

Guidance

on the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2026/261 of the European Parliament and of the Council on phasing out Russian natural gas imports and preparing the phase-out of Russian oil imports, improving monitoring of potential energy dependencies and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1938¹

This document was prepared by Commission services to give guidance to national authorities, EU operators and citizens for the implementation and the interpretation of Regulation (EU) 2026/261. It is of explanatory nature and does not constitute a legally binding act. Legal provisions of Union law take precedence over the contents of this document and should always be consulted. The authentic texts of the EU legal instruments are those published in the Official Journal of the European Union. Only the Court of Justice of the European Union is competent to authoritatively interpret Union law.

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¹ OJ L, 2026/261, 2.2.2026 - ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2026/261/oj>

I.	GENERAL POINTS.....	4
1.	What does Regulation (EU) 2026/261 prohibit?.....	4
2.	Which gas is considered “Russian gas”?	4
3.	How does the REPower Gas Regulation relate to the prohibition under Article 3ra of Council Regulation (EU) 833/2014?	4
4.	As of when does the prohibition for Russian LNG and pipeline imports apply?	6
5.	Can Russian gas under long-term contracts exceptionally be imported if the long-term contract has been amended after 17 June 2025?	7
II.	PRIOR AUTHORISATION PROCESS AND NECESSARY ADAPTATIONS IN TIMES OF SUPPLY SHORTAGES.....	8
6.	Which imports are subject to prior authorisation?	9
7.	How many days before the gas is meant be brought into EU customs territory do I need to request the prior authorisation and submit the relevant documents?	10
8.	When is the latest date to request the first prior authorisation to ensure that gas can enter the EU when the REPower Gas Regulation starts applying?	10
9.	Do I have to request a prior authorisation and submit documents for every cargo, even if the import happens under the same long-term contract?	10
10.	In which Member State do I have to request prior authorisation?	11
11.	What if I have to reroute a cargo of non-Russian LNG in the last minute – can I use the authorisation already provided by another Member State?	11
12.	Which authority in the respective Member State is responsible to grant the prior authorisation?	11
13.	The prior authorisation requires an analysis of elements which may need the involvement of other authorities – how will this be organised?	11
14.	Who is obliged to notify the information necessary for the prior authorisation?	12
15.	Can LNG or pipeline gas subject to prior authorisation be imported without an approval of the prior authorisation by the authorising authority?	12
16.	Is there a time limit within which the authorising authorities have to decide about the authorisation?	12
17.	Does the prior authorisation substitute the customs procedure?	13
III.	RULES FOR IMPORTS OF RUSSIAN GAS.....	13
18.	What information do importers of Russian gas need to submit to authorising authorities?	13
19.	What happens if I have blended Russian LNG with non-Russian LNG in the same LNG cargo (‘mixtures’) – is the import prohibited?	14
IV.	IMPORTS OF NON-RUSSIAN GAS	14

20. What type of evidence needs to be submitted for imports of non-Russian gas which is subject to prior authorisation?.....	14
21. My contract partner is not the producer, how can I get the proof of the country of production?	15
22. What rules apply to pipeline imports via Turkstream / Strandzha 1?.....	16
V. OTHER ISSUES	16
23. Do I have to inform authorities or the Commission about Russian gas contracts?	16
24. Is transit of Russian gas through the Union allowed? What information is necessary to present?	17
25. Is storage and/or warehousing of Russian gas allowed?	18
26. What about confidentiality of the submitted information/evidence, i.e. contracts?.....	18
27. How to deal with technical operational tolerance in LNG cargos?	18
28. Is prior authorisation required for a transport between two Member States which crosses a third country that is party to the Common Transit Convention?	18
29. Is prior authorisation necessary if gas which was in free circulation in the Union is temporarily stored or placed under a customs warehousing procedure in Ukraine and then re-exported into the Union? Which are the relevant documents to submit?.....	19

I. GENERAL POINTS

1. What does Regulation (EU) 2026/261 prohibit?

Regulation (EU) 2026/261 (“REPower Gas Regulation”) is a trade measure under Union law, prohibiting the import of pipeline gas and LNG from the Russian Federation.

Q 3 below explains the interplay of the REPower Gas Regulation with Article 3ra of Council Regulation 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine.

Last update: 2 February 2026

2. Which gas is considered “Russian gas”?

For pipeline gas, the prohibition covers all gas that *“originates in or is exported, directly or indirectly, from the Russian Federation”*. This means that the prohibition applies to **all pipeline gas that is extracted (and therefore ‘originating’) in the Russian Federation**. In addition, all gas which is *exported*² from the Russian Federation via pipelines to the Union is covered by the prohibition, regardless of whether it is imported directly to the EU or via a third country.

For LNG, the REPower Gas Regulation includes an additional clarification, namely that the prohibition also covers all gas *“that is obtained from natural gas in gaseous state extracted in the Russian Federation”*³. The addition for LNG is meant to clarify explicitly that also gas extracted in countries other than the Russian Federation which is liquified or re-gasified in the Russian Federation falls under the prohibition⁴.

Last update: 2 February 2026

3. How does the REPower Gas Regulation relate to the prohibition under Article 3ra of Council Regulation (EU) 833/2014?

The REPower Gas Regulation and the prohibition under Article 3ra of Council Regulation 833/2014 have each a different purpose and a partially different scope and are based in different provisions of the Treaties. They apply cumulatively. Therefore, the mere fact that an activity is not prohibited under one of the measures does not imply that it is permitted under the other measure.

