IV

(Informaciones)

INFORMACIÓN PROCEDENTE DE LAS INSTITUCIONES, ÓRGANOS Y ORGANISMOS DE LA UNIÓN EUROPEA

PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

PREGUNTAS ESCRITAS FORMULADAS CON SOLICITUD DE RESPUESTA ESCRITA

Preguntas escritas formuladas por los diputados al Parlamento Europeo y las respuestas de una de las instituciones de la Unión Europea

(2014/C 367/01)

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(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-003990/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(31 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Διακοπή χρηματοδότησης προγραμμάτων ψυχικής υγείας στην Ελλάδα από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο

Σοβαρούς κινδύνους για την υγεία χιλιάδων ασθενών και ατόμων με αναπηρίες ενέχει η απόφαση της Επιτροπής να διακόψει τη χρηματοδότηση των υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας, όπως το πρόγραμμα «ΨΥΧΑΡΓΩΣ», από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο. Η απόφαση αυτή βασίζεται σε προγενέστερη συμφωνία της προηγούμενης Επιτροπής (Σύμφωνο Špidla), η οποία προέβλεπε ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση θα αναλάβει τις δαπάνες μετά το πέρας της τρέχουσας προγραμματικής περιόδου.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη:

Α. Την πρωτοφανή οικονομική κρίση που μεσολάβησε της εν λόγω συμφωνίας και τα αυστηρά μέτρα δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής που έλαβε η Ελλάδα τα τελευταία χρόνια.

Β. Τις νομικές υποχρεώσεις της ΕΕ που απορρέουν από την Σύμβαση για τα Δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία (CRPD, άρθρο 19).

Γ. Το νομικά δεσμευτικό πλαίσιο του νέου κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου για την προγραμματική περίοδο 2014-2020 (εδάφιο 19, άρθρο 8).

Δ. Την θέση της ίδιας της Επιτροπής ότι η μετάβαση από την ιδρυματική στην κοινοτική φροντίδα θα πρέπει να είναι μια από τις επενδυτικές προτεραιότητες για την ίδια την Ελλάδα για την περίοδο 2014-2020.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Σκοπεύει πράγματι η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να διακόψει τη χρηματοδότηση από το ΕΚΤ των υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας σε κοινοτικό επίπεδο στην Ελλάδα την επόμενη προγραμματική περίοδο;

2. Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή ότι μια τέτοια απόφαση θα μπορούσε να θέσει σε σοβαρό κίνδυνο μερικά από τα πιο ευάλωτα μέλη της ελληνικής κοινωνίας;

3. Κατά τη γνώμη της Επιτροπής, τίθεται θέμα παραβίασης των υποχρεώσεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στην CRPD, αλλά και των νέων κανονισμών για τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία;

4. Ποιος θα είναι ο αντίκτυπος της απόφασης για την διεθνή εικόνα της Ένωσης; Αναμένει αντιδράσεις από την Επιτροπή των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα Δικαιώματα των Ατόμων με Αναπηρία;

5. Έχει ζητήσει η ελληνική κυβέρνηση αναθεώρηση της απόφασης αυτής; Γνωρίζει η Επιτροπή τον προγραμματισμό της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης για την συνέχιση των υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Απριλίου 2014)

Τον Μάιο του 2013, η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση και η Επιτροπή υπέγραψαν μνημόνιο συμφωνίας (ΜΣ) σύμφωνα με το οποίο όλες οι μεταρρυθμίσεις στον τομέα της ψυχικής υγείας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δημιουργίας ενός νέου βιώσιμου συστήματος ψυχικής υγείας, πρέπει να έχουν ολοκληρωθεί έως τις 31 Δεκεμβρίου 2015, με χρηματοδοτική στήριξη από το επιχειρησιακό πρόγραμμα ανάπτυξης ανθρώπινων πόρων για την περίοδο χρηματοδότησης 2007-2013.

Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες που ελήφθησαν από τις ελληνικές αρχές, η εφαρμογή του μνημονίου συμφωνίας προχωρεί αλλά υπάρχουν ακόμα σημαντικοί στόχοι που πρέπει να επιτευχθούν το 2014 και το 2015. Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση συνεχίζει να εργάζεται για την ολοκλήρωση των σημαντικών στόχων του ΜΣ για το 2014 και το 2015. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί στενά την εν λόγω πρόοδο και γνωρίζει τη σημασία των μεταρρυθμίσεων για τους ασθενείς με προβλήματα ψυχικής υγείας, και ιδίως για τους χρόνια ασθενείς. Μέχρι σήμερα, οι ελληνικές αρχές δεν έχουν ζητήσει αναθεώρηση του ΜΣ.

Μετά την εφαρμογή των μεταρρυθμίσεων που καθορίζονται στον χάρτη πορείας και σύμφωνα με το μνημόνιο συνεννόησης που υπεγράφη πριν από ένα έτος, δεν είναι απαραίτητη η οικονομική στήριξη του ΕΚΤ για τη σωστή και βιώσιμη λειτουργία του τομέα ψυχικής υγείας στην Ελλάδα.

Η Επιτροπή, μέσω της ευρωπαϊκής στρατηγικής για τα άτομα με αναπηρία 2010-2020 ([1]) και σύμφωνα με τη σύμβαση των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία, θα εξακολουθήσει να στηρίζει τα κράτη μέλη στην ανάπτυξη υπηρεσιών ψυχικής υγείας σε επίπεδο τοπικής κοινότητας και χωρίς κοινωνικούς αποκλεισμούς παρέχοντας αναλύσεις, πολιτική καθοδήγηση, δυνατότητα ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών και κάθε άλλου είδους στήριξη.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003990/14
to the Commission
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: Suspension of funding for mental health programmes in Greece under the European Social Fund

The Commission's decision to discontinue the funding of mental health services, such as the 'PSYCHARGOS' programme, through the European Social Fund poses a serious threat to the health of thousands of patients and persons with disabilities. This decision is based on a prior agreement of the previous Commission (the Špidla Pact), which provided that the Greek Government should bear the cost of such programmes after the end of the current programming period.

Taking into account:

A. The unprecedented economic crisis that occurred since this agreement and the stringent fiscal consolidation measures taken by Greece over the last few years,

B. The EU's legal obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, Article 19),

C. The legally binding framework of the new European Social Fund regulation for the 2014-2020 programming period (Section 19, Article 8),

D. The Commission's own position that the transition from institutional to community care should be one of the investment priorities for Greece itself for the period 2014-2020,

Will the Commission say:

1. Does it really intend to suspend ESF funding of mental health services at community level in Greece during the next programming period?

2. Is it aware that such a decision could pose a serious threat to some of the most vulnerable members of Greek society?

3. In the Commission's opinion, could this be seen as a violation of the European Union's obligations under the CRPD and of the new Structural Fund regulations?

4. What will be the impact of the decision on the Union's international image? Does it expect any response from the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?

5. Has the Greek Government called for a revision of this decision? Is the Commission aware of the Greek government's plans for the continuation of mental health services?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2014)

In May 2013, the Greek Government and the Commission signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) according to which all mental health reforms, including the establishment of a new viable mental health system must be completed by 31 December 2015, with financial support coming from the Human Resources Development Operational Programme of the 2007-2013 financing period.

According to information received from the Greek authorities, the implementation of the MoU is progressing, but important milestones have still to be achieved in 2014 and 2015. The Commission is aware that the Greek Government continues to work on the completion of the 2014 and 2015 milestones of the MoU. The Commission is closely monitoring progress and is aware of the significance of the reforms for the mental health patients, in particular for chronic patients. To date, the Greek authorities have not called for a revision of the MoU.

Following implementation of the reforms set out in the Roadmap and according to the MoU signed a year ago, no ESF financial support should be necessary for a proper and sustained functioning of the mental health sector in Greece.

The Commission, through the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) and in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, will continue to support Member States in developing community-based, socially inclusive mental health services by providing analysis, political guidance, information exchange and other support.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003991/14
to the Commission
Emma McClarkin (ECR)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: The killing of songbirds in Cyprus

A number of my constituents have contacted me regarding the 1.5 million migrating songbirds killed illegally each year in Cyprus for profit because of their value for selling in restaurants.

The Prince of Wales wrote very recently to Major-General Richard Cripwell, Commander of British Forces in Cyprus, and to President Nicos Anastasiades of Cyprus, detailing his concerns. It is estimated that, of the 1.5 million birds killed each year, 500 000 are killed on British Armed Forces bases where large numbers of acacia bushes have been planted to attract the birds searching for insects. Catchers place traps there in the evenings to catch the birds and pick them up the following morning.

This has now become a major criminal enterprise, with mafia figures rumoured to be involved. These criminals have little regard for the welfare of the birds, which are made to suffer for long periods of time before they die. Methods of capture include glue sticks and vertical mist nets.

Trapping was made illegal in 1974, but it is clear that the practice continues to happen.

Is the Commission aware of this problem in Cyprus?

