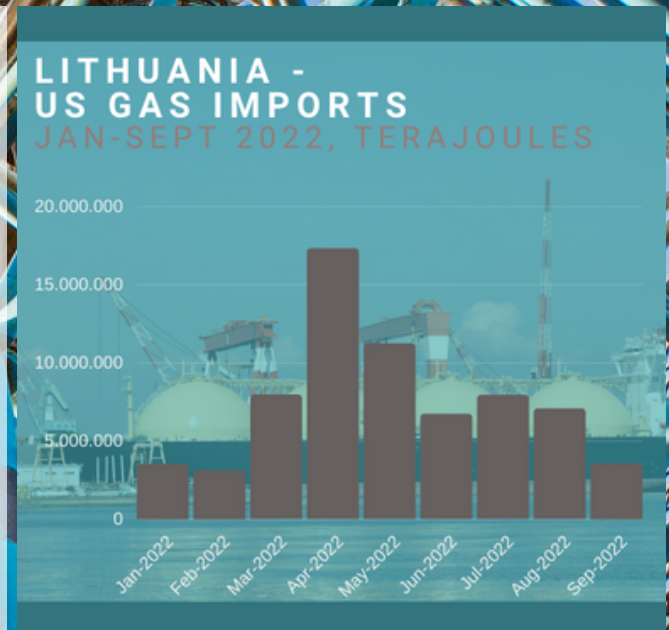


Lithuania: Fracking - Coming to your doorstep

Imports of US gas into Lithuania represent 143%, almost one and a half times more than the country's total gas consumption - and almost all of it is fracked. Fracking is a disaster for our climate and for communities affected by the brutal drilling method. Europe must swiftly move off all fossil gas for a safe liveable future.

Fossil gas, no matter its origin, is no solution for Europe. Russian gas has proven to be synonymous for supply insecurity and weaponization of the EU's dirty energy dependency. The EU's aim to get off Russian gas could be a big chance to accelerate a just transition. So far, however, EU-leaders and European governments have chosen to go into the wrong direction embracing LNG as a dirty fix, while largely ignoring real solutions. Simply moving Europe's gas addiction from Russia to LNG imports is a big problem. This briefing takes a closer look at fossil gas imports from the US, which are almost entirely fracked.



SPOTLIGHT FRACKED GAS

US Energy Information Administration data states that 87% of gas produced in the U.S. is shale and tight gas, which needs to be extracted via hydraulic fracturing, or fracking*. If we assume that U.S. gas exports to Lithuania follow this same proportion, it means that fracked gas represents 124% of all gas consumed in the country.

Lithuania has received 23 vessels with US gas between January and September 2022. It is the EU country with the highest share of fracking gas imports compared to its consumption in the same period.

The three top-US export terminals supplying dirty US gas to Lithuania in this period were Cameron LNG in Louisiana, Corpus Christi in Texas and Sabine Pass in Louisiana. Cameron LNG is owned by a consortium including Semptra LNG, TotalEnergies and others, both the gigantic Sabine Pass and Corpus Christi terminals are owned by Cheniere, America's largest fracked LNG company. Cheniere cashes in big on the polluting business while harming communities: in 2022 it reported more than double its revenues compared to last year.

So although fracking in the country is in a way limited, leading to fracking firm Chevron pulling out of the country claiming that Lithuania's laws and regulations are too restrictive, there is no limitation on importing the climate-wrecking chilled fuel.

Lithuania imported 1.94 billion cubic meters (bcm) of almost entirely fracked US gas between January and September 2022.

US LNG - A COSTLY DIRTY BET

LNG imports have been portrayed as a flexible energy supply saving Europe. A solution for immediate gas needs as a result of embargoes and cuts of gas flows from Russia is indeed necessary, but LNG can only be a short term emergency solution.

The veritable LNG import and LNG infrastructure expansion frenzy Europe witnesses today is a dangerous and disproportionate reaction to the energy crisis. Europe must not create a risky, dirty LNG dependence which comes at a high price and is no solution for energy poverty.

