

**Question for written answer E-004336/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Marek Belka** (S&D)

Subject: Future of the Bełchatów area and the New Green Deal

The Bełchatów power plant is the largest primarily lignite-based plant in the world, continuously producing some 20% of electricity in Poland. It is one of the region's biggest employers, and it also boosts other economic sectors in the region.

Mining in the 'Bełchatów' deposit will end in the next two years, when its geological resources have been depleted, and the power plant will receive lignite only from the 'Bełchatów – Szczeów' deposit. It is thought that this deposit will last no more than 20 years, and the coal from this deposit contains high levels of toxic cadmium and mercury compounds. The idea of exploiting lignite deposits in Złoczew is highly controversial (due to its distance from the Bełchatów power plant, and hydrogeological and social considerations).

In the context of the New Green Deal proposed by the Commission, one way for the Bełchatów region to develop further is for construction to continue on solar farms at the Bełchatów power plant.

In light of the above, I would like to ask the Commission:

1. Does it believe that the Fair Transition Fund should be increased and extended to incorporate social aspects (tackling unemployment, retraining employees, etc.), so that areas like Bełchatów – in the context of a gradual move away from conventional energy sources – can continue to develop and their residents can feel secure?
2. From what other sources could the Bełchatów region obtain funding for the development of renewable energy sources and as compensation for the much-needed energy transition?