

**Question for written answer E-003512/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Gunnar Beck (ID)

Subject: Bulgarian and Commission probe into the Bulgargaz-BOTAS agreement of January 2023

In January 2023, Bulgaria's state-owned Bulgargaz and Bulgartransgaz signed an agreement with their Turkish counterpart, BOTAS. This agreement does not align with EU principles and will further hinder competition in Bulgaria's gas market. It allows rebranded Russian gas into EU gas networks, weakens EU energy sovereignty and gives Turkish President Erdoğan the capacity to influence EU energy policies.

In this context:

1. Does the Commission share the concerns expressed by Bulgaria's current Prime Minister and Energy Minister about the agreement?
2. Was it briefed on the agreement before it was signed?
3. Was it aware of the terms of the agreement when approving EUR 400 million in Bulgarian State aid to Bulgargaz?

Submitted: 30.11.2023