

The Trans-Adriatic pipeline project was 96 % complete at the end of May, said TAP AG, a company in charge of the construction and operation of Trans-Adriatic gas pipeline (TAP). The statement from the consortium said that TAP is currently moving further into the project construction phase. Every day hundreds of meters of TAP's right of way are cleared, strung, welded, lowered into the trenches and backfilled, in line with the project construction steps and schedule. Last week, TAP AG announced that it has completed the 105 kilometer-long offshore section of the pipeline under the Adriatic Sea. Activities to connect the Italian and Albanian coasts began in mid-January, with pipes welded and tested onboard the semi-submersible pipelaying vessel, Castoro Sei. The pipes were then laid on the seabed of the Adriatic Sea in a continuous stretch from the Italian shore towards Albania. Approximately 9,000 pipes were used for TAP's offshore section and laid at depths of approximately 810 meters below sea level. TAP's contractor Saipem's Castoro Sei laid pipes covering an average of 1.2 kilometers per day, but reached a peak on one single day of 2.8 kilometers. 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.