



Parlamentul României

Senat

Bucharest, 3 June, 2015

Courtesy translation

OPINION of the ROMANIAN SENATE on the **ENERGY UNION PACKAGE**

COM (2015) 80 final - A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy

COM (2015) 81 final - The Paris Protocol – A blueprint for tackling global climate change beyond 2020

COM (2015) 82 final - Achieving the 10% electricity interconnection target Making Europe's electricity grid fit for 2020

The Senate of Romania has examined the Energy Union Communications according to the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon (Protocol no.1).

Taking into account the report of our permanent Committee on European Affairs, **the Plenum of the Senate**, during its session on the 27 May 2015, decided on the following points of views:

The Romanian Senate noted that, in the field of energy, citizens and companies from both Romania and European Union need a wide range of options and appropriate prices. An environmental friendly energy should be safe and sustainable. Moreover, the whole energy sector ought to be characterized by a high degree of competitiveness and freedom of choosing the consumers. In this context, it seems reasonably to define and protect vulnerable consumers. In order to have appropriate electricity prices for consumers and economic growth inside and outside the European Union, the implementation of a coherent definition regarding the vulnerable consumer should be a top priority over the next period of time for Romania as well as the European Union. The house heating is a significant issue for the new member states who have recently joined the EU. For example, according to Eurofund, 40% of the Romanian population can not benefit from an adequate heating, although Romania is considered to be an energetically independent member state. .

A) General issues regarding the position of Romania on the Energy Union package

COM (2015) 80 final - A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy

- The Senate welcomes the introduction in the conclusions draft of an EU engagement concerning the building of an Energy Union based on the recent communication and the assessment of its implementation, before the end of this year;.

- Romania is ready to further cooperate with the European Commission with a view to elaborate detailed national sheet including all concrete aspects required by the implementation of the Energy Union;
- The Senate emphasize some aspects which are extremely relevant as regards the set up of the Energy Union, namely, the need to develop an efficient and regulated Energy single market providing for economic growth and employment and draw on investments, the key role of the internal energy resources (including the Black Sea potential) and the need to direct the Community finances for projects focusing on the access of the indigenous potential, the reinforcing of the energy security of the whole Energy Community, the regional cooperation and the importance of the political and financial support to energy projects on vulnerable regions of the Europe, and the Central and South - Eastern Europe,;
- The Senate welcomes the public debate on the Communication of the European Commission with a view to the European Security Strategy, especially in the current international context from the Eastern border of the EU.
- The Senate underlines the urgent need to rethink options and opportunities in the South – Eastern Europe aiming at the cancellation of the weaknesses which are specific to the reliance on a single external source as well as a strengthened solidarity both inside EU and between EU and its neighbors.
- The Senate appreciates that the Strategy on security energy has several positive elements and welcomed references to:
 - the strategic importance of the indigenous energy resources (including unconventional sources)
 - the potential of new areas of resources as Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Sea;
 - the role of the nuclear energy;
 - the appropriate diversification of routes and supplier sources;
 - the will to prioritize the most important common interests projects;
 - taking into consideration the importance of the energy security of the third contracting parts of the Energy Community, especially Republic of Moldova and Ukraine;
 - the need of the investments and regional connectivity (as connectivity with Republic of Moldova).
- The Senate supports the initiative to give priority to the infrastructure projects within the most vulnerable regions from the energy security perspective, as Central and Eastern Europe. In this sense, the Senate sustained the idea to draw up a list with the most important joint interest projects which should have priority in getting financing and implementation. At the same time, the Senate appreciated the importance of the consultation initiated by the Commission with the member States when setting up the selection and the selection criteria for joint interest projects under the Working Program.
- As regards the interconnection between the framework energy - climate changes 2030 and the Strategy on Energy Security, the Senate emphasized, that in order to accordingly reach the strategic objectives through an increased flexibility, although a coherent approach of the energy issues is needed., the European Strategy on energy security should remain an autonomous topic, independent of any other policy or legislative framework.,

COM (2015) 81 final - The Paris Protocol – A blueprint for tackling global climate change beyond 2020

- The Senate appreciates the efforts to elaborate and adopt this Communication;

- The EU policies should take into consideration the context of the international negotiations in the field of the climate changes in order to not put added pressure upon the competitiveness of the European industry, energy security and internal market labor. So far this are not confirmed by the results of the international negotiations,
- The Senate considers that this document give a clear vision for a dynamic and transparent protocol, mandatory from a legal point of view, including all balanced and ambitious engagements for all the state Parts.

