

**Question for written answer E-002927/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Marco Zanni (ID), Valentino Grant (ID), Antonio Maria Rinaldi (ID)

Subject: Dutch trade surplus during the European energy crisis

The price of natural gas, which has been rising steadily since 2021, continued its upward spiral in 2022 following the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, reaching an all-time high of 330 EUR/Mwh on the Dutch TTF over-the-counter market favoured by a few select traders.

This is causing problems for almost all EU Member States with the exception of the Netherlands, which recorded a record increase in its trade balance in the first half of 2022, thanks to its key position on the gas market, as well as fossil fuel sales in the EU at extremely high prices.

The current situation, with spiralling prices fuelled by speculation on OTC markets such as the TTF, is benefiting one country at the expense of all others.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission suspect possible TTF market manipulation and will it verify, in cooperation with European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) the trading carried out from 2021 until now?
2. Does it consider that the advantage enjoyed by the Netherlands as both a European hub market and an influential trader might constitute an infringement of EU internal market competition rules for the prevention of macroeconomic imbalances?