### Rybnik coal power plant  Poland

**Sectors:** Coal Electric Power Generation

#### On record
This profile is no longer actively maintained, with the information now possibly out of date. Send feedback on this profile.

**By:** BankTrack  
Created before Nov 2016  
Last update: **Oct 18 2016**

**Contact:**  
[**Diana Maciaga**, Climate coordinator, Stowarzyszenie Pracownia na rzecz Wszystkich Istot](mailto:Maciagad@stowarzyszenie-pl.com)

**Project website**  
[https://pgegiek.pl/Nasze-oddzialy/elektrownia-rybnik](https://pgegiek.pl/Nasze-oddzialy/elektrownia-rybnik)

### Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Closure</th>
<th>Decommission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Sectors

Coal Electric Power Generation

### Location

### Status

- **Planning**
- **Design**
- **Agreement**
- **Construction**
- **Operation**
- **Closure**
- **Decommission**

### Website

[https://pgegiek.pl/Nasze-oddzialy/elektrownia-rybnik](https://pgegiek.pl/Nasze-oddzialy/elektrownia-rybnik)

### About Rybnik coal power plant

A new 910 MWe (electrical megawatt) unit is planned for the hard coal-fired Rybnik power station, located on the outskirts of the city of Rybnik in Silesia Voivodship, to be constructed by Électricité de France (EDF).

This area is the most industrialized region of Poland, and is where most of the hard-coal mines and the majority of hard-coal power plants are located. Currently the Rybnik power plant has a generation capacity of 1775 MWe, installed in eight blocks, and is the biggest power plant in the Silesia region. The power generated in Rybnik - exceeding 9000 GWh - makes up 7% of the installed electric power in the Polish energy system, and its annual coal consumption is around 4 million tons. The new 910 MWe coal unit was due to replace the (almost 40 year old) units 1, 2, 3 and 4 that were to be shut down before 1st of January 2016.

The new unit would cost EUR 1.8 billion, which EDF planned to cover from the group’s own capital. However due to the increase in costs due to the Fukushima accident in 2011 and the economic downturn, it is no longer certain whether EDF is able to invest this sum without resorting to the financial markets.

### Latest developments

**Rybnik Power Plant may be decommissioned by the end of 2030.**  
Feb 28 2020
Impacts

Social and human rights impacts

One of the main problems presented by the new units is the health impact of coal combustion on the citizens of Silesia region. The investment area is characterised by bad air quality. On 21st November 2011, the European Commission sued Poland in the European Court of Justice for lack of progress in its implementation of the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC), which should have been implemented in Poland by the 11th of June 2010. The directive requires in particular that the PM10 (larger dust particles) level does not exceed 50 miligrams/m³ more than 35 times a year. However this PM10 level is breached with much higher frequency in many Polish metropolitan areas including Jaworzno and Rybnik in the Silesia region. Recently a group of residents of Rybnik have taken the Polish state to court over the bad air quality and the lack of clear plans to improve the situation in the foreseeable future. Protests over poor air quality have already led to changes in the regional legislation in the neighbouring Malopolskie Voivoship and its capital, Krakow.

The local health impacts from coal mining, transportation and combustion are also a significant concern, and communities living in proximity to these activities are experiencing adverse social impacts, such as displacement, and loss of social capital as well as facing increased risks of respiratory disease, heart disease, and lung cancer. Moreover use of large quantities of forest biomass can result in price increases and negative impacts on other sectors including paper, furniture and construction. As the power sector "sucks out" almost all available biomass from the market, smaller CHP and heating plants which could take advantage of local biomass potential are more likely to refrain from adjusting these plants to co-firing.

In addition, burning coal causes health related problems related to coal ash and air pollution. The plant also contributes to the region becoming ‘locked in’ to coal-based energy production for the next 40-50 years, making the shift to a renewable energy based society all the more difficult. Construction of the new Rybnik unit would prolong the dependence of the Silesia region on coal, potentially leading to new investments into coal mining. This increases the risk of 'stranded assets' as the requirements of climate and energy policy place ever-increasing pressure on the coal-based energy generation.

Both the Polish constitution and European Union legislation guarantee the right to live in a clean environment, and the quality of the air that citizens breathe every day is part of that right. The local health impacts from coal mining, transportation and combustion are also a significant concern, and communities living in proximity to these activities experience adverse social impacts including displacement and loss of social capital, as well as facing increased risks of respiratory disease, heart disease, and lung cancer.

Environmental and climate impacts

Burning coal is one of the most polluting methods of energy production. It causes significant changes to air quality through emissions of toxic substances such as SO2, NOx, small and large dust particles (PM10 and PM2.5) and heavy metals such as mercury and cadmium. Coal burning is also the largest single contributor to GHG emissions worldwide and thus has an impact on the climate of the region and the planet. Coal mining and coal combustion also cause serious water shortages and pollution both by modifying ground and subterranean water flows and sewage discharges that affect river and sea flora and fauna.

