

New Greenpeace study finds: investments in energy efficiency and renewables bring more economic and social benefits in Romania than gas investments

Greenpeace decided to test the [Romanian](#) government's decision to spend 4,35 billion euros in new fossil gas infrastructure until 2030 to assess its social and economic impact. The environmental organization commissioned the Institute of European Energy & Climate Policy (IEECP) to make a cost-benefit analysis to compare the government's plan of gas infrastructure development to hypothetical investments in buildings' energy efficiency.

The results show that investing in gas is the worst possible choice for the Romanian economy and society, while energy efficiency investments have much better social, economic and environmental impacts. Greenpeace calls on the [Romanian](#) government to scrap its investment plans into gas and invest into energy efficiency and renewables as these have a much higher value for the economy and for the society than gas. "The **energy crisis** has been raising questions about the security of energy supply in [Europe](#). It made energy bills skyrocket and left people and small and medium enterprises struggling to pay their energy bills, thus deepening the already record high energy poverty in Romania. At the same time, our dependence on fossil fuels is continuously worsening the impacts of the climate crisis, while they also damage people's health and destroy the environment. **At the same time, fossil fuel companies reported tens of billions in profits.** To have a long-term solution, the triple crisis of the energy crisis, the cost of living crisis and the climate crisis need to be addressed simultaneously." – said Alin Tănase , energy and climate campaigner of Greenpeace Romania.

To help governments avoid false solutions, [Greenpeace](#) commissioned the Institute of European Energy & Climate Policy (IEECP) to make a cost-benefit socio-economic analysis which compares the governments' investment plan in gas infrastructure with different scenarios that would make buildings more energy efficient throughout the region. This is in line with the EU's Energy Efficient First Principle which says that a government first ought to thoroughly check whether an investment in supply infrastructure, such as new gas pipelines, is really needed or it can be avoided because another investment in energy efficiency has similar, or better, value for the energy system, the economy, the environment and the society.

In [Romania](#) the available budget for the government's investment plans on natural gas expansion is 4,35 billion EUR according to Romania's National Investment Program, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, the Large Infrastructure Operational Program, the Sustainable Development Operational Program and the Modernisation Fund. The study compared the economic and social impact of this planned gas investment to the economic

New Greenpeace study finds: investments in energy efficiency and renewables bring more economic and social benefits in Romania than gas investments

and social impact of five different scenarios of energy efficiency investments. The methodology considered factors such as reduction of pollution, protection from rising energy prices, and higher property values from energy upgrades.

The study found that investing in energy efficiency brings higher economic, social and environmental benefits in all the examined five scenarios than investing in gas.

In fact, investing in gas is not only the worst choice from a social and environmental point of view, but it doesn't make sense even from a purely financial point of view. Spending €4.35 billion in energy efficiency investments can yield back to the economy (households, businesses, industry etc.) as much as €3.8 billions. While spending €4.35 billion in new gas infrastructure will further damage the economy by an additional €2.3 billion. An important finding of the study is that according to the scenario that brings the most benefits, around 200 000 households can be transformed into zero energy buildings from the budget the government plans to spend on new **fossil gas infrastructure**, which acquire almost no energy and are almost entirely self-sufficient.

"It's a no-brainer really: more [gas](#) means more energy poverty. By further investing in gas, we cement ourselves in a world of high energy prices, **environmental destruction and climate catastrophe** that only benefits the large energy corporations and creates huge deficits in the state budget. At the same time, transitioning to renewables and investing into more efficient homes ends energy poverty, allows households to spend less on energy, increases property value, and creates more jobs that boosts the Romanian economy." - adds Greenpeace Romania's climate and energy campaigner.

In 2023 all [EU](#) member-states will have to present their updated National Energy & Climate Plans for 2030 which ought to be adjusted to the new political, economic and technological developments. Greenpeace believes that all governments in Europe should quit new fossil gas projects, speed up the process of phasing out fossil gas by 2035 and invest in energy efficiency and clean energy instead of wasting taxpayers money, savings and **future health on fossil gas** infrastructure development.

Source: [greenpeace](#)