Article 3ra of Council Regulation (EU) 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine (“Sanctions Regulation”)⁵ prohibits the

² The concept of ‘export’ to the Union under customs law should be distinguished from the concept of ‘transit’; specific rules apply for gas reaching the Union under a transit regime, see recital 25 and Art 5(19) of the Repower Gas Regulation.

³ The prohibition for LNG in Article 3(2) of the Repower Gas Regulation refers to LNG that *“originates in or is exported, directly or indirectly, from the Russian Federation or that is obtained from natural gas in gaseous state extracted in the Russian Federation”*.

⁴ See also Art 2(29): ‘country of production’ means the country where the natural gas is extracted, regardless of whether that natural gas has been subsequently liquified or re-gasified in another country; where natural gas extracted in countries other than the Russian Federation is liquified or re-gasified in the Russian Federation, the Russian Federation shall be considered to be the country of production.

⁵ Article 3ra of Council Regulation 833/2014 reads as follows:

1. It shall be prohibited, as of 25 April 2026, to purchase, import or transfer, directly or indirectly, liquified natural gas falling under CN code 2711 11 00, if it originates in Russia or is exported from Russia.
2. Paragraph 1 shall apply as of 1 January 2027 in case the purchase, import or transfer is executed under a contract for the supply of liquified natural gas, excluding a natural gas derivative, the duration of which

purchase, import or transfer, directly or indirectly of liquefied natural gas (LNG) falling under CN code 2711 11 00 originating or exported from Russia, as well as the provision of related technical or financial assistance. This temporary foreign policy measure was adopted to decrease further Russia's revenues from the export of fossil fuels, raise the costs of its illegal actions in Ukraine and put maximum pressure on Russia to cease its war of aggression against Ukraine⁶. The measure is reviewed every 6 months.

While both regulations prohibit the import of Russian LNG, the Sanctions Regulation covers elements not prohibited under the REPower Gas Regulation. It applies, for example, not only to "imports", but also to the "purchase" and "transfer" of Russian LNG, which includes the transfer of LNG to third countries⁷. Article 3ra (3) of the Sanctions Regulation also prohibits "*to provide, directly or indirectly, technical assistance, brokering services, financing or financial assistance or any other services related to the prohibition in paragraph 1*".

A similar prohibition of technical assistance or financial services does not exist related to imports of pipeline gas in the REPower Gas Regulation.

The prohibitions in the Sanctions Regulation have to be complied with regardless of the REPower Gas Regulation⁸.

Conversely, the REPower Gas Regulation covers some aspects relevant for gas importers which are not covered by the Sanctions Regulation: It establishes a lasting import prohibition and extends the scope of the import prohibition also to *pipeline gas* which is currently not covered by the Sanctions Regulation⁹. It also introduces refined documentation and notification rules for gas imports, to ensure a smooth import process, efficient cooperation amongst involved authorities and to prevent circumvention of the import prohibitions.

contract exceeds one year and which contract was concluded before 17 June 2025 and where that contract was not amended thereafter, unless the amendment is limited to:

- (a) lowering contracted quantities;*
 - (b) lowering prices and fees;*
 - (c) amending confidentiality clauses;*
 - (d) amending operational procedures, such as communication procedures;*
 - (e) changes of addresses of contract parties;*
 - (f) transfers of contractual obligations between affiliated undertakings;*
 - (g) changes required by judicial or arbitration procedures or;*
 - (h) for landlocked countries, changes between national delivery points.*
3. *It shall be prohibited to provide, directly or indirectly, technical assistance, brokering services, financing or financial assistance or any other services related to the prohibition in paragraph 1.*
4. *In accordance with Articles 13 and 14, the prohibitions in paragraphs 1 and 3 shall be complied with regardless of any provision pursuant to other Union legislation with overlapping scope.'*

⁶ See recital 10 of Council Regulation (EU) 2025/2033 of 23 October 2025 amending Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine, OJ L, 2025/2033 of 23.10.2025.

⁷ See Art 3ra (1) of Council Regulation (EU) 833/2014; see also "Frequently Asked Questions" on the ban under Art 3ra of the Sanctions regulation, available under: https://finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/import-ban-liquefied-natural-gas-lng_en.

⁸ See recital 10 and Article 3ra(4) of Council Regulation (EU) 833/2014 and recital 14 and Article 14 subparagraph 4 of REPower Gas Regulation.

⁹ It should be noted that the prohibition relating to pipeline gas does *not* cover 'purchases' and transfers to third countries of Russian pipeline gas. Neither the REPower Gas Regulation prohibits to provide, directly or indirectly, technical assistance, brokering services, financing or financial assistance or any other services relating to the prohibition of import of Russian pipeline gas.

The REPower Gas Regulation also introduces a dedicated penalty regime for violations of the import prohibition or the notification obligations regards imports (Article 8), an obligation for Member States to establish diversification plans for Russian gas and oil (Article 9 and 10) and a general notification obligation for natural gas undertakings concerning any Russian supply contract (Article 11).

The REPower Gas Regulation and the Sanctions Regulation are therefore fully compatible and complement each other.

Last update: 2 February 2026

4. As of when does the prohibition for Russian LNG and pipeline imports apply?

The prohibition will apply at **different points in time**, starting already 18 March 2026¹⁰ for certain types of contracts, and extending to *all Russian gas imports* at the very latest as of 1 November 2027.

Different temporary exemptions pursuant to Article 4 of the REPower Gas Regulation allow, under certain circumstances, to continue importing Russian gas:

- No temporary exception from the ban will be granted for imports of Russian LNG and pipeline gas under any short- or long-term gas supply **contracts concluded or amended¹¹ after 17 June 2025**. The prohibition for imports under such recently concluded contracts will apply as of **18 March 2026¹²**.
- For **LNG imports of Russian gas under unamended¹³ short-term contracts** (i.e. contracts with a duration of one year or less, irrespective of the date of the conclusion of the contract), the prohibition applies as of **25 April 2026¹⁴**.
- For **imports of Russian pipeline gas under unamended¹⁵ short-term contracts**, the prohibition applies as of **17 June 2026¹⁶**.
- **All remaining Russian LNG imports** will be prohibited as of **1 January 2027¹⁷**.
- **All remaining Russian pipeline gas imports** will be prohibited as of **30 September 2027**, unless exceptional circumstances pursuant to Art. 4(2) REPower Gas Regulation justify an extension of this deadline for individual Member States to 1 November 2027.
- No imports of Russian gas will be possible after 1 November 2027.

The following graph illustrated the duration of the temporary exemptions:

¹⁰ See Art. 14 of the REPower Gas Regulation.

¹¹ See for exceptionally allowed amendments Article 4(5) of the REPower Gas Regulation and question 5 below.

¹² This follows from Art. 3 and 14 of the REPower Gas Regulation

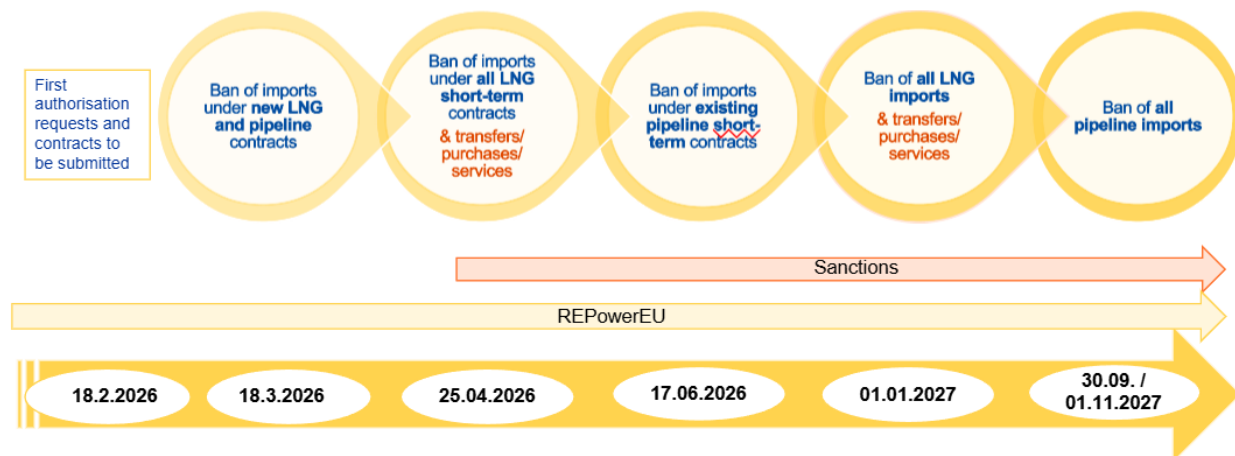
¹³ See for exceptionally allowed amendments Article 4(5) of the REPower Gas Regulation and question 5 below.

¹⁴ See Art. 3ra (1) Sanctions Regulation; Art. 4(3) REPower Gas Regulation.

¹⁵ See for exceptionally allowed amendments Article 4(5) of the REPower Gas Regulation and question 5 below.

¹⁶ Art. 4(1) REPower Gas Regulation; an exemption for certain short-term pipeline contracts may apply pursuant to Art. 4(4) REPower Gas Regulation.

¹⁷ Art. 3ra (1) Sanctions Regulation; Art. 4(1) REPower Gas Regulation.



Last update: 2 February 2026

5. Can Russian gas under long-term contracts exceptionally be imported if the long-term contract has been amended after 17 June 2025?

In principle, amendments of contracts after 17 June 2025 exclude invoking a temporary exemption under Article 4 of the REPower Gas Regulation¹⁸. Exceptionally, contract amendments do *not* exclude a temporary exemption, when they concern the following elements:

- (a) lowering contracted quantities;
- (b) lowering prices and fees;
- (c) amending confidentiality clauses;
- (d) amending operational procedures, such as communication procedures;
- (e) changes of addresses of contract parties;
- (f) transfers of contractual obligations between affiliated undertakings;
- (g) changes required by judicial or arbitration procedures; or
- (h) for landlocked countries, changes of national delivery points.

Recitals 21 to 25 provide further details on which contract amendments are permitted, and which exclude a temporary exemption.

Last update: 2 February 2026

¹⁸ See in this context also recital 17 of the REPower Gas Regulation.

II. PRIOR AUTHORISATION PROCESS AND NECESSARY ADAPTATIONS IN TIMES OF SUPPLY SHORTAGES

5a) Lengthy prior authorisation procedures may make non-Russian LNG imports more difficult in times of energy supply shortages - can Member States streamline their authorisation procedure?

Yes, by all means. The current situation is exceptional because of the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which lead to **significant supply shortages on the world LNG market** and intense competition on LNG cargoes on the world market.

