Press release | 21.05.2014

State aid rules

Commission's proposals fall short of what is needed to support shift to sustainable economy

The European Commission today presented proposals to revise EU rules on state aid, notably regarding general exemptions. Commenting on the proposals, Green industry policy spokesperson **Reinhard Bütikofer** said:

“The proposals from the Commission on general exemptions to EU state aid rules fall short of what is needed to support the transition to a sustainable economy.

"The block exemption on aid spent improving the energy efficiency of buildings is clearly welcome and follows the recommendations from the Greens (1) but the threshold for other energy efficiency measures is set too low (at 30%). Energy efficiency and savings measures are the low hanging fruit when it comes to improving energy security and tackling climate change and public funds play a crucial role in their role out. Meanwhile, the criteria for renewable energy are too stringent and inflexible and will make it very difficult for the block exemption to be used. This is a major flaw.

"Given all the lip service from the Commission on resource efficiency, it is extremely disappointing that there is no mention of it at all in the proposals. This is a missed opportunity for the revision of EU state aid rules, with a view to ensuring EU goals on resource efficiency can be realised."

(1) The Greens/EFA group proposed such an exemption in a study published in November 2013.

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Reinhard Bütikofer

Member

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