



Elena Popescu

(She/Her)
Romania

Elena Popescu, MS and PhD Power Engineer, graduated from Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Energy Faculty, she holds a PhD on energy policies: “optimal energy mix and the role of nuclear energy”.

She is specialized in nuclear energy, with an extensive activity in nuclear industry, nuclear European regulation and nuclear policy issues.

Between 2007 – 2012, she acted as counselor at the Permanent Representation of Romania to the European Union, Brussels, responsible for nuclear and international affairs in energy, representing Romania in the related Working Groups at the European Council and European Commission.

From September 2013 to October 2023, Elena Popescu was General Director for Energy Policy in the Ministry of Energy of Romania, coordinating energy policies at large, including nuclear energy and strategic investments in the energy sector. Starting to October 2023 until October 13th 2024, Elena Popescu is Deputy Director General in the Ministry of Energy of Romania. With extensive experience in the energy industry, energy administration and European and international affairs in energy field, Elena Popescu coordinated for 11 years activities related to the development, implementation of an integrated energy and climate change policy and regulatory framework for the energy sector in Romania, coordinated elaboration of the Energy Strategy and of the National Energy and Climate Plan for Romania, the strategic investments in the energy field, including nuclear investments.

She is also member of the Investment Committee of the Modernization Fund, an important financial instrument for the modernization of the Romanian energy sector in line with the European regulation and objectives.

She has been for 10 years the contact person for the European Commission in relation to energy policies in Romania and a reliable and competent voice in relation to European Commission and in relation to the foreign partners in the development of the energy projects.

She was the Romanian technical leader in negotiations with the European Commission services on different projects like strategic investments, restructuring programs for the state companies,

support mechanism/ instruments for supporting clean and low carbon technologies implementation in Romania, like state aid for Contracts for Difference for renewables and nuclear.

She has had an intensive activity in the energy diplomacy, with an important contribution to the preparation of the Romanian view and minister's interventions on the European Council ministerial meetings, in the last 10 -15 years, coordinating different working groups and having great contribution to the work of European Like-Minded Member States (LMMS) group in coordination of LMMS on different legal European acts in the process of the negotiations, under different legislative package which have been adopted at the European level in the last 10 years, the latest relevant being, Clean Energy for All Europeans Package and Green Deal legislative package.

Elena Popescu was part of the preparation of the European Nuclear Alliance establishment and has been actively involved in the European Nuclear Alliance process, in the European Industrial Alliance on Small Modular Reactors (SMR) and participates in the Road Map for New Nuclear, under patronage of Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) – OECD.

Elena Popescu has been also actively involved in The Partnership for Transatlantic Energy and Climate Cooperation (P-TECC), being a Co-Chair for Nuclear Energy Working Group. She is also Co-Chair of the SMR – Working Group, under the Intergovernmental Agreement between Romania and The United States of America.

Elena Popescu is a well-known name in the field, being part of different conferences panels and debates regarding the role of nuclear energy in the energy mix, both for Romania and for the European Union, in mitigation of the challenges to reach the very ambitious targets in terms of the energy security and climate change.

She can provide mentorship in English and Romanian.

MENTORSHIP TOPICS

Nuclear installation, development of nuclear program, EURATOM legislation and nuclear framework, energy planning, strategies, nuclear investments, international environment for nuclear.

Topic 1: Installation of Calandria and heavy water systems at Cernavoda Nuclear Power Plant, Units 1&2 (1983 – 1996)

The mentees will find out what it meant to be Head of the "Calandria Installation and Heavy Water Systems" division during the construction period of units 1&2 at Cernavoda Nuclear Power Plant and details about the activities carried out during that period: the development of mechanical assembly and control procedures for the systems related to the nuclear reactor and heavy water management systems; promoting and approving installation procedures up to the stage of "ready for execution"; preparing the assembly and providing technical assistance on site, for the implementation of the elaborated procedures; participation in the development of the assembly manual for nuclear power plants and the provision of training courses for employees.

Duration: 2 lectures, each 60 minutes

Topic 2: Romania and its civil nuclear program

The course will provide information about Romanian civil nuclear program – past, present and future (2 CANDU Units in operation, 2 CANDU Units in completion, SMRs, fuel cycle, waste management, R&D, regulation and nonproliferation)

Duration: 2 lectures, each 60 minutes

Topic 3: Legal framework for nuclear

The participants will be able to capture the expertise of a mentor directly involved for 5 years in the development of European legislation in the field of nuclear energy. The mentor worked in the Permanent Representation of Romania next to the EU, Brussels, as an advisor for the nuclear field and international energy relations.

Duration: 2 lectures, each 60 minutes

Topic 4: The energy planning system (energy planning, strategies, investments with focus on nuclear energy)

Participants will learn theoretical notions about energy planning and its necessity, why an energy strategy is needed, how it is done and how investments help to reach the goal of 0 CO2 emissions by 2050.

Duration: 2 lectures, each 60 minutes