

Forum: General Assembly 1

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Be sure to consult the [UNIS MUN LibGuide](#) for additional resources.

TOPIC 3: The question of weaponization of energy

I. Introduction to the Topic

III. Key Stakeholders

Federation of Russia:

The Russian Federation is responsible for supplying 40-50% of all energy in Europe, as well as distributing 10.5 million barrels of oil per day, which is equivalent to 14% of the world's total supply. Russia was able to distribute large amounts of gas through pipelines that spanned across Europe (please look at the additional resources to look at the map of such streams). However due to recent sanctions against , Russia has been diminishing their transport of energy to Europe as a means of retaliation. Allegedly, Russia has even gone as far as to sabotage its own Nord Stream pipelines to Germany, blaming the incident on an "error". Cutting other nations' reliance on their energy has caused energy, oil, and electricity prices to skyrocket across the globe, however mainly in Europe. The rise in prices has even pushed some nations' economies into recession.

Federal Republic of Germany: Germany, like other countries in Europe, was heavily dependent on Russian energy. Sixty per cent (60%) of Germany's energy is imported from Russia, and millions of dollars were spent in order to construct pipelines from country to country and throughout Germany. This being so, Germany was hesitant to retract their relationship with Russia. However, throughout the war, Germany maintained their relationship with Russia in terms of obtaining energy, paying Russia \$12.5 million dollars for gas during the first 100 days of the war. This had indirectly fueled Russian efforts against Ukraine. This had put Germany in a very difficult position. However, as of June 2021, Germany has now fully banned Russian oil and gas imports, and are now working to find other suppliers for energy. They are also looking to place Liquefied Natural Gas Terminals.

IV. Key Issues including Background Information

Inability to obtain fuel: Russia supplies around 40% of Europe's energy demand. However a series of sanctions has substantially decreased these supplies risking serious implications on operations that fuel industry and commerce and even basic services for sustenance of daily life. Among the key sanctions this far include: the EU's banning imports of Russian oil brought in by sea from December 2022; EU's ban on all imports of refined oil products from Russia starting February 2023; the US ban on Russian oil and gas imports; UK will phase out Russian oil by the end of 2022. It no longer imports Russian gas; Germany has frozen plans for the opening of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia; The EU has stopped importing Russian coal.

Rise in energy prices: The over-all constraint of oil supply globally has increased the prices of oil and oil products. During the early phase of the Russian-Ukraine war, prices of oil and gas increased sharply, with both major oil benchmarks at above \$110, with further increase over time. High energy prices contribute to increased cost of virtually all goods and services further fuelling inflation expectations. These rise in prices have pushed countries into recession, and have driven families into poverty

Lack of heating: The absence of Russia's natural gas has contributed to Europe's shortage of energy leading to a boost in heating bills. In the European Union, nearly 7% of the population was not able to heat their home properly in 2021. The country most affected by fuel poverty was Bulgaria followed by Lithuania and Cyprus, according to Eurostat data. Recent data indicates that In the UK alone, one in three households are expected to be pushed to poverty during winter.

Due to the shortage and rise in energy, families are finding difficulty heating their homes. This is especially crucial during the winter seasons. The lack of heating in homes has ill effects on health, most commonly increases in blood pressure, cough, heart conditions and pneumonia. With this impact, mental health issues can also arise. Unfortunately, the poor and vulnerable are the most affected. It is expected that one third of households are expected to be pushed to poverty during the winter.

Downturn in economic activity: Economists have highlighted the impact of energy prices to inflation across the world, raising prices for commodities and the cost of production. The continuing rise of inflation reduces the purchasing power of households and drives the production costs of firms. Taken together, the overall impact is loss in productivity and less revenues for the companies.

Studies have shown that industries that use gas intensively in their production processes could continue to see disruptions during the winter months. Industries that rely heavily on energy for their production processes such as chemicals and petrochemicals, cement, paper, iron and steel were most particularly affected. These industries also employ around 3.2 million people in the EU which is equivalent to around 11 per cent of EU's total industrial employment. In addition, the continuing high prices will create a long term negative impact that will reduce the competitiveness of the European region in high energy manufacturing activities, resulting in reduced market-share and also for companies to consider relocating their production process to countries with lower energy costs.

Downturn in economic activity: Overall effect on economy implications on poverty, employment, companies can't manufacture things. World supply on vital life saving commodities in Europe are at risk of becoming short of supply for example, medicines and vaccines are manufactured in many countries in the U.K and the E.U. They are the top manufacturers of pharmaceuticals in the world.

V. Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Date

Description of event

1970

Signing of the Russia-Germany gas pipeline contract. On Feb 1st 1970, politicians and gas executives from Germany and the Soviet Union had signed a contract for the first major Russia-Germany gas pipeline, which was planned to run through Siberia to the West Germany Border. The contract took 9 months of negotiation, and cost 1.2 billion dollars. In this contract Russia agreed to supply the machines high quality industrial goods, Russia would provide materials Germany industry. High pressure pipelines would bind the countries together. Half a century later in 2020, Russia would supply more than half of Germany's natural gas and about a third of all the gas used to heat homes, power factories.

2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine occurred on February 24th, 2022 where Russia instigated a full invasion of Ukraine. This follows years of tension between the nations, in which Russia has invaded and captured Crimea, carrying its intent to expand its territory feeling threatened by the growing forces of NATO. The energy crisis that had started in 2021 in the aftermath of the COVID-pandemic was dramatically amplified following Russia's invasion into Ukraine. Prior to the war, Europe had heavily relied on Russian gas and oil to power their nations. However, since the initiation of the war, European nations began to pull out of their reliance on Russian oil and had begun to levy sanctions against Russia in an attempt to deplete its economy.

2022 Sanctions imposed on Russia. These sanctions, specifically those imposed on Russian Energy, have caused energy and electricity prices to skyrocket from 2021, increasing by 110% from August 2021. This has left nations scrambling for other energy resources. These increases in prices have driven families into poverty,

2022 Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany, [announces](#) Germany has suspended certification of Nord Stream 2, the controversial \$11 billion new gas pipeline set to increase supply from Russia to Germany through the North Sea, bypassing Ukraine. Since the start of the war, Europe is looking to other countries such as Algeria for gas supplies.

Russia has been decreasing its transportation of energy to Europe for months. It has started in June 2021.

2022 Following events such as Russia began decreasing its supply of oil to Europe in June 2022, as a result the price of oil has risen. The decision by OPEC + (a group of oil producers led by Russia) to cut production by 2 million barrels per day, amounting to 2% of global supply. This cut, along with other factors such as supply disruptions caused by Russia, has led to an energy crisis in Europe with high prices and potential for a global price war between Europe, the US and other major oil importers.

2022

On September 26, 2022 underwater explosions had destroyed of the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines, which were used to transport natural gas from Russia to Germany through the Baltic Sea. Russian officials denied responsibility for the gas leaks, two of which happened within the exclusive economic zone of Denmark, and one in Sweden. Swedish authorities who inspected recovered objects from the explosion had confirmed that they had found traces of explosives.

Seismologists and scientists from both countries determined that ruptures that occurred were not caused by earthquakes, but were equivalent to several hundred kilograms of TNT. These factors led authorities to believe that this was an act of “sabotage” and they viewed this as “energy blackmail”

The compounding factors of the pandemic, Russian-Ukrainian war, sanctions, and the reduction of gas transports heavily impacted Europe. Blah blah, reduced heating, increased energy prices

VI. Possible Challenges & Solutions

In this section you provide guidance to your delegates on how they might approach each of the 3-5 Key Issues you mentioned in the earlier section. This section contains your analysis & evaluation of each of the Key Issues with possible solutions for each from different perspectives. Your goal is not to solve the issue for your delegates but guide them in terms of how certain stakeholders might solve the issue & the consequences of that solution from different perspectives. Each Key Issue should have one (1) paragraph.

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VII. Recommendations for Resolution Writing including Research

Delegates are advised to research this topic and to look at the relationships their country holds with others. When forming a resolution, delegates representing Russia are highly advised not to form resolutions with that of NATO nations and Ukraine, as they have polarizing views on this topic and are facing critical conflicts. Delegates are advised to seek out countries that have similar perspectives . Russia is advised to seek partnership with countries such as China, as they have recently agreed upon a contract where Russia will supply China natural gas for the next 30 years. Delegates representing European nations, such as Algeria, are advised to discuss amongst themselves on how they can cooperate with each other to find solutions, as well as approach countries in Africa who are large oil producers.

When forming resolutions on this topic, delegates are highly advised to approach this issue by looking at the acute, midterm, and long term solution. To form a resolution on this matter that will take optimal effect delegates are advised to not approach long term solutions as quick solutions, and must be mindful that action also must take effect quickly.

VIII. Bibliography

This section should contain 10-15 relevant sources in MLA format. Some will be background; others will be from different stakeholder perspectives. Sources should be varied in terms of media sources, academic reports, governmental, intergovernmental & non-governmental reports. Chairs should attempt to include sources from the perspectives of the different countries in their committee. All sources should be included in the UIS MUN LibGuide.

(Must be in MLA Format)

IX: Additional Resources