

**Question for written answer E-002487/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Fund for asbestos victims

The Italian Government's Decree-Law No 34/2023 (converted into Law No 56/2023) established, in Article 24, a fund for asbestos victims that should intervene in favour of workers in publicly owned companies who have contracted asbestos-related diseases while working at shipyards – or in favour of their heirs.

The fund can also be accessed by investee companies that have to pay compensation for material and non-material damage to workers, as explained in the Decree-Law and the Interministerial Implementing Decree of 16 July 2024.

The legislation therefore provides that only publicly owned companies active in the shipbuilding sector (i.e. Fincantieri, the only applicant in 2023) may use this fund to cover the costs of compensation for workers who are victims of asbestos, thereby giving them an advantage over competitors in the sector.

Given that the objective of the fund could be effectively achieved by allocating the entire amount directly to the workers affected (or the heirs), can the Commission clarify whether only allowing publicly owned companies active in the shipbuilding sector access to the fund might in fact constitute unwarranted State aid capable of distorting competition within the meaning of Article 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union?

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