

**Question for written answer E-005515/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Richard Sulík (ECR)

Subject: Plan and funding for transformation of coal-mining regions

New emissions standards for coal-fired power stations have been adopted and will enter into force in 2021. These standards are based on an updated version of the best available techniques for large combustion plants. More than 90% of Slovakia's coal and lignite capacity would fail to meet these standards. Moreover, the EU has committed to meeting its obligations under the Paris Climate Change Agreement. This means that a number of coal-fired power stations in Europe are anticipated to close down, leading to the loss of associated jobs.

In line with its declaration, the Commission has adopted a set of instruments to help Member States to transform and rejuvenate the economy in affected regions in order to overcome the possible negative effects of such a transformation. In any case, private investors are reportedly ready to help revitalise certain regions even without outside financial support.

1. Does a specific plan exist to gradually phase out coal extraction and to mitigate the negative impact of transforming affected regions? Does a grant scheme or other financial mechanism exist to provide financial assistance to affected regions? If not, does the Commission intend to propose such a plan, grant scheme or financial mechanism?
2. What existing financial mechanism could be used for this purpose?
3. Does the Commission have a study that would justify the need for such a financial instrument in light of the possible transformation of regions from private sources and the interest from private investors?