

## Turkey, EU agree site for key gas pipeline

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Turkey and the European Union have agreed on a site near Ankara for the start of the Nabucco pipeline, planned to carry natural gas to Europe, a high level Turkish energy ministry official said.

The EU will provide financial support for the planned site near Ankara at Ahiboz, the official said, which will fund the necessary natural gas facilities.

Gas supplies for the project have thus far only been secured in Azerbaijan.

'The European Union's support, including financial support, will help build the physical infrastructure that will turn Ahiboz into an energy hub,' said the official.

Apart from the Nabucco project, Turkey has also said it wants to export gas to third countries.

The official did not specify how large the EU's financial support would be.

The 4.6 billion euro (\$7.27 billion) Nabucco pipeline is expected to carry 21 billion cubic metres of natural gas annually from the Caspian region to European consumers in order to lessen Europe's dependence on Russian gas.

Construction is expected to begin in 2010 and gas is expected to begin flowing by 2013.

Until the addition of RWE early last month, the Nabucco consortium was equally owned by oil and gas companies in the transit countries - Austria's OMV, Hungary's MOL, Turkey's Botas, Bulgaria's Bulgargaz and Romania's Transgaz.