The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Oil Exports to U.S. Hit Record High – Bloomberg

The surge in demand for Russian energy helped Russia sell more oil to the U.S. than Saudi Arabia for the first time in history.

March 24, 2021



Russia and Saudi Arabia are part of the OPEC+ cartel which fixes oil production levels in a bid to manage global prices. **Ruslan Shamukov / TASS**

Russian oil shipments to the U.S. hit a record high last year, according to calculations by Bloomberg, while at the same time Washington was amping up its warnings about Europe's energy dependence on Russia.

Russia leapfrogged Saudi Arabia to become the third-largest oil supplier to the U.S. last year, accounting for 6.85% of all U.S. imports. That amounted to an average of 538,000 barrels a day — or around 5% of Russia's entire oil production.

U.S. oil refineries have increasingly turned to Russia following the imposition of sanctions on Venezuela, which as recently as 2018 accounted for 6% of all U.S. oil imports. Saudi Arabia's

production cuts — part of an OPEC+ deal brokered with Russia to support prices throughout the pandemic — also left space in the market for Russian oil producers, analysts told Bloomberg.

The surge in U.S. demand for Russian energy came as the outgoing Donald Trump administration was going into overdrive in its eleventh hour attempts to thwart the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline between Russia and Germany, citing concerns over Europe's energy reliance on Russia. The controversial pipeline — more than 95% complete — is also opposed by many eastern European states, and France recently joined calls to ditch the project.

Analysts told Bloomberg increased U.S. imports from Russia have not raised concerns in Washington, and they expect that once Saudi Arabia begins to ramp up production, Russian exports to the U.S. could fall back.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/03/24/russian-oil-exports-to-us-hit-record-high-bloomberg-a73355