



Deputy Economy Minister Evgenia Haritonova has said that the Bulgaria – Serbia gas grid interconnection with Serbia is a very important project which must be implemented according to schedule.

Haritonova spoke Thursday upon the completion of the feasibility study of the Bulgaria-Serbia gas grid interconnection project.

The feasibility study for the gas pipe had a price tag of around BGN 900 000, according to reports of money.bg.

Haritonova pointed out that the development of the gas transmission grid was an important priority for the Ministry of Economy, Energy, and Tourism (MIET) and the Bulgarian government.

“We have been developing the electricity transmission grid but the gas transmission grid has somehow been left on the back burner,” she claimed.

“We all saw what happened in 2009 when gas supplies for Bulgaria from its only source were stopped. As a result, MIET was all the more convinced that we had to start intensive activities for the development of feasibility studies, preparation, and designing of gas grid interconnections” she noted.

Bulgaria’s Deputy Economy Minister noted that the existence of gas grid interconnections would give Bulgaria the opportunity to develop the gas market and to persuade the European Commission that it took the problem seriously.

Haritonova also noted that the new gas pipe would connect Bulgaria to Central European gas hubs located in Austria and Hungary.

She said that Bulgaria could only speak of a normal gas market after it had secured connections to the gas grids of all neighbor countries.

She further argued that the signing of the memorandum of understanding for the implementation of the gas grid interconnection project with Serbia on December 14 had increased investor interest in northwestern Bulgaria.

The gas pipe will have branch lines for three Bulgarian cities – Slivnitsa, Godech, and Dragoman, money.bg informs.

Four routes have been developed for the project, the most preferred option being route #2, which does not require the issuance of an environmental impact assessment report.

The route starts from the gas hub in Novi Iskar and passes north of Sofia through the municipalities of Kostinbrod, Slivnitsa, and Dragoman.

The gas pipe section to the Serbian border is about 60km long and the Serbian section of the conduit will be 100 km long.

The operator of the pipe is yet to be determined and the creation of a joint venture for the purpose has not been discussed.

According to Svetlana Marinova from MIET, the Bulgarian section of the gas grid

interconnection is expected to cost around BGN 92.6 M, with 99% of the funds to be provided under the Competitiveness Operational Program.

In her words, the designing of the gas pipe and the land expropriation procedures are to start in the next few months.

A building permit for the Bulgaria-Greece gas interconnection is to be obtained in mid-2013, the construction of the pipe should start in early 2014 and the first gas is to flow on July 31, 2015, according to Marinova.

*Source Novinite*