

Ukraine – russia War, Energy Policy and Role of USA

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Abstract

The energy factor has always played a major role in international relations and it is a fact that it implements an important role in the defense of national interests, as well as in the fulfillment of numerous strategic plans. In the first half of the 20th century, which culminated in the Second World War, the concept of energy security was closely linked to the supply of fuel for military purposes. The biggest problem for energy security within the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st century was the protection of oil and gas supplies and delivery. This problem is now, related to the aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

Taking into consideration the importance of the energy security policy of the US in the framework of USA-EU relations and strengthening the Trans-Atlantic links between American and European partners with the purpose to oppose the imperialistic ambitions of Russia, the transportation of natural gas from the US to Europe and other regions of the world in the light of the Russia-Ukraine war and by this way, the reduction of dependence on Russian oil and gas in Europe has made the issue actual. For the European countries, it is important to get away from Russia's energy influence and so far, it is trying to find alternative sources of energy imports and increasing the share of non-traditional sources of energy within the energy balance of the EU and other European states.

On one side is Russia, which is trying to maximize its energy resources for the realization of its geopolitical interests. Particularly, after the embargo on Russian oil and oil products and the significant decreasing the volume of Russian gas export to the EU market, Kremlin tries to increase the export of oil and gas to alternative markets, first of all to China and India. It should not be forgotten, that in 2014, the Crimean Peninsula was annexed by Russia, and together with other factors one of the reasons was that there (on the Black Sea coast of Ukraine) are located important deposits of shale gas. On the other side is the United States of America, which has been intensively cultivating the shale gas deposits in recent years and intensively increasing oil production. However, it is worth mentioning that the transportation of the above-mentioned natural resources in Europe is quite a problematic issue due to its geographical location.

Keywords: Energy, EU, Gas, Oil, Russia, Security, Trans-Atlantic Links, USA.

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Introduction

The energy factor has always played a crucial role in international relations. It is through the energy that small states can in some cases influence the policies of large countries. The clear confirmation of this is 1973-1974. The global energy crisis was caused by the policies pursued by the Middle East countries when these countries protested against the US support for Israel in the Yom Kippur War (Davitashvili & Elizbarashvili, 2012). It is also noteworthy that it was the energy that played a crucial role in ending the Cold War, when, as part of effective measures taken by the US President R. Reagan administration, in particular in negotiations with Saudi Arabia, oil production in Arabic Peninsula began to rise, at the same time, world oil prices fell, causing the Soviet economy to collapse, further disintegration of the USSR and the end of the Cold War.

In today's world, it is a fact that energy plays an important role in protecting the national interests of big countries and in implementing several strategic plans. For example, we can take the recent active geopolitical interventions by the Russian Federation and the intensive use of energy policy to "punish" Europe because of support of Ukraine in the Russia-Ukraine war and increase the supply of Russian oil and gas first of all for China and India. In this regard, it should be mentioned about the high dependence of Europe on Russian gas and oil before the invasion of Russia in Ukraine on February 24, 2022. It is known that the EU consumed per year about 450 billion M3 of natural gas before the war in Ukraine. At the same time, more than 60% of the natural gas sales in Russia were carried out on the European market. According to the data from 2018, "Gazprom" has exported 200.8 billion cubic meters of natural gas to the European market (Chitadze, 2021). At the same time, the EU's dependence on Russian gas by September 2022 decreased from 40% to 7% (Interpressnews, 2022).

Russia was trying to maximize its energy resources to pursue its geopolitical interests. In 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea, one of the determining factors was the existence of significant shale gas deposits near the Crimean Peninsula. Also, before was signed \$ 10 billion contract between Ukraine and the British-Dutch company Royal Dutch Shell for the extraction of natural gas on Ukrainian territory (primarily on the Black Sea shelf) (Chitadze, 2021).

