

Geopolitics of gas

Plenary session outline

Natural gas is rapidly gaining in geopolitical importance. During the last decades it has grown from a marginal fuel consumed in regionally disconnected markets to a fuel that is transported across great distances for consumption in many different economic sectors. The relationships that are developing between major gas suppliers and key consuming countries create new geopolitical considerations that rise to the highest levels of economic and security policy.

Gas demand development (or destruction), gas pricing and structure of gas contracts, competitiveness of gas vs. other sources of energy, shale gas development, gas transit risks, LNG vs. pipeline competition, gas storage capacities - all these issues, which have always been the focus of gas companies, are now widely discussed by the politicians and broader public.

In this Plenary Session, participants will make a major effort to investigate the geopolitical consequences of a major expansion of the global gas trade and at the same time to assess the influence of increasing geopolitical tensions on the international gas business. The following topics will be discussed in particular:

- Shifts in gas pricing and contracts, hubs development (including in Asia) and their geopolitical implications
- EU-Russia-Ukrainian gas triangle
- Growing role of the Asian markets and ongoing shift of LNG away from Europe as well as Russian pipeline gas migration eastward
- US LNG exports and its impact on traditional suppliers and their export markets, as well as transatlantic cooperation and FTA development
- Qatari "big gas game" and potential entrance of Iran on the global gas arena