

The ambitions of the Western Balkan countries in electricity export could prove to be very risky, and it is anticipated that in the case of the planned scenario the region will have an electricity surplus of as much as 56 percent, while the countries with the most electricity available for export will be BiH and Serbia.

However, domestic economic experts point out that the electricity surplus can't be detrimental to BiH, which along with other Western Balkan countries, as they say, should develop common capacities and infrastructure in this field, in order to jointly appear in third markets more easily.

Still, the authors of this study write that countries in the region have ambitions to become energy exporters, but warn that local governments should take into account developments in adjacent countries, which would make the newly planned energy facilities economically unsustainable.

"In fact, given the competition in the region, and from Bulgaria, Romania and the rest of the EU as well, which are expected to have a significant surplus of electricity, export prices can be pressed down, and newly built power plants could end up being stranded assets.

EU Experts recommend to the governments to reconsider plans for export-oriented production capacities, to make analysis on their own or order them, and to increase regional cooperation in order to meet the demand peak. In addition, they recommend also the measures to reduce electricity losses and increase energy efficiency in each country.

The energy landscape in the western Balkans over the next ten years is likely to be quite different. As the objective is to meet domestic energy needs, almost all governments in the region tend to become exporters and are planning significant expansion of hydropower and capacity based on coal.

The report also mentions that in the next ten years Montenegro has the chance to reverse its position from the extreme importer of electricity, which once imported up to 50 percent of the required amount, to a country which will meet the entire demand from its own resources.

Duljko Hasić, an expert from the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina, said that it's a fact that BiH is a significant exporter of electricity, and that the energy surplus can't harm BiH.

Speaking about this analysis, he said that such a warning in any case will not go to the detriment of the Western Balkan countries to develop common capacities and infrastructure in this field.

"The issue of energy is the question of the future, it is a tripod outlined in the EU strategy - energy, communications and food, respectively. As much is produced, the energy will be insufficient and it will find its market in any case," said Hasić, adding that the question is how to be more efficient in common infrastructure, production and joint appearance in sales. He pointed out that it would be far better for the Western Balkan countries to work

together and jointly participate in third markets, than to do it individually.

“This way a significantly better effect for these countries would be achieved; joint cooperation would be established, given the fact that the Western Balkans countries are small.

With joint forces we could get to the appropriate synergy results, “said the expert. He suggested that the appropriate associations, business associations and companies together formulate an action plan for joint appearance in the third markets. This would, as he said, give a positive signal for the Western Balkans countries to invest here and to work together on economic cooperation, which would open the area of market benefits in other fields.

Dragan Jerinić, president of the Association of producers of electricity from renewable energy sources, believes that it is necessary to separate the sources from which is planned to get the energy.

“The long-term policy of the European Union, which is in favor of the plans in RS and FBiH, is the increase in capacity from renewable sources and reducing exploitation of coal.

“Exactly here the RS and the Federation have great potential. The mentioned study should be observed through this lens. There are less and less investors in Europe who want to invest in dirty technologies for energy production, because Europe in its directives and legislation turned to renewables and energy efficiency. In 2014, such policies have led to significantly decreasing or stagnating CO2 emissions into the atmosphere. We need to know to use wisely our available potentials, because clean energy will always have a good market price as well, “said Jerinić