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COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

of 18.12.2023

**on the draft updated integrated national energy and climate plan of Romania covering
the period 2021-2030**

**and on the consistency of Romania's measures with the Union's climate-neutrality
objective**

and with ensuring progress on adaptation

{SWD(2023) 930 final}

(Only the Romanian text is authentic)

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 292 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹, and in particular Article 9(2), and Article 14(6), thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999², and in particular Article 7(2) thereof,

Whereas:

Recommendation on Romania's draft updated integrated national energy and climate plan (NECP) of Romania covering the period 2021-2030

- (1) Romania submitted its draft updated integrated national energy and climate plan on 31 October 2023.
- (2) Due to the late submission of Romania's draft updated national energy and climate plan, the European Commission has had limited time to draft its assessment in order to adopt this recommendation six months before the final updated national energy and climate plans are due, as required by Article 9(2) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999.
- (3) Article 3 and Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 ('the Governance Regulation') lay down the elements that are to be included in the updated integrated national energy and climate plan. In December 2022, the Commission adopted the Guidance to

¹ OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 1

² OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1

Member States on the process and scope of preparing the draft and final updated national energy and climate plans³. The Guidance identified good practices and outlined the implications of recent policy, legal and geopolitical developments in energy and climate policies.

- (4) In connection with the REPowerEU plan⁴, and as part of the 2022 and 2023 European Semester cycles, the Commission has put a strong focus on Member States' energy and climate related reform and investment needs to strengthen energy security and affordability by accelerating the green and fair transition. This is reflected in the 2022 and 2023 Country Reports for Romania⁵ and Council Recommendations to Romania⁶. Member States should take into account the latest country-specific recommendations in their final updated integrated national energy and climate plans.
- (5) The Commission's recommendations with regard to the delivery of national targets under the Effort Sharing Regulation⁷ (ESR) are based on the likelihood that the Member States will respect the 2030 targets, taking into account the rules for the use of flexibilities under the ESR.
- (6) The Commission's recommendations regarding Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) aim at having an overview of the intended deployment of these technologies at national level, including information about annual volumes of CO₂ planned to be captured by 2030, split by source of CO₂ captured coming from installations covered by Directive 2003/87/EC⁸ or from other sources, such as biogenic sources or direct air capture; about planned CO₂ transport infrastructure; and about potential domestic CO₂ storage capacity and injection volumes of CO₂ planned to be available in 2030.
- (7) The Commission's recommendations regarding the performance under the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry Regulation ('LULUCF Regulation')⁹ address the delivery by the Member State on the "no debit" rule for the period 2021-2025 (Period 1) and its national target for the period 2026-2030 (Period 2), taking into account the rules governing the use of flexibilities as set out in that Regulation. The Commission's recommendations also take into account that in Period 1 any excess in emissions under the LULUCF Regulation will automatically be transferred to the ESR.
- (8) For climate adaptation to properly support the achievement of energy and climate mitigation objectives, it is essential to identify the potential climate change hazards and analyse climate vulnerabilities and risks that may affect relevant areas, populations and sectors. The Commission's recommendations on adaptation consider

³ 2022/C 495/02

⁴ COM(2022) 230 final

⁵ SWD (2022) 624 final, SWD (2023) 623 final

⁶ COM (2022) 624 Recommendation for a Council Recommendation; COM(2023) 623 final, Recommendation for a Council Recommendation

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2018/842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018, OJ L 156, 19.6.2018, p. 26. as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/857 of 19 April 2023, OJ L 111, 26.4.2023, p. 1

⁸ Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC (OJ 275, 25.10.2003, p. 32)

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the inclusion of GHG gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 climate and energy framework- and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 and Decision No 529/2013/EU, OJ L 156, 19.6.2018, p. 1, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/839 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 April 2023 OJ, L328/1, 21.4.2023, p. 1

the extent to which Romania integrated in its updated NECP adaptation goals that account for climate risks, that could prevent Romania from meeting the objectives and targets of the Energy Union. Without specific adaptation policies and measures, planned and implemented, the achievement of objectives in Energy Union dimensions is at risk.