The urgency of the topic is determined by the fact that against the background of the confrontation between the West and Russia, the issue of production and transportation of natural gas from the US to Europe and thus the topic of replacing Russian gas with European states by the gas, which has to be imported from the USA and other countries of the World, has gained special urgency. This factor will play an important role in weakening Russia's geopolitical influence and its aggressive policy against Ukraine and providing the security of the world democratic community and strengthening international security. Once again, the EU needs to find alternative sources of energy imports today to decrease Russia's geopolitical influence and provide its energy security. One such alternative source is the United States, where some shale gas fields have been intensively developed in recent years, and oil production has been increasing intensively, although the transportation of these natural resources to Europe due to geographical distance is a problem. Due to the above factors, the topic is quite relevant.

Research Questions:

- 1) How is the EU ready to pursue an independent energy policy amid a reduction and finally refusal of Russia's dependence on energy resources?
- 2) Is there a willingness in US business circles to export shale gas to Europe?
- 3) What is the political interest of the US supply of fuel and energy resources to European

countries during the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine?

4) What are the characters, also roles, and significance of US shale gas?

About the research methods, the following methods have been used:

1. Qualitative research methods;
2. Statistical research method, in particular, the amount of natural gas extracted in the world, USA, Europe, the volume of imports of US gas by leading EU countries;
3. Historical analysis method, which determined the stages of the production the natural (shale gas) in the USA;
4. Content analysis method;
5. Narrative analysis method.

As for the methodological framework of the paper, the theory of complex interdependence is used, also the paper is based on the concept of political realism, particularly, what collective measures should be taken, what specific alliance should be formed between the US and the EU to escape Russian influence in the energy field. The paper will also draw on the geopolitical concept of Atlanticism, which aims to expand the geopolitical influence of the West in the framework of the Russia-Ukraine war by several means, including energy policy. In addition, the principle of geoeconomics will be analyzed within the framework of geopolitical theory, how economics (in particular energy factors) can play its role in influencing world politics.

The purpose of this paper is to determine the role of energy in world politics on the one hand and to identify the circumstances that contribute to the growing influence of the United States in ensuring the energy security of the European Union and other regions of the world.

The task of the community is to spread the political and economic foundations in the field of energy cooperation between the US and the EU. Let's

analyze the energy strategy of the USA and the EU and, accordingly, further discuss the common interests in the field of energy between the US and the EU. Also, as part of our research, we explored the factors that directly contribute to the growth of US energy interests on the European continent.

Findings of the paper - For the first time it is deeply analyzed the role of the US shale gas and USA-EU Energy cooperation in the framework of the Russia-Ukraine war.

The Role of Energy in World Politics

One of the main reasons for the Russian invasion of Ukraine was the energy factor. Particularly, due to the export of Russian oil and gas on the international market – first of all European market, foreign exchange reserves of Russia before the invasion of Ukraine were estimated at 643 billion US Dollars, which gave the opportunity to Russia to fund the military operations in Ukraine since February 24, 2022. Furthermore, Vladimir Putin and the representatives of the Russian political elite were sure, that due to the high dependence of Europe on Russia, Western countries would not consider the adoption of any sanctions against Russia.

In general, energy is still a major research topic in political science. Rising demand for oil and gas from China and other fast-growing economies and the embargo on Russian oil and gas having been adopted by the Western countries has emerged the problem of finding alternative routes for the import of oil and gas and working over the increasing the producing of the alternative sources of energy. Also, the second important factor that has led to the increase in interest in energy is that governments are focusing on climate change, which in its turn is because the largest component of environmental pollution is the harmful gases released during the use of fossil fuels.

There is a solid reason that interest in energy policy will remain strong in the years to come. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that to

reach net zero emissions by 2050, annual clean energy investment worldwide will need to more than triple by 2030 to *around \$4 trillion (IEA, 2023)*.

Political science should use its capabilities to assess the impact of this increased demand on the environment, individual societies, and international relations. The economic growth of both developed and developing countries is significantly influenced by the increased energy demand factor and is closely related to environmental protection and various types of security.

The study of energy is interdisciplinary, involving work in the natural and social sciences and management at various levels in the national, regional, and global fields.

