

**Priority question for written answer P-004945/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Answer by Vice-President Frans Timmermans absolving Gazprom of responsibility for the situation in the EU gas market

In an interview on bTV during his recent visit to Bulgaria, Vice-President Frans Timmermans unexpectedly absolved Gazprom of manipulation in the European gas market.

He said, 'Russia is fulfilling its gas supply contracts and we have no reason to believe it is putting pressure on the market or manipulating it'.

This public stance by Frans Timmermans, absolving Gazprom of any responsibility for soaring of gas prices in the European market, is all the more questionable given that the most recent Commission communication on this issue, on 13 October, highlighted 'the need to investigate potential anti-competitive behaviour in the energy market'.

Similar expectations of the Commission concerning examining Gazprom's monopolistic behaviour in relation to the surge in gas prices were set out in the conclusions of the last European Council.

Could the Commission explain on what basis Vice-President Frans Timmermans absolved Gazprom of responsibility for the situation in the EU gas market?