

**Question for written answer E-002747/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Consequences of the forest fire around Chernobyl nuclear power station

Since 4 April 2020, fires have affected over 20 000 hectares of the forest around the Chernobyl nuclear power station – an area contaminated in the 1986 disaster. During this period of COVID-19 crisis, the Commission must not conceal other issues with regard to which the EU must at the very least remain vigilant and alert.

The highest levels of active caesium-137 in the air were recorded in the period 9 to 11 April 2020, when readings of 470 microbecquerels per cubic metre were taken by the Institute for Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety (IRSN), as stated in a press release dated 15 April ¹ which also indicated a peak of 1 200 microbecquerels per cubic metre in the night from 4 to 5 April.

IRSN statistics and simulations show that fallout generated by the fires has reached parts of Europe ². Burning plants and trees have released particles which trigger peaks in radioactivity.

1. How can the Commission guarantee that this fire will not affect Europeans?
2. Can it also guarantee that this event will not lead to soil depletion?

¹ https://www.irsn.fr/FR/Actualites_presse/Actualites/Documents/IRSN_NI-Tchernobyl-Incendie-Zone-d-Exclusion-Ukraine_15042020.pdf

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drBEy4V0j3l&feature=emb_title