

**Question for written answer P-009266/2016  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**José Blanco López (S&D)**

Subject: The social bonus and energy poverty in the EU

According to the media in my country (Spain), the incoming energy minister, Álvaro Nadal, briefed journalists in Brussels that the Commission had ordered governments not to make electricity bills a tool of social policy and had therefore stated that the social bonus, which is paid in countries such as Portugal or France, 'changes the conditions of the market.'

I would therefore like to ask the Commission:

1. Has it received any complaints about anti-competitive practices in the European energy market as a result of this aid to help pay electricity bills?
2. Does it consider that this form of social aid could undermine free competition on Europe's energy market?
3. If so, how does it intend to provide aid to deprived, energy-poor people in the EU?