Morgenthau believes that control of natural resources is a central element of national power in both war and peace. Gilpin even argued that resource competition is an important driving force in state behavior. Melby focuses on the government as an important factor in energy policy development and implementation and explains that the state strategy is shaped by the degree of dependence on national security imports (Rondeli, 2003).

Energy Is One of the Main Tools for Effective Foreign Policy Implementation

Energy is the use of the country's advantages in the process of energy and technology products to strengthen the country's global interests and harm the interests of competitors. This could mean, for example, providing energy to friends and allies who are heavily dependent on energy supplies supplied by a hostile state, such as, for example, the US attempting to make Europe no longer dependent on gas supplied by Russia. It could also mean freezing oil extraction in disputed waters to establish control, as was the case with the Chinese oil drilling operation in the South China Sea. The energy factor can be used both to strengthen ties with a geopolitical partner, as happened during the nuclear deal between the United

States and India, and to punish a rebellious neighbor, as has repeatedly been the case with Russia cutting off natural gas supplies to Ukraine in 2006 and 2009 – a long time before the Russian invasion to Ukraine in 2022.

While energy is not in itself a rigid force in politics, it can lead to a political process that goes beyond soft power politics. Energy has long been a key feature of public administration in the international arena. For example, when Japan expanded its empire in Asia before World War II, the United States, then Japan's main oil supplier, imposed very severe sanctions on energy exports to Japan (which ultimately failed) to curb further Japanese aggression.

In 1973-74, Arab members of OPEC imposed an embargo on oil supplies to the United States and Europe to halt foreign aid to Israel, leading to a sharp decline in the global economy. In each of these examples, politicians used brute force. The current situation is different in that energy power is seen as a viable alternative to hard power, while the use of military force, especially among large states, is less likely (Chitadze, 2021).

In the first half of the 20th century, culminating in World War II, the concept of energy security was closely linked to the supply of fuel for military purposes. When the British navy switched from domestic coal to imported oil in the early 20th century, it became easily vulnerable to adversaries, either occupying oil fields or attacking shipping lines and refineries.

The wars in oil fields in Indonesia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Romania during World War II made clear the military importance of oil production and supply.

The importance of oil in military terms did not change even after the Second World War, but at the same time, oil became vital in industrialized countries in many other respects as well. Developed countries have become dependent on motorized vehicles, not only in terms of passenger transportation but also in terms of food production, healthcare, manufacturing, heating, and electricity generation. At the same time,

most of the developed industrial countries could not extract the amount of oil that would meet their needs. Moreover, decolonization meant that oil was imported from independent countries and not from politically dependent territories, as it was before World War II. On the other hand, developing countries also depended on oil imports to develop economically and have political stability.

The vulnerability of this system became clear in 1973 when a majority of OPEC Arab members and some non-OPEC Arab countries cut off oil supplies to the United States, the Netherlands, and then to some other European countries in protest of US support for Israel. As a result, oil prices quadrupled, leading to an economic crisis and highlighting the fragility of the global oil supply system (Chitadze, 2021).

Thus, the first three-quarters of the 20th century saw the biggest problem of energy security as the protection of oil supplies and supplies, which is vital for the modern army and economy. Hostile actions inside or outside the official military conflict were seen as a major threat to oil supplies. The military metaphor "oil weapon" was quickly coined to describe the 1973 oil embargo. Energy security has been conceptualized by analysts who have viewed both war and peaceful diplomacy as part of the same "grand strategy." Central to such a strategy was the establishment of international regimes in which oil and supply disruptions to industrialized countries would be less likely. The first element was to strengthen the military and political power of the United States in the oil-producing regions, as enshrined in the Carter Doctrine, which stated that "the United States will use military force to protect its national interests in the Persian Gulf, namely the free supply of oil to the Middle East" (Chitadze, 2011).

The second element was to create a market for petroleum products where a large number of players would guarantee that no player would have too much power. The approach to the world oil market is a practical expression of Winston Churchill's well-known view that "oil safety and reliability is only in diversity".

