

**Question for written answer P-005325/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Werner Langen (PPE)

Subject: Sale of Hahn Airport by the State of Rhineland-Palatinate

The States of Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse are in the midst of selling off the heavily loss-making, state-owned airport of Hahn in the Hunsrück. Any private operator who runs the airport in future will also be in receipt of government subsidies. As part of the sale process, the State government of the Rhineland-Palatinate has made a number of statements about restrictions imposed by EU law, for instance that the State is obliged to sell the airport to the highest bidder and that it may not evaluate the purchaser's business plan.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it true that, under EU law as it stands, the tender for the sale of a public company may only be awarded to the highest bidder?
2. If not, what other criteria may be taken into account in the decision to sell?
3. Is it true that the State may not evaluate a buyer's business plan before the sale and that the Commission has specifically prohibited this?