

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003668/25
to the Commission
Dolors Montserrat (PPE)
(22 September 2025)**

Subject: Breach of the internal market and state aid rules in the Air Europa bailout

The Spanish Government's Air Europa bailout, totalling EUR 474 million, amounted to state aid and had repercussions for the European internal air transport market. The decision was taken in a Council of Ministers meeting chaired by the prime minister, whose wife was at the time running a university centre that had concluded sponsorship agreements with Wakalua — which is an innovation hub belonging to the Globalia group, Air Europa's parent company.

Although the Spanish Office for Conflicts of Interest has concluded that there was no obligation to abstain, concerns remain that these circumstances may have compromised the impartiality required for the granting of state aid. Court of Justice case-law requires state aid to be assessed in full transparency and stipulates there can be no sign of a selective advantage arising from the decision-makers' personal or family interests.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission believe that the existence of contractual or sponsorship ties between relatives of a member of the Government and the company benefiting from state aid could amount to a breach of the principles of neutrality and open competition in the internal market?
2. What additional safeguards should the Commission require for this type of bailout?

Submitted: 22.9.2025

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

The Commission decided on 31 July 2020 not to raise objections to the aid scheme of the Solvency Support Fund for strategic enterprises notified by the Kingdom of Spain and financed from resources of the State budget ⁽¹⁾.

The scheme was considered compatible with the internal market pursuant to Article 107(3) (b) of the Treaty of the Functioning of European Union, which allows aid to remedy a serious disturbance of the economy of a Member State. The 2020 Commission Decision also underwent judicial review of its legality, which the General Court and the Court of Justice of the European Union confirmed ⁽²⁾.

The 2020 Commission Decision approved the scheme, within which Spain could grant individual aid. It also required individual notification to the Commission in certain cases, notably if the amount of the relevant solvency instruments exceeded EUR 250 million to individual beneficiaries, irrespective of whether solvency instruments were combined with senior loans.

Since the amount of the participation loan (*préstamo participativo*) granted to Air Europa was lower than EUR 250 million, Spain needed not to individually notify the recapitalisation of Air Europa to the Commission.

The relevant provisions in Section 3.11 of the Temporary Framework for state aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak, which provided legal basis under state aid rules for recapitalisation support of the kind at issue expired on 30 June 2022.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Decision SA.57659(2020/N)-Spain-COVID 19 — Recapitalisation fund (OJ C269, 14.8.2020, p. 8).

⁽²⁾ Case T-628/20, EU:T:2021:285, Case C-441/21 P, EU:C:2024:477.