What does the Commission intend to do to help bring this illegal and barbaric practice to an end? Can the Commission provide the government with resources to help combat the criminals involved in this practice?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of this issue and would refer the Honorable Member to its answer to Written Question E-002678/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003992/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(31 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Preservação da praia da ilha de Porto Santo, Arquipélago da Madeira

A praia na faixa sul da ilha de Porto Santo, no arquipélago da Madeira, constitui um importante património público de carácter ambiental, como verdadeiro tesouro natural de importância estratégica para o presente e o futuro daquela ilha, para a atratividade turística e para a economia local e regional.

As modificações fisiográficas ocorridas no cordão dunar e na praia, nomeadamente a largura do areal e do cordão dunar, acarretam problemas e riscos já enunciados em diversos estudos de natureza técnico-científica. Estas modificações estão associadas, em grande medida, a ações de diversa ordem provocadas e desenvolvidas pelo Homem. Na ilha, verificou-se ao longo dos anos que a extração de inertes na praia, a construção do porto de abrigo, bem como da marina e equipamentos conexos, os efeitos da maré negra resultante do derrame proveniente do petroleiro espanhol Aragon, que atingiu o litoral do Porto Santo em janeiro de 1990, a construção de infraestruturas públicas nas áreas pré-dunares e consequente remoção do coberto vegetal no cordão dunar, a edificação de pequenas barragens nos ribeiros e açudes na vertente sul da ilha, a construção de unidades hoteleiras e instalações turísticas no litoral, a par do elevado índice de construção verificado na zona centro-ocidental da ilha, são algumas das causas que têm contribuído para as modificações ocorridas na linha de costa e no perfil e emagrecimento da praia. Na avaliação da dinâmica do litoral sul do Porto Santo, diversas análises e investigações de carácter técnico-científico demonstram, de forma rigorosamente fundamentada, como a extensão do areal daquela ilha perdeu cerca de 28 hectares de areia, nomeadamente entre 1937 e 1995.

Estes riscos suscitam preocupações legítimas e requerem uma intervenção com o objetivo, não só de conservar o ecossistema dunar na faixa sul do litoral da ilha do Porto Santo, mas também de conhecer melhor, conservar e proteger a biodiversidade do cordão dunar e, sobretudo, defender o seu interesse socioeconómico crucial e estratégico para a ilha e as suas populações.

1. Que medidas e apoios poderão ser mobilizados para defender e preservar a praia do Porto Santo, salvaguardando as suas particularidades?

2. Que fundos — de gestão direta e de gestão partilhada — poderão financiar as intervenções necessárias e adequadas aos diversos níveis acima mencionados?

Resposta dada de Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2014)

A ilha principal de Porto Santo não faz parte do sítio Natura 2000, que abrange apenas os ilhéus do arquipélago. Por conseguinte, a conservação da praia e das dunas não se insere no âmbito da legislação aplicável da UE ([1]) mas sim no da legislação nacional e regional portuguesa.

Os investimentos e as soluções de infraestrutura verde ([2]) (também denominadas soluções baseadas na natureza) podem constituir uma abordagem útil e rentável em matéria de conservação. A experiência adquirida em toda a Europa mostra que as soluções de infraestrutura verde são frequentemente mais rentáveis, mais resistentes e com mais benefícios a longo prazo do que as infraestruturas artificiais e pesadas («infraestruturas cinzentas»). Uma forma de o alcançar é prever um maior apoio à infraestrutura verde nos programas de desenvolvimento rural.

É possível solicitar apoio a título dos fundos da política de coesão (Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional, Fundo de Coesão e Fundo Social Europeu) para iniciativas integradoras, que envolvam a proteção do valor ecológico e socioeconómico das dunas. Compete, contudo, às autoridades nacionais e regionais promover e levar a cabo as iniciativas, medidas e projetos adequados.

O programa LIFE poderá ser uma outra fonte de financiamento. Já existe um projeto LIFE centrado na proteção dos ilhéus do sítio rede Natura 2000 de Porto Santo, incluindo a conservação das espécies endémicas ([3]).

A Comissão gostaria ainda de chamar a atenção dos Senhores Deputados para a sua proposta de diretiva relativa ao ordenamento do espaço marítimo ([4]).

([1]) Diretiva 92/43/CEE, de 21 de maio de 1992, relativa à preservação dos habitats naturais e da fauna e da flora selvagens (JO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([2]) COM(2013)0249 final.
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0249
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=3802&docType=pdf
([4]) COM(2013)0133 e 2013/0074(COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003992/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: Beach conservation on the island of Porto Santo

The beach along the southern coast of the island of Porto Santo, in the Madeira archipelago, is an important public environmental resource and a real natural treasure which is strategically important to the island's present and future, in terms of attracting tourism and for the local and regional economy.

Physiographical changes in the dunes and beach, particularly the length of the beach and the dune system, are giving rise to problems and threats which have already been described in various technical and scientific studies. These changes are largely linked to different forms of human activity. Over the years, factors which have contributed to changes in the coastline and the shape and narrowing of the beach have included the removal of sand from the beach, construction of the harbour, marina and related facilities, damage caused by the oil slick from the Spanish tanker Aragon, which reached the coast of Porto Santo in 1990, construction of public infrastructure at the edge of the dunes and resulting removal of plant cover from the dunes themselves, construction of small dams on rivers in the south of the island and of hotels and tourism complexes along the coast, as well as the high rate of construction in the centre-west of the island. Different technical and scientific analyses and research projects which have rigorously assessed the evolution of Porto Santo's southern coast have shown that the island lost 28 hectares of sand from its beach areas between 1937 and 1995.

The risks give rise to legitimate concerns; they call for action to not only conserve the ecosystem of the dunes along the southern coastline of Porto Santo, but also to gain a better knowledge of the biodiversity of this dune system and protect and preserve it and, above all, defend it as a key, strategic socioeconomic asset of the island and its people.

1. What measures and support can be used to protect and preserve the beach of Porto Santo, in order to maintain its specific characteristics?

2. What funds — whether under direct or shared management — could be used to finance necessary and appropriate initiatives at the various abovementioned levels?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The main island of Porto Santo is not part of the Porto Santo Natura 2000 site, which only includes the archipelago's islets. Therefore the conservation of the beach and of the dunes to which the question refers does not fall under the scope of the relevant EU legislation ([1]) and is addressed by Portuguese national and regional legislation.

Green Infrastructure ([2]) solutions (also known as nature-based solutions) and investments can provide a useful and cost-effective approach for preservation. The experience which is developing across Europe shows that Green Infrastructure solutions are often more cost-effective, more resilient and bring more long-term benefits than artificial, heavy (grey) infrastructure. One way this can be achieved is to provide more support for Green Infrastructure in the Rural Development Programmes.

It is possible to apply for support under the Cohesion Policy Funds (European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund) for integrative initiatives involving the protection of the socioeconomic and ecological values of the dunes. However, it is the responsibility of the national and regional authorities to promote and to implement adequate projects, actions and measures.

The LIFE programme could also be a source of funding. There is already an on-going LIFE project focusing on the protection of the islets of Porto Santo Natura 2000 site, including the conservation of endemic species ([3]).

The Commission would also like to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to its proposal for a directive for Maritime Spatial Planning ([4]).

([1]) Directive 92/43/EEC of 21.5.1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([2]) COM(2013)0249 final. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0249
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=3802&docType=pdf
([4]) COM(2013)0133 and 2013/0074(COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003994/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: Computer Vision Syndrome

Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) is the term used by the American Optometric Association to describe the symptoms of visual fatigue experienced by people using display screen equipment for prolonged periods of time. Such symptoms include sore, dry, irritated or watery eyes, headaches, musculoskeletal problems, blurred vision and short-term difficulty focusing on distant objects. Although evidence suggests that working with VDUs does not cause long-term or permanent damage to eyes, clearly such symptoms can still cause distress and discomfort.

The rapid increase in mobile technology, such as smartphones, tablets and laptops, has allowed workers and employers much more flexibility in their working arrangements. However, it has also led to a significant increase in the amount of time people spend looking at electronic displays, and can blur the boundaries between work and non-work time, leading to increased risk of psychosocial problems such as stress. In addition, these new technologies carry their own health and safety risks, such as musculoskeletal disorders linked to poor ergonomic conditions or repetitive strain injuries linked to frequent use of mobile phones.

The Commission has indicated that directive 90/270/EEC on Display Screen Equipment will be included in the review of health and safety legislation which is due to be concluded by the end of 2016.

1. Has the Commission carried out research into work-related health problems associated with new ways of working and increased use of mobile technologies?

2. Can the Commission confirm that the risks posed by the use of mobile technologies, both in the workplace and by employees working from alternative locations, will be included in the review of health and safety legislation and of Directive 90/270/EEC on Display Screen Equipment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

1. Action to improve health and safety at work remains high on the Commission's political agenda. For instance, the Europe 2020 strategy refers to the importance of adapting legislation to new risks for health and safety at work, consistently with the principles of smart regulation.

