

**Question for written answer E-006760/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Radan Kanev (PPE)

Subject: Follow-up to Written Question E-001737/2020 on the recovery of illegal State aid in Bulgaria

In its answer to my Written Question E-001737/2020¹, the Commission stated that it had asked the Bulgarian authorities to provide further clarifications regarding the market price valuations of forestland swaps.

Presently, no measures have been taken by the government to reconsider the State aid assessments, despite the allegations concerning the manipulative reduction of nearly EUR 500 million to which I referred in my previous question. Moreover, according to national media², the State aid recovery procedure has been blocked by complaints from private beneficiaries, who argue that the government's valuation methodology is not correct. Voluntary recovery was only carried out in 14 out of 132 cases where the State aid assessments were less than EUR 15 000 or the swap deals were cancelled for moral reasons.

1. How can the Commission explain the vast EUR 500 million difference between the government's State aid valuations and the independent assessments conducted for the Commission by third parties?
2. What steps will the Commission take to guarantee that the Bulgarian authorities adopt a methodology for the market price valuation of forestland swaps which is acceptable to both private beneficiaries and taxpayers, or cancel the swap deals instead?

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-001737-ASW_EN.html

² https://www.dnevnik.bg/zelen/2020/08/12/4101727_zaradi_propusk_na_durjavata_sud_reshi_grisha_ganchev/