

Lithuania Complains to EU over Gas Rule

By [The Moscow Times](#)

December 09, 2012

The  Moscow Times

VILNIUS— Lithuania's partially Russian-owned gas utility complained to Brussels about a law aimed at cutting the country's reliance on pipeline gas from Russia. The law would force the company to buy some supplies from a liquefied natural gas terminal.

Lietuvos Dujos, one-third of which is owned by Gazprom, said it had told the European Commission that the LNG terminal legislation violates EU law and will "severely restrict and distort competition."

"Therefore, on 6 December 2012, AB Lietuvos Dujos submitted a complaint to the European Commission requesting to initiate infringement proceedings," the company said Friday in a statement.

Lithuania remains heavily reliant on Russian gas long after it regained independence in 1991. The Baltic state plans an LNG terminal so it can import gas brought by sea from other suppliers and aims to have it on line by December 2014.

The outgoing center-right government backed a requirement that gas distributors buy at least 25 percent of their gas from the terminal to prevent Gazprom from undercutting it by dumping pipeline gas cheaply.

Lietuvos Dujos wants the government to scrap this requirement. It also said that the law, adopted in June, restricts use of the terminal by companies in other EU member states.

German company E.ON has 39 percent of Lietuvos Dujos, and the state has 17.7 percent.

The new center-left government, elected in October, has said it plans to review the LNG law, but its position in disputes with Russia over gas is not yet clear.

The relationship between Moscow and the European Union over energy has long been strained, and in September the European Commission opened an investigation into Gazprom on suspicion of anti-competitive practices.

The probe is focused on accusations that Gazprom hindered the free flow of gas across the EU's 27 countries, preventing supply diversification and imposing unfair prices on its customers by linking the price of gas to oil prices.

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