

**Question for written answer E-007943/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Robert Goebbels (S&D)**

Subject: Public consultation on unconventional fuels

The Commission recently released the results of its public consultation on 'Unconventional fossil fuels (e.g. shale gas) in Europe'.

Judging by the online questionnaire that was used, it is hard not to conclude that the environmental problems associated with any shale gas extraction operations were flagged up to a greater degree than the economic benefits of using shale gas to generate electricity or the resultant lower level of CO₂ emissions – aspects highlighted by US President Obama in his June 2013 Climate Action Plan.

The outcome of the Commission's consultation seems neither very conclusive nor very representative, as more than half of the 22 800 replies received came from Poland. A third of the 696 organisations that replied were social and environmental NGOs with a well documented bias against shale gas.

How can the Commission be satisfied with a 'citizens' consultation' that actually involves less than 0.005% of the Union's population?

Why does the Commission always entrust consultation exercises of this kind to organisations whose one and only purpose is to protect the environment? What criteria were used to select 'BIO Intelligence Service', and how much did the whole consultation cost?

Why are consultation exercises of this kind not entrusted to less doctrinaire, more objective organisations with a more open attitude to new technology?