



SA support for R&D projects under GBER -update

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Overview and context

- On 23 June 2023, the Commission formally adopted a **targeted amendment to the General Block Exemption Regulation (so called Green Deal GBER amendment)**
- Purpose of the revision was three-fold:
 - i. Ensure ample possibility for Member States to **mobilize more aid for projects in line with:**
 - (a) **the Green Deal objectives**
 - (b) **the European Industrial and Digital Strategies**
 - i. Ensure **coherence with the corresponding revised Guidelines** (incl. the Research, Development and Innovation Framework and the Climate, Environmental and Energy Aid Guidelines)
 - ii. Update to keep pace with **market and technological developments**

Overview and context – SA rules for RDI

General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)

Commission Regulation (EU) N° 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (as amended)

2022 RDI Framework

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation

R&D&I State aid measures

- R&D projects (art. 25 and art.25 a-d GBER) : support up to and including TRL8
 - **Feasibility studies** (evaluation of the potential of a R&D project)
 - **Fundamental research** (into underlying phenomena, no direct commercial application)
 - **Industrial research** (incl. prototypes and pilot lines in lab)
 - **Experimental Development** (incl. prototyping, demonstration, piloting, testing and validation in environment representative of real life operating conditions – with primary objective of further technical improvements)
- **Research Infrastructures (art. 26 GBER) and *Testing and experimentation Infrastructures (new art 26 (a) GBER)***
- **Innovation Clusters (art. 27 GBER)**
- **Innovation advisory and Innovation support services (Innovation aid for SMEs – art. 28 GBER)**
- **Process and organizational Innovation (art. 29 GBER)**

Amendments to Art 25 GBER

Support for R&D projects

- Streamlined R&D definitions
- Significantly higher notification thresholds (Article 4)

R&D categories	Previous thresholds	New R&D threshold	Multi-country projects
Fundamental research	EUR 40 M	EUR 55 M	EUR 110 M
Industrial research	EUR 20 M	EUR 35 M	EUR 70 M
Experimental development	EUR 15 M	EUR 25M	EUR 50 M

- Higher aid intensities and thresholds for “multi-country“ R&D projects (Art 25 (6) (d));
- Indirect R&D project costs can be estimated by applying a flat rate of 20%. This option applies regardless of the funds used, that is also in cases where only national/regional financial resources are used

Other amendments to R&D GBER provisions

- Clarification that “**Digital Innovation Hubs**” may qualify as innovation clusters in the meaning of Art. 27 GBER
- Clarification re. **eligibility under art. 27 GBER**
- Clarification that **innovation activities of SMEs** include the uptake of digital innovative solutions (including services offered by ROs, TEIs, clusters etc.)
- Guidance in **Art. 5 para 2 GBER** on how to grant transparent aid to SMEs in the form of reduced access fees for innovation advisory services and innovation support services

GBER and synergies with Horizon Europe programme

Art. 25a GBER – State aid for R&D projects awarded a SoE quality label

- **Eligible beneficiaries:** SMEs only
- **Maximum aid amount:** EUR 2.5 mln/per SME/per project or feasibility study
- **Eligible activities:** HE programme rules up to experimental development activities (**up to TRL8**)
- **Eligible costs, ceilings and calculation methods:** HE programme rules
- **Maximum public funding:** State aid + any other public funding incl. under EU central management: → funding rate set out for that project under HE programme rules
- **Incentive effect of the aid:** presumed → Art. 6 (5)(j) GBER

GBER and synergies with Horizon Europe programme

Art. 25b GBER – aid for ERC Proof of Concept and under Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions awarded a SoE quality label

State aid rules applicable only insofar as national funding is for 'economic activities' – in practice MSCA or ERC-actions often involve a non-economic context

- **Eligible beneficiaries:** HE programme rules
- **Eligible activities:** HE programme rules
- **Eligible costs, ceilings and calculation methods:** HE programme rules
- **Maximum aid amount:** no specific limit
- **Maximum public funding:** State aid + any other public funding incl. under EU central management: → funding rate set out for that project under HE programme rules
- **Incentive effect of the aid:** presumed → Art. 6 (5) lit. j GBER

GBER and synergies with Horizon Europe programme

Article 25c – aid involved in co-funded research and development projects (up to TRL8)

- co-funded R&D project or a feasibility study (including R&D projects implemented under a European Institutionalised Partnership based on Article 185 or Article 187 of the Treaty or a programme co-fund action, as defined in the Horizon Europe programme rules)
- implemented by at least 3 Member States, or alternatively 2 Member States and at least 1 associated country
- selected on the basis of the evaluation and ranking made by independent experts following trans-national calls in line with the Horizon Europe programme rules

Article 25d – aid for teaming actions

- aid provided to co-funded Teaming actions, involving at least 2 Member States and selected on the basis of the evaluation and ranking made by independent experts following transnational calls under the Horizon Europe programme rules

Thank you



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