

Gazprom Launched Pipeline Construction in Bulgaria

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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SOFIA, Bulgaria — Bulgaria's prime minister and the chief of Russia's Gazprom have launched the construction of the Bulgarian stretch of a pipeline meant to transport Russian natural gas to Europe.

Plamen Oresharski and Gazprom CEO Alexey Miller announced Thursday the start of work on the 540-kilometer (335-mile) section of the South Stream pipeline, which is expected to start operating in December 2015.

The trans-European pipeline would ship up to 63 billion cubic meters (2 trillion cubic feet) of gas annually to Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria and Italy in one leg and Croatia, Macedonia, Greece and Turkey in a second.

The pipeline's route bypasses transit nation Ukraine to ensure safe shipping. Pricing disputes between Russian and Ukraine have caused major disruptions in recent years, cutting gas

for millions of customers.

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