

# RIGC | 2020

## THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL AND THE FUTURE OF GAS

Online Edition: November 23-26

The Romanian International Gas Conference (RIGC) is a flagship annual English-language event of the Energy Policy Group (EPG), an independent Romanian think-tank on energy and climate policy. The conference takes stock of developments and trends for the natural sector in Romania and Southeast Europe. The 2020 edition will take place on-line, as a sequence of four webinars, with varying formats, from November 23 to 26.

The backdrop of RIGC 2020 is the European Green Deal, which sets the continent’s economy on a uniquely ambitious track to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. In this context, the gas industry will have to bring to the fore a convincing long-term decarbonization strategy, around the production and use of renewables, biogas/biomethane, power-to-gas, and carbon-free hydrogen, alongside the needed infrastructure – all “future-proof” and at optimized costs.

RIGC 2020 will focus on the gas sector’s adaptation to the European Green Deal’s thinking and priorities, as well as the implications of the post-Corona recovery on Romania and the region. The conference will also tackle major regional topics, such as the “last train” for investment in the development of the Black Sea deep-water gas fields, in a context of increasing headwinds for the global O&G offshore industry – and also one of newly discovered enthusiasm for the wind power potential of the Black Sea; the new dynamics of gas flows in Southeast Europe, with geopolitical undertones prompted by the inauguration of TurkStream’s first leg, the upcoming Southern Gas Corridor, the hurdles seen by the BRUA project, the foreseeable opening of new LNG sources in Greece, and the beginning of the end for the Russian gas transit through Ukraine and Romania as well as rapidly falling costs for offshore wind. For the Romanian gas market, a host of regulatory hurdles following the liberalization of the supply segment will also be discussed.

The conference will convene a high-level line-up of EU, Romanian and regional officials, CEOs, industry and technology experts, and researchers from think-tanks and academia. The online attendance will be free of charge.

**Main sponsor and partner:**



**Media partners:**



## DAY 1: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2020 (10:00 - 12:00 EET) THE FUTURE OF GAS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR CENTRAL, EAST AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE

- The European Green Deal brings many new opportunities for sustainable investment in the energy sector. The Modernisation Fund, the Just Transition Fund, the Innovation Fund are key financial instruments through which the Central and East European countries will be able to finance their transition to clean energy sources and the required infrastructure.
- The panel will address the decarbonization paths that are cost effective for the energy sector, in general, and the gas sector, in particular, the potential for sector integration, the challenges of securing a just transition for the carbon-intensive regions, the adequate protection of vulnerable consumers, and the overall issue of economic competitiveness.
- Recent EU strategies – Hydrogen Strategy, Energy System Integration Strategy, and the Industrial Strategy – embedded in the European Green Deal are framing a bold vision of climate neutrality by 2050 and a broad policy approach to that sets both constraints and openings for the natural gas sector.

---

**10:00 - 10:10 Conference opening and layout of RIGC 2020:** Radu Dudău, EPG Director

**10:10- 10:25 OPENING SPEECH:** *The Future of Natural Gas in Romania and Southeast Europe*

Dan Drăgan, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business  
Environment

**10:25 – 10:40 Q&As**

**10:40 - 11:40 PANEL DISCUSSION # 1**

**Panelists:**

Adam Guibourgé-Czetwertyński, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Climate and Environment, Poland

Apostolos Gotsias, Member of the Board, Regulatory Authority for Energy, Greece

Zhecho Stankov, Deputy Minister, Energy Ministry, Bulgaria

Andreas Goldthau, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, Potsdam

**Moderator:** Victor Grigorescu, independent energy consultant, former Energy Minister

**11:40 - 12:00 Q&As**

### Main sponsor and partner:



Oil and Gas Employers' Federation

### Media partners:



## DAY 2: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020 (10:00 - 12:00 EET) THE NEW GAS FLOWS OF SEE: BETWEEN GEOPOLITICS AND A NEW MARKET REALITY

- A new dynamics of gas flows is starting to develop in SEE, with Russia redirecting a part of the gas transit through Ukraine via the recently inaugurated TurkStream. The upcoming second line, due to reach Hungary via Bulgaria and Serbia, opens the prospect for new markets in the Balkans, as well as competition among new pipeline projects, vying to tap into fresh gas flows. The Southern Gas Corridor will also cross the region, and new LNG terminals are to be built in Greece and Croatia. A Vertical Corridor of gas is planned to connect Greece to Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, and further on to the Baltic Sea. The US-backed Three Seas Initiative will play an important role as well.
- A new regional competition for pipelines, interconnectors, transit fees, market volumes, and political influence is likely to start, under redoubled constraints of EU gas market rules and regulations, as well as new restrictions for access to financing gas infrastructure.
- On the other hand, the upstream sector has been upended by an oversupplied European gas market, with depressed prices – an effect exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis. Under these circumstances, projects such as Neptun Deep promptly require significantly improved regulatory terms. For the FIDs in the Black Sea fields, 2020 may well be a last train. Meanwhile, Romania’s offshore wind potential has got into the limelight.
- On the longer run, the projections of diminishing gas demand in Europe, the increasing electrification of final energy consumption and the promotion by the European Commission of a value chain (production, transport, and demand) for renewable hydrogen, possibly on the back of offshore wind power creates both opportunities for synergy and sector integration, and complexity and uncertainty which must be address by means of smart regulations.

