

Romanian officials announced that the first phase of the Bulgaria-Romania-Hungary-Austria (BRHA) gas pipeline project on Romania's territory has been completed. CEO of Romanian natural gas transmission system operator Transgaz Ion Sterian expressed its dissatisfaction with Bulgaria's constant delays in the construction of gas interconnection with Greece (so-called IGB pipeline).

Sterian noted that although the project included in the European Commission's program of Projects of Common Interest, and financed by the EU, it has not been completed more than ten years after it was conceived. He added that Transgaz and Hungarian FGSZ have contacted Bulgartransgaz regarding the completion of the vertical gas corridor towards Greece, however, the Bulgarian did not answer.

The project, which connects Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and Austria, will increase Romania's natural gas export and import capacity to Hungary to 1.75 billion cubic meters per year and the export capacity to Bulgaria to 1.5 billion cubic meters per year. The first stage's cost amounted to 479 million euros, out of which 179 million euros came from the EU grant, while the rest was financed by natural gas transmission system operator Transgaz. The project's second stage aims to connect the future offshore gas exploitation sites in Romania's Black Sea section to BRHA pipeline, thus allowing the country to export part of the Black Sea production to Hungary and Austria. In June 2018, Transgaz has started the construction of the first phase of BRHA gas pipeline. Initial completion date of the first phase of BRHA gas pipeline was December 2019.