

Russian Nuclear Project in Finland Stalls Over Croatia Investor

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 16, 2015



Plans to build a Russian nuclear reactor in Finland suffered a setback on Thursday after the government said its probe into the ownership of a Croatian investor pointed to Russia.

Helsinki has called on the Fennovoima consortium to ensure at least 60 percent European ownership before it approves plans by Russia's Rosatom to build the 1,200-megawatt reactor.

"It has not been possible to adequately verify that factual control in the company Migrit Solarna Energija is held by parties residing or domiciled in EU or EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries," the Ministry of Employment and the Economy said.

"It is clear that its background is not... in the (EU/EFTA) area. There are Russian sponsors behind it," Economy Minister Olli Rehn was quoted as saying by Finnish national broadcaster YLE.

The company emerged last month as the Fennovoima consortium faced a deadline

for submitting a construction application. At the time it expressed interest in taking a 9 percent stake in the project worth 159 million euros (\$176 million).

The Croatian company reported a net profit of just \$20,000 last year and has Russia-born owners, its documents and Finnish media reports showed.

Co-owner Grigory Edel has told Finnish business newspaper Kauppalehti that he was born in Russia but holds no assets there and holds Croatian citizenship.

Finland's minister of economy will have to decide whether the project was still "in accordance with the overall good of society", the ministry said in a statement.

The construction licence application process will remain open until the matter is submitted to the government for consideration, it said.

The Finnish parliament set its ownership requirements after agreeing last December to address concerns over Russia's influence in the country's energy sector.

Finnish utility Fortum has considered taking a 15 percent stake in the project, but has so far failed to reach an agreement with Rosatom on a related assets swap in Russia

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/07/16/russian-nuclear-project-in-finland-stalls-over-croatia-investor-a48211>