The sole reactor at NPP Krsko was commissioned in 1983 and has an operational permit until 2023. The process of the permit's extension has already been launched.
Slovenian Ministry of Infrastructure has issued an energy permit for the construction of the second unit at nuclear power plant Krsko, a step that allows permitting procedures to begin and comes a week after the national climate strategy enshrined nuclear as a long-term energy option. The project will be managed by the state-owned Gen Energija.
Ministr Jernej Vrtovec said that the energy permit kick-start the broadest possible public debate, not just at the expert level but also among the people, adding that this did not mark the final decision on the investment, it is merely the first step. Only after a broad social consensus is reached, procedures such as siting, the acquisition of a building permit, selection of contractor and construction itself will begin. Project details such as estimated price, time frame or selection of technology have not been determined yet, nor has the precise location.
Minister Vrtovec said that the energy permit would serve as the basis for the verification of environ-mental, spatial, technical and economic parameters in the form of a national spatial plan, environ-mental impact assessment, cross-border impact assessment, building permit acquisition, selection of supplier and financing. He said that the plan is to build a 1.1 GW unit with an estimated production of 9,000 GWh of electricity per year and a life span of 60 years. He said, given that Slovenia plans to abandon coal by 2033, the country could not secure energy in-dependence only with alternative energy sources, without nuclear.
According to General Director of Gen Energija Martin Novsak, the best and safest technology for now is the pressurized water reactor of the kind currently in use in NPP Krsko. New generations of nu-clear reactors are under development, including small modular reactors, but the technology has not hit the market yet.
Novsak said the second unit is necessary and technologically feasible, adding that the company has enough experience to manage the project economically and transparently. The investment would be financed with a combination of own sources, potentially with the help of co-investors and even with EU funds. The most optimistic scenario is to reach the final decision in five years, after which, it would take five years to complete construction of the new unit.