

**Question for written answer E-003260/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: The dire situation of SMEs in Algeria

The suspension of the Treaty of Friendship between Spain and Algeria¹ due to the former's recognition of Moroccan suzerainty over the Western Sahara² resulted in the Algerian banking association announcing a freeze on accounts for foreign trade transactions with Spain. This has put Catalan exporting SMEs operating in Algeria in a dire situation. These account for 32 % of all Spanish exports to Algeria³. There are currently 508 regular exporters, and 34 Catalan companies have subsidiaries in Algeria. In terms of value, Catalonia exported goods worth EUR 634.3 million to Algeria in 2021. Algeria is Catalonia's 24th biggest trading partner. Many companies are experiencing supply chain blockages in Algerian ports, are not being paid for their exports and cannot recover their cargoes⁴.

1. Given the trade defence mechanisms which the Commission has put in place, what can the Commission do to help mitigate this situation of legal insecurity and arbitrariness?
2. How can the Commission make Algeria comply with the EU–Algeria Association Agreement⁵ so as to address the aforementioned issues?
3. Has Spain informed the Commission about the consequences of its recognition of Moroccan suzerainty over the Western Sahara, especially as regards trade in Algeria?

¹ https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2003-20616

² <https://elpais.com/espana/2022-06-08/argelia-rompe-el-tratado-de-amistad-y-buena-vecindad-con-espana-suscrito-hace-20-anos.html>

³ <https://www.accio.gencat.cat/ca/accio/premsa-comunicacio/cercador-premsa-actualitat/article/20220614-suspensio-relacions-comercials-algeria>

⁴ <https://www.accio.gencat.cat/web/.content/banconeixement/documents/informes/2022/afectacio-comerc-exterior-amb-algeria.pdf>

⁵ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_2005.265.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2005%3A265%3ATOC