
SERBIA'S GASTRANS INVITES BINDING BIDS FOR NEW GAS LINK

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Serbias Gastrans has invited binding bids to book capacity at a planned section of Gazproms TurkStream pipeline, which will carry Russian natural gas across Serbia to Europe.

Firms that placed non-binding offers in the market test of the project last year can place binding bids by March 18 for gas transit between Jan. 1, 2020, and Sept. 30, 2039, Gastrans said.

Gastrans is owned by Swiss-based South Stream Serbia, in which Russias Gazprom holds a 51 percent stake and Serbias gas monopoly Srbijagas the remainder.

The TurkStream project is designed to deliver gas to Europe via Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary as part of Russian plans to bypass Ukraine, currently a main transit route for its gas deliveries to Europe.

The planned 400-kilometre link through Serbia, which connects the countrys natural gas transmission system to those of Bulgaria and Hungary, is expected to be completed by Dec. 15, with capacity of 13.88 billion cubic metres a year.

It is slated to begin commercial operation on Jan. 1, 2020.

In last years market test, Gastrans received non-binding bids for the import of 9,139 gigawatt hours (GWh) of natural gas per day from Bulgaria and the export of 5,258 GWh of gas per day to Hungary in 2019-2039.

The European Unions energy watchdog said last week the project would hurt competition in the region after Serbias energy regulator exempted it from the EUs Third Energy Package, a 2009 reform to integrate the EU energy market and boost competition.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/serbia-gas-turkstream/serbias-gastrans-invites-binding-bids-for-new-gas-link-idUSL8N20Y4F8>

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