In this exceptional situation, Member States should make all efforts to **avoid any barriers to imports of non-Russian LNG which are not strictly necessary**. This means, for example, that the requested import documentation should, in times of supply shortages, not exceed what is strictly required by the REPower Gas Regulation¹⁹. To avoid that LNG, which is crucial for the European industry and households, cannot be imported because of unnecessarily long approval procedures, Member States need to organise the authorisation process in a particularly efficient manner in times of tight LNG supplies, and **make sufficient resources available** to allow for a swift approval process.

Authorising authorities can adapt their authorisation practice to the geopolitical situation and the short transition time for companies notably by using the flexibilities in the REPower Gas Regulation.

These flexibilities include, *inter alia*, the following points:

- **Accelerated authorisation:** While there is no explicit deadline for the decision on the authorisation request for non-Russian LNG in the REPower Gas Regulation, it appears appropriate that authorising authorities grant the authorisations particularly swiftly in the current phase. It appears advisable to target an authorisation of non-Russian gas imports within 12-24 hours in the current situation. In case the authorisation is provided in less than 5 working days, authorising authorities may also decide to allow the import of the LNG at an earlier stage than the 5 working day period originally envisaged by importers.
- **Single documentation for multiple cargoes:** In case of multiple deliveries under the same supply contract, no individual authorisation appears warranted if circumstances (notably the producer) remain unchanged. Authorising authorities should therefore abstain from requiring an approval of the same and unchanged documents for every new delivery under the same supply contract. Authorities may also provide an authorisation for all cargoes under the same supply contract for a certain period²⁰.
- **Avoiding obstacles in case of changes of import harbour – mutual recognition:** In the current situation of fierce competition for LNG cargoes, importers may need to re-route cargoes on short notice. If these importers have already received an authorisation for non-Russian LNG, it appears disproportionate to require a new authorisation just because the

¹⁹ This is, of course, without prejudice to the right of authorising authorities to request for more detailed evidence in cases where there is evidence for circumvention. In general, authorising authorities need to weigh the risks that a lengthy verification process may constitute for energy prices and competitiveness with the risks of a circumvention of the Russian gas ban in the individual case at hand.

²⁰ This shall apply unless there are changes of exporter or contract partner or specific evidence of circumvention.

import harbour of the LNG changes from one Member State to another. As long as the Strait of Hormuz is effectively blocked, authorising authorities should therefore mutually recognise authorisations for non-Russian LNG already granted by other authorising authorities. The Commission will assist authorities where needed to ensure that the necessary information can be swiftly exchanged between authorities. To facilitate mutual recognition, authorisations should be provided in English language where possible at Member State level.

- **Facilitated proof of the ‘country of production’ – no import infrastructure:** Many exporting countries do not have gas import infrastructure in place. As it is unlikely that gas from these countries has been produced in Russia, the submission of the ‘standard’ customs documents (country of origin / bill of lading) is normally sufficient to prove the country of production. Authorities can therefore waive the submission of additional documents in such situation²¹.
- **Facilitated proof of the ‘country of production’ – separation between import and export infrastructure:** The same approach appears warranted if other information is provided that excludes that the imported LNG has been produced in the Russian Federation, e.g. in case import and export infrastructure is clearly separated in an exporting country.

The Commission will assist authorising authorities in establishing an overview of the LNG import infrastructure in different exporting countries.

- **Allowing ex post complementation of documents:** In view of the possible need of importers to decide on import destinations on short notice, all authorising authorities should allow to complement documents at a later stage in case the most important information has already been received. It appears proportionate in the current context to allow further submission of certain clarifying documentation after the actual import and to carry out ex-post controls instead of blocking the gas import until all the required documents have been delivered.

Last update: 18 March 2026

6. Which imports are subject to prior authorisation?

According to Article 5, a prior authorisation is needed for:

- a) All imports of **Russian pipeline gas or LNG** which fall under a temporary exemption pursuant to Article 4.
- b) Imports of **non-Russian pipeline gas or LNG** from countries that are not on the list of countries exempted from prior authorisation under Art 5(4). These are **all third countries except Norway, the United States, the United Kingdom, Algeria, Qatar or Nigeria**.²²

Last update: 2 February 2026

²¹ This is, of course, without prejudice to the right of authorising authorities to request for more detailed evidence in cases where there is evidence for circumvention.

²² See Art. 5(4) REPower Gas Regulation. The published and updated list will be available on the following Commissions webpage: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/strategy/repowereu-roadmap_en.

7. How many days before the gas is meant be brought into EU customs territory do I need to request the prior authorisation and submit the relevant documents?

For the import of Russian gas, the request for prior authorisation needs to reach the authorising authorities **at the latest one month** before the entry into the customs territory of the Union.

For the import of non-Russian gas, the request for prior authorisation needs to reach the authorising authorities **at the latest 5 working days** before the entry into the customs territory of the Union.

Early information about upcoming imports before the minimum notice period, where possible, will help avoiding delays.

Last update: 18 March 2026

8. When is the *latest date* to request the first prior authorisation to ensure that gas can enter the EU when the REPower Gas Regulation starts applying?

The import prohibition pursuant to Article 3 of the REPower Gas Regulation becomes applicable on **18 March 2026**²³.

This means for imports intended to be brought into the customs territory by 18 March that

- authorisation requests for **imports of Russian gas** need to be submitted to the authorising authority at the latest **already by 18 February 2026**²⁴.
- authorisation requests for **imports of non-Russian gas** need to be submitted to the authorising authority at the latest **by 11 March**²⁵.