The third element was the creation of the International Energy Agency (IEA) with the mission of coordinating emergency response to OECD countries to cut off oil supplies. IEA members must have had oil reserves that would be used against similar violations.

The main focus in terms of energy security is on the threats that may be created by external entities, be they hostile states or terrorists, unreliable exporters, or overly powerful foreign energy companies. The main threats are premeditated actions such as embargoes, unscrupulous use of market power, sabotage, or terrorism. The energy security analysis developed by the School of Thought in this area focuses on configuring interests, power and alliances, and maneuvering space for different players, such as changing suppliers or energy options.

The risk minimization strategy, in terms of sovereignty, involves switching to more reliable suppliers or weakening the role of a separate agent through diversification, locally replacing imported resources, and establishing military, political, and/or economic control over energy systems. In general, the growing importance of energy, and electricity in particular, leads to the political problem of ensuring the smooth operation of more and more complex systems, especially at the global level (be it "oil peak" or climate), which in turn gives rise to a "reliability" perspective. Related to Engineering and Natural Sciences. In this sense, "objective" factors that are subject to quantitative assessment, such as increased demand, lack of resources, aging of infrastructure, technical failures, and extreme natural disasters, are considered to be a threat to energy security. Risk minimization within this structure includes infrastructure modernization, transition to more powerful energy sources, the introduction of safer technologies, and demand growth management.

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Russia-Ukraine War and its Reflection on Energy Policy

The Kremlin's expansionist policy changed the energy strategy of the West, primarily Europe. In particular, the war forced the West to think more about "green technologies" and the use of nuclear energy (due to the increase in prices of traditional energy resources - gas and oil), as well as alternative energy projects, in particular, about receiving natural gas from the USA (shale gas), North Africa, Norway, as well as receiving oil and gas from the Caspian Sea region and Central Asia, etc.

As a result, gas imports from Russia decreased. In particular, compared to 2021, in 2022, gas production in Russia was 12% less, and exports decreased by about a quarter. The reduction took place, especially in the EU countries. For example, before the Russia-Ukraine war, the share of fuel supplied by "Gazprom" in the volume of natural gas consumed by the EU countries exceeded 40%, and the highest rate of dependence on Russian gas - 55% - was in Germany (a total of 90 billion cubic meters were consumed per year). As we know, only after Russia invaded Ukraine, the EU countries and, first of all,

Germany, decided to reduce the consumption of Russian gas. Just two months after the start of the war, Germany reduced its dependence on Russian gas to 35%, and the shutdown of the "Nord Stream" made it theoretically impossible to consume Russian natural gas (BPN, 2022).

In total, as it was mentioned above, by the fall of 2022, the EU's dependence on Russian natural gas has decreased from 40% to 7% (BPN, 2022).

In this case, it would be interesting to discuss energy projects related to the Caspian Sea region. In particular, the goal of the government of Azerbaijan is to export about 24 billion cubic meters of natural gas to the international market in 2023, of which to supply Europe with about 12 billion cubic meters of natural gas. It is worth noting the fact that in 2021, Azerbaijan supplied 8 billion cubic meters of gas to Europe (BPN, 2022).

In July of last year, the European Union and Azerbaijan reached an agreement, according to which the gas export from Azerbaijan to the European Union will be doubled to 20 billion cubic meters by 2027. Nevertheless, last year, exports to Europe amounted to only 11.4 billion cubic meters, although in 2023 this indicator is expected to increase to 11.6 billion cubic meters (BPN, 2022).

As for the position of another state of the Caspian Sea region, Turkmenistan, it is worth noting the fact that at the end of 2022, the leaders of Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan discussed the issue of supplying Turkmen gas to Europe through the territory of Georgia at a trilateral summit. In general, it is planned to transport gas from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan, and then transfer it to the Southern Corridor pipeline network, which connects Azerbaijan to Europe through Georgia and Turkey. It is important to note that the issue of supplying Turkmen gas to Europe bypassing Russia was discussed before, but unsuccessfully. However, after the war in Ukraine, the topic of finding alternative routes for the transportation of energy trains became relevant.

