

**Question for written answer E-009368/2012
to the Commission
Rule 117
Ivailo Kalfin (S&D)**

Subject: Introduction of an energy grid access charge in Bulgaria

By decision of the Bulgarian energy regulator SCEWR (State Commission for Energy and Water Regulation) in October 2012, renewable energy producers have been required to pay monthly charges for access to the grid. The charges represent between 10% and 39% of the price of the renewable energy. Bankruptcies are expected as an immediate result of the decision, particularly among small and medium-sized producers in the renewables sector, for whom the level of the charges is unrealistic.

When the charges were proposed there was a strong reaction both from the representatives of business and consumer organisations and from diplomatic representatives in Bulgaria. On 8 October 2012, ambassadors from 15 countries, including 11 EU Member States, wrote to the Minister responsible expressing serious concern about the decision, which, they said, would damage the business environment in Bulgaria. They called on the Government to intervene immediately. To date, however, the Bulgarian Government has moved neither to abolish the charge nor, indeed, to justify its introduction.

Does the Commission consider that the introduction of these charges, without any explanation as to their value, is in accordance with European law?

Does the Commission not consider the provision for varying levels of charge, depending on the period for which producers were connected to the grid in previous years, to be a distortion of competition?

Does the Commission plan to take any action in view of the anticipated bankruptcies among renewable energy producers in Bulgaria as a result of the introduction of charges for access to the grid?