Last update: 2 February 2026

9. Do I have to request a prior authorisation and submit documents for every cargo, even if the import happens under the same long-term contract?

The REPower Gas Regulation does not limit the scope of an authorisation to only one LNG cargo.

In situations of tight LNG supplies, no individual authorisation appears warranted for multiple deliveries of non-Russian gas under the same supply contract, if circumstances (notably the producer) remain unchanged. Authorising authorities should therefore abstain from requiring an approval of the same and unchanged documents for every new delivery under the same supply contract. Authorities may also provide an authorisation for all cargoes under the same supply contract for a certain period.

Last update: 18 March 2026

²³ See Art. 14 of the REPower Gas Regulation.

²⁴ See Art. 5(2) of the REPower Gas Regulation.

²⁵ See Art. 5(3) of the REPower Gas Regulation.

10. In which Member State do I have to request prior authorisation?

Similar to the customs declaration, the prior authorisation request should be made in the Member State where the natural gas is to be released for free circulation.

Last update: 2 February 2026

11. What if I have to reroute a cargo of non-Russian LNG in the last minute – can I use the authorisation already provided by another Member State?

Authorising authorities should acknowledge the fact that in a situation of severe supply shortages, importers may need to re-route cargoes on short notice, and closely cooperate in such times.

If importers have already received an authorisation for non-Russian LNG, it appears disproportionate to require a new authorisation just because the import harbour of the LNG changes from one Member State to another. As long as the Strait of Hormuz is effectively blocked, authorising authorities should mutually recognise authorisations for non-Russian LNG already granted by other authorising authorities. The Commission will assist authorities where needed to ensure that the necessary information can be swiftly exchanged between authorities. To facilitate mutual recognition, authorisations should be provided in English language where possible at Member State level.

Last update: 18 March 2026

12. Which authority in the respective Member State is responsible to grant the prior authorisation?

Member States can choose which authority they designate as responsible for the prior authorisation. If no other authority is designated (e.g. a ministry or the energy regulator), the default authorising authority is the national customs authority. The Commission has published the list of responsible authorising authorities on its website ²⁶.

Last update: 18 March 2026

13. The prior authorisation requires an analysis of elements which may need the involvement of other authorities – how will this be organised?

National authorising authorities will not carry out the prior authorisation in isolation. The regulation **obliges the relevant authorities to share information, support each other and to work jointly** on the analysis of prior authorisation requests²⁷. For example, even in case the customs authorities are chosen as the “authorising authorities” by a Member State, the Regulation includes clear legal obligations for other authorities to support the customs authority, e.g. in the analysis whether the conditions for an exemption in gas supply contracts for Russian gas are fulfilled. The other national authorities need to make **sufficient resources** available to guarantee an efficient analysis of the prior notifications as of 12 February 2026.

²⁶ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/strategy/repowereu-roadmap_en

²⁷ See e.g. Art 7(2) of the REPower Gas Regulation. See also the obligations to cooperate amongst national authorities in Art 5(5) and 5(6) and Art 6.

Authorising authorities are also obliged to **cooperate across borders** and exchange data and to set up the necessary information tools with other authorising authorities, in line with the obligations in Art 7(5) of the REPower Gas Regulation. At European level, ESMA, OLAF, EPPO, ACER and the Commission will be involved in the exchange of data and will assist the verification process where necessary. In times of energy supply shortages, the swift cooperation between Member States is of particular importance. Databases for the necessary exchange of information should be available, and duplication regulatory processes in several Member States should be avoided.

Last update: 18 March 2026

14. Who is obliged to notify the information necessary for the prior authorisation?

The REPower Gas Regulation leaves some flexibility regarding *who* has to submit the information necessary for the prior authorisation. The notification has to be submitted by the economic operator who lodges the declaration for release for free circulation, or its representant. This may be the importer, but the information may also be submitted by other market participants.

Last update: 2 February 2026

15. Can LNG or pipeline gas subject to prior authorisation be imported without an approval of the prior authorisation by the authorising authority?

No. It is the very purpose of the prior authorisation to avoid “*faits accomplis*” *before* the gas enters the customs territory of the Union. Recital 22 of the REPower Gas Regulation stipulates: “*Imports should be refused in the absence of an authorisation*”. Accordingly, Article 5(5) provides “*Where the information provided is not conclusive, the customs authorities shall refuse the release for free circulation of the relevant goods.*” The system of prior authorisation is different from customs control procedures in other sectors. It is, in principle, not allowed to provide the information only after the gas has been brought into the customs territory of the Union (‘ex-post declaration’), or to bring gas subject to prior authorisation into the customs territory of the Union on the basis of a mere ‘self-declaration’, without prior authorisation.

Last update: 2 February 2026

16. Is there a time limit within which the authorising authorities have to decide about the authorisation?

Recital 22 of the REPower Gas Regulation provides: “*(...) authorising authorities should strive to issue an authorisation within the period between submission of information by the importer and the planned entry into the customs territory of the Union in order to facilitate imports of gas into the Union.*”

This means that, even absent a legally binding decision deadline, authorities are obliged to minimise the time of the authorisation procedure as much as possible, also taking into account the impact of the duration of the authorisation on LNG supplies. In the current situation of significant LNG supply shortages, it appears therefore appropriate that authorising authorities use all potential for accelerating the authorisation procedure and grant the authorisations particularly swiftly. Authorising authorities should target an authorisation of non-Russian LNG imports within 12-

24 hours in the current situation. In case the authorisation is provided in less than 5 working days, Authorising authorities may also decide to allow the import of the LNG at an earlier stage than the 5 working day period originally envisaged by importers.

