

First gas will be introduced into the Albanian and Italian sections of the pipeline in coming weeks, says Head of External Affairs at TAP AG Vugar Veysalov.

Veysalov explained that following the commissioning of the first section of the pipeline at the end of November 2019, gas continues to be gradually introduced into the Greek pipeline. So far, more than 275 kilometers have been commissioned, or 50 % of its route in Greece. Commissioning has started at the Kipoi compressor station with the introduction of gas on 29 February 2020. In the upcoming weeks and months, first gas quantities will be introduced in Albania and then in Italy. He added that the commissioning phase is due to be completed in time for TAP to transport first gas in 2020.

Regarding the market test, Veysalov said it continues as planned. After publishing the draft project proposal for incremental capacity together with Snam and DESFA on 20 January 2020, TAP intends to proceed with the subsequent phases of the market test, in line with the Guidelines for the 2019 Market Test of Trans Adriatic Pipeline, approved by the National Regulatory Authorities of Greece, Italy and Albania.

TAP project envisages 878 km long pipeline that will connect to the Trans-Anatolian (TANAP) near the Turkish-Greek border and cross Greece, Albania and Adriatic Sea before reaching its final destination in Italy. Current shareholders of TAP AG are British Petroleum (20 %), Azeri state-owned SOCAR (20 %), Italian Snam (20 %), Belgian Fluxys (19 %), Spanish Enagas (16 %) and Swiss Axpo with 5 % of the shares. The initial capacity of the pipeline is 10 billion cubic meters of gas per year, with an option to expand the capacity to 20 billion cubic meters. The cost of the project was initially estimated at some 6 billion euros, but in 2016 CEO of TAP AG Ian Bradshaw confirmed that the construction should cost 4.5 billion euros. The construction of the Greek section of the pipeline was launched on 17 May 2016, while construction works on the Albanian section started on 30 September same year. The works on the 105 kilometers long offshore section between Albania and Italy started in October 2018.