

Abstract

This study analyzes the cooperation between the European Union and the Russian Federation in the energy sector before and after the beginning of Russian special military operation in Ukraine on February 24, 2022. In addition, it also identifies the main challenges and prospects for cooperation between parties. The purpose of the study is to understand relations between Russia and the European Union in the energy sector by the end of 2022.

Russia, as an energy supplier, has a significant role for Europe. Over the past decades, the energy sector was one of the main areas for cooperation between parties, including renewable and nuclear energy fields. However, relationship development dynamics during analyzed period was different. Today, countries are going through a new crisis stage, which is unprecedentedly larger than before. Mutually beneficial cooperation between countries was replaced by confrontation.

The results of the study demonstrated the following: Ukrainian factor significantly influenced on Russian-European energy cooperation. That were observed in 2006, 2014 and 2022. Until 2022, despite the existence of controversial issues and opposite policies, both sides managed to find a consensus and energy cooperation continued. However, after February 24, 2022, the overall picture has changed dramatically. Cooperation between the EU member states and Russia in some energy areas has gradually ceased. This might be seen in unprecedented sanctions against Russia and other restrictive economic measures that harm both sides, as well as in the countries increasing motivation to find alternative traditional energy sources exporters (for the EU) and importers (for Russia).

2022 is characterized by world energy market disruption and historical energy prices increase. All these together aggravates the situation in the global energy market. Moreover, the reaction of European countries to the above-mentioned threats increases climate risks. Particularly, this is about coal generation increase in some EU countries.

At the same time, the EU countries in order to increase their energy security are accelerating the transition to renewable and nuclear energy. Despite today's difficulties between sides, the development of these industries in the EU might perform as a basis for future energy cooperation as Russia possesses necessary resources for relevant technologies functioning.