**10:00 - 10:05** Opening by the moderator

**10:05 - 10:40 MODERATED DIALOGUE BETWEEN**

Julian Bowden, Oxford Institute of Energy Studies (OIES), and  
 Christina Verchere, CEO, OMV Petrom  
**Moderator:** Radu Dudău, EPG Director

**10:40 - 10:50 Q&As**

**10:50 - 11:40 PANEL DISCUSSION #2**

**Panelists:**  
 Julian Bowden, Senior Visiting Research Fellow, OIES  
 Adrian Volintiru, CEO, Romgaz, Romania  
 Ion Sterian, CEO, Transgaz, Romania  
 Szabolcs I. Ferencz, CEO, FGSZ, Hungary  
**Moderator:** Victor Grigorescu, independent energy consultant,  
 former Energy Minister

**11:40 - 12:00 Q&As**

**Main sponsor and partner:**



**Media partners:**



## DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2020 (10:00 – 12:00 EET) ADDING VALUE TO THE NATURAL GAS VALUE CHAIN

In Romania, developing value-added demand segments for natural gas has become a strategic priority. What are the prospective uses of natural gas that can be developed economically and sustainably, at the same time? A fundamental prerequisite of that is a well-functioning natural gas market. What are the current hurdles and the workable solutions to it? And how to embed the gas sector in an increasingly decarbonised energy sector?

**10:00 - 10:05** Opening by the moderator

### **10:05 - 10:40 MODERATED DIALOGUE BETWEEN**

Catharina Sikow-Magny, Director for Internal Energy Market,  
DG Energy, European Commission, and  
Niculae Havrileț, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy,  
Energy and Business Environment

**Moderator:** Christian Egenhofer, CEPS

**10:40 - 10:50 Q&As**

### **10:50 - 11:40 PANEL DISCUSSION #3**

#### **Panelists:**

Franck Neel, Executive Board Member responsible for Downstream Gas,  
OMV Petrom

Eric Stab, CEO, Engie Romania

Livia Stan, Public Affairs Director, E.ON Romania

Mariusz Kawnik, Executive Director, Central Europe Energy Partners (CEEP)

**Moderator:** Vasile Iuga, independent energy expert,  
Member of the EPG advisory board

**11:40 - 12:00 Q&As**

## Main sponsor and partner:



Oil and Gas Employers' Federation

## Media partners:

ENERGY

energynomics.ro

PROFIT.ro

360

Club.Economic

ECONOMISTUL

CRACIUNO

FOCUS ENERGETIC

INVESTenergy

FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE

NewsEnergy

NaționalTV

News

## DAY 4: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2020 (10:00 - 12:40 EET) SOUTHEAST EUROPE'S ENERGY MIX IN 2030 AND BEYOND. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GAS?

- The pillars of today's decarbonization vision for the gas industry are biogas and biomethane, power-to-X technologies relying on renewable power, and green hydrogen, produced with zero carbon emissions. The latter must also assume that carbon capture, storage and utilization (CCUS) capacities will adopt. The opening dialogue and the panel will tackle the most likely path of cost-efficient progress towards decarbonization, along with its policy, regulatory and technology prerequisites.
- More urgent is the issue of tackling methane emissions across the gas industry's entire value chain. The very credibility of the gas decarbonization strategy depends on it.
- The panel brings together international experts to discuss the various approaches, challenges, dilemmas, successes and real prospects of decarbonizing the natural gas sector.

**10:00 - 10:05** Opening by the moderator

### 10:05 - 10:40 MODERATED DIALOGUE BETWEEN

Christian Egenhofer, Head of the Energy and Climate Programme, CEPS and Julian Popov, European Climate Foundation

**Moderator:** Radu Dudău, EPG Director

**10:40 - 10:50 Q&As**

### 10:50 - 11:40 PANEL DISCUSSION #4

#### Panelists:

Alexandra Bocşe, State Counsellor, Head of the Climate and Sustainability Department, Presidential Administration

Alexandru Floriştian, Legal and Project Manager, Hydrogen Europe

Lisa Fischer, Senior Policy Adviser, E3G: *Tackling methane emissions*

Mihnea Cătuţi, EPG & CEPS: *Decarbonising the gas industry*

**Moderator:** Adrian Măniuţiu, Managing Partner EM360 Group

**11:40 - 12:00 Q&As**

### 12:00-12:30 CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

Highlights, conclusions, the road ahead

Christian Egenhofer, Victor Grigorescu, Radu Dudău

**12:30-12:45 Q&As**

#### Main sponsor and partner:



Oil and Gas Employers' Federation

#### Media partners:

