Romanian Competition Council said that it has launched an investigation of the activities of connecting household customers to the electricity and natural gas distribution networks, in the context of the modification of the applicable legislative framework and of the liberalization process of the two markets for household consumers.

The statement from the Council said that, according to the new regulations introduced in 2020, the electricity or natural gas distribution operator has the obligation to connect to the network all household customers, within 90 days from the date of obtaining the authorization for the construction of the connection, with the recovery of connection costs in a period of 5 years.

In this context, ANRE modified the procedure regarding the investment plans of the distribution operators, in order to ensure the capacity to satisfy reasonable long-term connection requests, without affecting the investments aiming at the operational safety of the distribution systems.

By adopting these legislative changes, the aim is to boost the process of connecting household consumers to electricity and natural gas distribution networks. Under these conditions, the constant increase in the number of places of consumption will determine the expansion of the markets for electricity and natural gas supply to domestic consumers, leading to both the growth of the portfolio of existing suppliers and the emergence of new suppliers on the market.

At the same time, however, the Competition Council draws attention to the fact that possible disruptions in the process of connecting household customers may affect the liberalization process, by limiting the increase in market size, ultimately leading to restricted competition in the electricity supply market or natural gas to household customers.