

The Chamber of Deputies, a lower house of the Romanian Parliament, adopted a draft law which abolishes the ban to build gas pipelines in the coastal zone of the Black Sea, which also includes beaches.

According to the local media, an explanation for this decision is that the future natural gas production in offshore perimeters of the Black Sea needs to be taken over in the national gas transport system operated by Transgaz. Some of the most important perimeters in the Romanian Black Sea waters are operated by OMV Petrom, ExxonMobil, Lukoil and Romgaz. The draft law also includes several exemptions for the current legislation. These exemptions are aimed at speeding up the authorization process for the construction works of the international gas pipeline that will connect gas networks of Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria.

The draft also prescribes that the projects of national importance in the field of natural gas can be implemented without the approval of landowners, on whose land the pipelines would be built. Moreover, if the landowners refuse to provide access to their land to the companies which are in charge of the construction of gas infrastructure, the police will provide help in order to enable the companies to carry out their works.