

**Question for written answer E-000129/2023
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Gerolf Annemans (ID)

Subject: Complaint from businesses that BAR support is regarded as 'state aid'

To offset the potential negative impact of Brexit on European firms, the European Union has established the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR), which can provide financial assistance for firms adversely affected by Brexit.

While it is clear to businesses that there are restrictions within the de minimis regulation, such as a cumulative ceiling, it turns out that this assistance is also regarded as 'state aid' purely because of the (administrative) involvement of a national authority for assessing or accepting proposals.

Naturally, it appears very pragmatic to work with local/national representatives in order to carry out a quick and thorough assessment of the correctness and practicability of applications; and there also seems to be no alternative to making a direct application for any assistance. This therefore appears to be contradictory.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problem that no account is taken of the origin of the funds and that as soon as a local/national authority is involved, albeit in a purely administrative capacity, BAR support is regarded as state aid?
2. Have there been complaints from firms in this connection?
3. How, if need be, will the Commission rectify matters?

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