

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0153/09

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to the Commission

Subject: Gas crisis

More than 75% of the gas imported by five EU Member States (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Greece) is Russian gas transiting through Ukraine (in all, 80% of Russian gas passes through Ukrainian gas pipelines). Unfortunately, from 1 January many irregularities have appeared in gas deliveries due to the breakdown in negotiations between the Ukrainian gas group (Naftogaz) and its Russian counterpart (Gazprom).

The reduction of Russian gas supplies to certain EU Member States, such as Greece and Bulgaria, was made without prior warning and in clear contradiction to the reassurances given by the highest Russian and Ukrainian authorities to the European Union that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine would not affect the EU. The gas supplies have to be immediately restored to the EU, taking into consideration that European industry and European citizens are in a difficult situation, namely because we are in the middle of winter.

1. Taking into account that Europe's dependence on Russia for its natural gas supplies is growing, what kind of measures and investments are envisaged in order to monitor and safeguard European gas supplies?
2. Bearing in mind that it was in 2006 when Gazprom last cut supplies through Ukraine and that there is a possibility of similar problems in the coming years, what action does the Commission intend to take in order to avoid having the same unacceptable circumstances in the future?
3. How will the Commission deal with the challenge to diversify European energy resources and build energy solidarity between Member States?