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ENERGO - CEE/FSU POWER - JUNE 19, 2025

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Slovenian distributors to build 1,300 km of smart low-voltage network by March 2026

18 June 2025

Slovenia’s five electricity distribution companies are expected to construct 1,300 kilometres of low-voltage network and install 838 transformer stations with smart grid components by the end of March 2026, Nas Stik reported earlier this week.

The initiative is being co-financed through the country’s Recovery and Resilience Plan, with a total investment value of €150mn, of which €71mn will be provided through EU-backed grants.

The companies also secured an additional €33.5mn in co-financing through a second call for proposals by the Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy, following an earlier allocation of €37.5mn.

Among the distribution companies, Elektro Primorska will invest over €11mn to build 113 km of low-voltage network and 73 transformer stations, with €6.9mn of that amount coming from Recovery and Resilience Plan funds.

Elektro Ljubljana has been awarded €5.2mn in co-financing for the construction of 84 km of low-voltage lines and 71 transformer stations.

Elektro Gorenjska plans to build or reconstruct 82.3 km of network and 53 transformer stations, with total investments of €10.2mn, half of which will be covered by the recovery fund.

Elektro Celje will use €4.9mn in approved funding for 77.7 km of network and 50 transformer stations, as part of a project worth over €10mn.

Elektro Maribor received the largest grant in this round—€11.3mn out of a planned €27mn investment. The company aims to construct 184 km of low-voltage network and install 118 transformer stations of various capacities, ranging from 250 kVA to 1,000 kVA.

The infrastructure upgrades are part of Slovenia’s broader green and digital transition, aiming to modernise the grid and ensure reliable energy supply while supporting future increases in electricity demand.

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Hungary to secure one-year grace period to phase out Russian gas, but left

without veto power

18 June 2025

The European Commission has unveiled a proposal on June 17 to completely phase out Russian energy imports by the end of 2027. While Hungary and other landlocked countries were given a one-year exemption, Budapest will have no option to veto the legislation.

The draft regulation includes an immediate ban on new short-term "spot" gas contracts from the end of 2025, followed by a stepwise prohibition on both pipeline and liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from Russia.

Nuclear energy was excluded from the proposal, shielding Hungary’s Paks II project and its Russian fuel supply from immediate disruption.

For the first time, the draft legislation also sets a binding deadline for eliminating remaining imports of Russian crude oil, which continue under various exemptions despite earlier sanctions. The EU would seek to fully halt Russian oil imports by the end of 2027 and introduce tighter enforcement measures to combat the "shadow fleet" of tankers operated by Moscow to evade restrictions.

The EC also called for a ban on the long-term use of EU liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals by Russian companies from 2028. The move is intended to prevent circumvention of pipeline restrictions through maritime routes.

Under the proposal, new Russian gas contracts would be banned from early 2026, with short-term agreements phased out by mid-2026 and long-term ones by the close of 2027. Landlocked countries such as Hungary and Slovakia would benefit from a one-year derogation, allowing Budapest’s 15-year gas deal with Gazprom signed in 2021, to remain valid until end-2027.

The exemption is little consolation for Hungary with heavy dependence on Russian gas, which accounts for the majority of its energy supply. The long-term contract, covering 4.5bcm annually, will now remain valid under the new EU rules, a move that Prime Minister Viktor Orban repeatedly defended as essential to ensuring national energy security and economic stability.

Hungary’s veteran leader has consistently criticised Brussels’ attempts to impose blanket bans on Russian energy, arguing that it would disproportionately hurt Hungary’s economy and risk driving up energy prices.

"At stake is no less than whether Hungarian households can be saved from the plan of Brussels bureaucrats and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, which would jeopardise Hungary's oil and gas supplies and make Hungarians' utility costs skyrocket," the prime minister said in his latest post on Facebook.

Orban has incorporated the EU proposal to decouple from Russian energy into his all-out anti-Ukraine campaign. The fearmongering reached new highs over the weekend with the release of an AI-generated video by the prime minister, showing Hungarian soldiers fighting on Ukrainian battlefields and coffins lined up.

In recent speeches, he frequently referred to this outlandish scenario that Hungarian soldiers would be returned home in coffins. Deploying combat troops abroad requires direct authorization from the president, which is one of the few real powers held by Hungary's head of state.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto chipped in, saying that Brussels wants to "kill" Hungary's utility protection scheme. "As a result of the von der Leyen-Zelensky plan, Hungarian families would pay double for electricity and three times more for natural gas, " he added.

If adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, the regulation will impose stricter reporting requirements on energy importers to verify the origin of fossil fuels, with the Commission and EU energy regulators monitoring compliance annually. The legislation will pass by qualified majority vote, removing Hungary's ability to block the measure despite its opposition.

"It is in the member states' interest to cooperate with the European Commission and implement the plan to phase out Russian energy if they want to ensure affordable and clean energy for their populations," EU Commissioner for Energy Dan Jorgensen told leftist daily Nepszava at Tuesday's press conference.

Member states must submit national diversification plans by March 2026, detailing how they intend to replace Russian energy sources. These must include existing contract details, a timeline for switching to alternative energy sources, and an assessment of potential bottlenecks. The Commission will monitor compliance, supported by new data disclosure rules for energy firms and customs authorities.

