

**Question for written answer E-009728/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Richard Sulík (ECR)

Subject: Philae module

Pursuant to the 2004 Framework Agreement between the EU and the European Space Agency (ESA), the Commission and the ESA coordinate their activities through a common Secretariat. Some 20 % of funding for the running of ESA comes from the EU budget.

The European Philae lander recently touched down on a comet after spending ten years travelling through space. According to current information, the module does not have enough energy as it is powered by a solar energy system and has landed in a location which does not receive enough sunlight to recharge the second battery.

On its official website, ESA states that the module was not equipped with a source of nuclear energy (RTG – radio isotope thermal generators) as ESA does not work with RTG technology. ESA therefore decided to develop solar cells that would do the same job.

Why is ESA not developing RTGs?

Would the problems that the module is facing just now have arisen if it had been equipped with a source of nuclear energy?