

**Question for written answer E-002989/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Tom Berendsen (PPE)

Subject: Capacity required to ensure a level playing field regarding foreign state support

Politico reported that there are only five people working in the European Commission's task force on foreign subsidies¹. According to the report, the team is in danger of being completely overwhelmed by the volume of work. However, it is precisely this task force that must enforce new rules, such as the new Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR). These rules are part of an important new set of measures to strengthen trade instruments and maintain a level playing field in Europe. In light of the anti-subsidy investigation on Chinese electric vehicles announced on Wednesday, one day after the Commission published a list of key critical technologies to be protected from strategic rivals, this news sends a very worrying signal as regards the European level playing field.

1. On Monday, 10 July 2023, the Commission said there would be sufficient staff when the notification period starts on 12 October 2023. Does the Commission consider five people to constitute sufficient staff, and if not, why has it not been possible to recruit sufficient staff in good time?
2. Is timely, diligent and effective enforcement of the new Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) jeopardised by the current staffing levels?
3. What concrete measures will the Commission take to ensure effective enforcement of the European level playing field with sufficient staff?

Submitted: 11.10.2023

¹ <https://www.politico.eu/article/european-union-commission-foreign-subsidies-regulation-unit-strapped-staff/>