

**Question for written answer E-005677/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Daniel Buda (PPE)**

Subject: The problem of natural gas in the European Union

All over the European Union, Member State governments are taking measures to protect consumers from rising gas prices, in direct response to the approaching cold season, when daily consumption needs will be at their highest. Since the start of 2021, gas purchase prices have increased by up to 250%, as a result of multiple economic, political and natural factors.

Globally, natural gas needs have grown due to economic recovery, especially in Asian countries, following the COVID-19 pandemic. As the cold season approaches, and with national reserves being below the estimated required level, governments are going to have a major problem in meeting the daily consumption needs. Russia, which provides 62% of the natural gas requirement, has reduced its supply in order to fill its national reserves, thus causing a continuous increase in prices.

By what mechanisms can the European Commission protect EU consumers from price increases in Europe?