- (9) The Commission's recommendations regarding renewable energy ambition are based on the formula set out in Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, which is based on objective criteria, and on the main policies and measures missing in Romania's draft updated NECP to enable a timely and cost-effective achievement of Romania's national contribution to the Union's binding renewable energy target of at least 42.5% in 2030, with the collective endeavour to increase it to 45% pursuant to Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources as amended by Directive (EU) 2023/2413¹⁰. The Commission's recommendations are also based on Romania's contribution to the specific targets of Articles 15a, 22a, 23, 24 and 25 of that Directive and the related policies and measures to rapidly transpose it and implement it. The recommendations reflect the importance of developing comprehensive long-term planning for the deployment of renewable energy, and in particular wind, to increase visibility for the European manufacturing industry and grid operators in line with the European Wind Power Package¹¹.
- (10) The Commission's recommendations regarding the national contribution to energy efficiency are based on Article 4 of the Directive (EU) 2023/1791 on energy efficiency¹² and the formula in Annex I to that Directive and the related policies and measures to implement it.
- (11) The Commission's recommendations pay particular attention to the targets, objectives and contributions and related policies and measures to deliver on the REPowerEU plan in order to rapidly phase out dependence from Russian fossil fuels. They take into account lessons learnt from the implementation of the Save gas for a Safe winter Package¹³. The recommendations reflect the imperative to make the energy system more resilient in light of the obligations stemming from Regulation (EU) 2019/941 on risk preparedness in the electricity sector¹⁴ and Regulation (EU) 2017/1938 on the

¹⁰ Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 82), as amended by Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources, and repealing Council Directive (EU) 2015/652, OJ L, 2023/2413, 31.10.2023

¹¹ Communication on European Wind Power Action Plan COM (2023) 669 final, 24.10.2023 and Communication on delivering EU offshore renewable energy ambition, COM (2023) 668 final

¹² Directive (EU) 2023/1791 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on energy efficiency and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 (recast), OJ L 231, 20.9.2023, p. 1.

¹³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European economic and social committee, "Save gas for a safe winter", COM/2022/360 final

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) 2019/941 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on risk preparedness in the electricity sector and repealing Directive 2005/89/EC OJ L158/1

security of gas supply¹⁵ in line with the Commission Recommendation on energy storage¹⁶.

- (12) The Commission's recommendations take into account the need to accelerate the integration of the internal energy market to strengthen the role of flexibility and to empower and protect consumers. The Commission's recommendation also considers the importance of assessing the number of households in energy poverty in line with the requirements of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, and the Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/2407¹⁷.
- (13) The Commission's recommendations reflect the importance of ensuring sufficient investments in clean energy research and innovation to boost their development and manufacturing capacities, including appropriate policies and measures for energy intensive industries and other businesses, and the need to upskill workforce for a net-zero industry in order to consolidate a strong, competitive and clean economy within the Union.
- (14) The Commission's recommendations build on the commitments taken under the Paris Agreement to phase down the use of fossil fuels, as well as on the importance of phasing out fossil fuel subsidies.
- (15) The Commission's recommendations on investment needs follow its assessment of whether the draft updated plan provides a general overview of investment needs to achieve the objectives, targets and contributions for all dimensions of the Energy Union; indicates the sources of financing, distinguishing private and public sources; and whether it outlines investments consistent with Romania's Recovery and Resilience Plan, Romania's Territorial Just Transition Plans and the 2022-2023 country-specific recommendations issued under the European Semester; and includes a robust macro-economic assessment of planned policies and measures. The NECP should ensure the transparency and predictability of national policies and measures, to support investment certainty.
- (16) The Commission's recommendations reflect the crucial importance of a wide regional consultation, and of ensuring early and inclusive consultation on the plan, including effective public participation with sufficient information and timeframe, in line with the Aarhus Convention¹⁸.
- (17) The Commission's recommendations on just transition reflect the assessment of whether the Romania's plan identifies in sufficient depth the relevant social, employment and skills impacts of the climate and energy transition and outlines adequate accompanying policies and measures to promote a just transition, while contributing to the promotion of both human rights and gender equality.

¹⁵ Regulation (EU) 2017/1938 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2017 concerning measures to safeguard the security of gas supply and repealing Regulation (EU) n°994/2010, OJ L 280

¹⁶ Commission Recommendation of 14 March 2023 on Energy Storage – Underpinning a decarbonised and secure EU Energy system; OJ C 103, 20.3.2023, p. 1

¹⁷ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2023/2407 of 20 October 2023 on energy poverty, C:2023/4080, OJL 2023/2407, 23.10.2023

¹⁸ Convention on access to information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters of 25 June 1998 (the 'Aarhus convention')

- (18) The Commission's recommendations to Romania are underpinned by the assessment of its draft updated NECP¹⁹, which is published alongside this Recommendation.
- (19) Romania should take due account of the present recommendations when developing its final updated integrated NECP to be submitted by 30 June 2024.

