

More than ten investors are interested in the privatization of thermal power plant Negotino, said North Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev.

PM Zaev said that the feasibility study for possible conversion to natural gas will be completed in early 2021, after which the Government will decide whether it will fully privatize the power plant or form a public-private partnership in order to implement the project for the plant's conversion. He noted that more than 70 energy companies, such as German RWE and Greek PPC, are currently interested in investing in several energy projects in North Macedonia.

In September, the new Government said that it is planning to convert the 210 MW thermal power plant Negotino from fuel oil to natural gas. TPP Negotino is state-operated and currently provides cold reserve service, although it has not been used lately due to extremely high cost of operation, in excess of 130 euros/MWh of produced electricity. For years, there have been speculations whether the plant should be decommissioned or converted to use new type of fuel, but the new Government said that it will launch a tender procedure for the plant's conversion to natural gas within the next six months. Originally, TPP Negotino was to be built in two phases. First 210 MW phase was completed in 1978, and part of the infrastructure was prepared for another 210 MW block. Since beginning of construction of TPP Negotino, possibility of altering TPP from oil to gas fired has been enabled, and part of installation has been made. Government has published two tenders for sale of TPP Negotino (2007/2008), but they both failed. By tender documentation, one of the conditions was that future owner will be obliged to construct new 300 MW unit, or entire new power plant in nearby location. Winner of the first cancelled tender, Hatch, expressed plans to construct 500 MW unit and upgrade existing from 210 MW to 350 MW.