It should be emphasized that the vast resources of Turkmenistan are mostly unused because Ashgabat is not able to transport them to Europe. The reason is that there is no agreement on the transportation of Turkmen gas through the Caspian Sea and then through the pipeline. At the current stage, almost a third of Turkmen's gas is supplied to China, and the rest to the domestic market and Russia. At the end of 2020, Turkmenistan's gas reserves amounted to 13.6 trillion cubic meters, which was a third of Russia's reserves (BPN, 2022).

As for the oil policy, the following should be noted here. In particular: as a result of the ceiling imposed by the "Great Seven" on Russian oil prices, which amounted to 60 dollars per barrel, the price of Russian oil, Urals, fell to 50.47 dollars per barrel in December 2022, which is less than the limit set by Western countries. By comparison, the Brent crude oil futures were trading at \$78.28 per barrel at press time, while in February 2023 WTI crude futures were trading at \$73.11 per barrel. In addition, in the last four weeks of 2022, oil exports from Russia fell to a minimum.

In particular, in December 2022, the offshore supply of oil from Russia decreased by 117,000 barrels per day, which includes an average of 2.615 million barrels per day (BPN, 2022).

In addition, the issue of oil exports from the Caspian Sea region is on the agenda, bypassing Russia in Europe and the international market as a whole.

For example, Kazakhstan formed a working group to increase oil export through Georgia to 15 million tons. The purpose of which is to work on the development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR) for the export of Kazakh oil. According to representatives of the Kazakh authorities, the goal of the working group is for TITR to provide transport capacity for the export of 6.5 million tons of oil in 2023, which should increase to 7.5 million tons in 2024, and to 15 million tons by the end of 2025 (BPN, 2022).

As is known, the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), i.e. the "Middle Corridor", passes through China, Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, and then through European countries. The operational Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway is part of this corridor.

Currently, the main export route for Kazakh oil is the Caspian pipeline consortium system, which will pass through the territory of Russia and ensure the exit of Kazakh crude oil to the international market through the Russian port of Novorossiysk. The share of Kazakh oil from the volume transported by the pipeline Tengiz-Novorossiysk is more than 80%. In total, the capacity of the pipeline provides transportation of 67 million tons of oil per year (BPN, 2022).

Discussion of diversification of oil export routes in Kazakhstan started in 2022, the reason for this is primarily political. In particular, in June last year, at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, the President of Kazakhstan Tokayev told Putin to face to face about the so-called Donetsk and Lugansk regions having been recognized by Russia. According to the President of Kazakhstan, those "republics" are "quasi-state territories" and Kazakhstan would never recognize them.

The following month, in July 2023, Tokayev instructed the national gas and oil company "Kazmunaigaz" to urgently diversify its oil supply. At that time, Tokayev included this issue in his pre-election program.

Discussing the issues of implementing the energy projects bypassing the territory of Russia, it is important to analyze US energy policy and the US role in providing the EU energy security, especially, taking into account the production and export of shale gas.

Main Aspects Related to the US Shale Gas

Shale gas - is a natural gas extracted from oil shale and consisting - mainly of methane.

Today, shale gas in the press is called mainly produced natural gas obtained by unconventional methods of extraction from sedimentary rocks - shale

History

The first commercial shale gas well was drilled in the United States in 1821 by William Hart at Fredonia, New York, who is considered in the United States to be the "father of natural gas".

The initiators of large-scale shale gas production in the US are George Mitchell and Tom L. Ward.

Large-scale commercial production of shale gas was launched by Devon Energy in the United States in the early 2000s, which pioneered a combination of directional drilling (including horizontal) and multi-stage hydraulic fracturing at the Barnett field in Texas in 2002. Thanks to a sharp increase in its production, called the "gas revolution" in the media, in 2009 the United States became the world leader in gas production (745.3 billion m³), with more than 40% coming from unconventional sources (coal bed methane and shale gas) (Wang, 2015).