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Croatia's electricity production dips in April

17 June 2025

Croatia's net electricity production fell in April compared to the previous month, while petroleum product use remained broadly stable, data from the national statistics office showed on June 17.

Electricity available for the inland market totalled 1,383 GWh in April, down 12.9% from March but up 1.8% year on year. The figure includes both final consumption and network losses, the statistics office said.

Natural gas availability for domestic consumption dropped 13.8% on a monthly basis to 8,531

terajoules (TJ), although it rose 32.3% compared to April 2024. Gas stocks fell by 1,103 TJ during the month.

In contrast, petroleum products available for inland consumption reached 271,000 tonnes, up 1.1% from both March 2025 and April 2024. Stockpiles of petroleum products increased by 51,000 tonnes.

The statistics office noted that the reported quantities for inland consumption of energy products also include volumes that may be held in storage by final consumers or in the retail sector.

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Commercial banks show strong interest in financing Poland's first nuclear plant, investor PEJ claims

17 June 2025

Poland's first nuclear power station will seek commercial funding in the second half of 2025 amidst "very strong interest" from banks, Poland's state news agency *PAP* reported on June 1, citing Wojciech Rosi?ski, finance director at state-owned company Polskie Elektrownie J?drowe (PEJ), the plant's project leader.

The facility, to be built in the municipality of Lubiatowo-Kopalino on the Baltic coast, will include three AP1000 reactors supplied by the US consortium of Westinghouse-Bechtel. Construction of the nuclear plant is planned to start in 2028, with the first unit expected to begin commercial operation in 2036.

PEJ plans to finance 70% of the project with debt and the remainder from state equity. The company has signed letters of intent with 11 export credit agencies for around 70% of the required debt, with the rest to come from commercial lenders.

"We are seeing very strong interest from virtually all the major commercial banks, both domestic and international. In fact, during talks, these institutions have expressed readiness to commit significant amounts by their standards," Rosi?ski told *PAP*.

The executive also said the strongest engagement comes from banks based in countries with established nuclear industries, including the US, France and the UK. Institutions from Germany and Spain have also shown interest.

Pension and investment funds may be considered for refinancing after the plant becomes operational, Rosi?ski also said.

PEJ aims to finalise the financing by the end of 2028. Part of the setup is securing approval from the European Commission to supply the project with PLN60bn (€14bn) in capital.

“The European Commission’s decision will also provide the green light for the entire debt to be covered by state guarantees, which is an essential element of the financing structure,” Rosi?ski said.

That decision will enable commercial lenders to enter and launch formal due diligence, followed by credit agreement talks.

The project’s estimated investment and operational costs up to the commissioning of the third unit total PLN192bn, excluding financing costs.

With a smaller commercial debt share, PEJ expects the overall project budget to remain within 5% of the figure notified to the Commission. Rosi?ski said exchange rates and interest levels will be key factors, as 90% of the debt will be in US dollars or euros.

“We will do everything in our power to ensure the final cost of the project is as low as possible without compromising the quality of work, safety, or the schedule,” Rosi?ski said.

Poland plans to construct two nuclear power plants overall – the second one in the centre of the country – with a combined capacity of up to 9 GW as part of the long-term strategy to move away from fossil fuels.

Poland remains the only country in Central and Eastern Europe (excluding the Baltic States) without an operational nuclear facility.

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Estonia abandons 100% renewable electricity target by 2030

17 June 2025

Estonia has quietly backed away from its legally mandated goal of generating as much renewable electricity as it consumes. While the official 2030 target remains in place, it is now clear the deadline will not be met – or even approached in the foreseeable future, *ERR.ee* reported on June 17.

In late August 2022, the government led by Kaja Kallas (Reform) – who had previously worked in the wind energy sector – approved a legislative amendment raising Estonia’s 2030 renewable electricity target from 40% to 100% of national consumption. The country’s legislature, Riigikogu, passed the bill without delay.

In 2023, Estonia consumed 8.1 terawatt-hours (TWh) of electricity. Domestic production amounted

to 5.4 TWh – around 65.8% of consumption. Of that, 3.4 TWh – or 41.7% – came from renewable sources. Renewable generation is roughly split into thirds: biomass and waste, wind and solar.

At the time, then-Climate Minister Kristen Michal of Reform expressed confidence that Estonia was on track. However, now serving as Prime Minister, Michal has reversed that position. Speaking on ETV's *Esimene stuudio*, he admitted the goal is no longer realistic.

"It was already quite clear six months ago that meeting 100% of electricity consumption with renewable sources by 2030 is not feasible at the current pace," Michal said, *Esimene stuudio* and *ERR.ee* said.

He suggested a revised target year of 2033 or 2035.

One major factor was the government's decision this spring not to proceed with a reverse auction for offshore wind development, citing high potential costs – up to €2.6bn in subsidies. Though not officially cancelled, progress now depends on new European financial instruments under the Green Deal. No comparable support mechanisms currently exist, *ERR.ee* said.

