

Russia Seeks Talks on EU Energy Regulations

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia has requested talks with the EU on its "Third Energy Package" in a possible first step towards filing a dispute at the World Trade Organization, officials said Thursday.

The EU introduced the legislative package in 2009 with the aim of opening up gas and electricity markets, but Russian companies have balked at some requirements.

Russia's request to the World Trade Organization, or WTO, on Wednesday concerns several aspects, including a requirement on granting access to natural gas and electricity networks, something which could force Russian firms to sell stakes and cede market share.

It also pertains to EU measures on the production, supply and transmission of natural gas and electricity and alleged discriminatory requirements for certifying third countries.

Russia said the EU measures were inconsistent with WTO agreements on services, as well as

on subsidies and countervailing measures, WTO officials said.

WTO members have 30 days to begin talks to try to resolve a dispute. If these fail, after 60 days a country may ask the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body to establish a dispute panel.

The EU and U.S. have imposed visa bans and asset freezes on some Russians in protest at Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region.

Russia joined the WTO less than two years ago and has become embroiled in trade disputes with the EU and Japan.

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