One of the most serious secondary effects of pollution from coal combustion is ocean acidification and acid rains. The Silesia region and Rybnik city itself are already struggling with chronically poor air conditions, and the new unit would do little to improve this situation. In fact replacing the ageing units 1 to 4 with small renewables based co-generation heat and power plants and drastically improving thermal efficiency of the buildings in Rybnik and Silesia region as a whole would lead both to the improvement of the air quality in the region as well as to increase of energy security and employment opportunities.

Other impacts

The full costs of energy generated from coal are not fully accounted for. For example, a series of subsidies are still provided to the coal sector in Poland, at both local and national levels.

In the case of the Rybnik power plant the decision of the city council of Rybnik exempted EDF's investment from real estate tax, while coal and biomass co-firing falls under the definition of renewable energy and thus receives direct state support in the form of green certificates.

In 2011 over 50% of "renewable energy" produced in Poland originated from co-firing and EDF was by far the biggest beneficiary. Additionally EDF will receive a part of its CO2 emission allowances in the period 2013-2019 for its power plants in Poland instead of having to purchase them on auctions, and is listed as a company that will be exempted from having to apply the Industrial Emissions Directive for all of its Polish power plants from 1st
January 2016. All these subsidies distort the ability of the financial sector to take investment decisions based on unbiased economic calculations.

Governance

Updates

Rybnik Power Plant may be decommissioned by the end of 2030.

Feb 28 2020

According to Adam Gawęda, Secretary of State in the Ministry of State Assets, all 8 225MW coal units in Rybnik Power Plant will have been decommissioned by the end of 2030. Exact dates are known for four oldest units (1-4). It must be noted that Polska Grupa Eenergetyczna (PGE), owner of the power plant, has neither denied nor confirmed this information. PGE is going to built at least one 700MW gas unit in Rybnik PP.

Rybnik Power Plant supposed decommission timetable:
- Unit 1 decommissioned on 16.08.2021
- Unit 2 decommissioned on 16.08.2021
- Unit 3 decommissioned on 31.12.2022
- Unit 4 decommissioned on 31.12.2022
- Unit 5 operational until 2030
- Unit 6 operational until 2030
- Unit 7 operational until 2030
- Unit 8 operational until 2030

EDF finalizes the disposal of EDF Polska’s assets to PGE

Nov 13 2017

On the 13th November, 2017, EDF has finalized the disposal of EDF Polska assets (heat and electricity cogeneration and electricity generation) to PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna SA. The transaction has been carried out on the basis of a valuation amounting to c. 6.1 billion zlotys for 100% of the perimeter of EDF Polska (c. 1.4 billion euros). The transaction perimeter includes the Rybnik generation plant, the coal cogeneration plants of Krakow, Czechnica, Gdansk, Gdynia, Torun and Wroclaw as well as the gas fired cogeneration plants of Zawidawie and Zielona Gora. This perimeter represents a total installed capacity of 4.4 GWth and 1.4 GWe. It also includes the heat distribution networks of Czechnica, Torun, Zawidawie and Zielona Gora. The Wroclaw plant, the cogeneration plants and heat distribution networks of Czechnica, Zawidawie and Zielona Gora are held indirectly through a 50% + 1 share stake via Kogeneracja.

Polish consortium in talks over EDF plants

Jan 19 2017

French utility EDF is in talks with a Polish consortium over the potential sale of its combined heat and power plants in Poland. The Polish government has stipulated that the assets, also including a large coal-fired power plant, should only be sold to Polish local interests, with a view to protecting overall energy security. Warsaw had previously stopped a sale of the assets to an Australian and Czech bidder. On Wednesday EDF’s Polish subsidiary Kogeneracja said that EDF had formally ended the exclusive talks with IFM. EDF put its heat and electricity cogeneration plants up for sale at the start of last year, along with its 1.8 GW capacity coal-fired power plant at Rybnik in southern Poland (source Power Engineering International).

Related companies

Alstom France show profile
The tender for supplying the boiler and the turbine hall to the new unit in Rybnik has been won by Alstom and is valued at 900 million euros. Alstom has historically been involved in corruption scandals around the world-ranging from Indonesia, through Zambia, Malaysia, Latvia, Brazil and Tunisia to Slovenia.

Polska Grupa Energetyczna (PGE) Poland show profile
Coal Mining | Nuclear Electric Power Generation | Coal Electric Power Generation
In 2017 EDF sold Rybnik Power Plant to a Polish state-owned utility PGE S.A. The power plant changed its name to PGE Energia Ciepła S.A. Oddział w Rybniku. Transition of the plant in Rybnik into the structures of PGE Górnictwo i Energetyka Konwencjonalna S.A. was completed in 2020, the Rybnik Power Plant becoming a branch of PGE GiEK.