In view of the importance of undisrupted energy supplies into the Union, authorising authorities should therefore be **equipped with sufficient resources** to decide on the authorisation requests as soon as possible.

Authorities should inform the declarant about the indicative time for the adoption of a decision.

In view of the possible need of importers to decide on import destinations on short notice, all authorising authorities should allow to complement documents with more detailed information at a later stage in case key information has already been received. It appears proportionate in the current context to allow further submission of more detailed and rather complementary documents after the actual import and to carry out ex-post controls, instead of blocking the gas import until all the required documents have been delivered.

Last update: 18 March 2026

17. Does the prior authorisation substitute the customs procedure?

No, the prior authorisation does not substitute the usual customs procedure, but complements it. The rules of the Union Customs Code remain applicable to importers.

Last update: 2 February 2026

III. RULES FOR IMPORTS OF RUSSIAN GAS

18. What information do importers of Russian gas need to submit to authorising authorities?

At least the following information shall be submitted to the authorising authorities²⁸:

- (a) the date of the conclusion of the gas supply contract;
- (b) the duration of the gas supply contract;
- (c) the contracted quantities, including all upward or downward flexibility rights;
- (d) the identity of the parties to the gas supply contract, including, for parties registered in the Union, the Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number;
- (e) for LNG imports, the place of liquefaction and the port of first loading;
- (f) in the case of mixtures, documentation proving the quantities of natural gas that originates in or is exported, directly or indirectly, from the Russian Federation and the quantities of natural gas from other countries of origin contained in the mixture and information establishing the mixing process;

²⁸ See Article 5(2) of the REPower Gas Regulation.

- (g) the delivery points, including possible flexibilities concerning delivery points; and
- (h) any amendment of the gas supply contract, indicating the content and the date of the amendment, with the exception of amendments which relate solely to the gas price.

Authorising authorities, customs authorities and other authorities involved in the monitoring referred to in Article 6 and 7 may, where they deem the information provided under the prior authorisation procedure to be insufficient to assess whether the authorisation is to be granted, request more detailed information. Authorising authorities may, in particular, require the submission of the text of certain provisions of the gas supply contract in full or the entire text of the gas supply contract, except for price information, in particular where certain contractual provisions are interrelated, or where the full knowledge of the formulation of the contractual provisions is crucial for the assessment. Where a temporary exemption under Article 4 is requested and the price of the natural gas contract was amended on 18 June 2025 or later, the information shall include information on the price amendment²⁹.

Last update: 2 February 2026

19. What happens if I have blended Russian LNG with non-Russian LNG in the same LNG cargo ('mixtures') – is the import prohibited?

The prohibition applies only to the share of Russian gas in the LNG cargo. This would require that clear evidence can be submitted proving that for some quantities of the LNG the Russian Federation is not the country of production, such as information establishing the mixing process and information on the country of production of the respective volumes of the LNG. In case the share of non-Russian contents of a shipment containing Russian LNG cannot be established with evidence, the release for free circulation will be rejected for the whole consignment.

Last update: 2 February 2026

IV. IMPORTS OF NON-RUSSIAN GAS

20. What type of evidence needs to be submitted for imports of non-Russian gas which is subject to prior authorisation?

The evidence to be submitted for non-Russian subject to prior authorisation is described in Art. 5 of the REPower Gas Regulation (in particular paragraphs 3, 5, 6 and 8). It is important to note that the REPower Gas Regulation introduces a **new obligation** for importers which are subject to prior authorisation, namely to provide authorising authorities with all **information necessary to establish the 'country of production'**.

For the purpose of this Regulation, the concept of 'country of production' is different from the concept of 'country of origin' used in the Union Customs Code. It looks at **where the gas has actually been extracted, regardless of any subsequent transformation**. This means that the country of production of gas which has been extracted in the Russian Federation remains the

²⁹ See Art. 5(5) of the REPower Gas Regulation.

Russian Federation, even if it has subsequently been liquified, re-gasified or otherwise processed in another country.

However, in view of the need to process LNG-import requests as swiftly as possible in times of serious supply interruptions, authorities should make use of alternative information which may be available to establish that gas has not been produced in the Russian Federation.

Many exporting countries do not have gas import infrastructure in place. As it is unlikely that gas from these countries has been produced in Russia, the submission of the ‘standard’ customs documents (country of origin / bill of lading) is normally sufficient to prove the country of production. Authorities can therefore waive the submission of additional documents in such situation³⁰.

The same approach appears warranted if other evidence is provided that excludes that the imported LNG has been produced in the Russian Federation, e.g. in case import and export infrastructure is clearly separated in an exporting country.

The Commission will assist authorising authorities in establishing an overview of the LNG import infrastructure in different exporting countries.

Authorisations can only be granted **when sufficient** evidence on the non-Russian origin is provided. As the burden of proof is upon the declarant, importers are advised to get in touch with authorising authorities early on and to submit all possible documents which may be useful to prove the actual country of production.

Authorising authorities and customs authorities shall verify the evidence submitted to establish the country of production, and, where appropriate, request further information. The information to be provided may include, but is not limited to, documentation proving the place of extraction of the gas and as appropriate of its liquification, **upstream delivery documentation**, evidence on the **route of the delivery** such as publicly available satellite tracking of LNG cargoes or tracking information from the European Maritime Safety Agency, or **sales contracts**. Unlike otherwise specified by the authorising authorities, the principle of free evidence applies, and the evidence is not subject to specific conditions³¹.