In contrast, the approach to onshore wind has been more concrete. The government is reviewing a bill allowing transmission system operator Elering to conduct a reverse auction for up to 2 TWh of renewable electricity per year, with subsidies capped at €20mn annually – or €200mn on over a decade.

According to the Ministry of Climate, existing projects from earlier auctions are expected to add 1.32 TWh in 2026-2027. If the 2 TWh auction is successful and timely, total additional production could reach 3.32 TWh.

Adding that to the current 3.4 TWh would bring production to around 6.72 TWh by 2030 – still 1.4 TWh short of the 8-TWh target. Any increase in consumption would widen the gap, *ERR.ee* said.

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Poland and Baltic states sign memorandum on critical infrastructure security

17 June 2025

Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have signed a memorandum aimed at deepening cooperation on protecting critical infrastructure, Poland's Climate and Environment Minister Paulina Hennig-Kloska said on June 16.

The initiative follows the synchronisation in February of the Baltic states' electricity systems with the continental European power grid, which includes Poland. The Baltic grids were previously linked to Russia and Belarus.

The urgency of the agreement has increased following recent incidents involving underwater cables in the Baltic Sea. These events have raised concerns over the vulnerability of critical infrastructure in the region to sabotage, particularly from Russia.

The memorandum sets out plans to strengthen joint efforts to safeguard vital infrastructure. It also establishes a dedicated working group that will be responsible for coordination, information sharing and joint security measures. This will include exercises and data exchange to address risks facing both land-based and maritime assets.

According to Lithuania's Ministry of Energy, the group's role will be "more effective coordination of initiatives, exchange of information, and joint implementation of security measures to protect key energy infrastructure – both onshore and offshore – against physical, cyber and other threats," Polish news agency *PAP* reported.

Synchronisation with the continental system required aligning the frequency of their electricity networks with that of the European grid. Poland played a facilitating role in this process.

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Lithuanian parliament orders audit of €3bn 700-MW Baltic Sea offshore wind project

16 June 2025

Lithuania's parliament Seimas instructed the National Audit Office to conduct an audit into the involvement of state-owned enterprises in the Curonian Nord offshore wind project in the Baltic Sea, *LRT.lt* and *BNS*, a Lithuanian news agency, reported on June 16.

The audit will focus on the first 700-MW offshore wind farm, currently being developed by Ignitis Renewables – a subsidiary of the state-owned Ignitis Group – in partnership with Ocean Winds, a global offshore wind developer.

Concerns have been raised that although development rights were awarded jointly to Ignitis and Ocean Winds, only Ignitis Renewables is currently financing the project – rather than returning those funds to the state in the form of dividends, *BNS* said.

In February, Ignitis Group confirmed that delays in large-scale electrolysis and green hydrogen projects across Europe and the Baltic region have complicated efforts to secure long-term power purchase agreements. As a result, financing the wind park – with an estimated cost of €3bn –could prove more difficult.

These challenges could delay the planned start of commercial operations, currently scheduled for 2030, by up to five years.

Under the 2023 tender, Ignitis Renewables and Ocean Winds won the rights to develop Lithuania's first offshore wind farm without state subsidies. The consortium paid €20mn to the state for development rights and has since invested an additional €30mn in seabed surveys, feasibility studies and personnel, *BNS* and *LRT.lt* said.

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Poland's PGE unveils PLN235bn investment plan, targets PLN17bn EBITDA by 2030

13 June 2025

State-controlled Polish utility PGE plans to invest PLN235bn (€54bn equivalent) over the next decade under a new strategy aimed at boosting EBITDA to PLN17bn by 2030 and PLN30bn by 2035, while resuming regular dividend payments, the Warsaw-listed company said on June 12.

The strategy responds to increased market volatility, geopolitical uncertainty, the need for responsible energy transition, and the demands of delivering major power projects, PGE said.

It is structured around three pillars: securing energy supply, lowering energy costs to strengthen Poland's economy and creating shareholder value in line with ESG principles and respect for local communities and employees.

PGE expects a shift in its earnings structure, with growing contributions from gas-fired capacity and energy storage alongside regulated business and renewables. EBITDA is forecast to grow from PLN11bn in 2024 to PLN17bn in 2030 and PLN30bn in 2035.

The company said it plans to improve its risk profile and maintain covenant compliance while increasing use of external funding and enhancing its credit rating. Partnerships with Polish and international financial institutions (IFIs) are expected to expand the use of project finance.

Of the PLN235bn in planned outlays, PLN175bn will go to development and maintenance, PLN39bn to acquisitions and PLN21bn to optional investments.

PGE also said 39% of this spending will support regulated-tariff projects, 22% will go to offshore wind farms with CfD support, and 39% will fund investments eligible for other support mechanisms

or market-based returns.

The company intends to allocate PLN75bn to distribution, PLN85bn to onshore and offshore renewables, PLN37bn to flexible gas capacity, PLN14bn to energy storage and PLN18bn to district heating.

PGE said dividend payments may resume once four conditions are met: recurring net profit, at least two years of positive free cash flow, an investment-grade rating, and no one-off events with material impact on cash flows.

PGE's last dividend payment was in 2016.

The company's stock price inched up 0.47% to PLN10.74 on June 12 on the Warsaw Stock Exchange. Year to date, it has jumped 76.85%.

