

This year is going to be important for the Serbian energy sector due to the adoption of new laws, the reorganization of public enterprises and a new plan of investments in the energy sector, said Serbian Minister of Mining and Energy Zorana Mihajlovic.

Minister Mihajlovic said that there is a need to amend the Law on Energy Efficiency, because Serbia is now wasting the amount of energy equivalent to what an average power plant produces in year, due to energy inefficient facilities. Through the new Energy Efficiency Administration, the Ministry will enable companies and households to get monetary help and to make their apartments, buildings and industrial facilities energy efficient over a certain period of time.

Also, she estimated that around 350 million euros would be invested in the energy distribution system alone in the next three years, adding that a new plan of investments in state-owned power utility EPS is being made and an investment boom is needed for EPS to be able to keep up with other power companies in Europe in the next six to seven years . In the gas sector the focus should be on connecting with the region. The works on the gas interconnection with Bulgaria should start soon, while works on the projects for interconnections to Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro continue. The construction of a gas pipeline to Pristina should be considered as well. When it comes to high-voltage electricity transmission, she said that transmission system operator EMS is working on the Trans-Balkan Corridor, which will connect Serbia with all the countries in the area. For Serbia, this also means additional revenues, but also the fact that we can be a mandatory route for the transfer of electricity. According to her, in the decades ahead, the production of electricity in coal-fired thermal power plants will gradually reduce, which doesn't mean that they will shut down in five or ten years, but, as she says, that the share of the production from medium and large hydro power plants will gradually increase. Regarding the restructuring of public enterprises, Minister Mihajlovic said the EPS had already accepted a reorganization plan and started implementing it.