



Naftogaz Chief Executive Oleksiy Chernyshov RADYSLAV USIEIEV

Europe is [whittling down its Russian natural gas](#) dependence. It had been at 40% of its imports a year ago. Now it is between 10% and 20%. Europe could turn to Ukraine to replace even more — with the help of foreign investment. Meanwhile, the United States has supplied about 3.5% of Europe's gas and now provides 40%. That's 56 billion cubic meters exported in the form of liquefied natural gas by Cheniere Energy, Shell, and TotalEnergies. Europe has built 23 LNG terminals.

In 2014, Ukrainians ousted Russia's puppet Victor Yanukovych leading to Russia's invasion and annexation of Crimea. Western Europe promised economic retaliation but didn't follow through. The continent said the same after Russia poisoned opposition leader Alex Navalny, who is now wrongly imprisoned. Russia was kicked out of the Group of Eight (now seven) for that. But cheap energy almost always trumps such outrage.

1 of 4 free articles

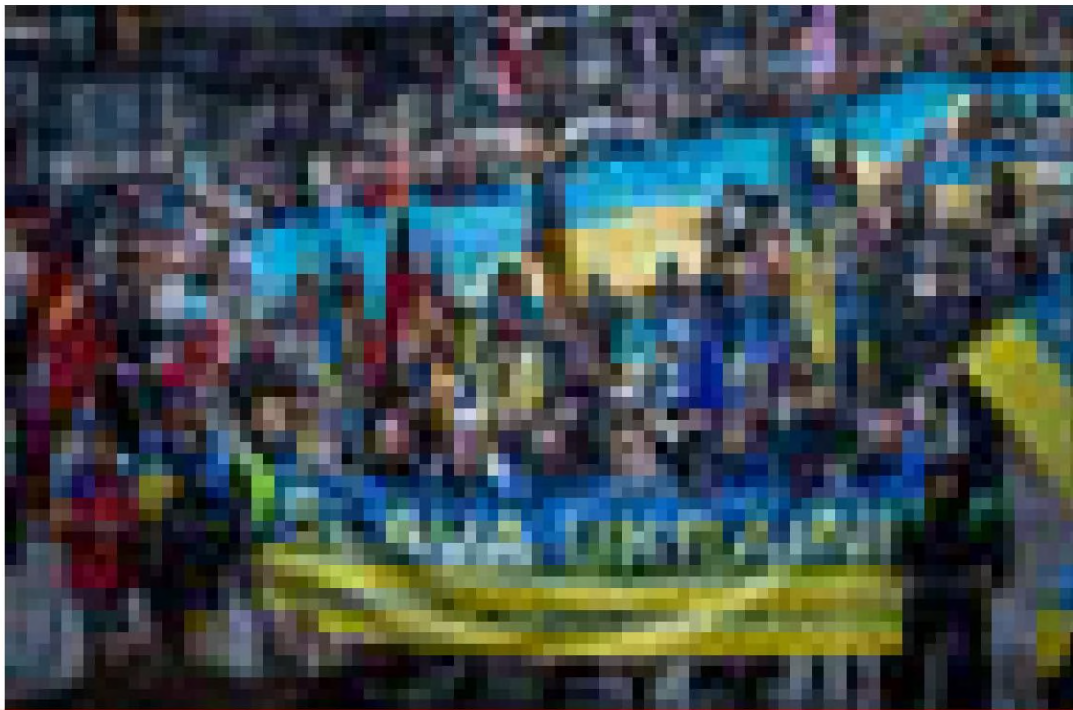
Subscribe to journalism that illuminates, informs and inspires.

[Subscribe Now](#)

Putin not only wanted power over Ukraine, but he also wanted control over the country's natural gas pipelines. As it turns out, Russia is taking hits on the battlefield and in the energy markets. Europe is not just cutting Russia out of its lucrative natural gas market; it also killed Nord Stream 2 — 55 billion cubic meters of pipeline that would have doubled Russia's capacity to the continent.

“Russia has to pay us back for all the damages it has caused,” says Chernyshov. The world has witnessed attacks on nuclear power plants — an odd target given that the deadly radiation could flow north into Russia. “Russia has tremendous resources, and it will always have them. The civilized world will expect Russia to provide for itself — an energy behemoth that will remain formidable. But Ukraine is now a candidate for the European Union” — helped tremendously by its natural gas reserves and storage.

Turning point in Ukraine's history



1 of 4 free articles

Subscribe to journalism that illuminates, informs and inspires.

[Subscribe Now](#)

USAID and Europe are providing humanitarian aid to the Ukrainians. Before the invasion, the U.S. government agency helped counter disinformation and prevent cyber attacks. In 2015 and 2016, Russia attacked the Ukrainian power grid through internet intrusions. Now it is doing so with missiles.

In the short term, Ukraine must use mobile generators and battery storage to harden its distribution system. In the mid-term, engineers will **connect Ukraine's network** to Europe's fortified high-voltage transmission system — with an eye long term to create a self-healing grid. But challenges abound, such as aligning the “frequencies” of every electric generator that feeds into the network, says an engineer and industry advisor, Massoud Amin.

That brings us back to CEO Chernyshov's visit to Washington. While Ukraine has the third highest proven reserves in Europe, U.S. corporations have the technical expertise to produce that gas and ensure Ukraine reaches its potential: horizontal drilling, hydraulic fracturing, and 3D seismic services. Companies are naturally concerned about the war, necessitating discussions with U.S. government officials about introducing “special war-risk mechanisms.”

“This is a great moment in Ukrainian history. Ukrainian President Zelensky has led the fight to protect our country. Emotions are high,” says Chernyshov. “We are motivated to develop an independent and prosperous Ukraine, and we appreciate the support from the United States. We are more motivated than ever to produce energy — oil and gas — to fight against Russia and be admitted to the European Union. We want to win.”

1 of 4 free articles

Subscribe to journalism that illuminates, informs and inspires.

Subscribe Now

replacing even more Russian natural gas — a weapon that effectively neuters its nemesis.

Follow me on [Twitter](#).



Ken Silverstein

[Follow](#)

Since the late 1990s, I've covered energy, beginning with the rise and fall of Enron — first as a magazine writer before becoming... **Read More**

[Editorial Standards](#)

[Reprints & Permissions](#)

1 of 4 free articles

Subscribe to journalism that illuminates, informs and inspires.

Subscribe Now

This material is distributed by Yorktown Solutions, LLC on behalf of the All-Ukrainian Industry Association "Federation of Employers of the Oil and Gas Industry." Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.