

For the second round of tender for the construction of hydropower plant Cebren, the Government of North Macedonia said that a total of nine bidders have qualified. The statement from the Government said that five consortia and four individual bidders have been selected to continue the tendering procedure, out of ten candidates which submitted expressions of interest. The selected consortia include Turkish companies Enka, Colin, Ozaltin and Yapi Merkezi, Greek PPC and Archirodon, Austrian EVN and Verbund and Spanish Cobra and Cobra Hidraulika, while French EDF, Italian Webuild Italia, Chinese Gezhouba Group China and Power Construction Corporation of China qualified as individual bidders.

In February 2020, the Government launched a concession procedure for the use of water from Crna Reka for the production of electricity, namely the construction and operation of hydropower plant Cebren. The plant should have installed capacity of 333 MW, with estimated annual electricity production of 1,000 GWh, and should cost around 570 million euros. As a part of future private-public partnership, ESM plans to include HPP Tikves in the project company. The two HPPs will use water from the same source and can only function at the same time if they are managed by a single entity. The tender was extended on several occasions due to adverse impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the economic climate, but the currently valid deadline expired on 18 December. Procedure for construction of HPPs Cebren and Galiste is the longest tender procedure in the history of Macedonia. Both HPPs will be built on Crna Reka River, and they are offered as a package, not individually, although there were talks that only HPP Cebren would be built. Construction works for both HPPs are estimated to last 7 years. HPPs Cebren and HPP Galiste along with existing HPP Tikves should become one hydro cascade system.