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Slovakia has sufficient supplies of nuclear fuel, economy minister says

13 June 2025

Slovakia has sufficient supplies of nuclear fuel to keep its two nuclear power plants operational in case there is a drop in fuel supplies from TVEL, an arm of the Russian state agency Rosatom.

“I can assure you we have a sufficient amount of nuclear fuel, which is already in Slovakia, and some is in the process of being shipped,” the country’s Minister of Economy Denisa Sakova (Hlas) said in the country’s parliament in response to queries by legislators, daily *SME*, Press Agency *TASR* and other media reported.

Sakova added that the largest electricity company in the country, Slovenske elektrarne (SE) is responsible for the operations of the Slovak NPPS Mochovce and Jaslovske Bohunice, and that full details are sensitive and she cannot disclose these in full.

As *bne IntelliNews* covered, Slovakia has also signed contracts with French Framatome and US Westinghouse in a push to diversify its nuclear fuel supplies from reliance on Russia, but these have not yet been licensed by the country’s nuclear watchdog UJD. Slovak NPPs feature Russian-designed VVER 440 reactors.

Last December, regional energy behemoth EPH of Czech energy and media oligarch Daniel K?etínský signed an agreement with Italy's Enel Group to acquire its 50% stake in their joint venture Slovak Power Holding, bringing EPH's overall share in Slovakia’s SE to 66%.

The move to buy Enel's stake gives EPH effective control of SE, though the government retains a 34% blocking minority stake. The total consideration for Enel's shares in SPH was €150mn, which

EPH already paid when it entered SE by buying the initial 50% stake in the venture in 2016.

As *bne IntelliNews* reported in August, the transaction is to mark Enel's exit from Slovakia after almost 20 years, during which it has rowed with the government and struggled to modernise the formerly state-owned utility.

K?etínský has forged close links with populist Prime Minister Robert Fico's Smer party, under whose previous governments it reached the SE deal and also took over Eustream in 2013, which runs the Slovak section of the Druzhba [Friendship] pipeline that brings Russian gas to Europe.

Last autumn, the cabinet announced plans to launch a new nuclear tender. The new nuclear reactor would be located at the existing Jaslovské Bohunice nuclear power plant (NPP) site, which already has two reactors, and is projected to cost €10bn, according to the cabinet plans.

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Kazakhstan shows interest in exporting oil, gas and uranium to Slovakia

13 June 2025

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has expressed Kazakhstan's readiness to begin exporting oil, gas, uranium and other goods to Slovakia, *The Times of Central Asia* reported on June 12, citing a meeting between Tokayev and Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico in Astana.

Speaking at a joint press conference, Tokayev reportedly emphasised Kazakhstan's interest in strengthening relations with Slovakia across both bilateral and multilateral platforms. In 2024, trade between the two countries totalled $140mn, with new opportunities emerging in sectors such as energy, industrial production, agriculture, logistics, digitalisation, critical raw materials, education and tourism.

"Kazakhstan is ready to export oil, gas, uranium, food products and other goods to Slovakia," he stated.

According to Kazakhstan's Ministry of Energy, the country exported 68.6mn tonnes of oil to foreign markets in 2024. That figure is expected to rise to 70.5mn tonnes in 2025. Of this, 57.05mn tonnes will be exported through the infrastructure of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), with additional volumes delivered via the Atyrau-Samara pipeline (8.8mn tonnes), the Druzhba pipeline to Germany (1.2mn tonnes) and the Atasu-Alashankou route to China (1mn tonnes).

Kazakhstan also plans to ship 3.6mn tonnes of oil via the port of Aktau on the Caspian Sea, with 1.5mn tonnes continuing via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline that runs to the Turkish Mediterranean coast.

Tokayev also said that Kazakhstan sees prospects for cooperation in the military-technical sector and invited Slovakia to take part in the development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport

Corridor (TITR), or Middle Corridor, which connects China and Europe via Kazakhstan.

“We have five reactors, and a sixth will soon be operational. We’re also planning to purchase a 1.5-MW nuclear power plant. If our Kazakh colleagues are interested, we’re ready to cooperate,” Fico said at the meeting.

He added that discussions were held on using the Druzhba pipeline corridor through Russia and Belarus to supply oil to Slovakia.

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Kazakhstan awards Russia, China one nuclear plant project each, Uzbekistan revises its plan to include large facility

16 June 2025

Kazakhstan has avoided the difficulty of disappointing either Moscow or Beijing in its choice of nuclear power plant (NPP) main contractor by awarding Russia and China one plant each.

This has been made possible by Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev’s determination that his country will need two or more NPPs in coming years in order to meet its energy demand on a low-to-no emissions basis.

Neighbouring Uzbekistan, meanwhile, has reportedly reformatted its plans to move into nuclear power production by adding a large NPP to the small plant that Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom has already agreed to build. The revised plan was reported by Russian media outlets *TASS* and *Interfax*, with reference to the Russian Ministry of Economic Development.

In Kazakhstan, Rosatom and China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) have been selected to lead separate NPP construction consortiums, the lately established Kazakh atomic energy agency announced on June 14.