Recommendations on the consistency with the Union's climate-neutrality objective and with ensuring progress on adaptation

- (20) Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 (the European Climate Law), the Commission is required to assess the consistency of national measures with the climate-neutrality objective and with ensuring progress on adaptation. The Commission assessed the consistency of Romania's measures with these objectives²⁰. The below recommendations are based on that assessment. Romania should take due account of the present recommendations and follow up on them in accordance with the European Climate Law.
- (21) While the Union's net greenhouse gas emissions (including from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) and excluding international transport) show a steady downward trend overall, broadly in line with the linear trajectory achieving the Union's 2030 climate target of -55% and the Union's 2050 climate-neutrality objective, the pace of emission reduction needs to accelerate and action by Member States is essential. Progress across Member States has been mixed with several sectoral challenges and weaknesses that need to be remedied without further delay. Moreover, Romania has only recently submitted to the Commission its national long-term strategy in accordance with Article 15 of the Regulation (EU) 2018/1999²¹. The Commission will assess whether the national long-term strategy is adequate for the collective achievement of the objectives and targets of the Energy Union. Reliable long-term strategies are the cornerstone for achieving the economic transformation needed to move towards the Union's climate-neutrality objective.
- (22) Adaptation policies should focus on areas or sectors particularly vulnerable to climate change, or whose activities are key to the resilience of other sectors, or which have significant importance to the national economy or public health. Priority response is required on impacts and risks that are expected to affect critical infrastructure or systems with long life span, or are expected to affect systems irreversibly, taking into account interaction with socio-economic development or other non-climatic drivers. Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation efforts is necessary for maintaining accountability and improving adaptation policy. Various Union funding instruments can be mobilised to fund adaptation. Climate resilience considerations should be put in the forefront when Member States design their national plans under the relevant Union funds. None of the spending should do harm to adaptation: that is, increase vulnerabilities either for the beneficiaries or for others. The investment needs of climate adaptation are increasing and will accelerate over the next decades. Improved funding should be accompanied by sufficient capacity and expertise necessary for

¹⁹ SWD(2023) 930

²⁰ EU Climate Action Progress Report 2023, COM(2023) 653 final, and Commission Staff Working Document Assessment of progress on climate adaptation in the individual Member States according to the European Climate Law, SWD(2023) 932.

²¹ Since Romania had not submitted the long-term strategy required by Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, within the required deadline, the Commission opened an infringement procedure against Romania in accordance with Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (ref. INFR(2022)2090). On 8 December, Romania submitted its national long-term strategy.

administration as well as implementation to ensure quality of spending and absorption capacity and avoid maladaptation. In addition to public and private funding, innovative funding instruments could also be explored through cooperation with the private sector.

- (23) The most vulnerable communities are those with elevated likelihood of being impacted by climate change. Unequal exposure and vulnerability to climate impacts of different regions and socio-economic groups worsens pre-existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Just resilience should reduce the unequal burden of climate risk and ensure equity in the distribution of the benefits of adaptation. The systemic ability to adjust to climate change is a key feature to avoid or moderate potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, and to cope with the consequences. Physical impacts of climate change are evolving at a faster pace than expected. Progress in adaptive capacity is needed at all levels of the government, and in the public and private sectors, and requires increased awareness on vulnerabilities and risks. Private stakeholders are agents of change by providing information, resources, capacities, and funding.
- (24) Nature-based solutions offer efficient and cost-effective adaptation and mitigation options, if their deployment is incentivised through strategic frameworks, policies and funding. They can be implemented independently or integrated in other adaptation and mitigation measures, combined with more technological or infrastructure-based solutions. Implementation needs to consider the complexity of ecosystems and the projected effects of climate change, the local context, linked interests and values, and socio-economic conditions.

HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT ROMANIA TAKES ACTION TO:

CONCERNING THE DRAFT UPDATED NATIONAL ENERGY AND CLIMATE PLAN UNDER REGULATION (EU) 2018/1999

1. Set out cost-efficient additional policies and measures, including for the transport sector and for non-CO₂ emissions, including methane and N₂O, from energy and agriculture, and explain their expected impacts to meet the national greenhouse gas target of -12.7% in 2030 compared to 2005 levels under the ESR. Provide projections to show how the existing and planned policies will deliver on the target and if necessary, specify how flexibilities available under the ESR will be used to ensure compliance. Complement the information on the policies and measures, clearly spelling out their scope, timeline and expected greenhouse gas reduction impact, including for measures in Union funding programmes such as the common agricultural policy.
2. Identify the amount of CO₂ emissions that could be captured annually by 2030, including the source. Provide details on how the captured CO₂ will be transported. Identify the overall CO₂ storage capacity and injection volumes available by 2030.
3. Set out a concrete pathway towards reaching the national LULUCF target as defined in Regulation (EU) 2018/841, in particular given the revision of Romania's national greenhouse gas inventories. Include additional measures in the LULUCF sector detailing their timing and scope and quantifying their expected impacts to ensure that greenhouse gas removals are effectively aligned with the 2030 EU net removal target of -310 MtCO₂eq and with the country specific removal target of -2380 ktCO₂eq as defined in Regulation (EU) 2018/841. Provide clear information on how public funds (both Union funds, including the common agricultural policy, and State aid)

and private financing through carbon farming schemes are consistently and effectively used to achieve the net removal national target. Provide information on the status and progress to be made in ensuring the enhancements to higher tier levels/geographically explicit datasets for monitoring, reporting and verification, in line with Part 3 of Annex V to Regulation (EU) 2018/1999.

4. Provide additional analysis on the relevant climate vulnerabilities and risks regarding the achievement of the national objectives, targets and contributions and the policies and measures in the different dimensions of the Energy Union. Better outline and quantify the link to the specific Energy Union objectives and policies, that adaptation policies and measures should support. Set out additional adaptation policies and measures in sufficient detail to support Romania's achievement of national objectives, targets and contributions under the Energy Union.
5. Raise the ambition of a share of renewable energy sources of at least 41 % as a contribution to the Union's binding renewable energy target for 2030 laid down in Article 3(1) of Directive (EU) 2018/2001, as amended in line with the formula in Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/1999. Ensure that sufficient measures are taken to cover the gap towards its 2021 renewables baseline which must not be lower than its mandatory national overall target for the share of energy from renewable sources in 2020, as per Article 32(4) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999.
6. Provide a long-term plan for the deployment of renewable energy technologies over the next 10 years, with an outlook to 2040. Include an indicative target for innovative renewable energy technologies by 2030 in line with Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as amended. Include specific targets to contribute to the indicative sub-targets in buildings and industry for 2030, and the binding sub-target for renewable fuels of non-biological origin (RFNBOs) in industry for 2030, in line with Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as amended. Confirm the binding targets in heating and cooling target in line with the binding targets for both 2021-2025 and 2026-2030 and include an indicative target to achieve the top-ups of Annex IA to Directive (EU) 2018/2001. . Include a sub-target for advanced biofuels and renewable fuels of non-biological origin (RFNBOs) in the transport sector, making sure the minimum level of RFNBO in 2030 is observed.
7. Further develop detailed and quantified policies and measures in a way that enables a timely and cost-effective achievement of its national contribution to the Union's binding renewable energy target of at least 42.5% in 2030, with the collective endeavour to increase it to 45%. Describe in particular how it plans to accelerate permitting and designate 'renewables acceleration areas', including for which renewable energy technologies, with faster and simpler procedures. Elaborate on measures to accelerate the deployment of renewables via the uptake of renewable power purchase agreements, guarantees of origin and further details on ensuring an enabling framework to promote self-consumption and energy communities. Provide further information on how it aims to accelerate the deployment of renewables and the phasing out of fossil fuels in the heating and cooling sector, in particular in district heating and cooling in line with Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as amended, including by ensuring an enabling framework for increasing integration between electricity and heating and cooling networks and developing or modernising renewables-based efficient district heating and cooling infrastructure. Describe how the design of the obligation on fuel and energy suppliers in the transport sector will be covered, include comparable measures for promoting hydrogen in industry, and prepare the EU for renewable hydrogen trade.

