

**Question for written answer E-002412/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Jens Geier (S&D)

Subject: Obstacles to the financing of social services resulting from EU state aid rules

In Germany, funding applications by providers of social services of general economic interest (SGEIs) often fail because the application of the general Regulation (EU) 2023/2832 (SGEI de minimis Regulation) is declared in funding guidelines to be the only way to ensure compliance with State aid rules. The absence of any reference to the SGEI de minimis Regulation and to the SGEI Exemption Decision often makes access to funding more difficult or leads to it being denied.

The SGEI de minimis Regulation states in Recital 8 that SGEIs should meet the needs of users as fully as possible and Member States should be able to cater for those needs in the most appropriate way taking into consideration the specificity of each Member State as regards in particular the provision of social services.

1. Are the SGEI de minimis Regulation, the SGEI Exemption Decision and the general de minimis Regulation of equivalent status, without any 'precedence' for the general de minimis Regulation, so that the SGEI de minimis Regulation and the SGEI Exemption Decision may also be applied in particular to amounts below EUR 300 000?
2. In the Commission's view, would the best way to meet the above-mentioned needs be to also apply the SGEI de minimis Regulation within the SGEI sector?
3. How does the Commission plan to support Member States in implementing the Union's Sustainable Development Goals in the social sector, if funding is often blocked by the excessive application of the general de minimis Regulation?

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