

Poland buys more LNG, reduces reliance on Russian gas

WARSAW, Aug 3 (Reuters) – Poland's dominant gas firm PGNiG said on Friday that its LNG purchases from Qatar and elsewhere jumped by 60 percent in January-July from a year earlier, as the country diversifies its sources to reduce reliance on Russian gas.

PGNiG has to buy certain amounts of gas annually from Russia under a long-term deal with Russia's Gazprom, which expires in 2022 and which Warsaw has said will not be renewed.

In the first seven months of this year, PGNiG's imports from Gazprom rose by 6 percent, it said, but the Russian share of PGNiG's total gas imports fell by 2 percentage points from a year earlier to 75 percent.

LNG, purchased from Qatar, Norway and the United States, accounted for 19 percent of PGNiG's total gas imports during the period, an increase of 6 percentage points from a year earlier.

PGNiG has been buying more LNG via a terminal at the Baltic Sea in Poland also plans to build a gas link to Norway by 2022, which would give it access to gas from the North Sea.

"PGNiG is getting prepared to start supplying the Polish market with gas produced on the Norwegian continental shelf," PGNiG said.

The company also said that gas consumption in Poland rose to 17 billion cubic metres (bcm) last year, from 15 bcm two years previously.