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Ukraine buys US LNG amid Trump-Putin talks on ending war

By Pavel Polityuk

March 18, 2025 7:52 AM EDT · Updated 21 days ago



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Employees work at a gas well of Ukraine's state energy company Naftogaz, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Lviv region, Ukraine October 1, 2022. REUTERS/Pavlo Palamarchuk/File Photo [Purchase Licensing Rights](#)

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KYIV, March 18 (Reuters) - Ukraine has bought 100 million cubic metres of U.S. liquefied natural gas in a deal between state firm Naftogaz and Poland's Orlen ([PKN.WA](#)), days after Kyiv declared its plan to buy large volumes of U.S. gas this year, Naftogaz said on Tuesday.

U.S. President Donald Trump said he would speak to Russia's Vladimir Putin on Tuesday about ending the Ukraine war, with territorial concessions by Kyiv and control of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant likely to feature prominently in the talks.

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U.S. imports of gas into Ukraine have the potential to strengthen an economic partnership with Washington and the presence of U.S. gas in Ukraine's storage facilities could deter Russian attacks.

Ukraine agreed to raise purchases of U.S. gas to meet its energy demand after Russia damaged its gas production and storage facilities.

The move would have been unthinkable just 10 years ago as Ukraine was 100% reliant on Russian gas, which was also covering nearly 40% of the European Union gas needs.

But three years of war have ruptured decades of economic relationships between Russia and the EU and Ukraine and the replacement of Russian gas with supplies from the U.S.

A senior Ukrainian energy official told Reuters this month that Ukraine may import large volumes of U.S. gas this year via terminals in Germany, Greece, Lithuania and Poland.

"The fuel will come from a shipment of U.S. LNG. After regasification, the gas will be transported to the Polish-Ukrainian border," Naftogaz said regarding the latest deal, adding the gas was due to arrive in April.

It added the gas would be used to "create strategic gas reserves", crucial for Ukraine's energy security.

MISSILE ATTACKS

The Ukrainian gas transmission system operator said Ukraine could receive LNG from the cheapest Polish and Lithuanian routes, but the Polish interconnector allowed the import of only up to 7 million cubic metres per day, compared with demand of 20-25 million.

The U.S. is the world's largest exporter of LNG and has played a major role in supplying Europe since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Ukraine's gas imports increased almost tenfold in February after a series of Russian missile attacks on its gas production.

Naftogaz and DTEK, Ukraine's largest private energy firm, said Russian forces had targeted Ukraine's energy infrastructure, damaging gas production facilities.

Russia denies targeting civilian infrastructure, but views the Ukrainian power system as a legitimate target in its war.

"Stable gas supplies remain our top priority. Cooperation with Orlen expands Ukraine's LNG import capacity and enhances energy security," said Roman Chumak, Naftogaz's acting chairman of the board.

"We are diversifying supply sources to ensure a reliable and accessible gas supply, especially amid ongoing Russian attacks on our infrastructure," he added.

The latest deal is the second under a memorandum of understanding between Naftogaz and Orlen and follows an earlier delivery, also of 100 mcm.

Additional reporting by Marek Strzelecki in Warsaw; editing by Louise Heavens and Jason Neely

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