

**Question for written answer E-002009/2021  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Michael Bloss** (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Commission State aid investigation into the German coal phase-out law

The Commission has opened a formal State aid investigation into the compensation for early closure of lignite operators RWE and LEAG pursuant to the German coal phase-out law. We are deeply concerned by the proportionality of the aid and whether it is needed at all. The lack of transparency around the compensation formula is particularly worrying. The price of CO<sub>2</sub> reached EUR 42 in March, cutting the profitability of modern lignite-fired power plants in half.

1. Is the Commission ensuring that the constant rise of CO<sub>2</sub> prices is duly factored into the government's calculations of the future profitability of lignite-fired power plants, in order to correctly determine the compensation, potentially with future adjustment parameters?
2. Since Germany does not seem to have provided a credible valuation of the profitability of the individual plants, will the Commission use its investigative powers under Article 7 of the Procedural Regulation to request this information from the operators or third parties and will the Directorate-General for Competition commission an independent valuation in order to not rely only on the government's and the operators' own valuations?
3. Although an extended shutdown has been called on the strategic reserve for lignite units, is the Commission still assessing it under electricity market regulations and State aid rules?