The Commission is aware of the risks that the Honourable Member mentions as regards the use of new mobile technologies and the potential impact of those risks on the aetiology and development of such health conditions as work-related musculoskeletal disorders and computer vision syndrome. Those and other health risks were highlighted in a study conducted for the Commission and published in early 2010 ([1]).

2. The Commission would like to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that, pursuant to Article 17a of the framework Directive ([2]) on measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, the Commission will produce a report, by the end of 2015 at the latest, based on a comprehensive review of the 24 EU health and safety Directives in terms of their relevance, of research and of new scientific knowledge in the various fields relating to occupational safety and health legislation, with a view to identifying gaps and inconsistencies in the existing legislation and to ensuring that it remains fit for purpose. It will inform the other EU institutions and bodies of the results of that review.

([1]) The increasing use of portable computing and communication devices and its impact on the health of EU workers, European Union (2010); available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=148&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes

([2]) Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003996/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(31 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Depressione in aumento

I disturbi mentali e la depressione sono in costante crescita, come dimostra il rapporto della Banca mondiale, condotto dall'università di Harvard e dall'OMS, che ha valutato l'impatto in 187 paesi di 67 fattori di rischio e 291 malattie. Se nel 1990 la depressione era il quarto disturbo più diffuso al mondo, nel 2000 è salita al terzo posto e oggi si riconferma tra le malattie più gravi e diffuse. I disturbi mentali sono responsabili dello 0,5 % delle morti per malattia, ma costituiscono il 22,9 % delle cause di disabilità. La consapevolezza sul tema è scarsa, e non tutti gli Stati membri hanno conoscenza e strutture adeguate per affrontare il problema. Lo studio fa riferimento a casi di malattia grave e non a sbalzi di umore e alle forme di depressione leggera. Bisogna inoltre considerare che la depressione si riverbera anche sulle persone vicine al soggetto malato, che soffrono a loro volta delle condizioni psicofisiche del paziente, vedendo la propria vita fortemente condizionata, così come le proprie stesse condizioni di salute.

Può la Commissione indicare:

1. se ha altri dati di supporto sulla situazione della depressione negli Stati membri?

2. Quali politiche sanitarie e sociali mette in pratica per contrastare questo fenomeno crescente?

3. Se non ritiene che le condizioni di salute mentale possano essere strettamente legate a quelle lavorative e, in caso affermativo, se non ritiene di dovere fare quanto in suo potere per migliorare le seconde e di conseguenza le prime?

4. Se è a conoscenza di terapie alternative agli psicofarmaci che siano meno dannose per il paziente e, in caso negativo, se non ritiene di dovere finanziare ricerche scientifiche a questo scopo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(24 giugno 2014)

Grazie all'indagine europea sulla salute condotta mediante interviste (European Health Interview Survey) la Commissione dispone di dati sulla prevalenza dei disturbi depressivi tra gli adulti in 14 Stati membri. I tassi di prevalenza vanno dallo 0,8 % in Bulgaria e Romania al 5,6 % in Belgio (media: 3 %). Una relazione nel contesto dello studio sul carico globale di malattia (Global Burden of Disease Study) ([1]) ha segnalato tuttavia che la depressione risulta essere una delle tre principali cause di disabilità in tutti i paesi dell'UE.

Per rispondere al problema della depressione e degli altri disturbi mentali, la Commissione sostiene nel 2013 un'azione comune con gli Stati membri sulla salute e il benessere mentale ([2]) nell'ambito del programma unionale Salute. Uno dei suoi pacchetti operativi riguarda specificamente la depressione.

Per quanto concerne le azioni intraprese dalla Commissione in relazione alle condizioni lavorative e alla salute mentale dei lavoratori al fine di migliorare entrambe, la Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole deputata alle proprie risposte alle interrogazioni E-000717/2014, E-002017/2014, E-004644/2014 e E-005547/2014 ([3]).

La Commissione attira l'attenzione sul fatto che l'organizzazione e l'erogazione di servizi sanitari e di assistenza medica rientrano nella responsabilità degli Stati membri.

([1]) Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation: The Global Burden of Disease. Generating evidence, guiding policy. EU and EFTA regional edition, 2013.
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003996/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: Depression on the increase

Mental disorders and depression are constantly on the rise, as evidenced by a World Bank report conducted by Harvard University and the WHO, which assessed the impact of 67 risk factors and 291 illnesses in 187 countries. In 1990, depression was the fourth most common disorder in the world. It had risen to third place by the year 2000 and is still one of the most serious and common illnesses. Mental disorders are responsible for 0.5% of deaths as a result of illness, but are the cause of disability in 22.9% of cases. Awareness of the problem is limited, and not all the Member States have adequate knowledge and structures to tackle the issue. The study focuses on cases of severe illness, not mood swings and low-level forms of depression. Account also needs to be taken of the fact that depression has an impact on people close to the sufferer as well, who in turn suffer as a result of the patient's physical and mental state, with their own lives, and even their health, being severely affected.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it have any other figures on the situation as regards depression in the Member States?

2. What health and social policies is it putting in place to deal with this growing problem?

3. Does it not think that mental health might be closely linked to working conditions and, if so, does it not think it should be doing something to improve working conditions and therefore mental health?

4. Is it aware of alternative therapies to psychotropic drugs that might be less damaging to patients and, if not, does it not think it should be funding scientific research in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2014)

The Commission has data available on the prevalence of depressive disorders in adults in 14 Member States through the European Health Interview Survey. The prevalence rates vary from 0.8% in Bulgaria and Romania to 5.6% in Belgium (average: 3%). A report in the context of the Global Burden of Disease Study ([1]) stated however that depressive disorder was found to be one of the major three causes of disability in every EU-country.

In response to the challenges of depression and other mental disorders, the Commission is supporting a Joint Action with the Member States on Mental Health and Well-being ([2]) under the EU-Health Programme in 2013. One of its work packages specifically addresses depression.

As regards actions taken by the Commission on working conditions and workers' mental health with a view to the improvement of both, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to questions E-000717/2014, E-002017/2014, E-004644/2014 and E-005547/2014 ([3]).

The Commission draws attention to the fact that the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care falls under the responsibility of Member States themselves.

([1]) Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation: The Global Burden of Disease. Generating evidence, guiding policy. EU and EFTA regional edition, 2013.
([2]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003997/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(31 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Italia-Cina, latte import-export

La centrale del latte di Torino ha stretto un accordo con una società di importazione cinese e due settimane fa sono partiti i primi container di latte UHT diretti verso l'Oriente. Nell'accordo si parla di una fornitura di 2 milioni di litri di latte annui, con la centrale di Torino che ne produce oltre 165 milioni l'anno; quindi non è da escludersi che le esportazioni aumentino, una prospettiva che alla società quotata in borsa non sembra dispiacere. Anche Granarolo e Sterilgarda hanno da tempo avviato le esportazioni verso la Cina, anche per la mancanza di fiducia da parte dei consumatori di Pechino per il latte «domestico» che quattro anni fa finì sotto inchiesta per l'addizione di melamina, un additivo chimico che causò la morte di 6 bambini e l'intossicazione di 300 000 persone. Il latte italiano è il più economico d'Europa e fra due anni, con l'abolizione delle quote latte, la produzione aumenterà.

La Commissione:

1. ha pensato a elaborare strategie di esportazione per il latte prodotto nell'UE verso la Cina?

2. Nel caso in cui volesse avviare negoziati di libero scambio con la Cina, come regolamenterebbe le esportazioni e le importazioni di latte?

3. È a conoscenza di intossicazioni alimentari all'interno dell'UE per il latte proveniente dalla Cina e contenente melamina?

4. Quali controlli adotta nell'ambito delle importazioni di latte dalla Cina? Può fornire dati numerici a supporto della loro efficacia?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione ha seguito con attenzione le modifiche della regolamentazione sanitaria cinese nel settore lattiero-caseario e per garantire che la Cina adegui la sua legislazione alle norme internazionali e alle regole dettate dall'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio (OMC), ha formulato dettagliate osservazioni sui progetti di legislazione cinese e intrattiene scambi sistematici con le autorità cinesi. Tale maggiore armonizzazione della legislazione cinese rispetto alle norme internazionali dovrebbe facilitare il commercio internazionale, il che comporterebbe un vantaggio generale. Quando si verificano perturbazioni commerciali la Commissione ricorre a tutti i mezzi possibili per trovare soluzioni rapide, per esempio tramite il coordinamento interno con gli Stati membri e con l'industria dell'UE nell'ambito della strategia europea di accesso al mercato.

2. Sebbene il latte e i prodotti lattiero-caseari abbiano sempre un accesso preferenziale al mercato nell'ambito degli accordi di libero scambio negoziati dall'UE, è prematuro attualmente ipotizzare un accordo di libero scambio tra l'UE e la Cina. Al vertice di novembre 2013, l'UE e la Cina hanno avviato i negoziati per un accordo bilaterale sugli investimenti. Più ampie ambizioni, tra le quali un accordo di libero scambio, possono essere considerate soltanto come un obiettivo a più lungo termine e successivamente alla conclusione di un ambizioso accordo di investimento.

