

After successfully finishing the auction for the construction of 62 MW of solar photovoltaic installations in 2020, the country will organize similar bidding for another 60 MW, Prime Minister Zoran Zaev has announced on Facebook. In 2019, North Macedonia organized auctions for the construction of solar PV plants backed with premiums on private and state land. In 2020, the government signed contacts with nine companies for investment in state land, and with 23 investors for projects on private land. He said that several solar power plants have already been put into operation, adding that he expects the new auction to trigger investments of EUR 35 million. Zaev said that there are so many arguments for the country to be considered a renewable energy leader in the region.

The construction of a 10 MW solar power plant is underway at a former coal mine in energy complex REK Oslomej, while two more facilities, with an installed capacity of 50 MW, will also be built, in an investment estimated at EUR 60 million, he said. He has announced that grants have been secured for feasibility studies for three new PV plants with a total capacity of 160 MW at energy complex REK Bitola.

Power plant TEC Negotino has launched tendering for the preparation of a feasibility study, and in the first half of 2021 it will be assessed whether a new gas-fired power plant will be built in a public-private partnership project or whether the plant will be sold, he said, adding that the project could attract an investment of EUR 200 million to EUR 500 million. The government earlier said it plans to switch the 210 MW power plant TEC Negotino from fuel oil to natural gas. Zaev also said that 2021 will see the start of construction on the second phase of wind farm Bogdanci. The investment will increase the wind park's installed capacity by 13.8 MW. He also recalled that the Čebren hydropower project has attracted strong investor interest.

North Macedonia plans to reach a 50% share of renewables in electricity production by 2024 and to phase out coal. The country is also in talks with General Electric to build a gas-fired power plant, and to switch power plant REK Bitola to gas. State-owned energy company Elektrani na Severna Makedonija (ESM) has recently suspended investments in Bulgaria's nuclear power plant Belene, and shifted its focus to the construction of a gas power plant in Greece.

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