

EN

E-000450/2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera
on behalf of the European Commission
(24.3.2025)

As set out in the Commission's reply of 19 July 2024¹, it is for the Member States to assess if a measure involves State aid and if so, to notify it to the Commission for assessment, unless it is covered by block exemptions. While the Commission cannot comment on exchanges with Member States due to confidentiality, it currently has not sufficient evidence to raise doubts and investigate the measures referred to in the question *ex officio*.

Regarding the new airport in Alcochete, it is possible that public funding for airport infrastructure does not involve State aid, depending on the design of the concession agreement. The Guidelines on State aid to airports and airlines² (Aviation Guidelines) offer guidance on the notion of aid and the conditions for State aid in the aviation sector to be compatible with the single market. In particular, investment aid for large airports is possible under exceptional circumstances under the Aviation Guidelines.

As concerns TAP Air Portugal, the Commission notes that any State aid approved by the Commission does not need to be reimbursed by the beneficiary. This includes compensation for damages suffered due to COVID-19 and the restructuring aid as approved by the Commission in 2021 and 2022³. The restructuring aid for TAP Air Portugal was approved by the Commission after having conducted a thorough investigation, considering comments from third parties, including competitors.

Regarding the EUR 20 rail pass, Member States can introduce public service obligations (PSO) establishing maximum tariffs for passengers in line with the provisions of the PSO Regulation 1370/2007⁴ on public passenger transport services by rail and by road. If the requirements of that Regulation are fulfilled, the measure is block-exempted and does not need to be notified to the Commission.

¹ Reply to written question E-001390/2024.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52014XC0404%2801%29&qid=1741950911744>

³ SA.62304, SA.63041, SA.63042, SA.100121, SA.60165.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2007/1370/oj/eng>