

Region: Lignite still excavated, coal and nuclear energy are core of electricity generation

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Coal and nuclear energy are still the basis of electricity generation in the South-eastern Europe. According to Eurostat, lignite – predominantly used for electricity generation, is still excavated in nine EU member states in 2018.

Germany was the largest lignite producer in the European Union, representing some 45 % of the bloc's total production. It is followed by Poland (18 %), the Czech Republic (11 %), Greece (10 %), Bulgaria (8 %) and Romania with 6 %. These six countries account for 96 % of total lignite production in the EU.

Also, lignite had the largest share in electricity generation in the Czech Republic (43 %), Bulgaria (38 %), Greece (32 %) and Poland (29 %). However, Greece has obliged to phase-out coal by 2023 and the country has already significantly reduced the share of coal in electricity generation.

In 2018, 9 % of the total gross electricity production was accounted for lignite, which almost identical to the share of all other types of coal (9.3 %).

The largest share in the EU's electricity generation in 2018 had nuclear energy with 25.3 %, while natural gas was accounted for 19 %.

The share of hydro power plants in total production in 2018 was 11.6 %, wind was accounted for 11.5 % and solar for 3.8 %.