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Balkan focus: Croatia, Bulgaria and Albania bank on LNG import solutions

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In January this year, Croatia joined the LNG importers' club, its 1.9 mtpa Krk terminal becoming the third LNG import facility in the Balkans, joining Greece's Revithoussa and Marmara Ereğlisi on Turkey's European side. For the Croatians, access to LNG has been a long-held wish, as it reduces their dependence on pipeline supplies while boosting the role natural gas can play in their country's energy transition. However, from a market perspective, the terminal has been criticised as unnecessary for a small gas market like Croatia.

Energy security is part of the reason why two other Balkan countries, Albania and Bulgaria, are looking to introduce LNG to their supply mix. In Albania's case, an LNG terminal would end its exclusive reliance on hydro for electricity, but critics point out that the thermal power station it would feed is not large enough to underpin an LNG terminal. For Bulgaria, access to LNG via Greece's proposed Alexandroupolis terminal would lessen its dependence on Gazprom for gas and support its coal-to-gas switch, the Bulgarian government hopes.



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