In the first half of 2010, the world's largest fuel companies spent \$21 billion on shale gas assets. At the time, some commentators thought that the shale gas hype, referred to as the shale revolution, was the result of an advertising campaign inspired by several energy companies that had invested heavily in shale gas projects and needed an influx of additional funds. After the start of large-scale production of shale gas, gas prices in the United States began to fall (Wang, 2015).

By early 2012, U.S. natural gas prices had fallen well below the cost of shale gas production, leading Chesapeake Energy, the largest shale gas producer, to announce an 8% cut in production and a 70% cut in drilling capital investment. In the first half of 2012, natural gas in the United States, where its overproduction was observed, was even cheaper than in Russia, which has the world's largest proven gas reserves. Low prices forced leading gas producers to

reduce production, after which gas prices went up (Wang, 2015).

Production Cost

According to the International Energy Agency, the cost of shale gas production in the United States within the second decade of the XXI century was about \$150 per thousand m³.

US Gas Prices

In 2008, for the US industry, natural gas was sold at an average of \$9.65 per thousand-foot³ (\$341 per thousand m³), in 2012 - at \$3.88 per thousand-foot³ (\$137 per thousand m³) (Stevens, 2012).

From 2009 to 2014, US retail natural gas prices fell from \$12.14 to \$10.97 per thousand cubic feet, for commercial consumers from \$10.06 to \$8.90, and for industry rose from \$5.33 to \$5.5 per thousand ft³ (Chitadze, 2021).

That is, in 2014, for the US industry, natural gas was sold at an average of \$194 per thousand m³ (\$5.5 per thousand cubic meters) (Chitadze, 2021).

Mining Technology

Shale gas production uses directional drilling), multi-stage hydraulic fracturing (using proppants), and seismic modeling. Similar production technology is also used to produce coal-bed methane.

Instead of hydraulic fracturing (fracking), the more expensive anhydrous propane fracking (injection of liquefied propane in the form of a gel) can be used as an experiment.

Shale gas is found in small concentrations (0.2–3.2 billion m³/km²), so large areas of wells need to be drilled to produce significant amounts of this gas (Chitadze, 2021).

Geography, Reserves Assessment, and Production Prospects

Shale gas resources in the world amount to 200 trillion m³, but only a small part is recoverable reserves. Currently, shale gas is a regional factor that has a significant impact only on the North American market (Chitadze, 2021).

Among the factors positively influencing the prospects for shale gas production are the proximity of fields to sales markets; significant reserves; the interest of the authorities of several countries in reducing dependence on imports of fuel and energy resources. At the same time, shale gas has several disadvantages that negatively affect the prospects for its production in the world. Among such shortcomings: are relatively high cost; unsuitable for transportation over long distances; rapid depletion of deposits; low level of proven reserves in the structure of the overall reserve; significant environmental risks in mining.

According to IHS CERA, shale gas production in the world by 2024 may prevail at 180 billion cubic meters per year (Chitadze, 2021).

Shale Gas Production in the USA

In the United States, explored shale gas reserves amount to 24 trillion m³ (in 2007, according to the US Energy Information Administration, technically recoverable - 3.6 trillion m³), or more than 10% of the worlds. In 2014, proven technically recoverable shale gas reserves, including new deposits, were estimated at 4.0 trillion m³ (141.1 tcf), explored (unproven) — 23.4 trillion m³ (827.4 tcf). Chesapeake Energy is the leading US shale gas producer (Chitadze, 2021).

In 2009, US shale gas production accounted for 14% of all combustible gas; its share is increasing (see the shale revolution), which in 2009 led to significant changes in the distribution of the world fuel gas market between countries and the formation of excess supply in the market by the beginning of 2010 (Chitadze, 2021).

By 2012, its production increased to 290 billion m³, which accounted for about 40% of the total natural gas production in the country (Chitadze, 2021).

