

**Priority question for written answer P-002318/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Phasing out fossil gas by 2040

The Council's emergency measures to reduce gas demand were implemented successfully, exceeding the 15 % target, and have been extended¹ until March 2024. Studies² show that this demand reduction could be made permanent, allowing fossil gas to be phased out by 2040. None of the scenarios used by the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change for its 2040 climate target modelling exercise³ has more than 6 % fossil gas, while other scenarios show that an even earlier phase-out is feasible⁴. Moreover, the REPowerEU forecast of 20 Mt of green hydrogen by 2030 seems too high, given that hydrogen will be used in hard-to-electrify sectors. The Agora report 'Breaking free from fossil gas'⁵ indicates that no more than 4 Mt of renewable hydrogen will be in the system by 2030.

Could the Commission:

1. Draft and publish, before June 2024, a scenario for achieving 100 % renewables by 2040, including pathways for phasing out gas in the power, industry and buildings sectors?
2. Propose an EU-wide framework for phasing out gas across sectors, with a 'fossil gas free' objective anchored in legislation?
3. Conduct an independent assessment of projected trends in demand for renewable hydrogen in priority sectors⁶, including an assessment of infrastructure utilisation rates, in order to instruct the decommissioning of stranded assets (dismantling and repurposing)?

Supporter⁷

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¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/28/member-states-agree-to-extend-voluntary-15-gas-demand-reduction-target/>.

² <https://institutdelors.eu/publications/la-securite-dapprovisionnement-gaziere-en-europe/>.

³ <https://climate-advisory-board.europa.eu/reports-and-publications/scientific-advice-for-the-determination-of-an-eu-wide-2040>.

⁴ <https://www.pac-scenarios.eu/>.

⁵ <https://www.agora-energiawende.de/en/publications/breaking-free-from-fossil-gas-1/>.

⁶ Steel, long-distance transport (maritime and aviation).

⁷ This question is supported by a Member other than the authors: Rosa D'Amato (Verts/ALE)