

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000441/25
to the Commission
Georgios Aftias (PPE)
(2 February 2025)**

Subject: Support measures for the self-employed

In recent years, based on statistical data, self-employed people in all European countries have been facing financial problems, which are having an impact on their lives. It is noteworthy that self-employed people are a crucial strength in European economies, as they cover a range of professional activities in both the primary and secondary production sectors and constitute the backbone of the economy of the member states of the European Union.

In view of this:

1. With what measures will the Commission support the sustainability of the self-employed?
2. Will the Commission propose solutions for their housing and energy problems?

Submitted: 2.2.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(22 April 2025)**

The Commission is committed to making life easier for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The economic sustainability of self-employed is part of this commitment.

The 2020 SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe ⁽¹⁾ and the 2023 SME Relief package ⁽²⁾ set out a comprehensive approach for this support.

However, EU initiatives are only complementary to Member States actions. The EU alone will not be able to support all EU's self-employed whose financial situation has weakened.

The Commission is committed to reducing administrative burden for SMEs by 35% ⁽³⁾. To improve SMEs liquidity, the Commission proposed a revision of the late payment rules ⁽⁴⁾.

The guarantee of the SME window of InvestEU ⁽⁵⁾ further improves liquidity of small companies by *inter alia* making loans for SMEs cheaper.

Additional concrete support initiatives are the network of sustainability advisers for SMEs of the Enterprise Europe Network ⁽⁶⁾ and the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs network ⁽⁷⁾.

The Commission also promotes entrepreneurship through the European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp).

The Council Recommendation ⁽⁸⁾ on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed ⁽⁹⁾, encourages Member States to extend access for the self-employed to social protection branches such as unemployment benefits, family-related benefits or benefits related to accidents at work and occupational diseases (see also the Council conclusions on social protection for the self-employed ⁽¹⁰⁾).

The Commission is aware of the growing housing problem affecting large parts of EU society. That is why the first-ever Commissioner for Housing, Mr Dan Jorgensen, was appointed and a European Affordable Housing Plan will be proposed in 2026.

⁽¹⁾ COM/2020/103 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52020DC0103>

⁽²⁾ Ibid. footnote 1.

⁽³⁾ First omnibus proposal, forthcoming, February 2025.

⁽⁴⁾ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-regulation-combating-late-payment-commercial-transactions_en

⁽⁵⁾ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/access-finance/investeu/investeu-fund-sme-window_en

⁽⁶⁾ <https://een.ec.europa.eu/about-enterprise-europe-network/advice-support/sustainability>

⁽⁷⁾ <https://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/>

⁽⁸⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=oj:JOC_2019_387_R_0001

⁽⁹⁾ See also Report from the Commission to the Council on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed, 2023: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0043>

⁽¹⁰⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13934-2023-INIT/en/pdf>