The EU-US LNG import deal of 50 bcm annually is estimated to cost Europe €64bn through 2025. It also comes with high climate costs - the US import deal with Europe will lead to emissions equalling those of 100 coal plants each year.

What is Fracking?

Fracking is the process of drilling down into the earth before a large quantity of water, sand and chemicals are injected into the rock at high pressure, allowing oil and gas to flow to the surface. Fracking is linked to a global spike of methane in the atmosphere, and methane is over 86 times more climate damaging than CO2. Fracking pollutes drinking water and produces large amounts of toxic, even radioactive wastewater. It is causing indescribable harm to impacted communities and leads to several public health problems. Fracking can trigger earthquakes and drives the petrochemicals and plastics boom as well as destructive infrastructure buildout.

Fracking is a technology widely banned across the EU over environmental concerns.

GAS BULLY EUROPE

The import infrastructure build-out plans in EU countries are nothing short of delusional, with over 121 billion cubic meters of new LNG import capacity planned or under construction. A decades-long lock-in to the dirty fuel, or the creation of huge stranded assets will be the consequence.

Further, several long-term contracts for 10-15 or more years have been or are expected to be made. This LNG frenzy already has devastating impacts across the globe. Egypt is now burning dirtier fuels to be able to sell more gas to Europe.

Pakistan suffers significant blackouts after the country can't buy LNG, as it is outbid by wealthy EU countries. Gas-hungry Germany is estimated to be able to bid high enough to trigger the breaking of long term contracts with poorer countries that can't afford paying that much for the LNG they are painfully dependent on.

Wasting money on the dirty LNG bet also blocks funds we desperately need to get off gas and to ensure real European energy security, failing also to stop Europe from being at the mercy of importers like Azerbaijan, Russia (which increased LNG exports to Europe by 40% between Jan-Oct 2022 compared to the same period in 2021), Qatar, or the dirty fracking world champion USA.

Stopping the rush for LNG is needed to avoid turning Europe, the biggest LNG importer on the planet, into a gas-bully.

We Can Stop Fracking Imports!

We ask for:

- Permanent and ambitious fossil gas consumption reduction in Europe, managed in a just and fair way to prioritize the energy poor and ensure no one is left behind in the switch to clean energy.
- An immediate stop to all public funding for new fossil gas infrastructure
- Money to be directed at solutions and adapting legal requirements to facilitate the upscaling of renewables and energy efficiency. This means further investments in geothermal, wind, solar, and solar electrification, demand side response, and smart energy storage solutions etc. which will fight climate change more efficiently, cheaply and with less public health risks while creating thousands of new clean energy and climate jobs.
- The blocking of the undue influence the fossil fuel industry has on climate and energy policy. Just like the tobacco lobby isn't invited to draft health legislation, big oil and gas must not have a say in developing legislation to protect our climate.

December 2022

Methodology

- Analysed time period: 1. January - 30 September 2022
- Malta, despite importing US gas, is not considered in the country ranking, given with 0,13 bcm its imports are very small
- U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) figures show that in 2021, 87% of the gas extracted in the United States was shale/tight gas. This gas is extracted by fracking.
<https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/natural-gas/where-our-natural-gas-comes-from.php> U.S. East Coast LNG terminals exporting to Europe contain different shares, but often close to 100% fracked gas.
- Data on LNG vessel origin, destination & volumes from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) [https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/LNG%20Monthly%20August%202022_1.pdf] was compared with Eurostat monthly data on gas consumption and gas imports [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nrg_cb_gasm/default/table?lang=en]
- Note: Gas imports into an EU member state are often higher than the total consumption of that country as imported LNG is often transported further into Europe, eg. from Greece to Bulgaria, from The Netherlands to Germany, from Italy to Austria etc. or injected into storage facilities.
- Underlying calculations and data can be found here:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18vcrmNcI4ql3uflN1VUqvgtHhAMsrw4IOgHIXWVgcw/edit#gid=1777250413>