



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **USEA to launch historic regional natural gas pipeline planning project in Southeast Europe**

Zagreb, Croatia— The U.S. Energy Association, through a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) supported project, has structured a landmark agreement among 7 transmission system operators (TSOs) in 7 countries in Southeast Europe to work together on planning, expanding and potentially interconnecting natural gas pipeline infrastructure.

The countries will sign a Memorandum of Understanding on May 16 in Zagreb under which they agree to develop network planning models, share pipeline network data, equipment information and other technical details.

Countries signing onto the deal include: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro.

Romanian and Serbian officials plan to attend the meeting in Zagreb and could sign onto the MOU at a later date.

Under the agreement, USEA will provide transmission system operators with modeling software and train utility engineers and network planners. USEA specialists will arrange periodical regional meetings and will oversee technical management of the models.

USEA's Senior Director, Will Polen, said, "This way of coordinating regional gas network development plans and developing technical justifications for investments to support regional gas markets is a new, progressive approach never implemented before in southeast Europe."

The models will be used to map existing infrastructure and forecast future system requirements. The models and analyses resulting from their use will be shared with ministries, regulators and international financial institutions to encourage investment in natural gas infrastructure.

**The United States Energy Association (USEA) is the U.S. member of the World Energy Council (WEC), the energy body of the United Nations. USEA also serves as a bipartisan advisory organization that represents 150 members across the U.S. energy sector from the largest Fortune 500 companies to small energy consulting firms. USEA's team of international energy specialists work with the U.S. Agency for International Development to build out energy infrastructure in developing countries.**



“We will provide the technical basis for gas transmission infrastructure improvements and expansion, similar to the way we have with the electricity transmission system operators in southeast Europe with USAID support. During the last 25 years, USEA and USAID have worked to leverage \$1 billion of power sector investment in Europe and Eurasia,” Polen said.

“It is not an easy task. Infrastructure projects take a long time and require substantial feasibility assessment. But with the gas network computer modeling capability, the analytical work will become much more accurate, reliable and actually easier” Polen said.

USEA expects new regional market supported by accelerated investment in natural gas pipelines will usher in a new age of energy security in Southeast Europe.

Polen said the agreement would enlarge markets for liquefied natural gas and develop new resources that could transform the economy of Southeast Europe, a region that has relied on Russian natural gas.

The modeling and analysis supported by the agreement would also bring much-needed natural gas resources to Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

If you would like to speak with Will Polen and attend the signing ceremony, please email Dipka Bhambhani at [dbhambhani@usea.org](mailto:dbhambhani@usea.org).

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