

The Serbian government has no intention at this time to sell the national electric power company EPS, sources in the Ministry of Economy told Tanjug Thursday.

“The possibility of selling the company is not being considered at this time. A reform and a very significant reorganization of the EPS to the benefit of all consumers in Serbia are the priority and the goal of the Serbian government,” the sources told Tanjug.

Quoting unnamed sources in the government, the Blic daily reported earlier in the day the privatisation law would be amended by the end of the year to clear the way for privatisations of strategic enterprises, including the EPS as a priority target.

However, Minister of Economy Zeljko Sertic told Tanjug there would be no amendments to the law that would allow for any sale of strategic resources.

Under an action plan for the law, amendments could be made in Q4 2016 in case an analysis of regulations shows that to be necessary in terms of risk of corruption, Sertic said, adding that he expected no amendments in that regard.

Blic reported the government should by the end of the year come up with a draft of a new privatization law defining the requirements for sale of strategic resources.

The resources are the electric power, the water management and the telecommunications sectors, which should become a separate entity in the privatization process, with the status of corporate and state-owned property also to be defined under the new regulations, the report said.

Blic reported this was a request from the EU, which believes that unclear ownership relations within public enterprises should be regulated by law, being a potential source of corruption.

For that reason, the government has amended the action plan to enable the opening of Chapter 23 in Serbia’s EU accession talks, the report said.

Source; B92