

Bulgaria solar power

The lineup in the list of the largest photovoltaic plants in Bulgaria is changing almost every week, and there is more in the pipeline

In the last two years, the combined nameplate size of solar power installations in Bulgaria has doubled to more than 2.4 GW and additions peaked this summer. Moreover, in the current top 20, no photovoltaic units built since 2021 benefit from any subsidies, data compiled by Capital.bg showed.

The facilities in the list, with 1.28 GW altogether in peak terms, mostly have domestic owners. Thirteen of them, including the seven largest ones, have been commissioned in the last two years, breaking almost a decade-long stagnation in the country. Their share is 84% or 1.07 GW.

Conversely, households and institutions interested in installing solar panels for self-consumption are still stuck with administrative hurdles

In the statistics of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Bulgaria had 1.28 GW at the end of 2021 and 1.95 GW just one year later. The measure is expressed in nominal or peak capacity. It is different than connection power, which can be lower by 20% or more depending on the level of solar irradiation, land configuration, type of panels and other factors.

At the same time, households, local authorities and activists in Bulgaria are complaining of an incomplete legal framework both for the installation of rooftop photovoltaics and other systems for own use and the establishment of energy communities. The authorities are currently working on changing the Law on Energy.

Since there is no state register of photovoltaics, the news outlet conducted a survey of available official reports and spoke to investors. It calculated that 700 MW is expected to be commissioned in the next several months, meaning that the 3 GW mark would be surpassed. But other projects are mostly on hold due to electricity market uncertainty, the report reads.

Journalists also pointed out that a substantial number of investors built relatively smaller capacities for their own needs in the last two years.

One of the most important factors in the photovoltaics landscape is the government's initiative to turn coal land including currently active facilities into solar power plants. The article adds that more than 4 GW is envisaged for the Maritsa East Mines (Mini Maritsa iztok) complex alone. For the time being, the chart with the largest PV units is changing week after week.

Three months ago, Eurohold commissioned its Verila solar power plant of 123 MW in nameplate capacity and

a 100 MW connection, the biggest in the country at the time.

Now the largest solar park is Dalgo Pole (208 MW), owned by Santera Re and its subsidiary Galaxy Re, though it is administratively separated into three units. The two partners controlling the company are Anton Shterev and Atanas Petrov, founders of beverage and tobacco producer Vinprom Peshtera. The group is also active in the real estate business, the article notes.

The first section of Dalgo Pole, in the municipality of Kaloyanovo near Plovdiv, was completed last August. It has a peak of 66 MW and a 55 MW connection. The second part, apparently at 50.4 MW in both categories, was commissioned in April, followed by Dalgo Pole 3 (91.6 MW) this month. Seen separately, the three units are sixth, seventh and ninth in the provisional national chart.

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