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EU Strikes Deal to Ban All Russian Gas Imports by 2027

By AFP

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European Union negotiators reached an agreement early Wednesday to phase out all imports of Russian gas by the fall of 2027, a move aimed at choking off a major source of revenue for Moscow nearly four years into its war on Ukraine.

The deal, struck between representatives of the European Parliament and the bloc's member states, sets a definitive timeline to unwind Europe's long-standing dependence on Russian energy, a reliance the EU has struggled to break even after the full-scale invasion.

"We've made it: Europe is turning off the tap on Russian gas, forever," the EU energy commissioner, Dan Jorgensen, wrote on X. "No more blackmail. No more market manipulation by Putin. We stand strong with Ukraine."

Under the agreement, long-term pipeline contracts, which can bind buyers for decades, will

be banned from Sept. 30, 2027, provided gas storage levels are sufficient, and in any case no later than Nov. 1, 2027. Long-term liquefied natural gas contracts will be prohibited earlier, starting Jan. 1, 2027.

Shorter-term deals will be phased out in 2026, from April 25 for LNG and June 17 for pipeline gas.

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The European Council said the timeline is intended "to end dependency on Russian energy following Russia's weaponization of gas supplies," which destabilized markets and sent prices soaring across the bloc.

European companies will also be allowed to invoke force majeure to break existing contracts once the ban takes effect.

The agreement must still be formally approved by the European Parliament and national governments.

As part of the deal, the European Commission will draft a plan to end Russian oil imports to Hungary and Slovakia by the end of 2027. The two landlocked countries were granted exemptions when the EU imposed an oil embargo in 2022.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who met with President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin last week, has continued to signal his intention to buy Russian energy.

The share of Russian gas in EU imports has fallen sharply since before the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, dropping from 45% in 2021 to about 19% this year.

But while pipeline volumes plummeted, Europe increased imports of Russian LNG, which is shipped by sea and regasified at European ports. Russia supplied roughly 20% of EU LNG imports in 2024, second only to the United States.

EU officials estimate that Russian LNG deliveries to the bloc this year will total around 15 billion euros ($17.5 billion).

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