Kazakhstan aims to commission 2.4 gigawatts of nuclear capacity by 2035.

The Kazakh atomic energy agency said Rosatom's proposal was "the most optimal and advantageous" for the first NPP, while China would lead construction works on the second. The agency noted that discussions had begun on attracting Russian state export financing for the project.

Rosatom CEO Alexei Likhachev stated that Kazakhstan's first plant would feature two VVER-1200 Generation 3+ reactors, a technology already deployed in Russia and other countries. The facility will be built in the village of Ulken, about 400 kilometres (249 miles) northwest of Almaty.

Further details on the cost, timeline and additional consortium participants were not disclosed.

French and South Korean companies also submitted bids for the projects.

Kazakhstan, a major uranium producer, has been without any nuclear power since 1999, when the Soviet-era BN-350 reactor on the Caspian Sea was shut down. For energy, the country currently largely relies on coal-fired power plants, with additional supply from hydroelectric and renewable sources.

A nationwide referendum in Kazakhstan in October 2023, called by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, supported the development of nuclear power.

Large and small

In Uzbekistan, the changed NPP plans will mean the construction of a two-unit large plant and a two-unit small nuclear plant, with the latter based on small modular reactor (SMR) technology, according to the Russian media reports.

Rosatom and Uzbekistan's Uzatom were yet to comment on the reported project revision. However, Uzbek officials have previously emphasised the country's need for large nuclear reactors.

In October last year, Energy Minister Jurabek Mirzamakhmudov noted that the project would start with small reactors but stressed the requirement for large reactors to support Uzbekistan's goal of 40%-renewable energy by 2030. The question as to whether nuclear power is renewable is a controversial one, given that uranium supply is not infinite, but NPPs fall into the zero-emissions category of power so can be seen as important in the fight against global heating.

Uzatom director Azim Akhmedkhadzhaev, in an interview with *YouTube* channel *Alter Ego*, stated that Uzbekistan needs four large NPPs to meet forecast rising electricity demand, pointing to growing consumption trends.

In March, Uzatom and Rosatom held technical discussions on the location, design and long-term goals for a high-capacity facility intended to support Uzbekistan's energy security and infrastructure sustainability.

In May 2024, Uzatom and Rosatom signed a contract to build a low-power nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan using six Russian "mini nuke" RITM-200N water-cooled reactors, adapted from shipboard technology.

The reactor has a thermal capacity of 190 MW, generates 55 MW of electricity and has a service life of up to 60 years.

Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has called the SMR project "vital" to Uzbekistan's economic development, highlighting the country's uranium resources, currently exported rather than used domestically.

The larger plant, like the SMR plant planned for Jizzakh region, has been under discussion for six years, with a projected construction timeline of six years from approval.

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Samruk Energy and China's CWE to build Kazakhstan's first pumped storage power plant

17 June 2025

Kazakhstan's Samruk Energy has signed a joint venture agreement with China International Water and Electric Corporation (CWE) to construct the country's first pumped storage power plant, *Kazinform* reported on June 16.

The agreement is considered strategically important to establishing additional reserves of manoeuvrable generation capacity to balance the increasing share of renewable energy sources in Kazakhstan's energy mix, according to a statement from Samruk Energy.

“This project is key to ensuring the country’s sustainable development,” the statement read, highlighting the mutual commitment of both parties to implementing the initiative on schedule.

Samruk Energy and CWE previously signed a cooperation agreement in July 2023 to carry out a feasibility study for the project, with two priority sites identified in the Almaty region.

The latest agreement follows a series of new energy and digital transformation accords signed by Samruk-Kazyna Fund during the Central Asia – China Forum held in Astana.

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64-MW Stolac Solarni Park solar plant begins operation in Bosnia

17 June 2025

The 64-MW Stolac Solarni Park photovoltaic power plant, located near the town of Stolac in Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Herzegovina region, has been connected to the grid and has begun generating electricity, China-based solar technology company AIKO confirmed in a statement released on June 14 consulted by *Balkan Green Energy News*.

Developed by local company Tibra Pacific with AIKO technology, the project is now fully operational and is supplying electricity to the regional grid.

The facility appears to be an extension of the Hodovo solar complex, which, at 92.5 MW, is currently the largest photovoltaic plant in the country, according to data from the independent system operator in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hodovo is operated by Eco-Wat, a subsidiary of Tibra Pacific.

“With an installed capacity of 64 MW using AIKO’s Stellar 1N+ ABC modules, Stolac Solarni Park represents a major milestone,” AIKO stated, adding that the project is Europe’s first utility-scale solar installation based on its proprietary N-Type All Back Contact (ABC) technology.

The system is built on a fixed-tilt structure with an optimised layout designed to maximise land use efficiency. AIKO said its modules outperformed conventional TOPCon technology, delivering 12% more energy and helping to reduce electricity costs by 3% during the project’s first phase.

“As the country’s largest operational ground-mounted PV plant, we needed technology that performs not just in labs, but on-site as well,” said Robert Brajkovi?, Chairman of Tibra Pacific. “AIKO’s modules set a new benchmark for us in terms of efficiency and consistency.”

