Esbo points of contact in Denmark

Cc to Esbo points of contact in:
Estonia
Finland
Germany
Latvia
Poland
Sweden
as of enclosed list

REGARDING THE POSITION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA ON THE TRANSBOUNDARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE NORD STREAM 2 PROJECT

We would like to thank Denmark for its submission of the environmental impact assessment (hereinafter – EIA) documentation (Non-Technical Summary, Transboundary Impacts, Construction Permit Application Summary and “Draft Permit for Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipelines”) for the Nord Stream 2 project and the ongoing consultations regarding the transboundary EIA for this Project.

The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, as an authority coordinating the transboundary EIA process in accordance with the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a transboundary Context (hereinafter – Espoo Convention), published the received EIA documentation on its website and distributed the EIA documentation to the relevant national authorities. All national stakeholders had the possibility to provide feedback regarding the mentioned documentation to the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania by 20 November of this year (comments received with delay were taken to account as well).

The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania did not receive any feedback from the public, however, there were some issues raised by the relevant national authorities. The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, upon evaluating the views and the responses of the governmental authorities regarding the Nord Stream 2 is presenting the following position:

The Nord Stream 2 project goes against the aims of European Union (hereinafter – EU) policy on climate change mitigation, energy security, Energy Union goals and gas supply diversification. Lithuania maintains its consistent position that all energy infrastructure projects with European relevance need to be compatible with EU law (incl. EU Third Energy Package) and EU energy policy objectives. Lithuania supports the European Commission’s view that Nord Stream 2 could expand Gazprom’s presence within the EU’s gas market and undermine the creation an open gas market with competitive prices and diversified suppliers. Lithuania also supports the European Commission’s position that the Nord Stream 2 project contradicts the EU’s energy security policy
objectives, which, among others, include the diversification of routes and gas suppliers. Therefore, we agree with the view that there is no need for additional infrastructure such as Nord Stream 2.

The assumptions made by the Nord Stream 2 developer regarding the necessity to increase the capacity of EU natural gas imports are not sufficiently justified, as the current EU gas import capacity is twice the annual natural gas demand. Moreover, after the implementation of the planned natural gas import infrastructure projects in the EU, the total EU natural gas import capacity would be three times higher than the annual EU natural gas demand. Therefore, a full-scope analysis, which would clearly examine the economic and social impact of the Nord Stream 2 project on the EU’s existing and potential gas suppliers, and the need of yet another gas supply route from an already dominant supplier, should be carried out prior to permitting of the project. A more detailed analysis of the Nord Stream 2 project should be carried out so that it would ensure that Nord Stream 2 would not create any adverse effects to market access for alternative gas suppliers. Also, a more detailed assessment of the Nord Stream 2 project vis-a-vis the EU regulatory and policy framework is required to justify its compliance with EU law and energy policy objectives.

The project should be permitted only if the aforementioned assessments provide undeniable evidence of its economic validity and compliance with EU climate and energy policy taking into account EU Third Energy Package requirements, the objectives set out in the Energy Union Strategy such as free third party access to the natural gas transmission networks in Europe, increasing competition between gas suppliers, diversification of resources, as well as the goals of 2020 Climate and Energy Package, 2030 Climate and Energy Framework and a Roadmap for Moving to a Competitive Low Carbon Economy in 2050.

Lithuania is also of the opinion that construction permit granting procedures should be postponed until the necessary amendments of the Gas Directive (2009/73/EC) will be adopted and it would be clarified that the core principles of EU energy legislation (third-party access, tariff regulation, ownership unbundling and transparency) will apply to the major gas transmission lines to and from third countries up to the border of the EU's jurisdiction.

It should be clear that measures will be taken in order to prevent the environmental threats posed by chemical weapons and other pollutants (such as heavy metals, radionuclides and organic pollutants) to the Baltic Sea region during the construction and operation of the Nord Stream 2 project.

We kindly ask you to take into account the Lithuanian position during the transboundary consultations in accordance with Article 5 and the decision making in accordance with Article 6 of the Espoo Convention and to provide written feedback regarding our expressed issues. We would like to note that the decision regarding the necessity for additional consultations could be made only after the consideration of the written feedback.

Yours sincerely

Reda Brandisauskiene
Vice-Minister

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