3. Le importazioni nell'UE di latte e prodotti lattiero-caseari cinesi non sono autorizzate, pertanto, non vi sono stati casi di intossicazione alimentare nell'UE provocati da latte proveniente dalla Cina e contenente melamina.

4. Stante la situazione descritta nella risposta 3, qualora venissero presentate per l'importazione nell'UE partite di latte o di prodotti lattiero-caseari provenienti dalla Cina, esse sarebbero respinte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003997/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: Milk imports and exports between Italy and China

Turin's Centrale del Latte (central dairy) has entered into an agreement with a Chinese import firm, and the first containers of UHT milk headed east two weeks ago. The agreement mentions the supply of two million litres of milk a year. Since the dairy produces more than 165 million litres of milk a year, it is possible that exports will increase — a pleasing prospect for the quoted company. Granarolo and Sterilgarda have been exporting to China for some time, not least because of Beijing consumers' lack of faith in 'domestic' milk, which was under investigation four years ago for the addition of melamine, a chemical additive that caused the death of six children and the poisoning of 300 000 people. Italian milk is the cheapest in Europe and production will increase in two years' time when milk quotas are abolished.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Has the Commission considered drawing up strategies for exporting milk produced in the EU to China?

2. Should it wish to enter into free trade negotiations with China, how would the Commission regulate milk exports and imports?

3. Is the Commission aware of any cases of food poisoning in the EU caused by milk from China containing melamine?

4. What checks are in place as regards imports of milk from China? Can the Commission provide figures on the effectiveness of these checks?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

1. The Commission has been following closely the sanitary regulation changes in China in the dairy sector. With a view to ensure that China aligns its legislation with international standards and with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, the Commission has provided extensive comments on drafts of Chinese legislation and have regular exchanges with Chinese authorities. This further harmonisation of Chinese legislation with international standards should result in the overall benefit of facilitating international trade. When trade disruptions occur, the Commission uses all possible means to find rapid solutions, including the internal coordination with EU Member States and EU industry under the EU's market access strategy.

2. While milk and dairy have always preferential market access within FTAs negotiated by the EU it is too soon to speculate about an EU-China FTA. At the November 2013 Summit the EU and China have launched negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement. Broader ambitions, including a free trade agreement, could only be envisaged as a longer term objective, and after conclusion of an ambitious investment agreement.

3. Imports of milk and dairy from China into the EU are not authorised, therefore there were no cases of food poisoning in the EU caused by milk from China containing melamine.

4. Given the situation described in reply 3 above, should consignment of milk or dairy products from China be presented for import into the EU, they will be rejected.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003998/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(31 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Plan Hidrológico del Ebro y embalses

Considerando la aprobación del Plan Hidrológico del Ebro y todo lo expuesto en la pregunta E-002404/2014.

Considerando que este plan plantea la construcción de 43 nuevos embalses que se sumarían a los 109 que hay actualmente, mayoritariamente para usos de riego, y el aumento de 45 0000 hectáreas de regadío que se sumarían a las 95 0000 existentes, previendo un aumento sustancial del consumo de agua del río.

Considerando que estos nuevos embalses harán que vuelva la «burbuja del agua» ya que no están justificados económica ni socialmente y solamente benefician a los intereses privados de las grandes constructoras, operadores de agua y mercados a los que responde este proyecto.

Considerando la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta E-014172/2013 sobre la presión de los embalses en la que afirmaba que «el artículo 4, apartado 7, de la Directiva marco del agua (DMA, 2000/60/CE) dispone que cualquier proyecto que pueda impedir la consecución de un buen estado ecológico o provoque un deterioro del estado de las masas de agua solo podrá llevarse a cabo si se cumplen las condiciones establecidas en dicho artículo y que una de estas condiciones es que los motivos del proyecto sean de interés público superior y/o que los beneficios que suponga el logro de los objetivos de la DMA se vean compensados por los beneficios del proyecto. Asimismo, debe demostrarse que los beneficios obtenidos con el proyecto no pueden conseguirse por otros medios que constituyan una opción medioambiental significativamente mejor».

¿Considera la Comisión que el Plan Hidrológico del Ebro y la construcción de 43 nuevos embalses pueden impedir la consecución de un buen estado ecológico y provocar un deterioro del estado de las masas de agua? ¿Considera la Comisión que el Plan Hidrológico del Ebro es un proyecto de interés público superior? ¿Considera la Comisión que los objetivos del proyecto no se pueden conseguir por otros medio que constituyan una opción medioambiental mejor? ¿Considera la Comisión que los objetivos del proyecto son más importantes que preservar un sistema ecológico como el Delta del Ebro que goza de diferentes figuras de protección a nivel estatal y europeo?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de mayo de 2014)

El artículo 4, apartado 1, letra a), inciso i), de la Directiva marco del agua ([1]) dispone que los Estados miembros deben tomar medidas para evitar el deterioro del estado de todas las masas de agua. Todo nuevo proyecto que entrañe modificaciones físicas de las masas de agua que supongan un deterioro debe demostrar que se cumplen las condiciones establecidas en el artículo 4, apartados 7 y 8. Entre ellas están el requisito, establecido en el artículo 13, de exponer los motivos de esas modificaciones o alteraciones en el plan hidrológico de cuenca.

Las presas grandes producen un deterioro de las masas de agua afectadas, pues alteran la hidrología y la morfología de los ríos al convertir una masa de agua en un embalse. Así pues, antes de autorizarse proyectos de este tipo se debe evaluar el cumplimiento de las condiciones establecidas en el artículo 4, apartado 7, y los motivos por los que se realiza el proyecto deben explicarse en el plan hidrológico de cuenca.

Tal como se señaló en la respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-02404/2014 y E-02572/2014 ([2]), el plan hidrológico de cuenca del Ebro se comunicó a la Comisión mediante el Sistema de Información sobre el Agua para Europa ([3]) el 17 de marzo de 2014. La Comisión está evaluando actualmente el contenido del plan y si cumple los requisitos de la Directiva marco del agua.

([1]) Directiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 23 de octubre de 2000, por la que se establece un marco comunitario de actuación en el ámbito de la política de aguas (DO L 327 de 22.12.2000).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/es/eu/wfdart13/es091/envuc1epa/

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003998/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: Water management plan for the Ebro river and dams

I should like to refer the Commission to the approval of the Ebro river basin management plan and to the full text of Written Question E-002404/2014.

The management plan in question proposes the building of 43 new dams (mainly for irrigation purposes) in addition to the 109 existing ones, and an increase in irrigation land of 450 000 hectares, in addition to the existing area of 950 000 hectares. This will entail a substantial increase in consumption of water from the river.

The new dams will bring back the 'water bubble'. They are cannot be justified economically or socially and will only be of benefit to those with private interests in the large construction firms, water operators and markets connected with the project.

In its reply to Written Question E-014172/2013 about pressure from dams, the Commission stated that 'Article 4(7) of the Water Framework Directive (WFD, 2000/60/EC) establishes that any project that is liable to cause failure to achieve Good Ecological Status (GES) or deterioration of status of water bodies can only be implemented if the conditions set out in that article are fulfilled. These conditions include that the reasons for the project are of overriding public interest and/or the benefits of achieving the WFD objectives are outweighed by the benefits of the project. In addition, it has to be proved that the beneficial objectives served by the project cannot be achieved by other means which are significantly better environmentally.'

Does the Commission take the view that the Ebro water management plan and the building of 43 new dams are liable to result in failure to achieve Good Ecological Status and the deterioration of the status of water bodies? Does the Commission take the view that the Ebro water management plan is a project of overriding public interest? Does the Commission take the view that the objectives of the project cannot be achieved by other means which are better environmentally? Does the Commission take the view that the objectives of the project are more important than the preservation of an ecological system such as the Ebro Delta which is protected under a number of national and European schemes?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2014)

The Water Framework Directive ([1]) (WFD) Article 4 (1)(a)(i) requires MS to take measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all bodies of surface water. Any new project that involves physical modifications of water bodies entailing deterioration must satisfy the conditions in Article 4(7) and 4(8) are fulfilled. These include the requirement to set out the reasons for those modifications or alterations in the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) required under Article 13.

Large dams cause a deterioration of the status of the water bodies affected, as they disrupt the river hydrology and morphology when changing a water body into a reservoir. Therefore the fulfilment of Article 4(7) conditions needs to be assessed before authorising such projects and the reasons for the project have to be explained in the RBMP.

