

The Organization of Renewable Energy Producers in Romania (PATRES) said that the new proposed water usage fee of 6.8 euros/MWh for all hydro-based producers of electricity is uncompetitive and discriminatory for the operators of small hydropower plants. According to amendments proposed by Romanian Minister of Energy Virgil Popescu, hydro-based electricity producers could be paying significantly increased water usage fees. The amendments will replace the existing water usage fee paid per cubic meter of water used by hydropower plants, with a new fee calculated per MWh produced. PATRES claims that the amount and the mechanism for calculating the fees for turbine water must take into account the technical characteristics of the power plants, not the functioning budget of the Water Administration (ANAR). The new tax would account for 17 % of electricity price. Including other taxes charged by ANAR, such as the rent for the minor riverbed, the insured fall, all the fees paid by small hydropower plants represent 35 to 40 % of their turnover. Last week, Fondul Proprietatea, minority stakeholder in the largest hydro-based producer Hidroelectrica, also criticized the proposed amendments.