AIKO described the project as a symbol of regional commitment to energy diversification and clean power generation. While no further technical or financial details were disclosed, the project is expected to contribute significantly to the country's renewable energy targets.

The launch of Stolac Solarni Park adds momentum to the expansion of utility-scale solar energy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where several projects are underway.

In May, another 125-MW solar plant was launched in the same municipality. Chinese company Norinco International will build a 125-MW solar power plant near Stolac, the company's supplier Arctech announced. The total value of the project is estimated at BAM214.2mn (€109.5mn).

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China's Sinoma to build $25mn wind turbine blade plant in Uzbekistan

16 June 2025

China's Sinoma Science & Technology is set to invest $25.2mn in establising a wind turbine blade factory in Uzbekistan.

According to *Yicai Global*, the facility, to be located in Jizzakh region, will be constructed and operated by Sinoma Science & Technology Wind Power Blade, a subsidiary.

The plant is expected to produce 110 blades annually, each measuring between 90 and 120 metres in length.

Construction is scheduled to take about seven months.

Sinoma will offer technical support, training, and maintenance services for wind turbine blades.

The company, a producer of glass fibre and composite materials, has 13 wind turbine blade plants in China and one in Brazil.

In 2024, its revenue from wind turbine blades reached CNY8.6bn ($1.2bn), accounting for 33% of the group's total revenues, according to the company annual report.

Overseas income made up 10% of overall revenue, indicating growing interest in international markets.

China is Uzbekistan's top trade and investment partner, with bilateral trade reaching $13bn in 2024—double the volume of five years ago.

Since 2017, Chinese direct investment has grown fivefold, and over 3,700 Chinese-backed companies now operate in the country.

In May, Uzbekistan approved a $288mn Chinese-backed project to build a 500-MW solar power plant in Jizzakh's Farish district.

Chinese firms have increasingly secured deals in Uzbekistan's renewable energy sector, including a contract won by SANY Renewable Energy Co to construct a wind farm in Karakalpakstan. The deal was struck during Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's visit to China in January 2024.

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Republika Srpska to award €800mn Trebinje wind farm project to Chinese company

13 June 2025

The government of Republika Srpska, one of the two entities in Bosnia & Herzegovina, plans to award a 30-year concession for the construction and operation of the Trebinje wind farm to Chinese company China Power PTE through a negotiated procedure, bypassing a public tender, *Capital* reported. The total value of the project is estimated at BAM1.56bn (€797mn).

The proposed wind farm will have an installed capacity of 537.5 MW and an estimated annual electricity output of 1,270 GWh —equivalent to approximately 10% of Bosnia's total electricity consumption.

According to the government decision, which was not included in the official press release following last week's cabinet session, China Power PTE is to pay a one-time concession fee of BAM7.8mn and an operational royalty of BAM0.0055 per kilowatt-hour produced.

The Ministry of Energy and Mining is tasked with carrying out the negotiations and must submit a final proposal for awarding the concession, along with a draft contract, to the government within 60 days.

The project stems from a strategic cooperation agreement signed in August 2023 between Republika Srpska's Minister of Energy and Mining Petar ?oki? and Chinese firms Zhongbo Group and China Power. At the time, the Republika Srpska government said the agreement marked the beginning of Chinese involvement in exploring renewable energy opportunities in the entity, with the Trebinje wind farm being the first proposed investment.

Zhongbo Group has extensive experience in renewable energy and has developed approximately 10 gigawatts of solar capacity globally. China Power, its international project arm, is responsible for executing overseas renewable projects.

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Uzbekistan’s president tightens grip on local governance as energy woes and reform delays mount

16 June 2025

Uzbekistan’s President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has ordered a sweeping shake-up of local governance structures and has tightened oversight of reforms amid growing concerns over bureaucratic inertia and poor public service delivery.

Speaking during a wide-ranging video conference on June 16, Mirziyoyev called for greater accountability from ministers and regional governors, citing underperformance and a lack of responsiveness to citizen needs.

“We must not forget that behind every appeal lies the fate of a person, his pain and hope. It is our duty to live with the pain of the people,” the president said.

In the first five months of 2025, Uzbekistan’s industrial output rose by 6.4%, exports increased by 18% and foreign investment grew by 46%.

Over 2,500 new facilities worth $3bn were launched, creating income opportunities for 2.4mn people.

Yet Mirziyoyev warned of the risk of this momentum stalling unless systemic inefficiencies—especially at the local level—are addressed.

“If the district level does not work effectively, no matter what instructions are given from above, the intended goals cannot be achieved,” he said.

Among the structural issues identified were excessive administrative layering and a lack of operational autonomy at the district level.

“More than 40 organisations in each district employ an average of 500 employees. But even to solve some simple issues, they need permission from the region, and they need permission from the republic,” he noted.

In response, the president announced a pilot programme to overhaul district management structures across 16 districts and cities, including Margilan, Yangiyul and Surkhandarya region.

Key state agency branches—spanning finance, investment, agriculture, employment, ecology, and social issues—will be transferred to under the control of district governors (khokims), who will also gain new authority to appoint, reassign, or dismiss staff.

A new incentive system will reward effective governance: regions that meet performance indicators will see their budgets increased by 10–15% the following year, while underperformers will face cuts and potential leadership changes.