As stated in the reply to written questions E-02404/2014 and E-02572/2014 ([2]) the Ebro RBMP has been communicated to the Commission through the Water Information System for Europe ([3]) on 17 March 2014. The Commission is currently assessing the contents of the plan and its compliance with the requirements of the WFD.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/es/eu/wfdart13/es091/envuc1epa/

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-003999/14
à Comissão
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(31 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Projeto COSTA — Rotas atlânticas para os Açores e a Madeira

O projeto COSTA («CO_2 & Ship Transport Emissions Abatement through LNG») tem como principal objetivo estudar a viabilidade de utilização de gás natural liquefeito (GNL) como combustível alternativo para a navegação marítima no Mar Mediterrâneo, Mar Negro e Oceano Atlântico, nomeadamente nas rotas para os Açores e a Madeira. O GNL diminui a autonomia aos navios, pelo que a posição geoestratégica dos arquipélagos dos Açores e da Madeira constitui uma potencial mais-valia ao nível do abastecimento de GNL nas rotas transatlânticas, motivo pelo qual o projeto COSTA abre importantes perspetivas para estas regiões ultraperiféricas (RUP).

O projeto COSTA visa complementar os resultados obtidos num projeto análogo no Mar do Norte e no Mar Báltico («LNG North Sea and Baltic project»), onde já existem desenvolvimentos significativos neste domínio. Contudo, até ao presente momento, apenas foram testados modelos para carreiras no Mediterrâneo, e não para as rotas atlânticas em águas profundas, nomeadamente para os Açores e a Madeira. Por este motivo, devido à importância e à distância destas rotas, e de modo a evitar uma situação de desvantagem competitiva destas RUP face aos restantes parceiros do projeto, urge dar continuidade a esta iniciativa que finaliza no corrente ano, através de um projeto COSTA II, que contemple devidamente as características e as especificidades das rotas para os Açores e a Madeira.

Perante o exposto, e considerando o interesse estratégico do projeto COSTA para a sustentabilidade ambiental das «Autoestradas do Mar», questiono o seguinte:

1. Confirma a Comissão o seu apoio à continuidade desta iniciativa através do financiamento de um projeto COSTA II, correspondendo às expectativas unânimes dos parceiros do atual projeto?

2. Reconhece a Comissão que a localização geográfica privilegiada dos Açores e da Madeira para as rotas transatlânticas justifica o desenvolvimento de estudos concretos e projetos-piloto específicos, incluindo a avaliação da viabilidade da criação de um terminal de abastecimento de GNL, que contemple análises aos níveis estratégico e competitivo, financeiro, infraestrutural, técnico e logístico, ambiental e de segurança?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(2 de maio de 2014)

O projeto COSTA («CO_2 & Ship Transport Emissions Abatement through LNG») é um dos projetos realizados ao abrigo do quadro financeiro plurianual 2007-2013 para a RTE-T, inserido no programa Autoestradas do Mar. No âmbito deste programa, e desde 2009, a redução das emissões dos navios tem sido um objetivo principal e uma prioridade fundamental. Assim, e apenas no âmbito desse programa, foram financiados mais de 15 projetos (dos quais o COSTA) e é possível que, após o último convite à apresentação de propostas do período 2007-2013, este número aumente para mais de 25, que representarão cerca de 800 milhões de euros de investimentos, uma vez adotada a decisão de seleção pela Comissão.

A Comissão pode confirmar que o programa de trabalho para 2014 relativo aos transportes do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa (CEF) (próximo convite à apresentação de propostas será em setembro de 2014) foi adotado e inclui nos seus objetivos a redução das emissões dos navios, definindo nomeadamente a utilização de gás natural liquefeito como prioridade fundamental no domínio das autoestradas do mar (ou noutros possíveis domínios, como os portos ou a inovação) ([1]).

Por conseguinte, todas as partes interessadas terão oportunidade de apresentar propostas concretas de desenvolvimento, bem como estudos de implantação estratégica no próximo convite à apresentação de propostas CEF. O programa de 2014 cria um quadro de oportunidades em toda a União Europeia, embora seja suficientemente flexível para ter em conta as condições económicas e as exigências táticas específicas, como as dos arquipélagos atlânticos dos Açores e da Madeira, situados estrategicamente entre as zonas de controlo das emissões de SO_x (SECA) europeia e norte-americana ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-guidelines/project-funding/work-programmes_en.htm
([2]) Zonas de controlo das emissões de enxofre.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003999/14
to the Commission
Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)
(31 March 2014)

Subject: COSTA project — Atlantic routes to the Azores and Madeira

COSTA ('CO2 & Ship Transport Emissions Abatement through LNG') is a project intended primarily to study the feasibility of using liquefied natural gas (LNG) as an alternative ship transport fuel in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Atlantic, not least on routes to the Azores and Madeira. LNG reduces ships' operating range, and the geostrategic position of the Azores and Madeira therefore constitutes a potential asset as regards the LNG supply on transatlantic routes; that being the case, the COSTA project opens up considerable prospects for these outermost regions (ORs).

COSTA aims to complement the results achieved in a similar project in the North Sea and the Baltic ('LNG North Sea and Baltic project'), in which significant developments are already occurring in the field concerned. However, the only models to have been tested to date are for Mediterranean shipping lanes and not for deep-water Atlantic routes, for instance to the Azores and Madeira. That is why, given the importance and the length of these routes, and in order to prevent the ORs from being placed at a competitive disadvantage in relation to the other partners in the project, it is essential for the initiative, which ends this year, to be continued in the form of a COSTA II project designed to cover the characteristics and specific features of the Azores and Madeira routes.

In the light of the foregoing, and bearing in mind the strategic significance of the COSTA project for the environmental sustainability of the 'Motorways of the Sea':

1. Can the Commission confirm that it will support the continuation of the above initiative by financing a COSTA II project, thereby meeting the unanimous expectations of the partners in the current project?

2. Given that the Azores and Madeira lie in a particularly useful geographical position for transatlantic routes, does the Commission agree that specific studies and pilot projects should be carried out in order to assess the feasibility of setting up an LNG supply terminal and to explore points related to strategy and competition, financing, infrastructure, technology and logistics, the environment, and safety and security?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2014)

The COSTA ('CO2 & Ship Transport Emissions Abatement through LNG') project is one of the projects implemented under the TEN-T framework 2007-2013 on the area of Motorways of the Sea. Under this programme and since 2009, ship's emissions reduction has been both a primary objective and a key priority. As such, more than 15 different projects (among which COSTA) have been funded, under Motorways of the Sea alone, and it is possible that following the last call for proposals of the 2007-2013 period this figure may rise to more than 25 projects representing *circa* EUR 800 million investments, once the selection decision is adopted by the Commission.

The Commission can confirm that the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) transport Work programme for 2014 (next call for proposals opens September 2014) has been adopted ([1]) and includes Ship's emissions reduction in its objectives, namely setting the use of Liquefied Natural Gas as a key priority under the Motorways of the Sea area (or other possible areas such as ports or innovation).

Consequently, all the interested stakeholders will find an opportunity for submitting concrete development proposals as well as strategic deployment studies in the forthcoming CEF call for proposals. The 2014 programme creates a framework of opportunities all over the European Union albeit being sufficiently flexible to cater for specific economic and tactical requirements, such as the ones for the Atlantic Archipelagos of Azores and Madeira, lying strategically between the European and the North American SECA ([2])s.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-guidelines/project-funding/work-programmes_en.htm
([2]) Sulphur Emissions Control Areas.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-004001/14
an die Kommission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(1. April 2014)

Betrifft: Umgang mit herrenlosen Hunden in Rumänien

Die EU fördert Presseberichten zufolge die Versorgung von Straßenhunden in Rumänien mit bis zu 250 EUR pro Hund. Berichten zufolge werden in Rumänien jedoch herrenlose Hunde oft eingeschläfert, obwohl Fördergelder für die Versorgung der Hunde angenommen werden.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten

1. Inwiefern fördert die EU Maßnahmen zur Eindämmung der herrenlosen Hundepopulation in Rumänien? Nach welchen Kriterien und in welchem Umfang findet diese Förderung statt?

2. Hat die Kommission Hinweise darauf, dass diese Gelder nicht bestimmungsgemäß verwendet werden? Inwieweit wird der Gebrauch von EU-Fördergeldern kontrolliert?

3. Falls die Kommission Hinweise auf einen Missbrauch hat, welche Schritte werden vonseiten der Kommission eingeleitet, um dem Missbrauch zu begegnen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(15. Mai 2014)

Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf die Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 und E-005276/2013 ([1]) verwiesen, in denen es um streunende Hunde und deren Behandlung geht.

Die Kommission kann keine Maßnahmen zur Kontrolle der Population streunender Hunde in Rumänien fördern, da dies nicht in den Zuständigkeitsbereich der EU fällt.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004001/14
to the Commission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Dealing with stray dogs in Romania

According to press reports, the EU helps fund the care of stray dogs in Romania to the tune of up to EUR 250 per dog. Even in cases where this money has been accepted, however, dogs are still often put down.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. How exactly does the EU fund measures to control the stray dog population in Romania? According to what criteria and on what scale is this funding provided?

2. Does the Commission have evidence that this money is being misappropriated? How closely is the use of this EU financial assistance monitored?

