

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2974/06
by Joost Lagendijk (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Agreement between the Port of Rotterdam and Barclays Bank

Is the Commission aware that the Port of Rotterdam recently secretly reached an agreement with Barclays Bank on the provision of a guarantee by the Port for a 2004 loan by Barclays to SS Rotterdam BV to the sum of €19 million, which was channelled at that time into the ailing RDM group¹?

Does the Commission think it is possible that the financial or other form of compensation which the Port has agreed on with Barclays involves a form of state aid, which, on the basis of Article 88 (3) of the EC Treaty and Regulation (EC) No. 659/1999², must be notified in advance to the Commission, given that the municipality of Rotterdam is the sole shareholder in the Port and the guarantee from which the agreement stems should possibly also have been notified³?

Is the Commission prepared to further investigate this matter?

What steps will it be taking to ensure that no impermissible state aid is granted?

¹ Algemeen Dagblad, 7 June 2006; De Volkskrant, 8 June 2006.

² OJ L 83, 27.3.1999, p. 1.

³ See Mr Monti's answer of 6 October 2004 to my previous question on this issue, P-2108/04