

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001899/24
to the Commission
Fabio De Masi (NI)
(1 October 2024)**

Subject: Possible initiation of a state aid procedure in relation to the planned sale of shares in Hamburger Hafen und Logistik AG

What is the Commission's assessment of the sale of shares in Hamburger Hafen und Logistik AG (HHLA) to the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), and does it intend to initiate a formal state aid procedure owing, for example, to the suspected sale of undervalued shares ⁽¹⁾?

Submitted: 1.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Vestager on behalf of the European Commission
(13 November 2024)**

The Commission has received submissions on the sale of shares in the Hamburger Hafen und Logistik AG (HHLA) to the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC).

The Commission is assessing whether those submissions can be treated as complaints within the meaning of Article 12 of Council Regulation (EU) 2015/1589 ⁽¹⁾ which, according to Article 24(2) of that regulation, can only be submitted by interested parties. At this stage, the Commission is not in a position to communicate on possible further steps relating to the above-mentioned submissions.

In general, it is for Member States to assess if a specific measure involves state aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and, if that is the case, to notify to the Commission for its assessment before granting such measure (except for specific cases covered by block exemptions).

¹ ¹See press reports on this topic — e.g.: <https://www.ndr.de/nachrichten/hamburg/Hamburgs-Hafen-Deal-Hackbusch-legt-Beschwerde-bei-der-EU-ein,msc212.html>

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015R1589>