

North Macedonian state-owned power utility ESM said that it has received thirteen offers at the coal supply tender, which the company published earlier this month.

The statement from the company said that the offers were received from three local coalmines, as well as mines from Albania, Kosovo, Russia, Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Five offers are related to coal supply for TPP Bitola, while eight of them concern the supply of TPP Oslomej.

However, ESM said that the tender for coal supply for TPP Bitola will have to be cancelled because none of the submitted bids offered sufficient quantities of coal. The company said that the tender will be relaunched soon. On the other hand, all offers for the supply of TPP Oslomej are valid.

In early October, ESM General Manager Vasko Kovacevski said that the company will increase its coal-based electricity generation in the period between December 2021 and April 2022 in order to meet the demand of large industrial consumers in the country, amid rising electricity prices in the region and the entire Europe. He explained that ESM will offer cheap coal-based electricity to large industrial consumers, at prices much lower than those on the free market.

This will be done by increasing coal mining activities and additional coal purchases to increase electricity production at the country's coal-based capacities, which includes the activation of unit 3 of TPP Bitola, as well as the operation of TPP Oslomej, which was slanted for closure as a part of a plan to build solar power plants on nearby depleted coal mine. Therefore, ESM launched a tender for the purchase of 1.2 million tons of coal. Of this amount, 900,000 tons is for TPP Bitola and 300,000 tons for TPP Oslomej. It is estimated that the cost of this procurement will be up to 50 million euros, since the coal will have to be transported by trucks, which significantly increases the price.