3. If the Commission has evidence that money is being misappropriated, what action will it take to address this problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2014)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 and E-005276/2013 ([1]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

EU competences do not allow the Commission to fund measures to control the stray dog population in Romania.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-004002/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(1. travnja 2014.)

Predmet: Obustava mjera aktivne politike zapošljavanja mladih u RH

Stopa nezaposlenosti među mladima do 29 godina starosti u Republici Hrvatskoj prema najnovijim statističkim podatcima varira između 49 i 52 posto, što Hrvatsku svrstava u sami vrh ljestvice država članica s najvišom stopom nezaposlenosti mladih.

Republika Hrvatska trenutno je obustavila mjere aktivne politike zapošljavanja mladih zbog pomanjkanja financijskih sredstava. Zbog potreba fiskalne konsolidacije hrvatska vlada pomalo je neočekivano odlučila štedjeti upravo na tim mjerama te je budžet za njih smanjen za 35 posto, što je nažalost onemogućilo nadležno ministarstvo da nastavi s provođenjem mjera dosadašnjom dinamikom.

U hrvatskom se javnom prostoru pojavila informacija kako je neizdavanje akreditacije Hrvatskoj za korištenje strukturnih fondova EU-a glavni razlog zbog kojeg naša država još uvijek nije dobila europska sredstva za poticanje zapošljavanja mladih.

S obzirom na to da je obustava mjera aktivne politike zapošljavanja mladih uzdrmala hrvatsku javnost i da stvaranje takve negativne atmosfere oko gorućeg problema u Republici Hrvatskoj šteti, između ostalog, i ugledu same Unije u očima hrvatskih građana, od Komisije tražim hitan i konkretan odgovor na pitanja u kojoj je fazi ishođenje akreditacije za korištenje strukturnih fondova EU-a i kad bi Republika Hrvatska trebala očekivati prvu isplatu iz tih fondova.

Odgovor g. Andora u ime Komisije
(6. svibnja 2014.)

Prije pristupanja Hrvatske EU-u aktivne mjere u području tržišta rada, uključujući one usmjerene na mlade, sufinancirane su operativnim programom *Razvoj ljudskih potencijala* (RLJP) u okviru IV. komponente Instrumenta za pretpristupnu pomoć. Nakon pristupanja Hrvatske taj je program revidiran i pretvoren u operativni program RLJP (2007. – 2013.) Europskog socijalnog fonda (ESF).

U skladu s Uredbom (EZ) br. 1083/2006 ([1]), kako je izmijenjena osobito Aktom o pristupanju Hrvatske, isplate iz fondova EU-a mogu se izvršavati samo ako Komisija nema dvojbi po pitanju sustava upravljanja i kontrole u državama članicama (MCS) koji su namijenjeni praćenju korištenja sredstava.

Dana 13. ožujka 2014. hrvatske vlasti dostavile su izvješće o ocjeni sukladnosti MCS-a za potrebe operativnog programa RLJP (2007. — 2013.). Komisija je 8. travnja 2014. obavijestila hrvatsko revizorsko tijelo i upravljačko tijelo ESF-a (Ministarstvo rada i mirovinskog sustava) da je službeno odobrila procjenu sukladnosti MCS-a za potrebe operativnog progama RLJP (2007. — 2013.). Time su ispunjeni uvjeti navedeni u Uredbi, čime se Komisiji omogućuje pokretanje isplate iznosa predfinanciranja od 18 milijuna eura 9. travnja, a 10. travnja 2014. plaćanje tijekom provedbe u iznosu od 11,6 milijuna eura.

Hrvatska ima pravo na potporu u okviru Inicijative za zapošljavanje mladih (YEI), koja je namijenjena financiranju mjera za izravnu pomoć mladima koji nemaju pristup zapošljavanju, obrazovanju ili osposobljavanju. Okvirna dodjela sredstava za Hrvatsku u okviru YEI-a za 2014. i 2015. iznosi 66 177 144 eura, čemu će se pridodati najmanje isti iznos sredstava ESF-a. O operativnom programu ESF-a *Učinkoviti ljudski potencijali* (2014. — 2020.), u okviru kojega se planiraju mjere YEI-a, još uvijek se pregovara.

([1]) Članak 71. stavak 1. i 2. te dio 7. Priloga III. Uredbi Vijeća (EZ) br. 1083/2006 od 11. srpnja 2006. o utvrđivanju općih odredaba o Europskom fondu za regionalni razvoj, Europskom socijalnom fondu i Kohezijskom fondu i stavljanju izvan snage Uredbe (EZ) br. 1260/1999 (SL L 210, 31.7.2006.) kako je izmijenjeno osobito Aktom o pristupanju Hrvatske.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004002/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Cessation of active youth employment policy measures in Croatia

According to the most recent statistical data, the unemployment rate in Croatia among young people (up to the age of 29) fluctuates between 49% and 52%, putting Croatia at the very top of the list of Member States with the highest rates of youth unemployment.

Croatia has now ceased its active youth employment policy measures owing to a shortage of funding. Given the necessity of fiscal consolidation, the Croatian Government took the somewhat unexpected decision to make savings by cutting these measures, reducing the budget for them by 35%. This has, regrettably, prevented the competent ministry from continuing to implement the measures as it had before.

The Croatian public has learned that the main reason why Croatia has still not received EU funds to help promote youth unemployment is the fact that Croatia has not been authorised to draw on EU structural funds.

The cessation of active youth employment policy measures has shocked Croatian society, and the creation of such a negative atmosphere surrounding what is a burning issue for Croatia is doing damage to the EU's reputation in the eyes of Croats. In this connection, can the Commission say what the state of play is as regards obtaining authorisation to draw on EU structural funds? Can the Commission also say when Croatia should expect its first payment from these funds?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2014)

Prior to Croatia's accession, active labour-market policy measures, including those focusing on youth, were co-funded through the Human Resources Development (HRD) Operational Programme (OP) under Component IV of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance. Following Croatia's accession, that Programme was revised and became the European Social Fund (ESF) HRD OP (2007-13).

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 ([1]), as amended in particular by the Act of Accession of Croatia, payments from EU Funds can only be made where the Commission has no reservations regarding the Member State's management and control system (MCS) for monitoring the Funds' implementation.

On 13 March 2014 the Croatian authorities submitted a report on the compliance assessment of the MCS for the HRD OP (2007-13). On 8 April 2014 the Commission notified the Croatian audit authority and the ESF managing authority (the Ministry of Labour and Pension System) that it had officially approved the compliance assessment of the MCS for the HRD OP (2007-13). Thus the conditions set in the regulation were met and enabled the Commission to initiate payment of pre-financing amounting to EUR 18 million on 9 April and an interim payment of EUR 11.6 million on 10 April 2014.

Croatia is eligible under the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the aim of which is to finance measures directly helping young people neither in employment, nor in education or training. Croatia's provisional allocation under the YEI for 2014 and 2015 is EUR 66 177 144 million, which is to be matched by at least the same amount from the ESF allocation. The ESF Efficient Human Resources OP (2014-20), under which YEI measures are programmed, is still being negotiated.

([1]) Article 71(1) and (2) of and Part 7 of Annex III to Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 (OJ L 210, 31.7.2006), as amended in particular by the Act of Accession of Croatia.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-004003/14
Komisi
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(1. dubna 2014)

Předmět: Nepřiměřená délka soudního řízení v občanskoprávních věcech v Itálii

Současný italský soudní systém je extrémně pomalý a neefektivní, přičemž soudní řízení v občansko-právních sporech v průměru trvá téměř 8 let, z čehož téměř 564 dní připadá na soudní přelíčení. Na konci roku 2010 čekalo na rozsudek soudu téměř šest milionů občanskoprávních případů. V letech 2001 až 2008 se nepřiměřená délka soudního řízení týkala 40 000 případů. Pro podniky z jiných evropských zemí snižuje nepřiměřená délka řízení atraktivitu Itálie jako země, ve které investují a působí, protože se musí obrátit na italské soudy vždy, když potřebují, aby byly rozhodnuty smluvní spory nebo jiné občanskoprávní věci.

1. Souhlasí Komise s tím, že tyto institucionální problémy v Itálii brzdí vymahatelnost jednotného evropského trhu a jsou přímou hrozbou pro jednotný trh, protože ztěžují neitalským podnikům legální podnikání a získání potřebných povolení a brání volnému pohybu kapitálu a pracovních sil?

2. Jaké kroky Komise přijme, aby zajistila efektivnější fungování italského soudního systému v občanskoprávních věcech?

3. Co může Komise udělat, aby zajistila větší vymahatelnost jednotného trhu v Itálii, pokud jde o smluvní spory?

Odpověď Viviane Redingové jménem Komise
(19. června 2014)

Předvídatelná, rychlá a vymahatelná soudní rozhodnutí jsou důležitými strukturálními složkami atraktivního podnikatelského prostředí. Proto je zkvalitnění úrovně, nezávislosti a účinnosti systémů soudnictví jednou z priorit evropského semestru.

