

Russia's Gazprom to Respond to EU Antitrust Charges in September

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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BRUSSELS — Russia's Gazprom has been given a two-month extended deadline of mid-September to respond to European Union antitrust charges of overcharging in eastern and central Europe and blocking competitors from entering the market.

The European Commission gave Gazprom 12 weeks to reply when it unveiled the charges on April 22, but companies typically ask for more time to marshal their legal and economic arguments when faced with complex issues.

"The deadline to submit the response to the Commission is now mid-September 2015. Gazprom is currently going through the extensive case file, analyzing it thoroughly and preparing the appropriate reply," Gazprom said in a statement.

A source familiar with the matter had earlier told Reuters that the state-controlled company had been given an extension.

Commission spokesman Ricardo Cardoso said in an e-mail: "Gazprom argued that it would need additional time, including to assess the issues raised and translate documents."

The Commission in its charge sheet said Gazprom's prices in former Soviet states, where Moscow has historically been the exclusive gas supplier, could be as much as 40 percent above the norm.

The company may offer concessions to settle the EU antitrust case and stave off a possible fine that could reach \$10 billion, as well as avoiding a finding of wrongdoing, a Gazprom official told Reuters last month.

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