on the energy sector, and how can TTE sufficiently inform future energy policies and strategies?

Any dominant dependence of the EU, or any regional part of it, on any one energy supplier is unacceptable. The development of RES must not create additional risks to the availability of electricity by disproportionately increasing the importance of gas as a regulating source to cover fluctuations in the grid. There is a need for coordination and real openness and interconnection between the energy systems of EU countries and regions.

Appendix no. 4:, Mr. Milan Garbiar, Slovak Energy Expert

Original interview transcript

1. Došlo od vypuknutia ruskej vojny k zmene vízie a priorit Rady pre Telekomunikácie, Dopravu a Energetiku (Telecommunication, Transport and Energy Council, ďalej len TTE) v porovnaní s jej predvojnovou agendou?

Ak áno, mohli by ste poskytnúť informácie o konkrétnych oblastiach, na ktoré teraz EÚ kladie väčší dôraz, a o tom, či sa v dôsledku konfliktu prehliaďujú niektoré oblasti energetiky.

Vo verejnom priestore panuje momentálne zmätok, ktorý spôsobil konflikt na Ukrajine čo sa týka spôsobu zabezpečenia energy security. Myslím, že panuje všeobecný konsenzus, že masívne investície do renewables paradoxne zvýšili závislosť na Ruskom plyne najmä v kontexte nemeckej Energiewende. Avšak zmätok panuje v tom, ako by sme mali reagovať. Jedna skupina presadzuje ďalšie investície do renewables, ale na druhej strane existuje časť odborníkov, ku ktorým sa prikláňam aj, ktorá hovorí, že renewables problém nevyriešia. Ich argument je najlepšie popísaný v dokumente, ktorý prikladám. Ide o to, že súčasný dizajn trhu zakrýva vysoké náklady na riadenie odchýlky z renewables.

2. Ako by ste stručne opísali vplyv ruskej vojny na energetickú politiku EÚ/Radu TTE

Krátkodobo bola reakcia bola nasmerovaná skrze tieto iniciatívy:

- Re-power Europe projekt (ide o projekt, ktorý iniciovala DG Energy) kde konzorcium firiem modelovalo energetický mix Európy a dosah zmien energetického mixu.

- Iniciatíva na reformu trhu z elektrinou (treba si pozrieť stránku ACER v akom je to momentálne stave)

- Povinne naplnenie zásobníkov (spôsobilo to cenový spike v lete minulého roku) a príprava regulačných stupňov, ktoré by malo obmedzovať spotrebu rôznych priemyselných odvetví v závislosti od ich dôležitosti.

- Obmedzovanie spotreby prostredníctvom rôznych mechanizmov

- Mimoriadne dane a ďalšie legislatívne opatrenia iniciované na úrovni národných štátov

3. Bola vaša spoločnosť priamo ovplyvnená energetickou politikou TTE po vypuknutí vojny?

Priamo nie.

4. Aké úpravy alebo revízie by sa mali zvážiť v energetickom rámci EÚ a Rady TTE v súvislosti s vojnou na Ukrajine, aby sa zabezpečila väčšia odolnosť a udržateľnosť energetického sektora?

Osobne si myslím, a tento názor nijakým spôsobom nereprezentuje názor firmy pre ktorú pracujem, že v súlade s princípom subsidiarity by tieto otázky mali byť riešené na úrovni národných štátov. Energetický rámec EU a rady TTE považujem za pomaly a neefektívny, národné štáty sú schopne reagovať oveľa pružnejšie a v súlade s ich špecifickými potrebami.

5. Aké sú vaše hlavné priority a ciele v oblasti energetiky na Slovensku?

Z mojej pozície je vplyv na energy policy minimálny. Venujem sa skôr implementácii riešení vyplývajúcich z policies, prípadne z praktických riešení pre firmy v oblasti uspor, energetického managementu a risk managementu.

6. Aké sú podľa vás kľúčové ponaučenia alebo poznatky, ktoré možno vyvodit' z vplyvu vojny v Rusku na energetický sektor, a ako môže TTE dostatočne informovať budúce energetické politiky a stratégie?

Vid odpoveď na otázku č.4.

Translated interview transcript

1. Since the outbreak of the Russian war, has the vision and priorities of the Telecommunications, Transport and Energy Council (TTE) changed from its pre-war agenda?

If so, could you provide information on the specific areas on which the EU is now placing greater emphasis and whether any areas of energy are being overlooked as a result of the conflict.

There is confusion in the public sphere at the moment, caused by the conflict in Ukraine, as to how to ensure energy security. I think there is a general consensus that the massive investment in renewables has paradoxically increased dependence on Russian gas, particularly in the context of the German Energiewende. However, there is confusion about how we should respond. One group is advocating further investment in renewables, but on the other side there is a section of experts, which I also lean towards, who say that renewables will not solve the problem. Their argument is best described in the document I attach. The point is that the current market design masks the high cost of managing the deviation from renewables. I don't want to go into detail here. If you have further questions, we can take a call.

2. How would you briefly describe the impact of the Russian war on the energy policy of the EU/TTE Council?

In the short term, the response has been channelled through the following initiatives:

- Re-power Europe project (this is a project initiated by DG Energy) where a consortium of companies modelled Europe's energy mix and the impact of energy mix changes.*
- Electricity market reform initiative (see ACER website for current status)*
- Mandatory filling of storage tanks (which caused a price spike last summer) and the preparation of regulatory tiers to limit the consumption of different industries depending on their importance.*
- Limiting consumption through various mechanisms*
- Exceptional taxes and other legislative measures initiated at the level of nation states.*

3. Has your company been directly affected by the TTE energy policy after the outbreak of the war?

Not directly.

4. What adjustments or revisions should be considered in the energy framework of the EU and the TTE Council in the context of the war in Ukraine to ensure greater resilience and sustainability of the energy sector?

Personally, and this view in no way represents the view of the company I work for, I believe that in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, these issues should be dealt with at the level of nation states. I consider the EU energy framework and the TTE Council to be slow and ineffective; nation states are able to react much more quickly and in accordance with their specific needs.

5. What are your main priorities and goals in the field of energy in Slovakia?

From my position, the influence on energy policy is minimal. I am more involved in the implementation of solutions arising from policies, or practical solutions for companies in the field of energy savings, energy management and risk management.

6. In your opinion, what are the key lessons or insights that can be drawn from the impact of the war in Russia on the energy sector, and how can TTE sufficiently inform future energy policies and strategies?

See answer to question no. 4

Appendix no. 5:, prof. Jaroslav Knápek, Czech Energy Expert

Original interview transcript

1. Aké sú podľa vás kľúčové ponaučenia alebo poznatky, ktoré možno vyvodit' z vplyvu ruskej vojny na energetický sektor, a ako môžu byť použité v budúcich energetických politikách a stratégiách?

Jako základní ponaučení je jednoznačně potřeba diverzifikovat energetické zdroje a to jak z hlediska jejich různých druhů, tak i způsobů získávání (dovozu).

ČR měla sice formálně nižší celkovou dovozní závislost než je tomu v průměru zemí EU (a to díky především) tuzemským zásobám uhlí a rovněž díky tomu, že primární teplo uvolňované v jaderných reaktorech je metodicky počítáno jako tuzemský zdroj. Nicméně postupný pokles těžby a využívání tuzemského hnědého uhlí vede k tomu, že dovozní závislost na dovozu energetických komodit postupně narůstá, a to z necelých 29% v roce 2011 na více jak 40% v roce 2021.

Podstatně horší je situace v případě ropy a zemního plynu. V zemním plynu je dovozní závislost v roce 2021 celých 92,1%, celý dovoz je na bázi ruského plynu. ČR v dřívějším období ukončila dovoz ZP z jiných zemí (Norsko) a i odmítla participaci na projektech LNG terminálů (Svinoústí 1). Současně nebyla realizována dostatečně kapacitní propojka z Polska. Jednoznačně se preferovaly krátkodobé ekonomické benefity. Nicméně v reakci na plynovou krizi v roce 2009 se podařilo provést technická opatření umožňují „otočit“ směr proudění plynu a v případě potřeby odebírat plyn ze západní Evropy.

