

Question for written answer E-000410/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Agnes Jongerius (S&D)

Subject: Protecting European businesses in the event of takeovers

Businesses from third countries are constantly attempting to take over businesses in the EU. Whereas there are agreements within the EU to combat both intervention by the public authorities and State aid to companies, these rules do not apply to players outside the EU to the same extent. This allows foreign businesses to operate on our market while receiving public funding. Meanwhile EU companies, in contrast, enjoy only limited access to markets in third countries. In other words, a level playing field does not exist for EU companies. In addition, vital knowledge leaks out of the EU, while we do not have the opportunity to glean similar knowledge from other countries by means of takeovers. The EU should therefore protect businesses more effectively against takeovers.

1. Does the Commission consider that the agreements which are in force within the EU in order to combat public intervention and State aid to businesses ought to apply more widely, i.e. also to players from third countries?
2. Does the Commission lend any support to the idea that reciprocity – which means that when parties from third countries wish to invest in Europe, those countries should allow acquisitions by European companies within their territory – ought to be a basic principle of European trade and investment policy?
3. Will the Commission explicitly make equal market access a precondition for trade and investment agreements?