
RUSSIA AND TURKEY FEED EUROPE'S GAS ADDICTION

- 24.08.2016

Forbes, 23 August 2016

When Turkey shot down a Russian warplane last year, relations between the two countries soured. Russia retaliated by cancelling plans to build a 900 km natural gas pipeline through Turkey. It will be called TurkStream. This new hostility opened an opportunity for Europeans seeking to escape from their own dependence on Russian energy. When it appeared TurkStream would not fail, Europeans finally began preparing for alternative sources of natural gas.

But geopolitical conditions change swiftly. Following the failed coup in Turkey last month, Erdogan and Putin have rekindled their friendship. The relationship has the potential to help Russia with its energy plans and military strategies in the Middle East and Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan shake hands at a news conference after their talks in the Konstantin palace outside St.Petersburg, Russia, on Tuesday, Aug. 9, 2016. President Erdogan travels to Russia to meet with President Putin for the first time since apologizing in late June for the downing of a Russian fighter jet along the Syrian border in November last year. (AP Photo/Alexander Zemlianichenko)

The result of Russias and Turkeys rapprochement is continued European dependence on Russian natural gas for the foreseeable future. Before Turkey and Russia made amends, there were high hopes that Europe would commit to other sources of natural gas and not fall further under Russian dependance. In the months following the fight between Russia and Turkey, much excitement, particularly about the possibility of Europe importing more American liquified natural gas (LNG) emerged. Europe could also obtain natural gas from the Caspian Sea area, via a much shorter pipeline that would originate in Azerbaijan. Other sources of LNG include Qatar and the always friendly Australia. LNG imports would require the construction of new LNG import terminals and connecting pipelines.

Kaynak/Source: