

Russia's Energy Strategy and the Energy Supply of Europe

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1 The Russian Energy Strategy for the Period Until 2020

In discussing the energy relations between Europe and Russia, the forecasts of the EU as well as the Russian energy strategy may well serve as starting points. The Russian energy strategy for the period until 2020, approved by the Russian government in 2003, is replacing an analogous document from 1995.¹ The preparatory work on the "guidelines" for the new version began in 2000, but it took three more years until a document could be presented which the ministries involved, in particular, the Ministries of Energy and Economy, could agree upon. The new energy strategy is more than just a perpetuation of trends. It is meant to set the course for Russia's energy policy and to serve as a guideline of the administration's energy policy, although it does not have a binding character. This was made clear a few weeks after the strategy was passed, when the Russian government refrained from presenting the Kyoto Protocol to the State Duma for ratification, in spite of the energy strategy providing for this.

According to the energy strategy, the primary strategic goal of the Russian national energy policy is security in the fields of energy and ecology as well as energetic and budgetary efficiency. A threat to energetic security is seen in a deficiency of the energy supply in remote regions, while ecologic security appears to be highly threatened by environmental pollution, more specifically, with regard to oil production. Additionally, the dangers of exploiting the oil and gas deposits in arctic regions are pointed out. In order to reach energetic efficiency, the energy strategy sets the goal to reduce the high energy input in production and to make greater efforts to conserve energy. Budgetary efficiency aims at producing a greater contribution of the energy sector to the state budget. All these strategic goals refer to an important circle of internal problems. However, searching for substantial statements concerning the strategies toward external parties involved, such as the CIS or the EU, would be in vain. It is astonishing that the energy dialogue with the European Union, which on the governmental level is given a high priority, is mentioned only in very short and general terms with respect to energy strategy.² Yet what the Russian side has in mind can implicitly be derived from what it says about transport routes and the envisaged export volumes.

As a means of governmental energy policy, the energy strategy mentions the regulation of prices and tariffs, tax, customs and anti-monopoly policy as well as the control of state-owned mineral resources and other state property in the energy sector. In addition to the Ministries of Economy and Energy, the government has the Ministries of Nuclear Energy and Natural Resources, and other administrative bodies, which is more than adequate to regulate the so-called "fuel and energy

¹ Energeticheskaya strategiya Rossii. A short description of the energy strategy in English by Alexey Mastepanov is based on the temporary version:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/russia/energy-strategy2020_en.pdf>.

² For the relations EU-Russia see:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/intro/index.htm>.

For the energy dialogue EU-Russia see:

<<http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/delegations/russ/20030707%20Moscou/10.pdf>>.