

**Question for written answer E-000152/2019  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)**

Subject: Minimal heating allowance for ordinary working class households

The bad weather over the last few days has highlighted in the most tragic way the growing energy poverty suffered by ordinary working class households and the fact that even basic state infrastructure is lacking in Greece. A number of people have died as a result.

At a time when the government is heralding Greece's rise to become an 'energy hub' and is opening up new sources of profit for industrial monopolies, thousands of ordinary working class households can barely - if at all - afford heating, because of the prohibitive cost of oil and the punitive taxes they face (VAT, excise duty). Even hospitals and schools are insufficiently heated due to a shortage of oil. Thousands of homes are without electricity as they are unable to pay their bills, and in many areas repeated power cuts show that maintenance work has not been carried out, because, according to the cost-benefit criterion so prized by the EU, it is not worth investing capital for such a purpose.

The EU and the current SYRIZA-ANEL government, following in the footsteps of its ND-PASOK predecessors, with their slashed budgets and long-term measures hostile to ordinary working people, are this year again excluding thousands of families from receiving even this minimal heating allowance in order to secure extra money for business groups, through tax breaks and financial aid.

Will the Commission say:

- How does it view the fact that the EU and the SYRIZA-ANEL government, through their policy of energy liberalisation, are reducing ordinary working people to energy poverty, and the miserly heating allowance is anyway far from meeting the real needs of the shrinking number of beneficiaries?