

**Question for written answer P-001111/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Ramona Nicole Mănescu (PPE)

Subject: A case of abuse of dominant position in the energy sector

On 17 December 2018, the Commission adopted an infringement decision against the Bulgarian Energy Holding (BEH) Group¹ and issued a fine of EUR 77 million for blocking access to natural gas infrastructure in Bulgaria².

Given the types of conduct identified by the Commission and BEH's announcement that it will appeal the decision:

How will the Commission ensure that BEH and Bulgartransgaz implement the measures needed in order for the Bulgaria-Greece interconnector and BRUA pipeline to come to fruition?

What guarantees did the Commission obtain or impose in order to ensure that BEH and Bulgartransgaz will cooperate with the neighbouring transmission system operators, in accordance with their regulatory and contractual duties, so as to make the Bulgaria-Greece interconnector and BRUA pipeline operational and serve EU citizens in the south-east of Europe?

¹ Case AT.39849 in which, according to an official press release from the Commission, BEH denied competitors access to: the domestic Bulgarian gas transmission network; the only gas storage facility in Bulgaria; and the only import pipeline bringing gas into Bulgaria, which was fully booked by BEH. BEH's conduct constituted an abuse of a dominant position (Article 102 TFEU).

² The Commission explained that its decision to remove the barriers to entry for competitors in the Bulgarian markets would allow the Bulgarian wholesale gas market to function more efficiently. It also stated that this would be further facilitated by the recent opening of both the 'gas interconnector between Bulgaria and Greece', for which it had approved public support on 8 November 2018, and the 'Bulgaria–Romania–Hungary–Austria (BRUA) energy cooperation project', which will 'enable Bulgarian wholesalers to diversify their supply sources'.