Priority question for written answer P-002820/2020
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: The transition to sustainability in aviation calls for more European cooperation and coordination of research.

Some Member States are making State aid to airlines conditional on compliance with sustainability requirements, at a time when the airlines are suffering a massive loss of turnover because of cancelled flights and because bookings of flights have dried up due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both governments and airlines by and large accept that aviation needs to become sustainable.

A fundamental precondition for reducing emissions from aviation and attaining European sustainability objectives is the development of innovative, advanced technology to reduce emissions from aircraft and from aviation as a whole. That development calls for joint, coordinated research in Europe. In light of the above:

1. What is the Commission’s assessment of the progress and speed of technological development with a view to reducing emissions from aviation within existing European research programmes, such as Clean Sky?

2. What is the Commission’s assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on European cooperation and progress in the field of the greening of aviation?

3. Does the Commission consider that closer cooperation between national research institutes and more coordinated research in Europe are needed, for example by means of the establishment of an innovation and development centre for European aviation, in order to attain European sustainability objectives? If so, how will the Commission bring this about?