

**Question for written answer E-000614/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Robert Goebbels (S&D)**

Subject: Financial support by the Commission for a study opposing shale gas

Friends of the Earth has just published a study opposing extraction of shale gas in Europe. It has every right to do so. What is astonishing however is that this supposedly scientific study has been largely funded by Commission services, in this instance DG Development and DG Environment.

Even if it is stated that the contents of the study are the sole responsibility of its authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union, this financial patronage by two Commission directorates-general is likely to make the public believe that the Commission is working behind the scenes to oppose exploitation of this new form of energy in Europe. Readers of the study will in any case see the use of the EU flag as conferring a kind of 'moral support' by the Commission for this publication.

1. Would the Commission not agree that EU taxpayers' money should not be used to support partisan campaigns that lack scientific objectivity?
2. What was the total cost of the subsidies granted by the two directorates-general and who bears political responsibility for this?
3. Is the Commission also prepared to fund work by organisations campaigning for shale gas extraction?
4. Surely the Commission and its services should show greater restraint in regard to a controversial issue on which the European Union does not appear to have an official line?