

**Question for written answer E-002515/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Zala Tomašič (PPE)

Subject: Possibility of granting state aid to the Šoštanj Thermal Power Plant in accordance with European legislation

The Republic of Slovenia and Holding Slovenskih elektrarn (HSE) have stressed that the maintenance of the Šoštanj Thermal Power Plant (TEŠ), which is indirectly wholly owned by the state, could constitute unlawful state aid. Under Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 (GBER), the European Commission can allow countries to grant state aid if specific conditions are met. Aid is allowed for strategic projects related to development promotion in areas such as energy security and the transition to renewables, provided that it is proportionate and does not distort competition or pose a risk to trade between Member States.

TEŠ plays a key role in the transition to renewables by ensuring the stability of the energy system. But it is operating at a loss solely on account of its CO₂ allowance obligations. The closure of TEŠ without a suitable alternative could seriously jeopardise the stability of energy supply in Slovenia.

Directive 2003/87/EC regulates emissions trading rules and is not directly related to business financing. However, given the strategic importance of TEŠ, there is a need to examine whether state aid intended to cover the cost of CO₂ allowances during the transition to other sources would meet the conditions laid down in the GBER.

1. Which specific provisions in European legislation underpin the claim that the allocation of state funding to pay for emission allowances for TEŠ would constitute unlawful state aid?
2. Could the Slovenian Government (as the indirect 100% owner) grant aid to TEŠ until the stability of the energy system in Slovenia is no longer dependent on its operation?

Supporters¹

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¹ This question is supported by Members other than the author: Romana Tomc (PPE), Milan Zver (PPE), Branko Grims (PPE)