

An explosion at the pipeline in south-western Bulgaria halted the deliveries of Russian gas from Bulgaria to Greece, said CEO of Bulgarian natural gas transmission system operator Bulgartransgaz Vladimir Malinov.

Malinov said that there were no casualties, adding that the explosion caused a rupture in a pipeline, but there was no fire. The repairs are already ongoing and the flow of gas should be restored later this week. The damaged section was immediately sealed off and there was no pressure drop registered in the Bulgarian national gas system.

The reasons for the accident are yet to be fully investigated, but he said a technical problem was the most likely reason. In a separate statement, prosecutors said an initial survey at the site did not show signs of human interference.

Greek Ministry of Energy said that the accident does not pose a risk to the security of gas supply to Greece, as the country continued to receive gas from a pipeline link with Turkey and its liquefied natural gas reserves were high. About 3 billion cubic meters per year of Russian gas are delivered to Greece via Bulgaria.