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Russian Spies Eavesdropped on Ukraine Gas Talks, EU Official Says

By The Moscow Times

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BRUSSELS — Spies regularly target the European Commission, the region's digital economy boss said Thursday, specifically suggesting that Russia had listened in during negotiations last year over gas supplies to Ukraine.

The issue of spying is especially sensitive at present, with the German media reporting that Germany's intelligence agency helped the United States to gather information on European companies, including Airbus.

"My security experts tell me regularly of attacks from both inside and outside Europe," Günther Oettinger, Europe's Commissioner for the digital economy, said at an event.

During his previous position as EU energy commissioner, Oettinger last year led negotiations between Ukraine and Russia to ensure Gazprom continued to supply gas to Kiev despite

a pricing dispute.

Oettinger said the talks succeeded even though he was certain Moscow had given itself an unfair advantage.

"When the gas talks were going on, I am sure Gazprom knew everything. Fortunately, we were still well prepared," he said.

Gazprom in Moscow declined to comment.

Oettinger said the European Commission, the EU executive, expected a report from Berlin in the coming weeks on whether German agencies had intercepted data from Brussels.

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