

**Question for written answer E-005722/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Marc Botenga (The Left)

Subject: Prince group and competition law

In May 2021, it was announced that the Prince International Corporation (Prince group) would be acquiring Ferro Corporation, a major competitor from the sector. The purchase should be completed by the end of March 2022 and is subject to the approval of the European competition authorities. In October 2021, employees of Prince in Bruges (Belgium) were told that the acquisition would put the Prince group in a monopoly position. The company is supposedly referring to this as a reason for divesting glass, porcelain and enamel activities in Belgium (Bruges), Italy (Cambiago) and the United States (Leesburg). Employees have various questions relating to the decision to be taken by the European competition authorities, and I would like to ask the following:

1. Can the Commission confirm that these or other divestments are necessary to comply with EU competition law?
2. How have the Commission and the competent competition authorities assessed the viability of the divested branches and the impact on staff?
3. In light of the company's internal procedures, what specific conditions are the Commission and the competent competition authorities imposing on the parties concerned regarding the retention, use or acquisition of internal company information during and after the divestment?