As a result of the growth in shale gas production, two new terminals for the import of liquefied natural gas, built in the United States in addition to the 10 existing ones, have become redundant. In 2010, some terminal owners even intended to obtain an export license. In particular, Freeport LNG Development, which previously built an LNG import terminal, signed a contract with the South Korean SK Group and the Japanese Toshiba in September 2013 to export 2.2 million tons of LNG per year (Chitadze, 2021).

In November 2009, a White House press secretary stated that "the use of shale gas is expected to greatly enhance US energy security and help reduce greenhouse gas pollution."

By 2010, shale gas production in the United States reached 51 billion cubic meters per year. In early April 2010, it was reported that the US Department of Energy found that the statistics on natural gas production in the country were overestimated, in connection with which it intends to adjust the total figures downward (Chitadze, 2021).

The largest shale gas fields in terms of production: are the Barnett field (Texas), Marcellus, Haynesville, Fayetteville, and Eagle Ford.

East European Gas Analysis predicted in 2011 that U.S. shale gas production by 2015 would be over 180 billion cubic meters a year. According to the main forecast of the International Energy Agency, shale gas production in the United States by 2030 will be no more than 150 billion cubic meters per year (Chitadze, 2021).

US-EU Energy Relations

As a result of Russia's aggression, the export of shale gas extracted by the USA on the territory of the country to Europe (through gas liquefaction - LNG) increased by 2.5 times in 2022 (European Commission, 2023).

Overall, European countries increased their total imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) by more than 60% to 125 million tons last year, with the United States becoming the largest supplier of the fuel. In particular, according to the results of 2022, Europe increased the volume of LNG imports from 75 million tons (102 billion cubic meters) to almost 125 million tons (170 billion cubic meters), and according to the data of 2022, the United States of America became the largest supplier of liquefied gas to Europe. In particular, imports from the USA increased from 21.4 million tons (29 billion cubic meters) to 53 million tons (72 billion cubic meters) (European Commission, 2023).

Conclusion

In case of cooperation between the US and Europe in the field of energy, and not only in this sphere, as well as the successful implementation of various energy projects bypassing Russia, a convenient ground will also be created for the strengthening of international peace, which will be connected with the fact that the influence of Russia, as an aggressive state in world politics will be significantly weakened. Kremlin used its energy resources to expand its political and economic influence in the world.

Official Washington must take into account the developments in the field of energy in the 80s of the last century when the Reagan administration convinced Saudi Arabia that the two countries could cooperate to weaken the Soviet Empire through the reduction of international oil prices. In 1985, Saudi Arabia increased its oil production, which affected the prices of "black gold". As a result, the price of oil fell from \$28 to \$10 per barrel, and this happened despite the war between two oil-producer countries, Iran and

Iraq (Chitadze, 2021). During the "Cold War" period, the main income of the Soviet empire was oil export. The fall in the prices of "black gold" was followed by the increase of the budget deficit of the USSR by approximately 5 times within the period of 1985-1988 (Chitadze, 2021). The economic crisis was followed by the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and Eastern Europe, the reunification of Germany, the reduction of defense costs, and ultimately the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The situation is partly repeated within 2022-2023. Due to the efforts of the USA, EU, and other states from the democratic community, the war led to the isolation of the Russian economy, in particular, due to the announcement of Western sanctions and increasing the volume of natural gas export from the US to Europe, the Russian economy shrank by 2.1% in 2022, according to the data of the Russian Ministry of Finance, although according to World Bank experts, Russia's gross domestic product decreased by more than 3% (Aljazeera, 2021).

In January 2023, Russia's income from oil and gas exports decreased by 46% compared to the previous year, and income from other products' exports decreased by more than 20% (TASS, 2023).

As for 2022, the budget deficit of the Russian Federation in this period amounted to 3.3 trillion Russian rubles or about 45 billion dollars, which is 2.3% of the country's GDP (Reuters, 2023).

Thus, an effective energy policy and efforts in other fields related to the weakening of the Russian economy and in this way forcing Kremlin to stop the war in Ukraine, are giving appropriate results in favor of the establishment of peace and security on our planet.

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