8. Include an assessment of the domestic supply of forest biomass for energy purposes in 2021-2030 in accordance with the strengthened sustainability criteria of Article 29 of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as amended. Include an assessment of the compatibility of the projected use of forest biomass for energy production with Romania's obligations under the revised LULUCF Regulation, particularly for 2026-2030, together with national measures and policies to ensure such compatibility. Include further measures to promote the sustainable production of biomethane, given Romania's sustainable biogas/biomethane potential and production, its profile of natural gas consumption and existing infrastructure, and its digestate use and biogenic CO₂ applications.
9. Provide to the extent possible an expected timeline of the steps leading to the adoption of legislative and non-legislative policies and measures aimed at transposing and implementing the provisions of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as amended, in particular for the measures mentioned in the previous points.
10. Include a national energy efficiency contribution on primary energy consumption in the Union's indicative primary energy consumption target in line with Article 4 and Annex I of Directive (EU) 2023/1791. Include the amount of energy consumption reduction to be achieved by all public bodies disaggregated by sector and total floor area of heated and/or cooled buildings owned by public bodies to be renovated yearly or corresponding yearly energy savings to be achieved. Include the amount of cumulative energy savings to be achieved over the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2030 and an explanation of how the annual savings rate and the calculation baseline were established.
11. Set out complete policies and measures to achieve the national contributions on energy efficiency and quantify the energy savings from the reported energy efficiency measures to ensure the achievement of the required amount of cumulative end-use energy savings by 2030 and set out measures to promote energy audits and energy management systems. Provide further information on the role of the National Energy Efficiency Fund, as defined in Article 30 of Directive (EU) 2023/1791, in helping deliver the energy efficiency national contributions to the EU targets, including the use of financial instruments within the fund.
12. Include an updated ambition level to ensure a highly energy efficient and decarbonised national building stock and to transform existing buildings into zero-emission buildings by 2050, including intermediate milestones for 2030 and 2040, and a comparison with the most recent long-term renovation strategy. Support the targets for the decarbonisation of buildings by including further information on policies, measures and their expected impact on energy savings for the implementation of a coherent long-term renovation strategy.
13. Strengthen the resilience of its energy system, in particular by setting an objective for energy storage deployment and putting forward policies and measures to integrate the imperative of climate adaptation in the energy system. Define clear objectives for encouraging gas demand reduction, as well as develop detailed policies and measures to reach these objectives towards 2030. Further assess the compatibility of its gas infrastructure with the decarbonisation objectives. Specify appropriate measures for the diversification and long-term supply of nuclear materials, fuel, spare parts, and services, including for the planned new nuclear power units, and the long-term management of nuclear waste. Provide more details on announced plans to develop Small Modular Reactor (SMR) projects. Assess the adequacy of the oil infrastructure

(refinery, oil stocks) with the expected decline in oil demand and the move toward lower-carbon alternatives.

14. Set out clear targets to improve the electricity interconnection capacity and identify a clear timeline to implement related projects. Put forward clear objectives and targets for demand response to improve the flexibility of the system in light of an assessment of the flexibility needs and describe how to facilitate energy system integration in connection with Article 20a of Directive (EU) 2018/2001 as amended. Present the state of play regarding the organisation of electricity markets clearly and consistently with targets and objectives described in the internal market dimension, and define forward-looking objectives and targets concerning market integration, in particular on measures to develop competitive wholesale markets and to phase out measures interfering with market signals. Develop more competitive retail markets and increase the level of consumer empowerment in the retail market.
15. Further develop the approach to addressing energy poverty by including an assessment of the situation of currently affected households and indicating a specific measurable reduction target as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, taking account of Commission's Recommendation (EU) 2023/2407. Provide additional detail on existing and potential measures to address energy poverty, and on the dedicated financial resources from the perspective of both social policy (affordability) and structural energy measures, particularly as regards access to energy efficiency, building renovation and renewable energy.
16. Further clarify national objectives in research, innovation and competitiveness to deploy clean technologies, establishing a pathway for 2030 and 2050 with a view to support the decarbonisation of industry and promote the transition of businesses towards a net zero and circular economy. Put forward policies and measures to promote the development of net-zero projects including those relevant for the energy intensive industries. Describe a predictable and simplified regulatory framework for permitting procedures and how access to national funding will be simplified where needed. Provide detailed policies and measures for the digitalisation of the energy system, the development of clean energy-related skills, and to facilitate open trade for resilient and sustainable supply chains of key net-zero components and equipment.
17. Specify the reforms and measures to mobilise the private investments needed to achieve the energy and climate targets. Provide a comprehensive and consistent overview of the public and private investment needs in aggregate and by sector. Complement a top-down economy-wide approach with a bottom-up project-specific assessment. Include a breakdown of total investment needs with additional information on the national, regional and Union funding sources as well as private financial sources to be mobilised. Add a short description of the type of financial support scheme chosen to implement the policies and measures, which are financed through the public budget, and the use of blended financial instruments making use of grants, loans, technical assistance and public guarantees, including the role of the national promotional banks in the respective schemes and/or how private financing is mobilised. Consider the cost-effective generation of transfers to other Member States under the ESR as a funding source. Provide a robust assessment of the macroeconomic impact of the planned policies and measures.

