

**Question for written answer P-002670/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Lorenzo Fontana (ENF)

Subject: Rules on oil and gas exploration and production in Italy

While the provisions of Italian legislation on oil and gas exploration and production were previously in line with the EU regulatory framework, there have now been calls for a regional referendum proposing to limit the duration of exploration activities to six years and extraction activities to thirty years and to repeal the provisions that allowed drilling concessions to be extended. The aim of this is to increase market competition between petroleum companies.

The changes to the regulatory framework provisions introduced by Law No 208 of 28 December 2015 now raise questions regarding their compliance with EU law, since they effectively create 'dual system' of drilling concessions, limiting the duration of those accorded under the single licence alone and not those governed by Law No 9/1991, which provides for indefinite extension of the validity of extraction licences and also licenses for exploration in the marine protection zone. This makes the Member State in question liable to infringement proceedings.

In view of the above, can the Commission say whether, in its opinion, Italian legislation is in breach of the Union law in force in this matter and whether this could lead to the initiation of infringement proceedings against Italy?