

**Question for written answer P-007549/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Lack of competition in the aviation sector

Following its acquisition of Austrian, Brussels and Swiss Airlines, and with its takeover of NIKI Luftfahrt and Air Berlin soon to follow, the Lufthansa Group has grown to be the dominant airline in Germany and neighbouring countries, chartering 110.62 million people between January and October 2017. Should the takeovers be completed, the combined market share of the Lufthansa Group is set to be around 90 % in Austria, and a stunning 96 % in Germany. A geographic segmentation between Lufthansa and its main competitors seems quite evident, with the biggest share of the central European market left to the German carrier, further strengthening its dominance.

Owing to a lack of competition, the Lufthansa Group is able to charge consumers a EUR 16 surcharge on tickets sold by neutral distributors, which leads to further consumer exploitation.

1. Given Lufthansa's recent acquisitions, does the Commission agree that mergers should be scrutinised for the sake of consumer protection?
2. Austria and Germany have both been harmed by these oligopolistic developments. Will the Commission take action to ensure a free competitive market and high transparency of ticket distribution in these two countries?
3. How does the Commission plan to tackle regional dominance in the common aviation market?