Question for written answer E-000858/2019
to the Commission
Rule 130
Anna Elżbieta Fotyga (ECR)

Subject: Different treatment of 'old' Member States and 'new' Member States in the granting of state aid

One of the cornerstones of the EU is the single market for goods and services. The Commission, whose job it is to ensure that EU rules are upheld in the fight against protectionism on the single market, does not appear to be treating ‘old’ and ‘new’ Member States in the same way in this area. This is evident from the data published on the Commission’s website, for example data on the enforcement of EU state aid rules. Since 2004 (the single largest expansion of the EU), the better-developed ‘old’ Member States have granted approximately nine times the amount of public aid than the ‘new’ Member States. At the same time, public aid was disputed by the Commission twice as frequently in the case of younger EU members than in the case of the old ‘15’ (proportion of subsidies granted by the state that are called into question[1]). What is more, the Commission is more inclined to issue a state aid recovery order for a ‘new’ Member State (47 decisions between 2005 and 2018) than for an ‘old’ Member State (10 decisions in the same period), and the four orders to immediately suspend aid taken issued since 2005 – an extraordinary measure – all concerned ‘new’ Member States.

1) Does the European Commission have an objective justification for the discrepancies in the treatment of state aid matters in the ‘old’ and ‘new’ Member States?

2) What action is the Commission taking to ensure that public aid cases from the ‘new’ and ‘old’ Member States are dealt with fairly, and is it monitoring the treatment of these cases to ensure that a uniform approach is taken?

[1] http://pie.net.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Raport_Protekcjonizm_gospodarczy_w_Unii_Europejskiej.pdf