

**Question for written answer E-010776/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: EU measures for effective and efficient use of existing gas pipelines now the Nord Stream gas pipeline is operational

On 8 November 2011 the new Nord Stream gas pipeline, intended to strengthen the European Union's energy security, became operational.

Russia will now be able to transport gas via Nord Stream which, up until now, transited through Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic. A large share of Russian gas will henceforth flow directly to Germany via the Baltic Sea. The countries in the European Union will be better equipped therefore to face any cut to the Ukrainian pipelines, such as the one in 2009.

However, some analyses indicate that the coming on line of Nord Stream will result in a drop in capacity for Russian gas carried via the existing Slovak, Polish and Czech pipelines. The Slovak pipeline could, therefore, be carrying up to 15 million cubic metres of gas less per year.

Is the European Union preparing, or has it already prepared, a plan to exploit the capacity of gas pipelines passing through the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland which are no longer used now that Nord Stream is operational?

Furthermore, how does the European Union intend to ensure the continued effective and efficient use of existing capacity in gas pipelines crossing the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland?