

## Serbia: South Stream delays is a question for Srbijagas says Energy minister Mihajlovic

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Energy Minister Zorana Mihajlovic said that the Serbian government has done all it can to create the conditions for the construction of the South Stream pipeline as soon as possible. She added that the question of beginning of works on the pipeline primarily a matter for Srbijagas.

"By the Decision of the Government, National Commission for the monitoring and support of the South Stream is formed, and with 35 MEUR, which were given by the budget we have set aside an additional 70 MEUR for this project", said Mihajlovic to Tanjug, adding that the regulation of pipelines pressure above 16 bar is changed.

The minister stressed that the government will grant South Stream the status of the project of national interest.

President of Serbian Gas Association Vojislav Vuletic said that South Stream was very important for Serbia in the energy, and economic terms.

"Anyone who wishes well to Serbia should wish that South Stream is implemented as soon as possible," he told Tanjug.

Serbia will benefit greatly from the South Stream also due to the payment of transit fees, for whose construction in Serbia 73 percent of Serbian citizens declared, said Vuletic.

Srbijagas, who is a partner of Russia's Gazprom on the section of South Stream through Serbia, is done all the necessary preparations for the construction of the gas pipeline and soon will begin construction of compressor stations in the pipeline in Serbia, Vuletic said, adding that South Stream can not jeopardize the restructuring plan of Srbijagas.

Srbijagas, said Vuletic, was brought in an awkward situation in which the Government of Serbia should "take it out" because the Government in the past has given all approvals for loans of Srbijagas, for the sale of gas at a lower price than the real, and for gas import.

Professor of Faculty of Economics Ljubomir Savic said that there is no doubt that the relations between Serbia and Russia are getting better, in favor of Serbia.

Russian investments are welcome in Serbia, he told Tanjug, the investment climate for them is changed for the better with the new government in Serbia, and one of the most common project is the South Stream.

It is a capital investment from which Serbia will have a huge advantage, as he pointed out,

the pipeline releases energy dependence and is included in the map of European gas pipeline.

Acting Director of the Republic Agency for Spatial Planning Dragan Duncic told Tanjug that he expects the Serbian government next week to adopt the amended Special Purpose Spatial Plan for the South Stream pipeline through Serbia.

"We have no problems with the amendments of the plan, they are working as quickly as possible and we expect to get all remaining approvals very quickly," said Duncic, adding that the document and report on the strategic assessment of its impact on the environment will be then found in front of the government.

Duncic announced that the work on issuing location permits is scheduled to begin next week, in order to start with the building permits for the South Stream and added that Serbia is the fastest of all the countries through which the pipeline passes, who did Spatial Plan for South Stream.

Source; Serbia Energy