Governors’ offices will be reorganised to include four deputy khokims, with responsibilities tailored to local development priorities.

A "Reform Headquarters," comprising business leaders and sector officials, will help draft three-year development plans for every makhalla (neighbourhood), spanning infrastructure, finance, investment and employment.

Meanwhile, the president moved to expand citizen engagement.

The national rollout of the "People's Control" electronic platform—first tested in Tashkent—will serve as a central portal for public appeals.

Local leaders will be held directly responsible for resolving issues on the spot.

“It will not be allowed to postpone the problem that arose today,” Mirziyoyev stressed.

To reinforce this system, governors themselves will now lead the People's Reception Offices, which have been criticised for functioning merely as intermediaries rather than problem solvers.

“Instead of listening to the grievances of the population and resolving issues, public reception centres have become intermediaries that distribute appeals to state organisations,” the president

said.

Executive discipline will be tightened with the Accounts Chamber assuming broader powers to assess not just financial compliance, but the effectiveness of government spending and public satisfaction.

The Supervisory Inspection under the Presidential Administration will be dissolved.

The president also announced salary increases for local government employees, effective August 1, including monthly bonuses tied to performance, to improve morale and retention.

“Those who fail to fulfil their assigned tasks will be dealt with,” Mirziyoyev said. “That way, everyone will learn to work with discipline and a plan.”

The meeting also highlighted strategic priorities for the remainder of the year, including $26.5bn in planned investment and the launch of 35 major projects worth $3.3bn by September 1.

Trade and investment agreements worth $30.5bn, signed at the recent Tashkent International Investment Forum, will require coordinated implementation.

Mirziyoyev outlined plans to promote exports through high-value agriculture, improve public transport and traffic safety, reduce poverty and tackle food inflation by making better use of forests and pastures for livestock.

“The possibilities of increasing exports through the use of modern agricultural technologies, such as bringing water to the neighbourhoods, growing fruits and vegetables and increasing meat and dairy products, were outlined,” the statement said.

The prime minister, cabinet members and regional governors were tasked with following through on the reforms.

Additionally, Mirziyoyev issued a warning to senior officials and regional leaders over persistent disruptions in the country’s liquefied gas supply.

The president demanded that the issue be resolved within two weeks or those responsible would be dismissed.

The Uzbek president blamed poor discipline and negligence for delayed reforms, highlighting that gas supply had been disrupted for up to 70 days in some regions.

“If we’re facing this many gas problems during the summer heat, how will people manage in winter?” he asked.

In Andijan and Surkhandarya, 70% of citizen complaints were linked to gas shortages.

Mirziyoyev also addressed rising electricity demand caused by high summer temperatures.

The government recently established the Energy Efficiency Agency and allocated UZS 100bn ($7.9mn) to support energy-saving initiatives.

Civil servants and state entities consuming over 500 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month will be required to switch to more efficient technologies, supported by green loans or subsidies.

The government aims to help at least 100,000 high-consumption households transition to energy-efficient systems by year-end.

Mirziyoyev warned that officials who delay implementation of changes may be dismissed. Whether these changes will translate into meaningful improvements across Uzbekistan's diverse regions remains to be seen. But the message from the top was clear: discipline, initiative and citizen focus will be the new watchwords of governance.

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Russia's Gazprom tariff demands costly and inflationary

18 June 2025

Recently requested bi-annual natural gas tariff indexation for domestic consumers proposed by Russia's state natural gas giant Gazprom could could raise electricity prices by up to 3% and heating costs by 1.2% annually, adding RUB40bn–RUB45bn ($552–621mn) to consumer electricity payments, according to *Kommersant* daily citing Ministry of Energy estimates.

bne IntelliNews already warned that Gazprom's additional tariffs could become a strong inflationary factor. Industrial consumers of gas include generating companies and biannual indexation would also lead to even higher electricity prices.

This could speed up the end of an "era of cheap electricity" in Russia, with the state struggling to finance the overhaul of its domestic generation and grid capacity.

More generally, tariff pressure could mark Gazprom increasingly relying on the domestic market to compensate for the loss of export revenues amid the full-scale military invasion of Ukraine.

The Ministry of Energy estimates the new seasonal pricing could modestly affect electricity and heat markets, but market participants surveyed by *Kommersant* believe that energy producers could see more significant impacts, especially during peak consumption in winter months.

According to the Council of Energy Producers cited by the daily, which represents major power

generators, over 60% of annual gas consumption occurs in 4Q and 1Q.

Their modelling shows the new bi-annual tariff coefficients could force heat tariffs for end users to rise by an additional 20% from July 2026, particularly in gas-dependent regions.

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Russia writes off $297mn hydro energy debt owed by Tajikistan

17 June 2025

Russia has written off a $297mn hydro energy debt owed by Tajikistan, *Khovar* reported on June 16.

The debt concerns money owed by Tajik energy utility Barki Tojik to Sangtuda 1 Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP), located on Tajikistan's Vaksh river. Russia owns 75% of the 670-megawatt project and Tajikistan 25%.

Under a revised intergovernmental agreement, approved by Tajikistan's lower house of parliament, the investment return period has been extended to 2048 and the debt will be written off in stages through 2034.

The electricity purchase tariff from the Sangtuda HPP will fall from 3.2 cents to 1.5 cents per kWh. However, the tariff will gradually reach 3.3 cents per kWh by 2033, with the rate to remain effective until 2048.

The plant generates around 12% of Tajikistan's total electricity output.

Russia and Tajikistan, the poorest country in Central Asia, have valued their combined stakes in the Sangtuda plant at $847mn.

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Kosovo's gross available electricity up 8.6% y/y in April

17 June 2025

Kosovo's gross available electricity in April grew by an annual 8.6% to 568 GWh, after rising by 3.3% in March, data from the country's statistics institute indicated on June 16.

Electricity consumption in Kosovo rose 15.7% year on year to 436.3 GWh in the fourth month of 2025.

Kosovo relies mostly on coal-fired power plants but is working to diversify its generation portfolio with renewable energy sources.

Gross electricity generation from thermal power plants (TPPs) plunged by an annual 36.7% to 321.8 GWh in April, while power production from hydropower plants jumped by 33.6% y/y to 50.5 GWh.

Power production from solar and wind power plants increased 13.9% y/y to 33.3 GWh. The share of alternative electricity in the overall consumption was 19.2% in the period under review.

Meanwhile, in April, Kosovo's electricity imports jumped by 82.2% y/y to 377.1 GWh, while exports – including transmission quantities – reached 214.7 GWh, dropping 24.6%.

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CEDIS to invest over €250mn in Montenegro’s power distribution network by 2029

17 June 2025

Montenegro’s electricity distribution system operator, CEDIS, announced on June 16 that it will invest more than €250mn in capital projects between 2025 and 2029 to modernise and strengthen the national power distribution network.

The five-year investment plan is focused on improving energy efficiency, ensuring reliable electricity supply, increasing system capacity and security, and reducing technical losses. CEDIS stressed that achieving higher service standards is a strategic goal, especially given the ageing infrastructure currently in use.

Of the total investment, around €121mn will be financed through favourable loans arranged in cooperation with major international financial institutions, including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the World Bank, KfW Bank and the French Development Agency (AFD).

The investment plan includes several strategically important projects. One of them is the digital transformation of the electricity distribution network, supported by a €35mn loan from the EBRD.

Another key project focuses on decarbonisation, financed with €21mn from the World Bank. It involves replacing outdated 35-kV switchgear at 110/35-kV substations and 37 old transformers with more energy-efficient models that meet EU eco-design standards. Work on this project is expected to begin in the third quarter of 2025.

CEDIS will also modernise substations in cooperation with the German development bank KfW. Through a €30mn investment, old armored substations will be replaced with new ECO DESIGN units that reduce energy losses and improve overall efficiency.

In partnership with the French Development Agency (AFD), CEDIS will implement a €35mn project

to reconstruct six 35-kV power plants and upgrade 250 low-voltage substations. This includes major facilities in Cetinje, Herceg Novi, Mojkovac and Podgorica, aimed at enhancing system reliability and supporting growing demand.

CEDIS said these investments reflect its commitment to Montenegro's energy transition, improving end-user reliability and aligning with EU green energy policies.

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Uzbekistan, Russia's Rosatom reportedly revise nuclear project to include both small and large plants

15 June 2025

The nuclear power project in Uzbekistan, led by Russia's state-owned Rosatom, has reportedly been reformatted to include a large nuclear power plant (NPP) together with the small plant the parties previously committed to building. The change of plan was reported by Russian media outlets *TASS* and *Interfax*, with reference to the Russian Ministry of Economic Development.

The expansion will mean the construction of two-unit high-power and two-unit low-power nuclear plants.

Uzbekistan's Uzatom agency and Russia's Rosatom were yet to comment on the reported project revision. However, Uzbek officials have previously emphasised the country's need for large nuclear reactors.

In October last year, Energy Minister Jurabek Mirzamakhmudov noted that the project would start with small reactors but stressed the requirement for a large reactor to support Uzbekistan's goal of 40%-renewable energy by 2030.

Uzatom director Azim Akhmedkhadzhaev, in an interview with *YouTube* channel *Alter Ego*, stated that Uzbekistan needs four large NPPs to meet forecast rising electricity demand, pointing to growing consumption trends.

In March, Uzatom and Rosatom held technical discussions on the location, design and long-term goals for a high-capacity facility intended to support Uzbekistan's energy security and infrastructure sustainability.

Around the same time, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev reviewed the technical and economic feasibility of siting a large nuclear plant.

In May 2024, Uzatom and Rosatom signed a contract to build a low-power nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan using six Russian "mini nuke" RITM-200N water-cooled reactors, adapted from shipboard technology.

The reactor has a thermal capacity of 190 MW, generates 55 MW of electricity and has a service life of up to 60 years.

President Mirziyoyev has called the SMR project “vital” to Uzbekistan’s economic development, highlighting the country’s uranium resources, currently exported rather than used domestically.

The larger plant, also planned for Jizzakh region, has been under discussion for six years, with a projected construction timeline of six years once it is approved.

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