

Balkan Stream, a Serbian section of the TurkStream gas pipeline extension, has already started being filled with gas and first deliveries are expected on 1 January 2021 according to Russian media but Serbian gas company Srbijagas did not make any statements regarding the launch of the Serbian section of the pipeline.

The Ministry of Mining and Energy said that technical tests, but also the commercial launch, could be done before the end of the year, adding that the pressure in the pipeline is already sufficient to deliver necessary quantities of gas to Serbia. However, the Ministry believes that the official launch of the pipeline will be between January and March 2021.

The Ministry said that a compressor station will be built by May 2021, while Bulgaria has to complete two compressor stations by the end of 2021. However, this will not hamper possible gas deliveries to Serbia in the first quarter of next year. When all compressor stations are completed, gas pipeline will be able to operate at full capacity and to deliver gas to Hungary and Austria.

Serbia has completed the laying of the pipes for its section of the TurkStream gas pipeline extension in December last year. The construction of Serbian section, connecting Bulgarian and Hungarian borders, has officially started in May 2019. With an envisaged capacity of almost 14 billion cubic meters of gas per year, 403 kilometers long Serbian section should be put into operation as early as 2020, and reach its full capacity during 2022. The operator of the pipeline in Serbia is local company Gastrans, a joint venture between Russian Gazprom and state-owned gas company Srbijagas.