Výrazně komplikovanější je situace v ropě. Dodávky surové ropy proudí do ČR jednak ropovodem Družba a jednak ropovodem IKL (napojeným na soustavu ropovodu TAL vedoucího z Terstu). Ropovod Družba i IKL sice mají kapacitu pro pokrytí plné roční spotřeby ČR, nicméně je omezena kapacita ropovodu TAL přes který proudí ropa do ropovodu IKL. Sice se již podařilo dosáhnout dohody o navýšení parametrů ropovodu TAL, ale toto navýšení kapacity je možné až k roku 2025.

Současná situace ve vazbě na geopolitická rizika jednoznačně zvyšuje potřebu při tvorbě strategií, při výběru dodavatelů, zajišťování přepravních tras formou účasti na různých projektech respektovat nejen ekonomická (zpravidla krátkodobá) hlediska, ale důsledně zvažovat i diverzifikaci zdrojů, dodavatelů a zajišťování alternativních tras. V neposlední řadě se ukazuje nezbytnost zvýšit připravenost i v oblasti legislativy – např. Zpřešení řešení krizových situací, omezování vytápění apod.

2. Existují nějaké nezamýšlené důsledky alebo riziká spojené s reakciou na ruskú vojnu v energetickom sektore, ktoré by sa mali zohľadniť pri dlhodobom plánovaní v oblasti energetiky?

Tato rizika určitě existují a jsou spojená především s nutností rychle a operativně reagovat na současnou situaci. Příkladem může být rychlý až překotný postup výstavby terminálů na LNG. Na jednu stranu se tak daří zajistit dodávky ZP ze zemí mimo Rusko, nicméně zde zůstává otázka ekonomické návratnosti těchto velkých projektů, která může dosahovat klidně 20 let. To pak může být v kontradikci s cíli dekarbonizace definované Green Dealem.

Dovoz LNG do Evropy logicky vedl k tomu, že došlo v řadě zemí třetí světa k problémům s jeho zásobováním. Jednoduše řečeno, Evropa vysála významnou část dodávek, resp. zvedla cenu plynu i pro země třetího světa.

Dalším příkladem možného nezamýšleného efektu je velmi rychlý rozvoj fotovoltaiky. Ten sice nastal již před zahájením války, ale ta ho jen umocnila. Zde dochází k velmi rychlému rozvoji výrobní základy se zásadními dopady na strukturu a fungování trhu s elektřinou. Posilování sítí, budování akumulčních kapacit a jiných technických opatření silně zaostává za prudkým a neřízeným rozvojem PV. To v brzké budoucnosti povede jednak k častému odpojování PV elektráren (díky nemožnosti využít jejich výrobu) a jednak bude razantně zvyšovat požadavky po službách flexibility pro udržení chodu sítě. To pak povede k dalším vícenáskladům spojeným s fungováním elektroenergetiky.

Zde se zdá jako zásadní nedostatek rychlá reakce státu ve smyslu revize energetické koncepce a stanovení efektivní trajektorie transformace elektroenergetiky.

Translated interview transcript

1. In your opinion, what are the key lessons or insights that can be derived from the impact of the Russian war on the energy sector, and how can they inform future energy policies and strategies?

As a basic lesson, there is a clear need to diversify the energetic resources, both in terms of their different types and the way they are obtained (imported).

Although the Czech Republic formally had a lower overall dose dependency than the EU average, this is mainly due to (mainly) domestic coal reserves and also due to the fact that the primary heat released in nuclear reactors is methodically counted as a domestic resource. However, the gradual decline in the extraction and use of domestic lignite is leading to a gradual increase in import dependence on energy commodities, from less than 29% in 2011 to more than 40% in 2021.

