Priority question for written answer P-003732/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Unfair practices in the container shipping industry disrupt entire supply chains

Unfair practices in the container shipping industry affect entire supply chains in and outside of the EU. The congestion of port terminals, the lack of container capacity, the poor reliability of schedules and the ongoing surges in freight rates not only heavily disrupt the maritime and logistic supply chain, they also negatively affect other parties down the supply chain, including retailers and consumers. Small and medium-sized enterprises are particularly hit by the present disruptions in the industry1.

Recently, US President Joe Biden decided to investigate the ‘unjust and unreasonable fees’ and other practices that are potentially undermining fair competition in the ocean shipping industry2.

1. What conclusions is the Commission drawing from the ongoing monitoring of key indicators in the container shipping industry3?

2. Has it identified any practices by container carriers which are undermining fair competition in the global container shipping industry, and if so, which ones?

3. On the basis of the Commission’s ongoing monitoring, what measures will it take to tackle and prevent unfair practices and ensure fair practices in the global container shipping industry and related supply chains?

2 https://www.nt.nl/scheepvaart/2021/07/09/noodbevel-president-biden-tegen-oneerlijke-kosten-containerscheepvaart/
3 https://www.joc.com/eu-meets-carriers-over-disrupted-container-shipping-market_20210624.html