

## Energy Minister: Completing interconnection projects - a prerequisite for cutting reliance on Russian Federation

**Cutting reliance on the Russian Federation can be achieved faster if we speed up the completion of interconnection projects, Romanian Energy Minister Virgil Popescu wrote on Wednesday on Facebook as he attended the panel 'Energy Transition and Energy Security - Twins or Opposites?' of the Energy Transition Dialogue organised in Berlin.**

"I had a fruitful dialogue with Luigi di Maio - Italy's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Benoît Revaz - Secretary of State with the Swiss Federal Office of Energy; Prof. Dorte Fouquet - Director of the European Renewable Energies Federation; and Rina Bohle Zeller - expert of wind turbine producer Vestas. The focus was on solutions to the complications of the energy market caused by Russia's war against Ukraine," Popescu said.

Our goal at this moment is to turn challenges into opportunities through cooperation, and in order to curb our dependence on the Russian Federation we need to speed up the completion of interconnection projects, he notes.

"We have managed to mobilize and move in 10 days Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova to the European power grid, now we need to speed up gas interconnection as well. And this means that we will be able to diversify our supply and transport sources from the U.S., Azerbaijan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel and other states. I said that in the decarbonisation process we are also relying on nuclear energy, and our intention is to promote an integrated vision in terms of investment, so that development reaches all segments: production, transport, distribution," the Energy Minister also wrote.

Although 60 percent of Romania's power production is already low-carbon, we want more, so we will massively invest in renewable energy production facilities, Popescu said.

"In the short term we will work together to use LNG and NG from countries that don't use energy as a blackmail weapon, as Russia has done. But we must work together, in partnership with the U.S. and other democratic states to increase our energy security. By joining forces, I am confident that opportunities will come the way of each of us," the message states.