Authorising authorities should make use of existing types of documentation where appropriate for the purpose of the implementation of the REPower Gas Regulation.

Last update: 18 March 2026

21. My contract partner is not the producer, how can I get the proof of the country of production?

The REPower Gas Regulation introduces a new legal obligation for non-Russian gas imports from certain countries³² to submit evidence for the country of production of the imported gas. Where the non-Russian origin of the gas cannot be established by other means (e.g. no import infrastructure, see previous question, but also Article 5(6) of the REPower Gas Regulation),

³⁰ This is, of course, without prejudice to the right of authorising authorities to request for more detailed evidence in cases where there is evidence for circumvention.

³¹ For a non-exhaustive list of possible information and documents that may be used to prove the country of production, point 2.3. of the European Commission guidance on non-preferential rules of origin may provide further indications - see: <https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-03/Guidance%20on%20non-preferential%20rules%20of%20origin.pdf>.

³² The obligation does not apply to the six countries falling under the exemption from prior authorisation.

exporters therefore need to provide evidence of the country of production for the gas volumes imported. The fact that the gas was not directly bought from the producer does not remove the obligation to prove the country of production. In this case, the seller of the gas may be able to provide information on the country of production.

Last update: 18 March 2026

22. What rules apply to pipeline imports via Turkstream / Strandzha 1?

Natural gas to be imported into the Union via the interconnection point Strandzha 1 is presumed to be exported from the Russian Federation³³, unless unambiguous evidence establishing that the country of production of the natural gas is not the Russian Federation is provided to the authorising authorities no later than 7 working days before the entry of that gas into the customs territory of the Union. The requirement of ‘unambiguous’ evidence reflects the fact that the interconnection point Strandzha 1 connects the Union to a pipeline system which transports not only gas from the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Republic of Türkiye, but also significant volumes of gas from the Russian Federation. Authorities therefore need to verify particularly carefully if the imported gas is not of Russian origin. The unambiguous evidence needs to be provided no later than 7 working days before the entry of the gas into the customs territory of the Union.

Last update: 2 February 2026

V. OTHER ISSUES

23. Do I have to inform authorities or the Commission about Russian gas contracts?

Yes, and **within 4 weeks** after entry into force of the REPower Gas regulation: According to Article 14(6) of Regulation (EU) 2017/1938, as amended by Article 11 of the REPower Gas Regulation, importers and gas undertakings must notify information related to gas supply contracts that originates in or is exported, directly or indirectly, from the Russian Federation **to the relevant competent authorities and the European Commission**, within 4 weeks of the Regulation’s entry into force. The following information needs to be provided by that date:

- (i) the information referred to in Article 5(1) of the REPower Gas Regulation³⁴;

³³ Art. 5(8) of the REPower Gas Regulation

³⁴ Information to submit under Art. 5(1) includes notably:

- (a) the date of the conclusion of the gas supply contract;
- (b) the duration of the gas supply contract;
- (c) the contracted quantities, including all upward or downward flexibility rights;
- (d) the identity of the parties to the gas supply contract, including, for parties registered in the Union, the Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number;
- (e) for LNG imports, the place of liquefaction and the port of first loading;
- (f) in the case of mixtures, documentation proving the quantities of natural gas that originates in or is exported, directly or indirectly, from the Russian Federation and the quantities of natural gas from other countries of origin contained in the mixture and information establishing the mixing process;
- (g) the delivery points, including possible flexibilities concerning delivery points; and
- (h) any amendment of the gas supply contract, indicating the content and the date of the amendment, with the exception of amendments which relate solely to the gas price.

- (ii) information on the quantities to be supplied and taken, including possible flexibilities under take-or-pay provisions or deliver-or-pay provisions;
- (iii) delivery schedules (LNG) or nominations (pipeline gas);
- (iv) possible contractual flexibilities concerning the annual contracted quantities, including make-up quantities;
- (v) conditions for the suspension or termination of gas deliveries, including force majeure provisions;
- (vi) information on which law governs the contract and which arbitration mechanism is chosen;
- (vii) key elements of other commercial agreements that are relevant for the execution of the gas supply contract, excluding price information.

A failure to notify these contracts on Russian gas on time may lead to penalties, in line with Art. 14(10) of Regulation (EU) 2017/1938.

Last update: 2 February 2026

24. Is transit of Russian gas through the Union allowed? What information is necessary to present?

Transit of Russian gas through the Union remains allowed, unless prohibited by Union restrictive measures (sanctions) for LNG under Council Regulation (EU) No. 833/2014.³⁵ However, specific information and notification rules apply³⁶. Where natural gas is transported through the Union from third country to third country under a transit procedure in accordance with the Union Customs Code, including for the purpose of storage under customs warehousing rules, authorising authorities and, where applicable, customs authorities shall be informed no later than 5 working days before the planned transit about:

- (a) the country of production of the natural gas to be transported under a transit procedure, unless such information is not available;
- (b) the planned or actual nomination schedules specifying volume, timing, and entry and exit points of the gas in transit, with daily granularity where applicable;
- (c) volumes and delivery points in the gas supply contracts; and
- (d) the contract between the seller or buyer or any intermediary entity and the relevant Transmission System Operators in the Union, where applicable.

