

Question for written answer E-002656/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Eliminating double taxation for EU investors

An increasing number of citizens, particularly young people, are investing in securities via online brokers in order to make build a private portfolio and make provisions for later in life. However, when investors from the EU receive dividends on foreign shares, they often face double taxation within the EU despite the existing double taxation agreements. Although it is generally possible to reclaim excess withholding tax, this often entails a long and onerous process that is impractical for retail investors. Many banks do not offer assistance in this regard.

Whilst established procedures make it possible to obtain a tax refund relatively easily for US securities, there remain significant practical obstacles within the EU. As a result, many investors choose not to claim a refund and the amounts they are entitled to are permanently lost. Directive (EU) 2025/50 (the FASTER Directive) provides for far-reaching measures to simplify withholding tax procedures. However, these will not apply until 2030, and even then the problem will only be partially resolved.

1. What additional challenges, despite the FASTER Directive, does the Commission expect there to be, particularly for retail investors, and how should these be addressed?
2. What further measures is the Commission considering to simplify the tax treatment of cross-border investments and remove barriers within the single market?
3. Does the Commission consider a standardised or largely automated EU-wide ‘relief-at-source’ procedure to be realistic in the long term, and what steps would be required to achieve this?

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