

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001603/25
to the Commission
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)
(22 April 2025)**

Subject: Closure of mines and lignite-fired power stations in Western Macedonia: a great cause of suffering for the people

Heightened competition between the EU and Russia and competitive planning by the US are paving the way for further increases in the cost of energy and basic commodities. The implementation of the EU's green strategy is also marked by the closure, by the Greek Government and Public Power Corporation, of the Meliti and Megalopoli coal-fired power stations and the planned closure of the one in Agios Dimitrios and of the mines that supply them. Power plants harnessing a local fuel, lignite, are being replaced by plants running on imported natural gas. This is depriving the people of access to cheap electricity, while fostering unemployment in Western Macedonia and jeopardising national energy security.

The Commission's action plan for 'cheaper natural gas imports' increases dependence on LNG from the US, which is more expensive, while guaranteeing lower relative energy prices for large industrial groups.

Can the Commission say:

1. How does it view the fact that the 'green' energy strategy pursued by the EU and national governments is determined by the requirements and interests of business groups?
2. What view does it take of the fact that ending dependence on Russian gas, abandoning cheap domestic lignite and shifting towards more expensive LNG from the US and the measures to increase the share of renewable energy sources under the conditions of the 'liberalised market' only result in further increases in costs for ordinary households, exploitative labour conditions for workers in the sector and a blight on the people of Western Macedonia?

Submitted: 22.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(30 June 2025)**

The EU Green Deal and its underlying legislative framework, in particular the 'Fit for 55 Package' were adopted by the co-legislators.

As part of the Green Deal, the Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) mobilises ca. EUR 55 billion to support the most affected regions from the energy transition from 2021 to 2027. Western Macedonia is one of the regions receiving support under the JTM.

Moreover, the Social Climate Fund will provide funding of up to EUR 86,7 billion from 2026 to 2032. The support measures and investments aim to address the social impact of the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions from buildings and road transport within the scope of the Emission Trading System, for example by increasing energy efficiency and decarbonisation of heating and cooling of buildings, specifically targeting and benefiting vulnerable households, micro-enterprises and transport users.

To tackle high energy prices and support those suffering from them, the Commission adopted the Affordable Energy Action Plan on 26 February 2025 ⁽¹⁾.

The measures set out in the plan aim at fostering energy efficiency and renewable energy deployment, accelerating permitting, grid deployment, boosting storage and electrification and reducing systems costs, helping to bring down energy costs and support both industry and households.

⁽¹⁾ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/strategy/affordable-energy_en.