Question for written answer E-004569/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Unfair practices in the container shipping industry continue to disrupt entire supply chains

Although the Commission recently prolonged the Consortia Block Exemption Regulation (CBER) in order to increase the efficiency of the container shipping market with a view to bringing lower prices and better quality of service to consumers, current practices in the container shipping market reveal that quite the opposite is happening. Latest figures show that while trade volumes are returning to pre-COVID-19 levels, container prices continue to rise. As such, while the Commission is continuing its monitoring with a view to identifying measures to facilitate a return to normal operations – as stated in its reply of 13 September 2021 to an earlier parliamentary question – unprecedented distorted practices in the container shipping market continue to affect the maritime and logistic supply chain and other parties down the supply chain.

1. Is the Commission of the opinion that the current EU regulatory framework is fit for purpose to ensure a well-functioning container shipping market that uses fair practices?

2. What is the Commission’s view on the exemptions from normal competition protections provided by the CBER in the light of the current distortion of the container shipping supply chain?

3. When can we expect the Commission to take the aforementioned necessary measures to facilitate the return to normal operations and fair practices in the container shipping supply chain?