

## PUBLIC LECTURE EVALUATION

### Masaryk University

<b>Faculty</b>	Faculty of Social Studies
<b>Procedure field</b>	Political Science
<b>Applicant</b>	Mgr. Martin Jirušek, Ph.D.
<b>Lecture date</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2025, 1:30 p.m.
<b>Lecture topic</b>	Politicization of Russian gas supplies in central and eastern Europe: Cases and lessons learned
<b>Persons present</b> (number)	24 + 3 online via MsT
<b>Designated evaluators</b> (board members)	prof. PhDr. Jan Holzer, Ph.D. prof. PhDr. Zdeněk Kříž, Ph.D. prof. PhDr. Ladislav Cabada, Ph.D. doc. Mgr. Matúš Mišík, Ph.D. associate prof. Michael LaBelle, Ph.D.

### Evaluation of the Public Lecture by Dr. Martin Jirušek

Dr. Martin Jirušek presented his habilitation public lecture entitled “Politicization of Russian Gas Supplies in Central and Eastern Europe: Cases and Lessons Learned.” The lecture was well-structured, timely, and addressed a topic of crucial significance for both academic and policy debates. At the outset, Dr. Jirušek explained the broader context of energy dependence in Central and Eastern Europe, clearly demonstrating how natural gas became not only an economic issue but also a political instrument. He convincingly framed the discussion within the strategic versus market-based approaches to energy policy, offering a solid theoretical foundation for the subsequent empirical analysis.

The empirical part of the lecture was particularly rich. Dr. Jirušek drew on a wide range of evidence from the period 2012–2020 and presented an original analytical model designed to detect strategic behaviour in the energy sector. His comparative case studies revealed the mechanisms of Russian leverage, including structural dependence, debt pressure, personal links of political elites, and selective use of foreign policy discourse. The lecture was filled with specific cases, and further illustrated how the model could be applied beyond gas to oil, nuclear energy, and critical raw materials.

The discussion following the lecture was vivid and engaging. A number of questions were asked by members of the habilitation committee and the audience. These included, among others: the role of soft power tools in analysing Russian energy policy; the relevance of classical political science variables (regime type, ideology, etc.) in the presented analytical

model; the use of energy resources to support ideologically friendly regimes; the role of European corporations in Russia's use of energy as a foreign policy tool; the added value of the proposed analytical model compared to existing tools; and a clarification of the "energy weapon" concept. Dr. Jirušek responded confidently and precisely, showing his ability to handle complex inquiries.

While the lecture was empirically strong, the committee would consider desirable that the conceptual framework in the whole as well as some of the concepts themselves could be further developed and reflected upon. This, nevertheless, is only a minor reservation. In general, the committee appreciated the habilitation candidate's ability to present a complex research problem, to bring his own original ideas to it, to apply it to case studies, and to respond promptly to the questions posed in the debate.

## Conclusion

The lecture delivered by Mgr. Martin Jirušek, Ph.D., entitled **Politicization of Russian gas supplies in central and eastern Europe: Cases and lessons learned** and delivered as part of the habilitation procedure, **demonstrated** sufficient scholarly qualifications and pedagogical capabilities expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of Political Science.

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025

prof. PhDr. Jan Holzer, Ph.D.

