

Europe: Rising potential in the field of nuclear energy

The United Arab Emirates is considering investing in Europe's nuclear power segment, approaching several European countries to gauge their acceptability for cooperation, sources familiar with the matter said. talks told Reuters last week.



The UAE has discussed the possibility of state-owned Emirates Nuclear Energy Company (ENEC) investing in European energy assets, including Britain's, to become a minority owner.

According to Reuters sources, ENEC has the ambition to expand its operating area, becoming an international nuclear energy company holding minority shares in other countries. Their aspiration is not to manage or operate those shares but only need minority ownership. The move will help the oil-rich country diversify its economy away from fossil fuels.

ENEC has discussed such an investment in the UK, sources said. For Britain, the investment could mean a bailout for its giant Sizewell C nuclear project, for which the country says it has successfully raised \$25 billion in investment to date.

As part of its international growth and investment plan, ENEC is working with many partners to find opportunities for cooperation in both new civil nuclear projects and civil nuclear technology as well as new technologies. Related clean energy like clean hydrogen, ENEC told Reuters.

While some European countries are looking to expand their nuclear energy activities to help them meet ambitious net zero targets, others are divided over whether Should nuclear energy be classified as green energy?

Several European countries consider nuclear energy essential for their economic survival, and see it as one of the best options for addressing the challenge of climate change.

Because of its disastrous history, the word "nuclear" often makes many people reluctant to accept it as a safe and reliable form of energy.

Some people argue that, unlike fossil fuels, it is one of the cleanest sources of energy because it does not cause greenhouse gas emissions.

Who opposes and who promotes?

Since the terrifying Fukushima incident that occurred in Japan in 2011, Europe remains divided over the construction and ownership of more nuclear power plants.

Italy and Lithuania have completely phased out nuclear energy for electricity production. However, France supports nuclear energy as a low-carbon source.

In addition, Bulgaria, Italy, Croatia, Finland, Hungary and Poland have supported France in realizing its nuclear ambitions. Of the 163 nuclear reactors in Europe as of August 2023, there were 56 in France alone.

Nuclear energy is influential in Europe as there are operating nuclear plants in 13 of the 27 member states and it provides about a quarter of all Europe's electricity.

French President Emmanuel Macron has announced a 52 billion euro plan to build six next-generation nuclear reactors in the country, starting in 2028.

Belgium and Germany, along with Switzerland and Spain, are among the countries planning to phase out their nuclear industries due to concerns about its dangerous impacts and challenges.

These countries had planned to completely abandon their nuclear energy plans, but were unable to do so completely due to changing energy geopolitics.

Opposition to nuclear power produced an overall 25% decline in nuclear power in the 27-nation European Union between 2006 and 2020, according to the European Commission.

There is more hope for nuclear energy as technology improves

Interestingly, in one of the recent surveys published by the Hungarian Foundation, a growing positive perception of nuclear energy can be seen in all EU member states. According to the results of the survey, opposition to nuclear energy decreased from 26% to 15%.

The factor that helps change the perception of nuclear energy can be attributed to its advantages, as it helps to significantly reduce carbon emissions and minimize greenhouse gas emissions, thereby ensuring energy sustainability. Future.

Furthermore, nuclear energy has a significantly high energy density, making it more efficient than other alternative sources. Unlike solar and wind energy sources, nuclear power plants operate independently regardless of weather conditions. Nuclear energy can serve as a long-term energy solution that makes people less dependent on the fluctuations and availability of oil and gas.

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