Gazprom’s unilateral decision to stop delivering gas partially or totally to 12 Member States is Russia’s latest attempt to use energy as an instrument of blackmail. The Commission and Member States have been preparing for many months for disruptions from Russia and reinforcing the resilience of the EU energy system. The Commission had already made a risk preparedness analysis of winter 2021-2022. The Commission has now developed an overview of the EU’s immediate preparedness for the next summer and winter (2022), in case of full disruption scenarios from its main supplier.

Currently, gas storage levels are above 55%, with gas being injected every day at a steady pace. Gas storages play a critical role in ensuring security of supply, especially to cover the seasonal differences in demand. However, in 2021 the Commission saw that storages were underfilled, compared to previous years. In the context of Russia’s military invasion of Ukraine, it is increasingly important to have storages filled to a high level for winter 2022-2023, to be prepared for all eventualities.

Therefore, the Commission put forward a proposal for a storage obligation of 80% for 2022 and 90% for the following years and is pleased that co-legislators found political agreement on the proposal on 19 May 2022. Moreover, the Commission adopted, on 8 March 2022, its REPowerEU communication, which sets out a plan to diversify away from Russian fossil fuels well before 2030. This was followed up by the publication on 18 May 2022 of the detailed REPowerEU plan, which outlines measures on inter alia energy savings and efficiency, securing alternative supplies and fast-forwarding the clean energy transition.

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