

Coal-fired power plants in Serbia, which are covered by the National Emission Reduction Plan (NERP), were the largest emitters of sulfur dioxide in the Western Balkans in 2020, with 333,602 tons.

Sulfur dioxide emissions from plants in Serbia exceeded the total emissions from all 221 plants in the European Union in 2020.

The data are set out in a report entitled "How Coal Plants in the Western Balkans Violate Regulations and Air Pollution, Cause Deaths and What Governments Have to Do About It" published by the CEE Bankwatch Network and the Center for Energy and Clean Air Research (CREA).

Emissions in Serbia are far above the limit set by the NERP for 2020. The biggest problem remains sulfur dioxide emissions, which were 6.1 times higher than the limit set at the national level.

The biggest polluter in Serbia is Kostolac B, so this thermal power plant itself emitted over 95,000 tons of sulfur dioxide. Followed by thermal power plants Nikola Tesla B1 and B2 with 85,765.9 tons.

The report says that the entire process of adopting the NERP in Serbia was marked by contradictions and a lack of transparency, and that the adoption required the Secretariat of the Energy Community to initiate proceedings against Serbia.

According to the report, in 2020, there were 847 hospital admissions in Serbia due to cardiovascular problems caused by PM 2.5 particles.

Among the effects that the emissions had on health, it is stated that in 2020, due to PM 10 particles, there were about 42,752 days of asthma symptoms in children with asthmatic disease. It is estimated that there were about 4,077 cases of bronchitis in children, due to the same pollutant.

Emissions from coal-fired power plants in the Western Balkans region continue to flagrantly exceed the permitted limits, it is stated.

Although emissions were expected to fall in 2020 due to a reduction in economic activity caused by the coronavirus, this did not happen.

In thermal power plants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and Northern Macedonia, sulfur dioxide emissions in 2020 were 6.4 percent higher than the allowed value, Nova Ekonomija reports.