

EN

E-000861/2021

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Vestager
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.5.2021)

1. Important projects of common European interest (IPCEI) are Member State led ambitious cross-border research and innovation or infrastructure projects that often entail significant risks, which private investors are not willing to take on by themselves. In such cases, State aid from several Member States may be necessary to fill the financing gap to overcome market failures. Portugal did not notify State aid as part of the IPCEI for the battery value chain in question and accordingly is not part of that project.

2. The individual projects within the IPCEI were selected by the twelve participating Member States in line with their national procedures. The Commission's role is to verify that the projects notified by the Member States complied with the relevant State aid rules. Technological innovation was one of the major criteria for approval of the submitted projects, in line with the IPCEI State aid requirements.

3. All Member States can support the battery value chain in a variety of manners. If the support involves State aid, different State aid rules could be applicable depending on the type of project, such as for example those of the General Block Exemption Regulation, of the Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation or of the Guidelines on regional State aid.

Cohesion policy programmes, national recovery and resilience plans and the Territorial Just Transition Plans may also support the deployment of innovative solutions along the battery value chain.

In addition, Portuguese public and private entities may join the European industrial alliances, including the European Battery Alliance¹ launched in 2017 and the European Raw Materials Alliance² launched in October 2020.

¹ <https://www.eba250.com/>

² <https://erma.eu/>