

**Question for written answer E-001140/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Marc Botenga** (The Left)

**Subject:** Energy trade with Saudi Arabia and the potential re-export of Russian oil

Recent reports have noted that Saudi Arabia's imports of Russian diesel have surged, while at the same time, the country is exporting large quantities to the EU<sup>1</sup>. The Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University has argued that Middle Eastern petroleum exporters have gained overall from the shock related to the war in Ukraine, mainly in the form of higher prices, but also through opportunities to refine, store and redistribute Russian crude. Its analysts have concluded that core Gulf exporters will be 'balancers-in-chief' in Europe<sup>2</sup>.

1. What proof does the Commission have that the diesel imported into the EU from Saudi Arabia is not in fact repackaged Russian oil?
2. Is it aware of a difference between the (average) price paid by Saudi Arabia for discounted diesel imports from Russia and the price of EU imports from Saudi Arabia?
3. Does it share the assessment that – in the context of the ban on Russian oil – market players such as Saudi Arabia are now playing a central role in fulfilling Europe's import requirements and avoiding market tightness?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-03-17/top-oil-exporter-saudi-arabia-loads-up-on-russian-diesel>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.energypolicy.columbia.edu/publications/the-eu-ban-on-russian-oil-crude-implications-for-the-middle-east>.