

**Question for written answer P-002917/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)

Subject: Public consultations on the future development of unconventional fossil fuels

In December 2012, the Commission announced that public consultations would be held on the future development of unconventional fossil fuels in Europe (e.g. shale gas). On the basis of opinions on this issue received by my office, it appears that the questionnaire that served as the main means of consultation failed to fulfil basic criteria of objectivity. The way in which the questions were formulated suggested responses that were anticipated by the questionnaire's author. Yet another element that undermines the questionnaire's credibility is the fact that it was not initially available in all of the EU's official languages, which prevented a large number of EU citizens from accessing it. It would be difficult for someone filling out this questionnaire to disagree with these arguments or with the affirmation that the existence of such shortcomings should lead to the public consultations on fossil fuels being repeated.

Given the gravity of this problem and the desirability of ensuring that both supporters and opponents of shale gas have the opportunity to express themselves freely on the issue, has the Commission taken appropriate steps to put together a new questionnaire without the aforementioned content-related errors?