

Abstract

The goal of this thesis is to explain the current dynamical development of the energy policy of the EU with the focus on the gas sector. Furthermore, this work examines what role in that process plays the European Commission. Lastly, it seeks to ascertain whether the EU's energy policy has a real impact on the development of the gas markets of Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Lithuania.

The first two questions are answered with the aid of John W. Kingdon's *Multiple stream theory*. The conclusion has it that the key role in the creation of the EU's energy policy was taken up by the European Commission, which can be described as the Kingdon's policy entrepreneur. As a true entrepreneur the Commission attempted to build the way for the creation of the single EU gas market, which would be based on sufficient cross-border infrastructure and diversified gas imports. Such a conclusion is supported by the Commission's activities leading to the adoption of important energy legislation, as the third energy package, and essential funds as were European Energy Programme for Recovery and the Connecting Europe Facility.

Latter, this work looks into the third research question. On the case studies of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Lithuania it proves, that the outputs of the entrepreneur activities of the Commission have had a positive impact on the progress of all the gas markets in the chosen EU member states. However, the rate of this progress differed, since it depended on the own performance of the three states in adopting EU legislation and drawing the EU funds on the infrastructure development.