

**Question for written answer E-000197/2021  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** The dismantling of France's public energy service through the Commission- and French Government-run Project Hercules

Project Hercules, which the French Government intends to implement under pressure from the Commission, will lead to the energy company EDF and all that remains of France's public energy service being dismantled, notably by setting up a subsidiary open to the private sector. At a time when the Commission intends to make the European Union the leading climate neutral continent by 2050, this project is utterly ridiculous and irresponsible. Studies conducted, and in particular the most recent one by the European Public Service Union, show that the progress made on renewable energy has been achieved in the main thanks to sizeable public subsidies rather than through free market competition<sup>1</sup>. In fact and as demonstrated by the report, '[e]xperience shows that private sector involvement in the grid has led to underinvestment that has slowed progress in renewable energy. [...] Public ownership and control are therefore central to the green energy revolution<sup>2</sup>.' Unless liberalisation of the energy sector is dropped, the just transition towards climate neutrality will be impossible.

That being so, when will the Commission stop trying to break up public services everywhere in the European Union?

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<sup>1</sup> EPSU (2019) 'The failure of energy liberalisation' <https://www.epsu.org/article/going-public-decarbonised-affordable-and-democratic-energy-system-europe-new-epsu-report>.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*.