

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001279/26
to the Commission
Tobiasz Bocheński (ECR)
(26 March 2026)

Subject: Rising energy prices and the competitiveness of EU industry

In recent weeks, gas and electricity prices in the EU have risen significantly once again as a result of geopolitical tensions. Energy costs for European industry remain significantly higher than in the US and Asia, which is having a negative impact on competitiveness and companies' investment decisions.

The current situation calls into question the effectiveness of the EU's energy and climate policy, including the ETS, which further increases production costs amid a price shock.

In light of the foregoing:

1. Will the Commission present an up-to-date assessment of the impact of the ETS on the competitiveness of EU industry?
2. Is it considering a temporary adjustment of climate policy instruments in the event of extraordinary increases in energy prices?
3. Does it have a plan to permanently reduce energy costs in the EU relative to its main economic competitors?

Submitted: 26.3.2026

Answer given by Mr Hoekstra on behalf of the European Commission
(11 May 2026)

The geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and their impact on energy markets underline the dangers of Europe's dependency on imported fossil fuels and on the volatility of global markets.

Against this background the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) is a key instrument for reducing Europe's dependency, enhancing resilience and ensuring long-term price stability.

The Commission will present a review of the ETS by July to strengthen the carbon market and ensure it delivers a fair, cost-effective contribution towards the recently agreed 2040 climate target ⁽¹⁾, as well as addressing carbon price volatility.

The impact of carbon costs on electricity prices is the smallest major component of electricity bills (11% for industry and 5% for households).

On 1 April 2026, the Commission proposed an amendment to the Market Stability Reserve to enhance the stability and predictability of ETS prices ⁽²⁾.

On 22 April 2026, the Commission presented the AccelerateEU Communication ⁽³⁾, outlining immediate, targeted actions for Member States to deliver rapid and lasting relief to households and industry facing high energy prices.

It includes structural measures to improve energy efficiency and accelerate electrification by reducing the four components of energy bills—supply costs, network charges, taxes, and carbon costs. It also includes a state aid temporary framework to support some of the sectors most exposed to price spikes.

To permanently reduce energy costs in the EU relative to its main economic competitors, the EU needs to accelerate electrification, the roll out of additional domestic clean energy production and the energy transition. The EU's legal commitment to climate neutrality remains unchanged.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2026/667 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2026 amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 as regards the setting of a Union intermediate climate target for 2040.

⁽²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_26_666.

⁽³⁾ COM(2026) 370 final, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions : AccelerateEU — Energy Union Affordable and Secure Energy through Accelerated Action.