

**Priority question for written answer P-004841/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Julie Lechanteux (ID), Philippe Olivier (ID)

Subject: EU-Qatar air transport agreement

On Monday 18 October 2021, the Commission announced that the EU and Qatar had signed an agreement to open European airspace to Qatari airlines, including in particular Qatar Airways, meaning that they will now be able to fly in and out of all European cities without any restrictions.

Thanks to this agreement, Qatar Airways will be able to divert European passengers to Doha Airport.

This is a real blow for European airlines, which have already taken a hit with the COVID-19 crisis, and in particular for Air-France KLM, which has already had to give up 18 daily take-off and landing slots at the airports of Orly and Charles de Gaulle-Roissy for the Commission to approve its recapitalisation.

Meanwhile, Qatar Airways received EUR 2.5 billion in aid from the Qatari Government to cope with the drop in global air traffic due to the pandemic and to compensate for losses incurred due to the grounding of aircraft with no compensation.

There is a real double standard here.

Given this stark imbalance, why is the Commission offering unlimited access to a market of half a billion European passengers in return for a microscopic market of 3 million Qataris?