Question for oral answer O-000017/2013
to the Commission
Rule 115
Danuta Maria Hübner
on behalf of the Committee on Regional Development

Subject: Regional state aid

The Commission has launched a consultation of stakeholders regarding a draft paper on the regional aid guidelines applicable for the next programming period (2014-2020). The coordination of these draft guidelines with the EU’s cohesion policy in the framework of the new legislative package raises a range of issues, in particular:

- Has the Commission examined how the guidelines align with the proposed legislative package for the EU’s cohesion policy, and what impact they will have on it, including as regards the financial instruments, the co-financing rule and ETC?

- What impact will the tightening of the guidelines have as compared with 2007-2013, in particular for Member States facing financial difficulties?

- Could the Commission explain why – except in the case of the poorest regions, which account for only one quarter of the EU’s population – the draft guidelines exclude regional aid for enterprises which employ more than 250 people and whose annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million, particularly as this category of enterprises also includes many indigenous mid-sized companies?

- What impact will limiting the scope of regional state aid to large companies have on the regions?

- Will the guidelines stimulate innovation, growth and employment in the internal market if they restrict aid to large enterprises and reduce its population coverage?

- Do the criteria for identifying areas that fulfil the conditions of Articles 107(3)(a) and (c) sufficiently and adequately accommodate the proposed CPR rules on the categories of regions, in particular as regards the definition of ‘c’ areas?

- Different years will be used for determining ‘a’ areas and ‘less developed regions’, and the resulting maps will be different. Regions leaving current objective 1 are not specified in the guidelines. How will this be solved, and how does the Commission justify the use of different reference years for classifying the categories of regions?

- Has the Commission taken into account the REGI mandate in relation to the CPR as regards the durability of operations, and is it prepared to take a coherent approach by establishing a period of durability of at least 10 years for the state aid rules?

Tabled: 21.2.2013
Forwarded: 25.2.2013
Deadline for reply: 4.3.2013