

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3567/08
by Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka (UEN)
to the Commission

Subject: EU definition of 'gas supply crisis'

Although EU common energy policy should, in accordance with the solidarity principle, be implemented to the benefit of all Member States, Council Directive 2004/67/EC of 26 April 2004 concerning measures to safeguard security of natural gas supply¹ fails to take proper account of the interests of all the Member States.

The current EU definition of 'gas supply crisis' does not provide a basis for effective action in response to threats to the security of gas supplies. This situation affects, in particular, Poland and the other Member States on the EU's eastern border, which import gas exclusively from Gazprom. Annual gas imports by those Member States stand at some 47 billion cubic metres, and an eight-week suspension of gas supplies, as referred to in the above directive, would not be enough to trigger action by the Community as a whole, because the 'alert threshold' would not have been reached.

Given the above, does the Commission intend to take steps to amend the directive (including the definition of 'gas supply crisis') so as to create a firm basis for a mutually supportive and effective response by the Community in the event of a disruption of gas supplies? Would Poland's proposed definition of a crisis as a situation where 'a Member State is at risk of losing half of its supply for four weeks in winter and six weeks in summer' not protect EU interests more effectively?

¹ OJ L 127, 29.4.2004, p. 92.