

PRESS RELEASE

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Romania's major role at European level in reducing methane emissions. Conclusions from the ASE Bucharest Roundtable

Romania, the European Union's largest producer of natural gas and home to one of the world's oldest oil industries, plays a strategic role in reducing methane emissions – an essential priority for the European Union in slowing climate change. This topic was at the centre of the roundtable hosted on 9 December by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), which brought together experts from the European Commission, the International Energy Agency (IEA), representatives of the Government, the competent authorities, the energy industry and civil society. The event was organised within the European project ["Implementing the EU Methane Emissions Regulation \(I-MER\) in Romania and Czechia"](#), coordinated by ASE Bucharest (FABIZ).

This highly potent greenhouse gas ranks second after carbon dioxide (CO₂) in its overall contribution to climate change and is responsible for about a third of current global warming, according to official European data.

Under the new European Regulation on reducing methane emissions in the energy sector (Regulation (EU) 2024/1787), Member States – including Romania – must shift from estimations to precise measurements of actual methane emissions in the energy sector (oil, natural gas and coal) and implement a robust system for monitoring, detection, reporting and mitigation.

Dr Corina Murafa, Project Director, ASE Bucharest (FABIZ): *"Implementing the European Methane Regulation is a complex challenge that requires robust data, institutional capacity and close collaboration between all actors involved. In many European countries, including Romania, institutions face resource constraints, which makes the role of the I-MER project even more important: supporting the Government, investors and civil society in understanding the data accurately and applying the Regulation effectively. The benefits are multiple: operators reduce gas losses and improve efficiency, the environment is better protected, and citizens enjoy cleaner air and a more responsible energy transition."*

Professor Cristian Bușu, PhD, Vice-Rector, ASE Bucharest: *"For us, coordinating the I-MER project is not only an institutional responsibility, but also a confirmation of our status as an elite university, deeply engaged with the major themes of today's economy: the energy transition, sustainability, climate policy and the profound transformation of the European energy sector. The partners involved in this project are highly reputable institutions, public authorities, international organizations, energy policy experts, environmental organizations and companies from across the energy sector. Together, we are building not only a platform*

for dialogue but also concrete tools for implementing the Methane Emissions Regulation. This roundtable we hosted is a clear example of genuine cooperation.”

The benefits of reducing methane emissions

Experts participating in the constructive roundtable analysed the challenges and opportunities of implementing the new Regulation.

International experts emphasized that cutting methane emissions will bring direct benefits for citizens, for energy security, the climate and the economy.

Data from the International Energy Agency show that, globally, **many methane reduction measures are not only technically feasible but also highly profitable**. Programmes such as leak detection and repair (LDAR) or the installation of vapor recovery units can achieve very high internal rates of return under certain operating and market conditions - including in some cases between 150% and 300%, with results varying depending on multiple factors (such as gas price, vapour or leak rates, and access to recovery infrastructure). Nearly 30% of the industry's methane emissions can be avoided through measures with rates of return above 25%, demonstrating that methane reduction is both a necessary climate action and an economic opportunity for operators.

National authorities stated that reducing methane emissions is a priority for operators in the sector, and that a correct transposition of the Regulation will ensure **a just and beneficial energy transition for Romanian citizens**.

They also highlighted **the significant responsibility that the domestic industry holds in implementing the Methane Regulation** - given Romania's long-standing experience and historical legacy in the oil and gas sector, and the fact that it is today the EU's largest natural gas producer and the third-largest oil producer.

Authorities also emphasized the need to strike a balance between ambitious objectives and a realistic implementation timeline, one that does not create a disproportionate burden for industry or discourage future investments in the oil and gas sector.

Experts' recommendations

Participants in the roundtable outlined several key directions for the effective implementation of the EU Methane Regulation in Romania:

1. Developing a clear national framework for implementing the provisions of the Regulation - responsibilities for inspections, sanctions, monitoring and reporting need to be clearly defined.

2. Integrating modern monitoring technologies - satellite data, direct measurements and LDAR programmes must be harmonised to improve data accuracy and provide a realistic picture of emissions.

3. Strengthening cooperation among all stakeholders - successful implementation of the Regulation depends on close cooperation between authorities, operators, NGOs, academic institutions, international experts and the Romanian research community.

4. Ensuring a proactive and transparent approach - methane reduction is not only a European obligation but also an opportunity to increase energy efficiency and reduce economic losses.

- Further information on the EU Regulation on the reduction of methane emissions in the energy sector ([Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1787](#)) are available on [the project webpage](#).

About the I-MER project

"Implementing the EU Methane Emissions Regulation (I-MER) in Romania and Czechia" is a European project led by ASE Bucharest (FABIZ), in partnership with Ecologic Institute (Germany), Centre for Transport and Energy (Czech Republic) and Environmental Defense Fund Europe.

The aim of I-MER is to support authorities, operators and civil society in the correct and efficient application of the EU Methane Regulation through: technical and economic analyses, training and capacity building activities, practical guides and tools, facilitating dialogue between national and international stakeholders.

This project is part of the [European Climate Initiative \(EUKI\)](#). EUKI is a financing instrument of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUKN).

For more information, visit: www.euki.de, www.fabiz.ase.ro/implementing-the-eu-methane-emission-regulation-i-mer-in-romania-and-czechia

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) is an advanced research and education university that continually strengthens its academic reputation through its sustained presence in major international rankings. ASE ranks first nationally and 301–400 globally in the prestigious Shanghai Ranking (Economics), and first nationally in the renowned Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2025.

Located at the zero kilometre of higher economic education in Romania, the University promotes excellence in research, teaching and the international educational experience offered to students, graduates and academic staff, benefiting from a vast network of bilateral agreements with leading universities worldwide. A degree from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies guarantees a secure future, a successful career and strong employability, with more than 87% of graduates finding employment in their field of study within six months of completing their studies.



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