

In June, Rosatom announced that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with French Framatome and US General Electric Steam Power to submit a joint bid at the tender for the construction of Bulgaria's second nuclear power plant Belene. Deputy General Director of Russian state-owned nuclear energy company Rosatom Kirill Komarov said that the company is willing to expand the composition of the consortium through which it participates in the tender for the construction of Bulgaria's second nuclear power plant Belene.

The statement from the company said that, in case Rosatom is selected as strategic partner for the project, GE Steam Power will supply the turbine equipment, while Framatome will deliver equipment for the power plant's automated process control systems. These three companies already successfully cooperated on nuclear projects such as the expansion of Hungarian NPP Paks and the construction of NPP Hanhikivi in Finland. Last December, Bulgaria announced the five shortlisted companies to enter the second, binding round of NPP Belene tender. She specified that the Russian, South Korean and Chinese companies are bidding for the position of strategic investor in the project, Framatome expressed interest in supplying safety systems and financing this share of its participation, while General Electric wants to manufacture turbines and other equipment and will also self-finance this part of the project. The five were selected on the basis of their experience in building nuclear power plants, their financial stability and high credit rating. The following companies submitted bids for strategic investments at the tender concluded in August 2019: Russian Rosatom through its subsidiary Atomenergoprom, Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Co., China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), Bulgarian company IPK & UP and two Bulgarian-registered consortia: Elektrocentrala Belene 2019 and AEC Belene. French Framatome applied to participate in the project's financial structuring and the supply of safety systems. US General Electric also seeks involvement in the financial structuring, but also as a potential designer and supplier of equipment. Also in June, Bulgarian Minister of Energy Temenuzhka Petkova said that, despite the coronavirus pandemic, the procedure for the construction of NPP Belene has not stopped for even a moment.