

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001676/25
to the Commission
Dirk Gotink (PPE)
(25 April 2025)**

Subject: Different interpretations of state support rules impact 500 jobs

On Friday, 25 April 2025, an emergency meeting was announced at Apollo Vredestein's factory in Enschede. The worst-case scenario is likely to happen: the loss of 500 employees ⁽¹⁾. In 2021, with a broad interpretation of the state support rules, Hungary invested in an alternative production site, and it is likely that production in Enschede will be relocated to there ⁽²⁾.

1. The Commission has previously stated that the state support provided by Hungary was permissible. Now the factory in Enschede will have to close, and this production will be relocated to Hungary. Can the Commission state its view of these developments?
2. Given this new production site and the recent developments, can the Commission take another look at the state support that Hungary has granted to Apollo Tyres?
3. Does the Commission agree with me that it is not desirable for different interpretations of state support rules in Member States to lead to unfair competition, and what does the Commission intend to do about this?

Submitted: 25.4.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera on behalf of the European Commission
(1 July 2025)**

1. In general, State aid should not encourage or facilitate the relocation of services or production from one Member State to another. EU State aid rules contain safeguards in this sense. The Hungarian aid to Apollo Tyres was granted in the context of state aid schemes approved by Commission decisions in cases SA.56926 and SA.57375 ⁽¹⁾. The schemes were adopted to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and to partially compensate companies for losses suffered because of the lockdown measures introduced by the Hungarian Government, in line with the state aid rules applicable to this type of situations.
2. Regarding the alleged closure and relocation of the Enschede factory, the Commission cannot interfere in specific company decisions regarding restructuring plans.
3. The Commission decisions in cases SA.56926 and SA.57375 do not depart from the standard interpretation of the applicable state aid rules. Furthermore, the Commission does not have any indication that the Hungarian schemes at issue were not implemented in line with those decisions.

¹ <https://www.tubantia.nl/enschede/spanning-in-enschede-vredestein-ligt-vrijdagmiddag-stil-personeel-opgetrommeld-dit-wordt-groot-ae92e42e/>.

² https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-005190-ASW_EN.html.

⁽¹⁾ Commission decision of 8 April 2020 in case SA.56926 (2020/N) — Hungary COVID-19: Aid measures for increasing competitiveness of undertakings in relation with the COVID-19 outbreak, OJ C 144 of 30.4.2020; Commission decision of 23 June 2020 in case SA.57375 (2020/N) — Hungary COVID-19: Compensation scheme related to the recovery of the Hungarian economy, OJ C 302 of 11.9.2020.