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## **EU MEMBERS AND LEADERS AGREE ON COMPROMISE FOR NORD STREAM 2**

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A deal between EU member states, the EU Parliament, and its Commission aims to give the bloc more oversight on gas pipelines. However, the controversial Nord Stream 2 project would not be threatened by the regulations.

The EU parliament and its Council are set to adopt new regulations on gas pipelines connecting the bloc members with non-EU countries, the EU Commission announced early on Wednesday.

The upcoming directive is based on a compromise between EU member states and EU officials in Brussels. The bloc leaders agreed to tighten Brussels' oversight of gas delivery and expand its rules to all pipelines plugging into the EU's gas distribution network.

"The new rules ensure that \* everyone interested in selling gas to Europe must respect European energy law," EU Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete said in a statement.

For example, owners of pipelines linking EU and non-EU countries would also be required to allow access for their competitors. Brussels would also have more power regarding transparency and tariff regulations.

### **Clear skies for Nord Stream 2**

Brussels has repeatedly expressed concern over the controversial Nord Stream 2 project which would deliver Russian gas directly to Germany through a pipeline under the Baltic Sea. Many EU states oppose the mammoth project, and the US claims it would allow Moscow to tighten its grip on the EU's energy policy.

Berlin has insisted that the pipeline is a "purely economic" issue.

Last week, France unexpectedly rebelled against the project, but Berlin and Paris soon reached a compromise. Thanks to their agreement, the latest deal is not expected to impede the ongoing construction of Nord Stream 2.

Citing sources from negotiators' circles, German public broadcaster ARD reported that the deal left room for Germany to approve exceptions from the EU-wide rules.

According to the EU Commission, however, exceptions are "only possible under strict procedures in which the Commission plays a decisive role."

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Kaynak/Source: