

The municipality of Bogatić should get Serbia's first geothermal district heating system by the beginning of the heating season, with this renewable energy source to be first used to heat public facilities and later to be made available to individuals and businesses, representatives of the municipality announced.

The new geothermal heating system will result in annual savings of between RSD 12 million (EUR 100,000) and RSD 18 million (EUR 150,000), as well as reduce air pollution.

The works are being carried out under a project developed in cooperation with experts from the University of Belgrade School of Mining and Geology, Dejan Milenić and Ana Vranješ, the author of the Heating Study.

The contract on construction works was signed at the end of last year. The total value of the project is RSD 120 million (EUR 1 million), out of which 75% will be financed through a loan and the rest from the municipality budget.

The project is to be completed within 120 days, said Bogatić Mayor Nenad Beserovac.

The local authorities have also prepared a study on the geothermal potential in the municipality of Bogatić in cooperation with the University of Belgrade School of Mining and Geology, Beserovac said, adding that the study envisages making geothermal energy available to individuals and businesses in the second phase, with electricity generation being the ultimate goal.

Antić: Opportunity for several harvests

Minister of Mining and Energy Aleksandar Antić said that the start of construction marks an important day for Bogatić, Mačva, and the wider region in Serbia, as it heralds many more projects to come.

The project to develop a geothermal district heating system for seven public buildings will deliver a return in a short term, which will enable offering this service to individuals and businesses in the future, Antić said. This part of Serbia has a strong agricultural potential and by using geothermal energy it can ensure several harvests each year, Antić noted, adding that this would be of capital value for the entire Serbia.

Exploration launched 30 years ago

The municipality of Bogatić is one of three municipalities in Serbia which were selected to get into the selection procedure for receiving funds from the EU for heating projects for public institutions based on results of a feasibility study ordered by the Ministry of Energy and Environmental Protection. A year later the geothermal well BB1 was equipped for production.

The exploration of geothermal energy started more than 30 years ago in Mačva, after which it was proven that there is a huge potential which has so far remained untapped.

## Construction of Serbia's first geothermal district heating system kicks off

When it comes to other geothermal projects in Serbia, the Swiss Cooperation Office and KfW are working on a project to use this energy source for district heating in Bečej, while Serbia-based oil and gas company NIS signed an agreement in October 2016 on cooperation in this area with China's Betec.

Recently the Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency announced a public call for the selection of the best bid for geothermal energy exploration in the area of the city of Slatina.

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