

Russian media state report that the official events related to the completion of the gas pipeline are not being held due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the ceremony will probably be held at a later date. According to Russian media, the construction of the extension of TurkStream gas pipeline through Bulgarian territory, dubbed Balkan Stream, has been connected to the Serbian section, thus marking the completion of its construction. Last month, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov said that the construction of Bulgarian section of TurkStream gas pipeline extension will be completed by the end of the year, which was also confirmed by the additional agreement signed between state-owned natural gas transmission system operator Bulgartransgaz and the contractor - Saudi-based Arkad consortium. According to newly agreed deadlines, the construction of the entire route with a length of 474 kilometers will be completed sooner. According to initial agreement, the first 308 kilometers had to be built within 250 calendar days from the signing of the contract, which was at the end of May 2020. However, the construction procedure was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The remaining 166 kilometers had to be ready in 615 calendar days. Now, however, the construction of the entire route is united in a new total deadline - 448 days from the signing of the contract, which was in September last year. Thus, the entire route of the Bulgarian section of the pipeline will be completed in mid-December. Last September, Bulgartransgaz and Saudi-based Arkad Consortium have signed a contract for the delivery of materials, investment project design, development and commissioning of the the Bulgarian section of TurkStream extension. The contract is worth 1.1 billion euros and has to be implemented within 615 days after its conclusion. The new pipeline will allow Bulgartransgaz to supply gas to Serbia, Hungary and finally, the hub in Austria. Bulgartransgaz also signed a contract, worth 197.5 million euros, with a consortium consisting of German FerroStaal and two local companies for the construction of two gas compressor stations. Serbian section of the TurkStream extension has been completed in December 2019.