

## What State Aid rules to support the recovery in maritime and insular regions?

Co-organised by the [CPMR](#)

**Tuesday 16 February 2021, 10:30 - 12:30 (CET)**

Online - Zoom with French and English interpretation

The COVID-19 pandemic has plunged the European Union into the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. The impact of the crisis has been highly asymmetric at territorial level and across sectors. The pace of the recovery is also expected to be uneven. Regional disparities, alongside social and economic ones, are likely to rise. Maritime and insular regions are among the hardest hit because of the specialisation of their economies (e.g. strong reliance on tourism) and/or their geographical situation.

The battery of emergency measures put in place by the Commission in spring-summer 2020 includes a temporary relaxation of State Aid rules that have been prolonged until mid-2021. However, the current crisis has highlighted the need to envision a more flexible approach to State Aid rules also in the long term in view of making them more responsive to both existing and emerging territorial challenges. The workshop aims to contribute to this reflection focusing on the review of regional State Aid, which is currently underway. In addition, the discussion will also address State Aid rules in the fisheries and transport sectors.

Over the next few years, the Recovery Plan and MFF, adding to the national measures rolled out to support the recovery, will generate staggering volumes of public investments across Europe, mostly in the form of grants. It is important that the Regional Aid Guidelines for 2021-2027, to be released in spring 2021, are designed in such a way to help maximise, rather than hinder, the impact of these investments. The panellists will assess the main aspects related to Regional Aid and, more broadly, State Aid in key sectors especially when looking at the needs of the maritime and insular territories. Among the main elements that will be discussed are: how Regional Aid rules could be more conducive to “green” investments; a possible review of intensity aid ceiling and population quota; a specific regime for islands; etc.

Hosted by REGI Committee Chair Younous Omarjee, the event will take the form of a round table discussion with DG COMP joined by SEARICA MEPs and political representatives from CPMR regions as well as experts. It will be opened by Karl Soukup, Director for State Aid, General Scrutiny and Enforcement at the Directorate-General for Competition of the European Commission.

## Draft Agenda

*Moderation by Nicolas Brookes, Executive Director of CPMR*

1. **10:30 – 10:45** Welcome by **Mr Younous Omarjee**, MEP, Chair of the REGI Committee and short remarks by **Mr Tonino Picula** MEP, Chair of the SEArice Intergroup
2. **10:45 – 11:00** Mr **Karl Soukup**, Director for State Aid, General Scrutiny and Enforcement, Directorate-General for Competition, European Commission
3. **11:00 – 11:45 Interventions by SEArice MEPs**
  - Mr **Pierre Karleskind**, MEP, Chair of the PECH Committee
  - Mr **François Alfonsi**, MEP, Vice-Chair of the SEArice Intergroup
  - Ms **Alicia Homs**, MEP, Vice-Chair of the SEArice Intergroup
  - Ms **Josianne Cutajar**, SEArice MEP
  - Reaction by Mr **Karl Soukup**, Director for State Aid, General Scrutiny and Enforcement, Directorate-General for Competition, European Commission
4. **11:45 – 12:05 Interventions by regional stakeholders**
  - Mr **Andras Edelenyi**, Member of the Employers' Group, European Economic and Social Committee
  - Mr **Juan José Martínez Lozano**, Director General of European Affairs, Murcia Region
  - Mr **Nils-Olov Lindfors**, Chair for Regional Development in Region Norrbotten, former Chair of the network of Northern Sparsely Populated Areas (2019-2020) and Member of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission
  - Mr **Gaetano Armao**, Regional Minister for Economic Affairs and Vice-President of Sicily, Presidency of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission
5. **12:05 – 12:15 Reactions by SEArice MEPS**
  - Mr **Cyrus Engerer**, SEArice MEP
  - Ms **Rosa Estaràs Ferragut**, SEArice MEP
6. **12:15 – 12:30 Debate**