

**Question for written answer P-003295/2013  
to the Commission  
Rule 117  
Niki Tzavela (EFD)**

Subject: Energy poverty

Energy prices in Europe are rising constantly and energy poverty is now an emerging problem.

The high cost of energy has led to energy poverty in many EU Member States. It was huge social problems linked to energy prices that brought about the fall of the government in Bulgaria. Most families in southern and central European countries are spending half their household budget on meeting their energy needs. Unless specific measures are taken to tackle the problem, we are likely to see a series of similar uprisings against energy poverty in many EU Member States.

- Is the Commission considering any specific measures to tackle energy poverty?
- Is it considering the possibility of including the cost of energy in its social policy for certain sections of the population? Could something of this sort be covered by the Social Fund, if certain changes were made to the guidelines governing that Fund?
- Has any decision been taken and a timetable established to include a heating allowance in a package of social benefits?