V letech 2012, 2013 a 2014 schválila Rada ([1]) na návrh Komise doporučení členskému státu určené Itálii. V doporučení na rok 2014 (doporučení č. 3) je Itálii adresována tato výzva „*[…] Sledovat v náležitou dobu dopad reforem přijatých ke zvýšení efektivnosti civilního soudnictví, aby byla zaručena jejich účinnost a případně přijata nezbytná doplňková opatření*“.

V rámci procesu evropského semestru pro rok 2014 Komise v současné době provádí analýzu jednotlivých zemí s ohledem na uplatňování uvedeného doporučení. V této souvislosti zohledňuje informace, které poskytuje Srovnávací přehled EU o soudnictví z roku 2014 ([2]).

([1]) Viz doporučení Rady (2012/C 219/14) ze dne 10. července 2012 k národnímu programu reforem.
Itálie na rok 2012 a stanovisko Rady k programu stability Itálie na období 2012-2015; doporučení Rady (2013/C 217/11) ze dne 9. července 2013 k národnímu programu reforem Itálie na rok 2013 a stanovisko Rady k programu stability Itálie na období 2012-2017.

([2]) Sdělení Komise s názvem Srovnávací přehled EU o soudnictví z roku 2014, COM(2014) 155 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004003/14
to the Commission
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Excessive length of civil court cases in Italy

The current Italian judicial system is extremely slow and inefficient, with average civil cases taking nearly eight years, of which 564 days are trials. At the end of 2010, there were close to six million civil cases working their way through the judicial system. Between 2001 and 2008, around 40 000 cases related to the excessive length of judicial proceedings. The excessive length of trials make Italy less appealing for businesses from other European countries as a country in which to invest and operate because they are obliged to go through the Italian courts whenever they need to settle contract disputes or other civil cases.

1. Does the Commission agree that these institutional problems in Italy hinder the enforceability of the European single market and are a direct threat to the single market, making it difficult for non-Italian businesses to operate legally and obtain the necessary permits, and preventing the free movement of capital and labour?

2. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that the Italian judicial system operates more effectively with regard to civil cases?

3. What can the Commission do to further ensure the enforceability of the single market in Italy with regard to contract disputes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

Predictable, timely and enforceable justice decisions are important structural components of an attractive business environment. Accordingly, the improvement of the quality, independence and efficiency of judicial systems is a priority for the European Semester.

In 2012, 2013 and 2014 the Council ([1]) endorsed a Country Specific Recommendation (CSR) to Italy, on the proposal of the Commission. The 2014 CSR (#3) calls on Italy to ' (…) Timely monitor the impact of the reforms adopted to increase the efficiency of civil justice with a view to securing their effectiveness and adopting complementary action if needed'.

The Commission is currently carrying out its country-specific analysis on the implementation of this recommendation, as part of the 2014 European Semester process. In this context, information of the 2014 EU Justice Scoreboard ([2]) is taken into account.

([1]) See: Council Recommendation (2012/C 219/14), of 10.7.2012, on the National Reform Programme 2012 of Italy and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Italy, 2012-2015; Council Recommendation (2013/C 217/11), of 9.7.2013, on the National Reform Programme 2013 of Italy and delivering a Council opinion on the Stability Programme of Italy, 2012-2017.

([2]) Communication from the Commission, The 2014 EU Justice Scoreboard, COM(2014) 155 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004004/14
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: European leadership in Arctic research — Interact

Will the Commission state how much has been contributed from the EU budget towards the Scannet and latterly the Interact network of Arctic research stations, and for what purpose?

Can the Commission confirm that 64 research stations, including those in Russia, Canada and the USA, are included or expect shortly to be included in the Interact network, and that this project remains European-led, with the grant hosted by the Swedish Royal Academy of Science and scientific coordination efforts led from Sheffield University in the UK?

Can the Commission indicate whether it believes that the results to date from Interact, particularly with regard to its role in improving our understanding of climate change and its effects upon weather systems, biodiversity, and landscape changes in the Arctic regions, as well as promoting international scientific cooperation, providing access for visiting scientists to the whole of the Artic, and knowledge-sharing about matters such as the risk of extreme events and the consequences in ecosystem services for people, have met its expectations?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

Scannet is a FP5 ([1]) thematic network project that has received a EU contribution of EUR 0.9 million and ended in 2004. It aimed to ensure easily available environmental data from the North Atlantic Region by compiling and comparing existing environmental data from 9 field sites, improving comparability and coverage of long-term observations, access and relevance of data.

Interact ([2]) is a FP7 ([3]) Research Infrastructures project with a EU contribution of EUR 7.3 million, ending in December 2014 and including 33 partners and 25 research stations. 'Observer stations' have also joined the project (with no EU financial support), for a total of 64 stations, including stations in Russia, USA and Canada. The main aim of Interact is to build capacity for identifying, understanding, predicting and responding to environmental changes throughout the Arctic.

The existing Interact project is indeed led by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The Interact partners may wish to apply to the Infraia-1-2014/2015 call published on 11 December 2013 as a topic on Research infrastructures for terrestrial research in the Arctic has been identified in that call. It would be up to the consortium to agree on the coordinating entity for the new project proposal.

When finished, Interact will have provided more than 500 scientists with the possibility to conduct research in the Arctic. The project has developed a new set of instruments to measure surface energy balance and the data provided by it will feed into climate models to improve their ability to predict climate. This research has already resulted in many scientific publications, adding to our knowledge on environmental change, its impacts and the way society needs to adapt to these changes in the future.

([1]) Fifth Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP5, 1998-2002).
([2]) http://www.eu-interact.org/
([3]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004009/14
do Komisji
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(1 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Klauzula napraw do dyrektywy 98/71/WE

W 2004 r. Komisja przedłożyła propozycję wprowadzenia klauzuli napraw do dyrektywy 98/71/WE w sprawie prawnej ochrony wzorów, pozwalając w ten sposób na częściową liberalizację rynku. Problem dotyczy rynku zewnętrznych części zamiennych najczęściej stosowanych do napraw powypadkowych na rynku wtórnym [*aftermarket*] – lusterka, błotniki, szyby, elementy nadwozia, światła, etc.

W dniu 12 grudnia 2007 r. Parlament Europejski większością głosów zaakceptował wprowadzenie klauzuli napraw. W związku z powyższym jedenaście państw członkowskich zliberalizowało swoje rynki. Również w pozostałych krajach istnieją wyraźne sygnały w kierunku liberalizacji. Na przykład we Francji władze państwowe ds. konkurencji potwierdziły potrzebę liberalizacji rynku części zamiennych poprzez przyjęcie rozwiązań opartych na zasadach zawartych w klauzuli napraw.

Pomimo powyższych postępów w kierunku liberalizacji rynku propozycja Komisji dotycząca klauzuli napraw została aktualnie wpisana na listę projektów legislacyjnych do wycofania w kwietniu (ref. Program Prac Komisji na 2014 rok – Aneks IV – strona 29) z powodu braku zgody na poziomie Rady.

Nie ulega wątpliwości, że osiągnięcie kompromisu w niniejszej sprawie w Radzie Europejskiej jest w obecnej sytuacji trudne. Jest to jednak temat szczególnie ważny i aktualny dla krajów członkowskich, zwłaszcza dla tych, które już zliberalizowały lub mają zamiar liberalizować swoje rynki.

Biorąc pod uwagę konsekwentne działania w kierunku liberalizacji rynku zewnętrznych części zamiennych w ramach Jednolitego Rynku Europejskiego, wycofanie propozycji wprowadzenia klauzuli napraw do dyrektywy 98/71/WE w sprawie prawnej ochrony wzorów może być postrzegane na rynku jako krok wstecz Komisji. W związku z powyższym:

— Jakie są główne powody oraz w jakim celu Komisja podjęła taką decyzję?

— W jaki sposób Komisja zagwarantuje liberalizację rynku części zewnętrznych po wycofaniu klauzuli napraw, do czasu znalezienia alternatywnego rozwiązania?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(28 maja 2014 r.)

Komisja uznała za stosowne przygotować grunt dla następnej kadencji poprzez zestawienie zagadnień dotkniętych widocznym impasem. Wniosek z 2004 r. dotyczący zmiany dyrektywy 98/71/WE w sprawie prawnej ochrony wzorów (COM/2004/0582) nie uzyskał jak dotąd wystarczającego poparcia ze strony państw członkowskich w Radzie Unii Europejskiej, mimo że został przyjęty przez Parlament Europejski w pierwszym czytaniu w grudniu 2007 r. Wycofanie wspomnianego wniosku, który najwyraźniej znalazł się w sytuacji trwałego impasu, wpisuje się w tę kategorię.

