

Vice-President of the National Regulatory Authority for Energy (ANRE) Zoltan Nagy-Bege said that the price of gas for residential consumers in Romania is expected to double in this winter season.

He said that, despite reassuring statements by the Minister of Energy Virgil Popescu, the current developments point to the energy prices (especially natural gas) rising further as opposed to the central bank's expectations for stabilization.

The high prices on the spot market will affect, for both electricity and natural gas, the residential prices at the beginning of next year. Nagy-Bege argued that the Romanian authorities could do nothing about this because the same high gas prices are present everywhere in Europe.

Speaking at an energy conference, Minister Popescu blamed the Russian gas company Gazprom for pushing up the price of natural gas in Europe. However, he reassured that everything will be back to normal once the newly constructed Nord Stream 2 pipeline becomes operational.

To help the citizens face the high energy prices in the coming months, Minister Popescu announced the introduction of the law on vulnerable consumers and other immediate measures to help households overcome the winter by disbursing subsidies. However, the Government has not yet decided whether subsidies will be paid for those with below average consumption or below average income. Also, he did not specify when such subsidies would be disbursed.