COM (2015) 82 final - COM (2015) 82 final - Achieving the 10% electricity interconnection target
Making Europe's electricity grid fit for 2020

- The Senate believes that the achievement of a strongly interconnected cross border market through the Energy Union should start from the goals set up by Member states .An European financial support is needed to reach the interconnection goals. In this light, the Senate appreciates that it is essential to use in a flexible and a complementary manner all the funds and financial instruments available. The Senate welcomes the possibility to engage the coming European Fund for Strategic Investments.
- The Senate agreed on the achievement of the connectivity goal by means of the Common interest Projects (CIP) and on the importance of the regional cooperation for development the stock capacities for energy obtained from renewable.
- To draw on investments, the Senate considers that an updating of the regulatory framework and of a regional cooperation policy on the energy projects with Republic of Moldova is required.

B) Topical issues directly affecting Romania in perspective of the Energy Union Package

1. COM (2015) 80 final - A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy

- It is important Union to take into consideration in order to build an effective Energy Union, the specific potential of each Member state in making use of the indigenous energy resources and the sovereignty to select its own energy mix based on the principle of the technological neutrality in reaching the energy and climate goals.
- In this sense, we appreciate that this principle could have better been brought out in bold relief by the Communication.
- It is certain that to reach the carbon free emission targets several Member states need the nuclear choice and the freedom to choose their own energy mix, including the nuclear level.
- ~~In this context we support and ask the right of Romania and any other Member State to be free~~ when selecting their own energy mix, by taking into account the specificities of each Member State harmonized to the general policies of the EU. We consider this right should be granted without discrimination¹ and should be fully respected.

¹ For example: Fostering resources that RES (renewable energy sources) by imposing mandatory targets (by The Climate-Energy 2030 which imposes GHG target (emission of greenhouse gases) by 40% and the target for efficiency EU-wide energy) clearly and wrongly put in an inferior position other technologies "low carbon", which will no longer contribute to the same extent as a percentage of the energy mix, as the upward trend is emerging for these targets certain resources at European level, a significant example in this regard is nuclear. From this point of view, arbitrary indication of some kinds of resources at the expense of others, especially at the expense of technology "clean" climate perspective does not favor long-term strategy of the European Union.

2. COM (2015) 82 final Achieving the 10% electricity interconnection target Making Europe's electricity grid fit for 2020

Regarding the integration of energy markets (PIE), we consider that the Energy Union should boost the efforts of Member States, national regulatory authorities (NRAs) and transmission system operators (TSOs) to enhance cross-border cooperation.

In this regard, the accession of some Member States of Southeast the European Region like Romania, as a full member in projects such as The Project for coupling electricity markets from the northwest and central Eastern Europe areas, should be one of the necessary and legitimate solutions designed to bring Europe closer to creating a single internal energy market, that is real and functional.

In this regard, we consider that more flexibility in terms of the market coupling process would be appropriate because keeping the regions in the form stipulated in the years 2005 starts to become a problem for the Member States in Eastern Europe, such as Romania and Bulgaria, which at that time were not EU Member States.

As a consequence, these two Member States are more or less obviously bound to follow developments in Southeast Europe which are less advanced (because the 8th region, in which the two countries are, includes both EU and non-EU countries) and when trying to follow developments in the center-west and north-west Europe, they encounter resistance from certain Member States from the already established regions.

Moreover, we believe that this "regional approach" which is based on the regions established 10 years ago, should not and must not become an obstacle in the way of the Common European objective of an Internal Energy Market.

Therefore, we hope that all EU Member States concerned, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary will accept Romania's participation as a full member of the electricity market coupling project for the North - Western and Central - Eastern Europe regions.

Moreover, we consider that the authorities and EU institutions must respect the principles of equality and non-discriminatory treatment between Member States of the European Union regarding Romania's participation as a full member of the electricity market coupling project for the North - Western and Central - Eastern Europe regions and the acceptance of Romanian entities (Energy Regulatory Authority - ANRE and operators of national transmission system - Transelectrica, OPCOM) involved in the electricity market coupling project for the North - Western and Central - Eastern Europe regions as members with same rights and obligations equal to those of other entities representing the other Member States of the European Union.

p. PRESIDENT OF SENATE

Ioan CHELARU

