

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000671/26
to the Commission
Jordan Bardella (Pfe)
(17 February 2026)

Subject: EDF report on nuclear fleet modulation and functioning of the merit order at the heart of the EU electricity market

The EU electricity market is based on the merit order mechanism, under which intermittent renewable energy is given priority over dispatchable sources such as nuclear.

A report published by EDF in February 2026 ⁽¹⁾ on the modulation of France's nuclear fleet highlights the limitations of this mechanism. It points out that prioritising so-called non-dispatchable energy sources, which often play only a minor role in stabilising the grid, may destabilise the electricity system and make it necessary to curtail dispatchable generation which is essential to security of supply. The blackout that hit the Iberian Peninsula on 28 April 2025 during a period of high intermittent production and low demand illustrates these issues.

Meanwhile, some Member States have recently taken steps to support fossil-based generation capacity, including gas-fired power stations, in order to safeguard their energy security and industrial competitiveness.

In light of the above, the lack of flexibility in the current framework calls into question the ability of the Member States to maintain low-carbon electricity mixes that are stable and competitive.

Can the Commission confirm that a Member State may be authorised to adapt competition rules and energy objectives in order to safeguard its energy sovereignty and nuclear fleet?

Submitted: 17.2.2026

Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(8 May 2026)

The functioning of the EU electricity market does not prioritise certain types of generation over others. It ensures at all times that the cheapest generation assets required to meet the demand are producing.

In line with the article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States are free to determine their own energy mix.

This sovereignty is exercised within the EU framework of binding targets for climate, renewable energy and energy efficiency in order to decarbonise the European energy system.

Member States outline their national targets, policies and measures for climate and energy in their National Energy and Climate Plans, taking into account in particular energy security and internal market aspects.

Renewable energy sources bring cheap and clean energy into the system but also require flexibility to cope with their variability. The 2024 revision of the Electricity Regulation mandates a periodic assessment of flexibility needs to be done at national level ⁽¹⁾, following which the Member States can set objectives for non-fossil flexibility. This complements the resource adequacy assessments which are performed to monitor and plan security of supply ⁽²⁾.

Investments in generation should be market-based. However, Member States can use different tools to support additional capacity in order to preserve security of supply and achieve decarbonisation.

In particular, Member States can introduce a capacity mechanism which provides payment to generators ⁽³⁾, or apply support schemes for non-fossil flexibility ⁽⁴⁾.

¹ https://www.edf.fr/sites/groupe/files/2026-02/2026_02_16_ETUDE_MODULATION.pdf.

⁽¹⁾ Electricity Regulation (EU) 2019/943, Article 19e.

⁽²⁾ Electricity Regulation (EU) 2019/943, Article 20.

⁽³⁾ Electricity Regulation (EU) 2019/943, Article 21.

⁽⁴⁾ Electricity Regulation (EU) 2019/943, Article 19g.