The situation is considerably worse in the case of oil and natural gas. In natural gas, import dependence in 2021 is a full 92.1%, with all imports based on Russian gas. The Czech Republic in the earlier period stopped importing NG from other countries (Norway) and also refused to participate in LNG terminal projects (Svinoustie 1). At the same time, a sufficiently high-

capacity interconnector from Poland was not implemented. There was a clear preference for short-term economic benefits. Nevertheless, in response to the 2009 gas crisis, technical measures were implemented to enable the gas flow to be "reversed" and, if necessary, to take gas from Western Europe.

The oil situation is considerably more complicated. Crude oil supplies flow into the Czech Republic through both the Druzhba pipeline and the IKL pipeline (connected to the TAL pipeline system from Trieste). While both the Druzhba and IKL pipelines have the capacity to cover the full annual consumption of the Czech Republic, the capacity of the TAL pipeline, through which oil flows to the IKL pipeline, is limited. Although an agreement has been reached to increase the parameters of the TAL pipeline, this increase in capacity is not possible until 2025.

The current situation in relation to geopolitical risks clearly increases the need to respect not only economic (usually short-term) considerations when developing strategies, selecting suppliers, securing transport routes through participation in various projects, but also to consistently consider diversification of sources, suppliers and securing alternative routes. Last but not least, there is also a need to increase preparedness in the area of legislation - e.g. dealing with crisis situations, heating restrictions, etc.

For more on the issue, see e.g. MIT. Energy Statistics - Energy Import Dependence of the Czech Republic 2011-2021. https://www.mpo.cz/assets/cz/energetika/statistika/energeticke-bilance/2023/3/Dovozni_zavislost_2011-2021.pdf.

6. Are there any unintended consequences or risks associated with the response to the Russian war in the energy sector that should be taken into consideration for long-term energy planning?

These risks certainly exist and are mainly linked to the need to react quickly and promptly to the current situation. An example of this is the rapid or even hasty progress in the construction of LNG terminals. On the one hand, this has helped to secure LNG supplies from outside Russia, but there is still the question of the economic return on these large projects, which can take up to 20 years. This may then be in contradiction with the decarbonisation objectives defined by the Green Deal.

The import of LNG into Europe has logically led to supply problems in a number of third world countries. Simply put, Europe has siphoned off a significant part of the supply or raised the price of gas for third world countries as well.

Another example of a possible unintended effect is the very rapid development of photovoltaics. This had already occurred before the war, but it has only intensified it. Here, there is a very rapid development of the production base with major implications for the structure and functioning of the electricity market. The strengthening of grids, the building of storage capacities and other technical measures are lagging far behind the rapid and uncontrolled development of PV. This will lead to frequent disconnection of PV plants in the near future (due to the impossibility of using their generation) and will dramatically increase the demand for flexibility services to keep the grid running.

Nowadays, the rapid response of the state in terms of revising the energetic concept and setting an effective trajectory for the transformation of the electricity sector seems to be a major shortcoming.

Appendix no. 6: Request: Change of the language of the thesis

Ěma Brunovská, Jesenského 14, 902 01 Pezinok, Slovenská republika

2. ročník Magisterského štúdia, študijný program: Veřejná a sociální politika

prof. PhDr. Arnošt Veselý, Ph.D.
Univerzita Karlova
Fakulta sociálních věd
Místnost: č. 410, Pekařská 16, Praha

Bratislava, 5/1/2023


Žiadosť o zmenu jazyka Diplomovej práce

Vážený pán prof. PhDr. Arnošt Veselý, Ph.D.,

Žiadam o zmenu jazyka Diplomovej práce s názvom: Dopad Rusko-Ukrajinskej vojny na formovanie energetickej politiky Európskej Únie pod vedením prof. PhDr. Františka Ochranu, DrSc..

Povôdne schválený jazyk práce je slovenský jazyk, z dôvodu kvantitatívne signifikantnejšiemu počtu zdrojov v anglickom jazyku, žiadam o zmenu zo slovenského na anglický jazyk.

S pozdravom


.....
podpis

Prof. PhDr. Arnošt Veselý, Ph.D. Digitálně podepsal
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