

Question for written answer E-006439/2017
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Monitoring of foreign direct investment in the European Union

Foreign direct investment is an important element of economic development and job creation. It is therefore right that the European Union has one of the most open investment systems in the world.

However, some investments in selected industries, sectors or even individual companies of relevance to security or public order could in future be used as a tool for their disruption in the EU Member States. The initiative put forward by the Commission to set up a framework for monitoring foreign direct investment therefore seems to be entirely appropriate.

Unfortunately, the first debates in the European Parliament are worryingly showing that this initiative is perceived by some as an opportunity to create tools to promote protectionist and anti-competitive behaviour in the Single European Market. In my understanding, the initiative should concern very strictly defined areas of the economy, such as energy, transmission, transport and defence industries, but certainly not all areas.

Does the Commission see the danger that such an approach might undermine the legitimate arguments for creating a framework for monitoring foreign direct investment? What action does it intend to take to ensure that its initiative is not turned into a harmful anti-market and anti-competitive mechanism that destroys free competition?