

## **Commission approves aid for closure of three coal mines in Romania**

The European Commission has authorised RON 1169 million (approximately €270 million) of public funding for the closure of three uncompetitive coal mining units owned by National Hard Coal Company JSC Petrosani (CNH SA). The Commission found the measure to be in line with EU state aid rules because production aid will decrease over time and Romania committed to carry out accompanying measures to mitigate the social and environmental impact of the closure.

Council Decision 2010/787/EU on state aid to facilitate the closure of uncompetitive coal mines allows public authorities to grant, under certain conditions, aid to the coal industry with a view to facilitate the closure of uncompetitive hard coal mines until December 2018.

National Hard Coal Company JSC Petrosani is a publicly owned company and the only company producing coal in Romania. It currently owns seven coal production units and Romania has decided to close three of them, which are considered uncompetitive. One of the mines would close by the end of 2015 (Petrila Colliery) and the other two by the end of 2017 (Uricani and Paroşeni Collieries).

The closure plan notified by Romania results in a gradual decrease of the overall amount of aid granted to cover production costs, in line with the Council Decision. Moreover, the plan includes measures to mitigate the environmental impact of the production of coal. Romania has also committed to support miners who are to be laid off and their readaptation in order to help them find new jobs outside the coal industry.