

Electricity producer Nuclearelectrica, the operator of Romania's sole nuclear power plant Cernavoda, initiated a partnership with the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) for support the delivery of technical assistance related to small and modular nuclear technologies (SMR) sitting assessment. For this purpose, the company received a non-refundable grant in value of 1.27 million dollars.

In March 2019, Nuclearelectrica signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the US company NuScale Power for an exchange of technical and economic information on the technology of small modular reactors developed by NuScale.

The goal is to identify and perform a preliminary assessment of new potential SMR compatible nuclear sites in Romania. According to the 2020 Romanian Energy Strategy Project, the employment of small and modular nuclear reactors might be beneficial to increase energy capacities without CO2 emissions and sources of hydrogen production, after 2035.

USTDA considers the partnership will create new business opportunities for US industry in an important market. USTDA will also be used to fund the costs of technical assistance for a licensing roadmap for SMRs. Nuclearelectrica's CEO Cosmin Ghita said that, in addition to the current development of reactors 3 and 4, the company is also interested in assessing the development of small modular reactors as a long-term solution to further develop the Romanian nuclear industry. It is interested in features like flexibility, modularity and higher efficiency that could provide advantages for both the energy system and businesses after 2035.

Small modular reactors (SMR) are a type of nuclear fission reactor which are smaller than conventional reactors, which allows them to be manufactured at a plant and brought to a site to be assembled. Modular reactors allow for less on-site construction, increased containment efficiency, and enhanced safety due to passive nuclear safety features.

Source: romania-insider.com