

European Commission has launched a public consultation on the draft General Block Exemption Regulation

The European Commission published a draft Regulation modifying the existing Regulation on General Block Exemption (GBER).

The GBER simplifies the procedures for aid granting authorities at national, regional or local level. It allows the granting of a range of measures with horizontal objectives considered to be in the common interest.

On 8 May 2012, the Commission adopted a Communication on a State aid modernisation package ('SAM'), which shall launch and frame the political debate on the modernisation of State aid control. The review of the GBER is an important element of SAM.

The Commission invites the other Institutions, Member States and stakeholders to provide input for the revision of the GBER. The GBER contains a variety of measures, many of which are also covered by specific guidelines or frameworks (regional, environmental, risk capital and R&D&I aid). In order to ensure coherence in the revision of the policy for each type of aid, dedicated separate questionnaires will be prepared for the main types of aid (regional aid, aid for R&D&I, environmental aid, risk capital), covering both exempted and non-exempted aid. By contrast, this questionnaire will focus on general questions relating to the GBER as such and on the categories of aid only covered by the GBER (e.g. training aid, SME aid for consultancy and participation in fairs, SME investment aid, aid for female entrepreneurs and disabled workers) and not by specific guidelines or frameworks. Overlaps were thus avoided to the extent possible, but respondents are invited to cross-reference replies in the parallel questionnaires if appropriate.

The period for this consultation is: 20.06.2012 – 11.09.2012.

The draft Communication is available in:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2012_gber/gber_questionnaire_en.rtf