

# Romania could reach EU Court of Justice because of coal-fired TPPs

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Romania could reach the EU Court of Justice because of its coal-fired TPPs. According to Bankwatch, the European Commission (EC) is asking Romania to improve the application of the directive on emissions from industrial installations within three months, otherwise it will reach the EU Court of Justice.

Three installations at two coal-fired thermal power plants operate without complying with the emission limits allowed by the directive for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and dust. For the fourth year in a row, the EC has launched infringement proceedings against Romania, this time in the form of a reasoned opinion, because it allows industrial installations to operate without the necessary permits. If in three months Romania does not adopt and communicate the necessary measures for the full and correct application of the directive, the Commission will notify the EU Court of Justice.

The infringement procedure took place following a complaint filed by the Bankwatch Association in 2017, which showed that the Industrial Emissions Directive is not applied correctly in Romania, a series of coal-fired thermal power plants operating without integrated environmental permits, and their emissions exceeding the legal limit.

The industrial installations referred to in the procedure are the units at the Mintia and Govora II thermal power plants which operate without integrated environmental permits and which have benefited from exemptions for SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and dust emissions, concluded with the withdrawal of the units from the National Transition Plan.

Alexandru Mustata from Bankwatch Romania said that most EU member states have either already given up coal-fired electricity production or will do so by 2030. Romania does not have such a plan, although many power plants are old and cannot operate legally. Instead of investing in the modernization of the energy system, Romania keeps subsidizing the big polluters.