18. Explain in detail how and by when Romania intends to phase out fossil fuel subsidies. Explain in more detail how Romania plans to phase out solid fossil fuels for power generation by clarifying related commitments and measures.
19. Provide detailed information on the social, employment and skills consequences, or any other distributional impacts, of the climate and energy transition, and on the planned objectives, policies and measures to support a just transition. Specify the form of support, the impact of the initiatives, the targeted groups and the resources dedicated, taking into account the Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality²². Ensure alignment between the coal phase-out timeline outlined in the Territorial Just Transition Plans and the final updated NECP. Include, to the extent possible, more elements to provide an adequate analytical basis for the preparation of a future Social Climate Plan, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2023/955²³, including indications on how to assess the challenges and social impacts on the most vulnerable of the emissions trading system for fuel combustion in buildings, road transport and additional sectors, and to identify potential beneficiaries and a relevant policy framework. Explain how the policy framework identified in the NECP will contribute to the preparation of Romania's Social Climate Plan and how the consistency between the two plans will be ensured.
20. Ensure inclusive public participation within a reasonable timeframe and broad participation of local authorities and civil society in the preparation of the plan. Provide a clear overview on how the consultation process will enable broad public participation from all relevant authorities, citizens, and stakeholders, including social partners, in the preparation of both the draft and final updated plan. Provide a summary of the views expressed by different actors, and a summary of how the plan integrates the views expressed during the consultations.
21. Intensify regional cooperation with neighbouring Member States and within the Central and South Eastern Europe energy connectivity High-Level Group, including in the interconnectivity, renewables, energy efficiency, internal market taking into account common challenges and shared objectives. Describe how Romania plans to establish a framework for cooperation with other Member States by 2025, in line with Article 9 of Directive (EU) 2023/2413. Pursue its efforts to sign the two required bilateral solidarity arrangements for the security of gas supply with its neighbours (Hungary and Bulgaria).

CONCERNING THE CONSISTENCY OF NATIONAL MEASURES WITH THE CLIMATE-NEUTRALITY OBJECTIVE AND WITH ENSURING PROGRESS ON ADAPTATION UNDER REGULATION (EU) 2021/1119

22. Ensure that adaptation priorities, strategies, policies, plans, and efforts are commensurate with the predicted future climate vulnerabilities and risks, based on the best available science and the climate prediction and early warning tools available. Ensure that adaptation policies are monitored and evaluated systemically and regularly, and results reflected in the ensuing revised policy design and implementation. Put climate resilience considerations more to the forefront in the use

²² Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality, OJ C243, 27.6.2022 p.35-51

²³ Regulation (EU) 2023/955 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 establishing a Social Climate Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (OJ L 130, 16.5.2023, p. 1)

of support from the Union funding programmes, such as the common agricultural policy, cohesion policy funding and other relevant Union funds. Union funds should be spent in such a way that they increase climate resilience and do not increase vulnerabilities (i.e., do no significant harm to adaptation). Ensure that public and private financing mechanisms for adaptation actions are in place and that the budgets are commensurate with the investment needs, in particular in the priority vulnerable sectors.

23. Engage stakeholder groups that are particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change in Romania's adaptation policy design and implementation. Improve coordination between different levels of governance (national/regional/local) to align planning tools and to help coordinated interventions aimed at systemic transformation. Involve social partners and private sector stakeholders in policy design, implementation and investments. Document the processes and outcomes of relevant consultations.
24. Promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation in national strategies, policies and plans and provide investments for their deployment.

Done at Brussels, 18.12.2023

For the Commission
Kadri Simson
Member of the Commission