Priority question for written answer P-004686/2020
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: The German Coal Phase-out Act providing for energy production from coal and lignite until 2038, and its compatibility with European law and the European Green Deal

The German Coal Phase-out Act could be in breach of EU competition rules and environmental standards, as it prevents harnessing the full potential of renewable sources, and thus hinders the Green Deal.

1. Has the Commission been notified of the compensation mechanism in the Coal Phase-out Act, is it considered State aid, will the Act’s compatibility with the Treaties be assessed, including but not limited to competition rules, are the capacity mechanisms for Jänschwalde A and B lignite plants, which are set to receive payments until 2028, compatible, and does the Commission see a need to fully use the lignite from the Garzweiler open cast mine?

2. The Industrial Emissions Directive on new air pollution standards for coal-fired power plants enters into force in 2021. 80 % of German coal plants do not meet the requirements. Given national delays of over two years, how does the Commission intend to enforce these requirements?

3. The Regulation on the internal market for electricity establishes that resource adequacy should be periodically assessed. Realistic demand projections and alternative solutions such as demand response, as well as generation and transmission from neighbouring countries like Denmark, are essential for our electricity generation. How are the German Coal Phase-out Act and the security reserve compatible with the rules for adequacy assessments in the Electricity Regulation?