The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia's Gazprom Says Europe Needs Turkish Pipeline

By The Moscow Times

June 09, 2015



The Turkish Stream project is also threatened by the EU's push to diversify its energy usage away from Russia, from which it receives about a third of its gas and oil.

A top official at state energy giant Gazprom said Tuesday that Europe will need to accede not only to the contested Turkish Stream pipeline but other gas distribution schemes too if it wants to avoid a major energy deficit in the coming decade.

"We will proceed from the assumption that good sense will prevail in Europe, and that we will talk not only about the distribution of gas through the Turkish pipeline ... but that we will soon talk about additional volumes too," said Alexander Medvedev, deputy chairman of the board of Gazprom, news agency Prime reported.

Without help, the EU will likely see a 50 billion cubic meter deficit of imported gas in 2025, he added.

Medvedev's statement was the latest in a battle of words between Gazprom and the EU over the future of the Turkish Stream project, an as-yet-unbuilt pipeline that is meant to funnel gas from Russia into Europe through Greece and Turkey.

Gazprom has been adamant that the EU has no choice but to back the pipeline, while the EU has expressed continued skepticism about the project, which could violate EU energy laws that bar companies from controlling all parts of a gas supply chain.

The Turkish Stream project is also threatened by the EU's push to diversify its energy usage away from Russia, from which it receives about a third of its gas and oil.

In its quest for energy independence, the EU has raised its use of renewable energy to around 15 percent of gross consumption and sought out alternative suppliers. In the first quarter of the year, Norway overtook Russia to deliver 29.2 billion cubic meters of gas to western Europe against Russia's 20.29 billion, news agency Reuters reported in May, citing data from Norwegian gas firm Gassco and Gazprom.

The EU is also on track to get around 10 billion cubic meters of gas from Azerbaijan by 2020 through a set of Caspian pipelines known as the Trans Anatolian and Trans Adriatic Pipelines (TANAP-TAP).

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