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EU equips radioactive waste storages in Ukraine's 5 largest cities with radiation monitoring system

The EU project "Integrated Automatic System for Environmental Radiation Monitoring at Specialized Enterprises of the State Corporation "Ukrainian State Association 'Radon'" has installed an automated system for environmental radiation monitoring at 45 radioactive waste storage facilities in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Lviv and Odesa. All of them are currently operated by the Radon. This system will enable monitoring and documenting of radiation conditions, and help to identify radiation hazards and respond quickly to them.

"It is crucial for both Ukraine and the EU that emergencies on Ukraine's territory are quickly detected and responded to and radioactive waste sites are well controlled and maintained throughout the country. I would like to emphasize the importance of equipping Ukraine with state-of-the art emergency detection and response equipment", - Dr Hans van Vliet, manager of this project in the European Commission, remarked.

The automated system consists of five environmental radiation monitoring subsystems, which measure radiation levels and transfer the results to the Radon head office in Kyiv, where data are processed and presented to Radon's management.

"The new automatic radiation monitoring system ensures safety of the public, the environment and the personnel of Radon corporation. It gives a possibility of quick response in case of radiation accidents", - Ihor Buksanchuk, the Director of Radon, said.

"The establishment of the automatic radiation monitoring system is in focus of EC-Ukraine nuclear safety cooperation. The State Agency of Ukraine on Exclusion Zone Management is very thankful to the European Union for the continuous support," - Oleksandr Kovalchuk, the Acting Head of the State Agency of Ukraine for Exclusion Zone Management remarked.

"The State Interregional Specialized Plants of Radon now have a wealth of modern monitoring equipment, allowing them to provide sustainable environmental monitoring in the years to come," Martin Pazur, Director of Nuvia a.s., the implementer of the project, commented.

The Radon is the main state enterprise collecting, transporting, and providing conditioning and interim storage for low-level radioactive waste not related to electricity generation. It uses for this purpose specialized plants in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Lviv, Donetsk and Odesa. Due to the conflict in Ukraine's east the EU project was implemented only at five of them excluding Donetsk. These plants have near-surface solid radwaste storage facilities, well-type storage facilities for disused radiation sources and tanks for liquid waste. These facilities are situated near large regional population centres, and those of the Kyiv specialized plant are located within the Kyiv city boundaries, which makes the issue of population safety of very high priority. In addition, these plants were designed and commissioned back in Soviet era in 1960-1962, the radiation monitoring equipment was obsolete. Ukraine intends to retrieve the waste and move it to the areas where safety could be assured more reliably. Until such a complex and costly project can be accomplished, the sites should be upgraded to ensure that people and environment are well protected from ionizing radiation.

By volume of radioactive waste – about 3.4 million m³ as of [October 2018](#) – Ukraine ranks second in Europe and fourth in the world. A total of 95% of these wastes were formed as a result of the Chernobyl accident.

Background information: Since 1991, the European Union has contributed more than EUR 1.05 billion to improve the safety of Ukraine's nuclear industry. Projects cover the provision of support to improved safety in the operation and maintenance of Ukraine's four nuclear power plants and establishment of an appropriate national radioactive waste management infrastructure, institutional support to Ukraine Nuclear Regulator, financial contributions to the establishment of a new safe confinement over the damaged Chernobyl reactor, as well as a number of social projects to support the communities living with the consequences of the 1986 Chernobyl accident.

The EU project "Integrated Automatic System for Environmental Radiation Monitoring at Specialized Enterprises of the State Corporation "Ukrainian State Association 'Radon'" is one of 19 ongoing EU projects on nuclear safety. It was implemented by Nuvia a.s. Duration: 2 years. Budget: EUR 2.6 mln.

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