

**Question for written answer E-006817/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Ciarán Cuffe** (Verts/ALE)

Subject: On the need for social and affordable housing in Ireland: clarification of the applicability of State aid rules on not-for-profit housing schemes

The Commission issued guidance in 2011 on the applicability of State aid rules to services of general economic interest (SGEI). In 2014 the Commission stated the following: 'the Commission has no power at all to impose a definition of social housing. It is for each Member State individually to define its policy in this area. The Commission has the sole responsibility to ensure that the aid intended for social purposes is not misused to finance commercial activities, which would be contrary to the provisions of the Treaty. Similarly, the Commission is not opposed to the principle of social diversity in the allocation of social housing'<sup>1</sup>.

In Ireland confusion remains on the applicability of state aid rules to not-for-profit housing schemes.

Can the Commission:

1. confirm that its statement of 2014 still stands?
2. indicate when it intends to clarify the application of its SGEI guidance to the housing sector?
3. confirm that aid in the form of public land provided by the state to a not-for-profit approved housing body at nominal cost and/or state lending at below market rates for the provision of affordable accommodation is compatible with the Treaty? Can it also indicate whether such aid has implications for compliance with the macro-economic rules for euro area Member States?

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Commission Vice-President Almunia to Michael Häupl, Mayor and Governor of Vienna, 25 April 2014.