

Serbia currently gets more than 70 percent of its electricity from lignite. Much of the electricity is also supplied by hydropower plants.

By 2030, coal consumption in the European Union should fall by 70 percent compared to 2015, and oil by 30 percent. At the same time, the share of renewable sources in energy production in the EU would more than double from today's 32 percent, the European Commission concluded at a recent summit in Brussels, which aims to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 percent. At the same time, the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, said that our country would be a low-carbon society by 2050, which should mean a 13.2 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 2010. The goal is to improve air quality.

Dr. Slobodan Ruzic, a former assistant minister of energy, says that every developed country uses all the energy resources at its disposal. Coal is our most important resource and together with hydropower, it gives this country the necessary level of security. Without coal and hydropower, we would have been an energy-dependent country for a long time. What needs to be done is to get rid of the use of old and inefficient thermal units and replace them with modern energy-efficient larger installed powers. This can increase efficiency in electricity generation by at least 10 percent and significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

According to the information of the Global Coal Tracker, as many as 27 coal-fired power plants are being built in the EU, so the question arises as to why Serbia is considered to be consuming lignite for electricity production.

Master Zeljko Markovic, leader for the energy sector in Diloit, former director of EPS, says that the construction of coal-fired power plants is not banned in the EU, so the issue of their construction is actually a matter of cost-effectiveness, bearing in mind that the price of electricity products from thermal power plants burdened with emission taxes. The regulation prescribes that only capacities whose emissions are lower than 550 grams of carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour are acceptable, and from July 2025, there will be an additional condition that average annual emissions are less than 350 kilograms of carbon dioxide per kilowatt of installed power. Bearing in mind that the current emission of thermal power plants in Serbia is 1,200 grams of carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour, we see that the requirements for acceptable capacities are extremely strict, which also means that in EU countries less and less is thought about investing in thermal power plants, explains Markovic. After all, Serbia is currently building or will build two coal capacities in the near future, with a total capacity of 700 megawatts, which will be technologically harmonized with the current EU legislation regarding emissions.

The Ministry of Energy emphasizes that the price of electricity is much higher when it is produced from fossil fuels, due to the costs of environmental protection, and it also has a negative impact on the environment and human health. Additionally, it is possible that countries that continue to produce electricity from coal will also face taxes estimated at hundreds of millions of euros. Then the question arises whether it is better to turn to energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and gas power plants or pay at least half a billion euros, and not have the positive effects that these investments bring. Unfortunately, these investments are far greater than the investments and allocations for green energy, and they are necessary. Our investments in air purification by 2030 will be almost 1.3 billion euros, and in currently current projects around 650 million euros.

Source: politika.rs