

**Question for written answer E-000374/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Marc Botenga (The Left)

Subject: State aid in the service voucher sector

In Belgium, the key aim of service voucher companies is to tackle undeclared work by allowing female workers (98% of low-skilled women) to receive social protection benefits through an employment contract. However, these women find themselves in an extremely precarious situation, due in particular to wages which leave them below the poverty line. According to just one statistic taken from a trade union study, over 40% of domestic workers put off going to the doctor or buying medication frequently or very frequently. The government subsidises 70% of the service voucher sector and this sector is viewed as consumption aid. In order to put an end to the prevailing instability in the sector, we believe that these subsidies should be increased and made contingent on an increase of the minimum wage in the sector, which would then be viewed as state aid.

1. Does the Commission view service voucher sector subsidies as state aid?
2. If so, does the Commission believe that this aid can be covered by the exemptions provided for in Article 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?