

**Question for written answer E-000873/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dolors Montserrat (PPE), Pilar del Castillo Vera (PPE)

Subject: Natural gas prices and the crisis with Russia

Over the last few months, natural gas prices have surged by historic rates of up to 400% between 2020 and 2021 in the relevant markets, thus placing a significant cost burden on industries, companies and households.

In its Communication of 13 October 2021, the Commission stated that energy price rises would most likely be temporary and would come down from April onwards.

The situation has changed owing to the tensions in Ukraine and it appears that energy prices will probably remain high for longer than expected.

1. Does the Commission plan to introduce further measures to supplement those set out in its Communication?
2. To what extent are these price increases attributable to factors linked to the energy transition, such as the reduced importance of long-term contracts, disincentives for investment in production apparatus or compensation for investment already made in reserves that will be unusable?
3. Can the STEP project to link Spain and France be resuscitated so that gas from regasification plants with spare capacity in Spain can be transported to the rest of the continent, provided that this project can be used to transport hydrogen in the future?