Phasing out Russian natural gas imports and improving monitoring of potential energy dependencies

2025/0180(COD) - 02/02/2026 - Final act

PURPOSE: to phase out pipeline gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) originating in or exported directly or indirectly from Russia, thereby preventing their access to the Union market.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2026/261 of the European Parliament and of the Council on phasing out Russian natural gas imports and preparing the phase-out of Russian oil imports, improving monitoring of potential energy dependencies and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1938.

CONTENT: the regulation establishes a framework for eliminating the Union's remaining exposure to the significant risks for trade and security of supply resulting from trade in natural gas with Russia and for preparing for the effective and timely phase-out of oil imports from Russia. This regulation is a key step towards achieving the REPowerEU objective of ending the EU's dependence on Russian energy.

Phased ban on natural gas imports from Russia

Imports of pipeline gas and liquefied natural gas will be prohibited six weeks after the regulation enters into force (early 2026), while maintaining a transition period for existing contracts concluded before 17 June 2025. More specifically:

- for **short-term supply contracts concluded before 17 June 2025**, the ban on imports of Russian gas will apply from **25 April 2026 for LNG** and from **17 June 2026 for gas transported by pipeline**;

- for **long-term LNG import contracts** , the ban will apply from **1 January 2027**;

- regarding **long-term pipeline gas import contracts**, the ban will begin **on 30 September 2027**, provided that Member States are on track to meet the storage facility filling targets set out in the Gas Storage Regulation, and no later than 1 November 2027.

Prior authorisation

When a temporary derogation is requested, imports will be subject to prior authorisation. The authorities empowered to grant authorisation must receive all the information necessary to assess whether the conditions are met. This information must be provided no later than **one month before the natural gas enters the customs territory of the Union**. For non-Russian gas, proof must be provided at least **five days** before entry. For non-Russian gas, proof establishing the country of origin of the natural gas must be provided at least **five days** before entry.

Natural gas to be imported into the Union via **Strandzha 1** will be presumed to be exported, directly or indirectly, from Russia, unless unambiguous evidence can be provided to the authorising authorities, no later than **seven working days** before the entry into the customs territory, establishing that the country of production of the natural gas is not Russia.

A no prior authorisation will apply when natural gas is imported from a natural gas producing country that exported more than **5 billion m3** of natural gas to the Union in 2024, and has prohibited the import of

Russian natural gas, whether originating in Russia or exported, directly or indirectly, from Russia, or applies other restrictive measures concerning this gas; or does not have gas infrastructure to import LNG or gas transported by pipeline.

No later than 5 working days after entry into force of this Regulation, the Commission should draw up the **list of such countries**. The Commission will monitor whether the criteria for an exemption from prior authorisation remain fulfilled and will update the list accordingly and may revoke the exemption if a circumvention is detected.

Effective monitoring

Customs authorities, and, where relevant, competent authorities and regulatory authorities, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and the European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) should ensure the effective monitoring of the regulation and cooperate closely with other relevant national authorities, authorities from other Member States, Union authorities and the Commission. They should verify the evidence submitted to establish the country of production by requiring further information, which may include but not be limited to upstream delivery documentation, such as publicly available satellite tracking of LNG cargoes or tracking information from the European Maritime Safety Agency.

Sanctions

Non-compliance with the new rules may result in maximum penalties of at least EUR 2.5 million for individuals and at least EUR 40 million for companies, at least 3.5 % the company's total worldwide annual turnover, or 300 % of the estimated transaction turnover.

National diversification plans

By 1 March 2026, EU countries must develop national plans for diversifying their gas supply and identifying potential challenges in replacing Russian gas. The Commission will assess these plans and may issue recommendations proposing adjustments where necessary. Member States that still receive oil imports from Russia must also develop national diversification plans for crude oil and petroleum products.

Lastly, in the event **of a declared emergency and if security of supply** is seriously threatened in one or more EU countries, the Commission may suspend the import ban for a maximum period of four weeks.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 3.2.2026.