

## **Visegrad Group's gas cooperation with Ukraine: recent developments and prospects**

Research proposal

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In the last few years we have seen a profound transformation of the Visegrad Group's gas relations with Ukraine. Firstly, Ukraine is gradually losing importance as a transit country for Russian gas deliveries to Central Europe (and further to Western Europe). This is mainly the result of growing interconnectivity between Central and Western Europe as well as opening of the Nord Stream gas pipeline in the late of 2011. Secondly, we can observe growing importance of some of V4 countries as a route of gas supplies to Ukraine. Poland launched the so-called reverse flow to Ukraine in 2012, Hungary in 2013, and Slovakia followed the suit in the late of 2014. Thirdly, we see growing energy security risks in both Ukraine and V4 countries. Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea and prolonged conflict over Donbass resulted with a few months long disruption of Russian gas deliveries to Ukraine and Gazprom's announcement that it will stop gas transit via Ukraine after 2018. Meanwhile, the Visegrad Group announced that it will help Ukraine, inter alia by maintaining reverse flows and providing technical assistance.

The main aim of research project is to analyze the dynamics of energy cooperation between the Visegrad Group countries and Ukraine. In particular I would like to focus on the establishment, functioning and prospects of reverse flows from Poland, Hungary and Slovakia to Ukraine, as they are the main indicators of changing formula of gas cooperation between V4 countries and Ukraine. I would also like to take a closer look on new infrastructure developments in the V4 countries that can have an impact on the relations with Ukraine, such as the Easting pipeline. Finally, I would like to explore regulatory cooperation between Ukraine and V4 countries, as Ukraine is a member of Energy Community and decided recently to implement third energy package.

### Project timetable

23 May – 23 June: research fellowship in Bratislava, interviews with policy makers and gas business representatives as well as relevant experts

Around 20 June: work-in-progress presentation in the Research Centre Slovak Foreign Policy Association in Bratislava

20 June – 20 July: finalization of the study