Last update: 2 February 2026

³⁵ see also “Frequently Asked Questions” on the ban under Art 3ra of the Sanctions regulation, available under: https://finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/import-ban-liquified-natural-gas-lng_en.

³⁶ Art. 5 (10) of the REPower Gas Regulation

25. Is storage and/or warehousing of Russian gas allowed?

Where operators store natural gas that originates in or is exported, directly or indirectly, from the Russian Federation in temporary storage or under a transit or customs warehousing procedure under the Union Customs Code on Union territory, Member States shall have appropriate monitoring and enforcement mechanisms in place to ensure that the use of Union storage by third countries does not pose any risk to national or regional security of supply or to the fulfilment of the storage obligations provided for in Articles 6a to 6d of Regulation (EU) 2017/1938, and provide relevant information to the Commission.

Last update: 2 February 2026

26. What about confidentiality of the submitted information/evidence, i.e. contracts?

According to Article 12 of the REPower Gas Regulation, any confidential information received, exchanged, or transmitted in accordance with this Regulation shall be subject to the specific requirements of professional secrecy laid down in this Article.

The obligation of professional secrecy shall apply to all persons who work or who have worked for authorities involved in the implementation of this Regulation and to any natural or legal person to whom the relevant authorities have delegated their powers, including auditors and experts contracted by those authorities.

Information covered by professional secrecy shall not be disclosed, except by virtue of provisions laid down by Union or national law.

All information exchanged between the relevant authorities or Member States in accordance with this Regulation that concerns business conditions or operational conditions or other economic or personal affairs shall be considered confidential and shall be subject to the requirements of professional secrecy, except where the relevant authority states at the time of the communication that such information may be disclosed, where the disclosure is required by virtue of provisions laid down under Union or national law or where such disclosure is necessary for legal proceedings.

Last update: 2 February 2026

27. How to deal with technical operational tolerance in LNG cargos?

It may be difficult or impossible to establish the country of production for some minor residual gas volumes which often remain in an LNG cargo for operational reasons. In view of the low risk of circumvention in these cases, it appears that flexibility can be allowed with respect to small "technical" gas volumes, provided the affected volumes concern less than 5% of the contracted volumes, and provided that there is no repeated pattern of using the full 5% of the margin.

Last update: 18 March 2026

28. Is prior authorisation required for a transport between two Member States which crosses a third country that is party to the Common Transit Convention?

Regulation (EU) 2026/261 links the prior authorisation to the *import* of pipeline gas and LNG. Article 2(8) defines 'import' as the placing of goods under release for free circulation, within the

meaning of Article 201 of the ‘Union Customs Code’. Therefore, prior authorisation is only needed if the gas is released for free circulation in the Union within the meaning of Article 201 of the Union Customs Code. Once gas is released for free circulation within the Union, no further authorisations are required when the gas is resold. Natural gas already released into free circulation in the Union may be transported between two Member States, crossing a third country – for instance, when gas is transported from Hungary or Romania to Poland, crossing Ukraine. If the gas is transported through Ukraine, which is a contracting party to the Common Transit Convention, and if the gas is moved under a deemed common transit procedure, the gas is technically *not re-imported* when it enters the Union.

No prior authorisation for the gas entering the Union is therefore necessary in this case.

Last update: 5 August 2026

29. Is prior authorisation necessary if gas which was in free circulation in the Union is temporarily stored or placed under a customs warehousing procedure in Ukraine and then re-exported into the Union? Which are the relevant documents to submit?

There are cases where natural gas is exported from the Union to Ukraine to be *temporarily stored* or placed under a *customs warehousing* procedure there. In case this gas is subsequently re-exported to the EU, a prior authorisation would be required under Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) 2026/261. This is because gas being exported from the Union and stored under temporary storage or customs warehousing schemes in a third country needs to be *imported* into the Union again, i.e. it needs to be subject to import formalities in order to be released for free circulation in the Union within the meaning of Article 201 of the Union Customs Code. The prior authorisation should be granted by the authorising authority in the Member State where the natural gas is to be imported.

However, the prior authorisation can be significantly simplified. The purpose of the prior authorisation for non-Russian gas is to establish that gas coming into the Union is of non-Russian origin. In cases where gas is sent from the Union to Ukraine under a *customs warehouse* or *temporary storage* procedure, and then re-exported to the Union, there is usually the possibility to provide sufficient proof as concerns the non-Russian origin of the gas. Indeed, natural gas can only get into free circulation in the Union after a thorough check that the country of production is not the Russian Federation. In cases where the origin of the gas has already been verified within the Union, it does not appear warranted to require detailed proof of the country of production again when the gas re-enters the Union from a customs warehouse or temporary storage in a third country. However, this can only apply if the Ukrainian exporter has applied to the tank /customs warehouse book-keeping measures comparable to the FIFO (First-in first out) principle that ensure that despite the mixing of the gas the gas of EU origin can be clearly traced and that there can be no fraud regarding the volumes. Safe in cases where there is evidence for circumvention, it should therefore be sufficient for importers to provide to the relevant authorising authority the documents proving that the gas volumes were in free circulation in the EU within the meaning of Article 201 of the Union Customs Code, and that those gas volumes have been subsequently in temporary storage or in a customs warehouse continuously at all times which is evidence through excerpts

from the book-keeping. Authorising authorities may further streamline prior authorisation procedures for re-imported gas as indicated in question 5a.

Last update: 5 August 2026