

**Question for written answer E-000972/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Franck Proust (PPE)

Subject: China's market economy status and the 16+1 group

At a time when we are considering the issue of China's market economy status and how we calculate GDP, our hesitant attempts to develop a common foreign policy are undermining our common commercial policy.

Inconsistent approaches to the issue of photovoltaic panels on the part of Member States have weakened the united front against Chinese dumping. In 2016, 'divide and rule' will no doubt continue to be China's watchword.

This is emphasised by the fact that the 16+1 group is seemingly taking on a more formal status. The partnership, established at China's instigation a few years ago as an informal grouping, brings together 11 new EU Member States, five Balkan States and China itself, and now poses a serious threat to the economic, commercial and diplomatic cohesiveness of the EU.

1. Does the Commission regard it as normal that Member States should be splitting off into regional blocs, including with third countries, and forming working groups with a partner as strategically important as China?
2. To what extent do the Member States recognise the 16+1 group?
3. How does the Commission intend to maintain solidarity among Member States on the issue of China's market economy status?