

Coal Mine “Kovin” about to Close - Without a Partner, 300 Million Tons of Brown Coal to Remain Underground.

The mine “Kovin”, where lignite is extracted underwater at the depth of 35 meters, is the only such mine in Europe, and if a strategic partner is not found, there is a threat that 300 million tons of brown coal reserves will be wasted.

“Kovin”, the unique lignite and coal mine in Europe with underwater exploitation, located along the left bank of the river Danube, opened in 1991, could be closed in five years, according to the estimated reserves in the mine itself.

However, this would be a great loss for Serbia, if it is known that the proven reserves of brown coal, just next to this mine, are bigger than 300 million tons and that, in this area, a new thermal power plant with the capacity of 700 megawatts could be built, which would produce more than six million megawatt-hours of electricity annually.

The total value of the investment has been estimated at 1.1 billion EUR, and the lifetime of the mine “Kovin” would be extended through strategic partnership. The investors from Russia and China are interested.

At the beginning of the nineties, the mine operated as a part of the “Electric Power Industry of Serbia” and this as an experimental mine with underwater exploitation, which means that, contrary to open pit coal mines, an excavator digs coal underwater, transports and deposits the mineral.

Around 1,000 tons of lignite are excavated in “Kovin” daily, underwater, at the depth of around 35 meters, whereas even three times more could be excavated, if the 25 years old excavator, for which the replacement of parts is too expensive, allowed this - Ivan Tadić, the mine director, who took up this post 10 months ago, says, transmits Serbia-energy.eu