



Executive Vice President Vestager  
European Commission  
DG Competition  
Place Madou  
1201 Saint Josse ten Noode  
Brussels

30<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Executive Vice President,

Thank you for meeting with me and my colleague, the Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe, on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020. It was a very helpful and fruitful meeting.

During our discussion, I raised the issue of the current revision of the Regional Aid Guidelines and the changes in population coverage for Member States, in particular the significant reduction in population coverage in Ireland from the current 51.28% to 25.62%. As I advised at the time, given the level of uncertainty in the context of both COVID-19 and Brexit, this is not the right time for such a change. While I appreciate that this was not an item on our Agenda at our meeting, you advised that we would consider further.

Since our meeting, our officials have engaged through the multilateral meeting on the Revision of Regional Aid Guidelines and we subsequently developed the attached position paper which we submitted to DG Competition on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020. This paper sets out our concerns regarding the timing of the proposed changes to population coverage, queries around the calculation methodology, issues around regional disparities. It also proposes solutions to these issues that are fair and reasonable for all concerned.

This is a significant issue for Ireland as we deal with the COVID-19 crisis and Brexit, and as we work towards recovery and resilience. We need all the tools available to us to get the Irish economy and the EU economy back on a firm footing.

I would therefore ask that you consider our attached proposal and that we would agree to discuss this further, when you reflect on the solutions we have put forward.

I thank you again for the ongoing collegiate support we have received from you and your staff over the last 9 months and look forward to our ongoing work together.

Best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

  
Leo Varadkar TD  
Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment

Cc: Commissioner Mairead McGuinness