

Information About the Temelin Nuclear Power Plant

Temelín Nuclear Power Plant is situated approximately 24 km north of the regional capital České Budejovice. It generates electricity in two 1000 MW production units fitted with VVER pressurized water reactors. Five villages with long historic record – Temelínec, Krtenov, Brezí, Knín, and Podhájí – were destroyed in connection with the power plant construction. The original Russian design was modified during the construction, and the US company Westinghouse was chosen as the supplier of the control system and fuel. However, problems with the fuel supplied by the company resulted in a decision to shift for fuel supplied by the Russian company Tvel in 2010. The power plant completion date was postponed more than ten times and the budget increased repeatedly during the construction.



Time Line

- 1980 Czechoslovak Government issued approval to build 4 units of TNPP
- 1986 building permit issued
- 1987 construction commenced
- 1990 Government decided to reduce the construction from 4 to 2 units
- 2000 fission reaction started in unit 1
- 2002 fission reaction started in unit 2
- 2008 CEZ announced a plan to build two more reactors at Temelin totalling up to 3400 MWe
- 2008 CEZ asked the Environment Ministry for an environmental assessment for the new units
- 2010 CEZ announced that discussions had begun with three candidates prior to the bid submission, and the results of contract will be announced till the end of 2013
- 2013 (January) - the EIA process was finished

The Czech Republic on its way to energy prehistory

Although several decades have passed since the decision to build Temelín Nuclear Power Plant, the current political representation's idea of energy policy has not changed. It has not, even after a number of advanced countries have been phasing out nuclear power since the Fukushima power plant disaster. The political representatives in power are doing all they can to take the country exactly in the opposite direction, to become Europe's open-air energy museum. According to the energy policy proposed, the Czech Republic should become Europe's only country with a complete nuclear agenda, including uranium mining, nuclear fuel manufacturing, and expansion of nuclear power plants.

The new units are now in doubt. Many economic analysts say investing into Temelin's enlargement without state help and at a time when electricity and emission allowance prices are depressed is a risky venture. The government is planning to legislate for a cost-difference guarantee for electricity from Temelin 3 & 4 to ensure that investment is viable. This would cover the difference between wholesale electricity prices and price levels needed to cover construction costs.



A farce called EIA

In line with the proposed energy policy, CEZ is planning to build two more nuclear units at Temelín. According to legislation in force, the environmental impacts of the new units have to be assessed in an EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment). The public is allowed to become involved in the process. However, it seems so far that the process will only be a formal one. The reason is that the documentation lacks crucial information such as evidence of the public utility of the project, assessment of impacts of a serious beyond design-basis accident, and a credible plan for how spent nuclear fuel is going to be handled.

Temelín civil disobedience

Neither the governmental officials nor the politicians have ever respected the opinions of people protesting against nuclear power in the Czech Republic. Not only environmental NGOs but also municipalities around TNPP opposed its construction in the 1990s. Fifty-eight municipalities around TNPP called for halting the construction in 1992. Blockades of the power plant were organized by the environmental organizations Greenpeace and Hnutí DUHA, culminating in an international blockade in the summer of 1997. Referendum 2000 coalition was set up in 2000 with the aim to induce a nation-wide referendum on the future of Temelín NPP. The politicians refused to hold the referendum despite the fact that the petition to hold it was endorsed with signatures by more than 100 thousand people.



Civil disobedience continues

The environmental NGOs South Bohemian Mothers, Calla, Hnutí DUHA and Civil Initiative for Environmental Protection have made a petition against building the new nuclear units at Temelín. The petition has been endorsed by a number of celebrities, and over 5000 people across the Czech Republic have signed it so far. At the same time, the anti-nuclear organizations are continuing their information campaign (info booths, seminars, lectures for schools and the public, happenings) to make a counterweight to the nuclear lobby in the Czech Republic.

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