

**Question for written answer E-014629/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)**

Subject: Transparency and compliance with EU law of EU energy agreements with third countries

One of the priorities established during the creation of the European Energy Union was to increase the transparency and compliance with EU law of the energy agreements concluded between the Member States and third countries.

The current mechanism for the exchange of information on cross-border energy agreements between the Member States and third countries is not an appropriate means of ascertaining whether EU law has been violated by such agreements, since the Commission only has power to revise agreements once they have already been signed, and not when they are being planned. The fact that this mechanism is ineffective is shown by the case of the South Stream gas pipeline. The Commission asserted that all of the agreements signed until now by the EU Member States across whose territory the new gas pipeline was due to run are not in compliance with the EU legal standards set out in the Third Energy Package.

What specific steps does the Commission intend to take to strengthen the Commission's involvement in reviewing planned cross-border energy agreements and in evaluating their compliance with EU legal standards?