

In its report for 2014, the Energy Regulatory Commission recorded a reduced electricity production, but also a reduced consumption. The biggest decline in electricity production was recorded in thermal power plants – as much as 20 percent compared to 2012, i.e. 7 percent with respect to the previous year.

The TPP Bitola, the combined-cycle TPPHP and “Kogel Sever“ were recording a reduced production.

In 2014, the total electricity consumption in Macedonia amounted to 6.960.428.642 KWh, which is a decline of 0.41 percent with respect to the consumption in 2013.

Experts estimate that the production decline in thermal power plants is expected, considering that these plants date back in the 1970’s and 1980’s.

“The reality is that you cannot have high expectations from an old man, but when the energy sector is in question, we have to be aware that the electricity price does not allow gas or oil fuel to be used for electricity generation. In such case, it will not be profitable. Even the most modern power plant, which is at the level of the world’s most advanced power plants, the TPP-HP, does not operate during summer period because it does not sell thermal energy and it does not pay to generate and sell electricity at this price“, says the professor Konstantin Dimitrov.

He adds that subsidies for using biomass, hydro potential and other renewable resources, as well as increased energy efficiency measures, can be an alternative to the use of coal.

Professor Dimitrov comments that electricity price increase is inevitable because the electricity is sold below the profitability level when it comes to the generation from domestic resources. The competent authorities should assess whether it is more profitable to import quality coal or to invest in new deposits and equipment for their exploitation. The situation can be alleviated by the construction of the HPPs Boškov most and Lukovo polje, but the construction process has been stopped for political and environmental reasons. Considering the current political crisis, it is unlikely that anyone is thinking about energy, Dimitrov adds.

As stated in the regulator’s report, the required quantities of electricity for satisfying domestic needs are provided by ELEM, TPPHP, Kogel, small hydro power plants, photovoltaic power plants, whereas the rest is imported.

The total installed capacity of the production facilities in Macedonia amounts to 2.011,25 MW. In 2014, the installed capacity was increased by 2.97 percent with respect to 2013. Domestic production satisfies 61.85 percent of domestic consumption, whereas the import satisfies 38.15 percent.

Experts comment that the reduced electricity generation is a consequence of the long service life of thermal power plants, but also of the smaller quantity of excavated coal, its lower quality and the outcome of power plants revitalization.

“To produce more energy, we need to have more domestic production capacities, because

private capacities operate only when they are paid, and renewable resources can only alleviate the problem, but not also provide enough energy for covering the overall needs“, says Kočo Anđušev, president of the Macedonian Energy Association within the Economic Chamber.

Anđušev comments that, without the construction of new facilities and without coal import, it is not possible to provide higher electricity generation. He stresses that the most important question here is what the coal quality is and at which price it is purchased, but also at which price the electricity is sold.

In terms of the Energy Strategy, he said that the construction of the thermal power plant in Mariovo depended on whether the prediction about the electricity price increase was taken into account.

The new Energy Strategy by 2035, which is in the finishing procedure, envisages a greater use of renewable energy resources and gas, as well as a lower electricity consumption in households.

The revitalization and modernization of the TPP Bitola will be finished by 2020 and the revitalization of the TPP Oslomej within the period from 2021/22. A new coal-fired thermal power plant will be built in 2031, and in 2032, the closing down of the existing blocks of the TPP Bitola has been envisaged as well as the opening of a new block of 300 MW which should be supplied from the mine Mariovo.

Gas consumption will rise significantly and it will reach 1.2 billion cubic meters.

Academician Gligor Kanevče said that electricity import would be reduced to 170 GWh annually.

The strategy envisages that the electricity price should rise in the following 20 years, from the current 43 euros to 90 euros per MWh, which experts find unacceptable. , transmits Serbia-energy.eu