Komisja pozostaje tym niemniej silnie zaangażowana w wysiłki na rzecz wyposażenia Unii Europejskiej w narzędzia niezbędne dla zapewnienia dalszego wzrostu i zwiększonej konkurencyjności, z uwzględnieniem efektywnej infrastruktury w dziedzinie własności przemysłowej. W tym kontekście Komisja postanowiła dogłębnie przeanalizować kwestię, czy obecne ramy prawne ochrony wzorów w Europie odpowiadają nadal potrzebom i oczekiwaniom europejskiego przemysłu. Pierwszym etapem analizy jest ekonomiczne badanie rynku wzorów przemysłowych, które zostało już rozpoczęte. Badanie obejmuje również kwestie części zamiennych i ma być ukończone do 2015 r. wraz z badaniem uzupełniającym dotyczącym aspektów prawnych ochrony wzorów w Europie. Komisja zamierza ponadto zainicjować debatę na temat ewentualnej reformy systemu prawnej ochrony wzorów w Europie. W tym celu Komisja przedstawi wyniki obu badań opinii publicznej jako przyczynek dla dalszej dyskusji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004009/14
to the Commission
Piotr Borys (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Repairs clause — Directive 98/71/EC

In 2004 the Commission brought forward a proposal to include a repairs clause in Directive 98/71/EC on the legal protection of designs, thereby making possible a partial liberalisation of the market. The area concerned is the market in external replacement parts that are mostly used for accident repairs (the 'aftermarket'): mirrors, mud flaps, windows, parts for bodywork, lights, etc.

On 12 December 2007 the European Parliament voted to accept the introduction of a repairs clause. As a result, 11 Member States liberalised their markets, and in the rest of the Member States there are also clear signs that liberalisation is on its way. Competition authorities in France, for example, have agreed that there is a need to liberalise the market in replacement parts and have taken steps based on the principles laid down in the repairs clause.

Despite this progress towards liberalisation of the market, however, the Commission proposal on the repairs clause is currently on the list of pending proposals for withdrawal in April (see Commission Work Programme 2014, Annex IV, No 32) on the grounds that no agreement has been reached in the Council.

There is no doubt that reaching a compromise on this issue in the Council is a very tall order as the situation currently stands. However, this issue is a particularly important and topical one for the Member States, particularly those that have already liberalised their markets, or are intending to do so.

Given the consistent action that has been taken with a view to liberalising the market in external replacement parts within the framework of the single European market, withdrawing the proposal to include a repairs clause in Directive 98/71/EC on the legal protection of designs might be perceived on the market as the Commission taking a step backwards. With this in mind:

— What were the principal reasons behind the Commission's decision? What was the Commission's aim?

— Once the repairs clause has been withdrawn, how will the Commission guarantee the liberalisation of the market in external parts until such time as an alternative solution is found?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission considers appropriate to pave the way for the next legislature by taking stock of manifest deadlocks. The proposal to amend Directive 98/71/EC on the legal protection of designs (COM/2004/0582) dates back to 2004 and so far has not received sufficient support from Member States in the Council of the European Union, despite the fact that it was adopted at first reading by the European Parliament in December 2007. The withdrawal of the proposal in question, which is faced with a clear and long-lasting impasse, falls within this framework.

However, the Commission remains strongly committed to giving the European Union the tools necessary for its further growth and stronger competitiveness, including effective infrastructure in the field of Industrial Property. In this context, the Commission has decided to thoroughly analyse whether the current legal framework for design protection in Europe continues to meet the needs and expectations of European industries. The first step of this analysis is an economic study on industrial designs that has already been launched. It addresses the issue of spare parts and will be completed in 2015 with a study concerning the legal aspects of design protection in Europe. The Commission intends to launch a future debate on the potential reform of the design system in Europe. For this purpose, it will present the results of both studies to the public for further discussion.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004010/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Droits de l'homme en Arabie saoudite

L'Arabie saoudite a accepté, il y a quelques jours, de nombreuses recommandations dans le domaine des Droits de l'homme pour améliorer son bilan. Sur 225 recommandations, elle en a accepté 145 pleinement et 36 partiellement, en a rejeté 38 et s'est abstenue sur 6. Néanmoins, les recommandations qu'elle a rejetées contenaient des points essentiels pour la démocratie, comme par exemple les droits des femmes, qui n'ont aucune liberté, ou encore l'accès des victimes à la justice.

Tout ceci alors que rien n'est actuellement prévu pour permettre aux groupes de travail des Nations unies, aux rapporteurs spéciaux ou aux organisations indépendantes de défense des droits humains de se rendre en Arabie saoudite pour rendre compte des violations des droits humains.

1. La Commission va-t-elle dans notre sens lorsque l'on pense qu'il faudrait imposer à l'Arabie saoudite la présence d'un groupe de travail pour évaluer la situation des Droits de l'homme en Arabie saoudite?

2. Le ministre de l'intérieur a annoncé «que des mesures seraient prises contre les militants qui s'allient à des organisations internationales en vue de nuire à l'intérêt national». Ne faut-il pas soutenir ces organisations internationales qui sont menacées par le pouvoir en place?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

Le bilan de l'Arabie saoudite en matière de Droits de l'homme reste un sujet de préoccupation pour l'Union européenne. La situation est particulièrement inquiétante en ce qui concerne la peine de mort, la liberté d'expression et les droits de la femme. Pour ce qui est de la situation des Droits de l'homme, l'UE coopère sans relâche avec la société civile en Arabie saoudite et à l'étranger, et poursuivra sur cette voie.

L'examen périodique universel auquel le pays a récemment été soumis au Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies a constitué une bonne occasion de discuter de la situation générale en Arabie saoudite. L'UE continuera à saisir chaque occasion de soulever les questions relatives aux Droits de l'homme avec ses interlocuteurs saoudiens, en s'appuyant notamment sur les recommandations formulées au cours de l'EPU.

L'UE préconise constamment à tous les pays d'adopter une attitude ouverte et constructive à l'égard des mécanismes des Nations unies, en particulier en adressant des invitations ouvertes aux rapporteurs spéciaux.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004010/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Diritti umani in Arabia Saudita

Pochi giorni fa l'Arabia Saudita ha accettato numerose raccomandazioni finalizzate al miglioramento della situazione dei diritti umani nel paese. Su 225 raccomandazioni ne ha accettate 145 integralmente e 36 parzialmente, ne ha respinte 38 e si è astenuta su 6 di esse. La raccomandazioni che ha respinto, tuttavia, riguardano elementi essenziali per la democrazia, come ad esempio i diritti delle donne, le quali sono private di ogni libertà, o l'accesso delle vittime alla giustizia.

Nel frattempo non è stato preso alcun provvedimento atto a consentire ai gruppi di lavoro delle Nazioni Unite, ai relatori speciali o alle organizzazioni indipendenti di difesa dei diritti umani di recarsi in Arabia Saudita per esaminare le violazioni dei diritti umani.

1. Conviene la Commissione che sarebbe opportuno imporre all'Arabia Saudita la presenza di un gruppo di lavoro incaricato di valutare la situazione dei diritti umani nel paese?

2. Il ministro dell'Interno ha annunciato che «saranno adottate misure contro gli attivisti che si alleano con organizzazioni internazionali al fine di danneggiare gli interessi nazionali». Non ritiene la Commissione che vadano sostenute queste organizzazioni internazionali minacciate dalle autorità saudite?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

La situazione dei diritti umani in Arabia Saudita resta una fonte di preoccupazione per l'Unione europea, in particolare per quanto riguarda la pena di morte, la libertà di espressione e i diritti delle donne. L'UE è impegnata in un dialogo continuo sulla situazione dei diritti umani con la società civile, sia nel paese che all'estero, e proseguirà su questa strada.

La revisione periodica universale cui è stata soggetta di recente l'Arabia Saudita dal Consiglio dei diritti umani delle Nazioni Unite è stata un'ottima occasione per discutere la situazione generale dei diritti umani nel paese. L'UE continuerà a sfruttare ogni occasione per sollevare le questioni relative ai diritti umani con i suoi interlocutori sauditi, basandosi in particolare sulle raccomandazioni formulate nell'ambito della revisione periodica universale.

L'UE raccomanda costantemente a tutti i paesi di adottare un atteggiamento aperto e costruttivo nei confronti dei meccanismi delle Nazioni Unite, in particolare estendendo l'invito aperto ai relatori speciali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004010/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Human rights in Saudi Arabia

A few days ago, Saudi Arabia accepted a series of recommendations for improving its human rights record: of the 225 recommendations, it accepted 145 in full and 36 in part, it rejected 38 and it abstained on six. Some of those it rejected, however, concerned issues fundamental to democracy, such as women's rights, which are non-existent in Saudi Arabia, and granting victims access to justice.

All the while, no plans have been made for United Nations working groups, special rapporteurs or independent human rights groups to go to Saudi Arabia and look into human rights violations.

1. Does the Commission agree that Saudi Arabia should be required to allow a working group into the country to report on the human rights situation there?

2. The Interior Minister has announced that 'measures will be taken against activists who have colluded with international organisations with a view to harming national interests'. Should these international organisations not be given support in the face of the threats issued by the Saudi authorities?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

Saudi Arabia's Human Rights record remains a matter of concern for the European Union. The situation is particularly worrying as regards the death penalty, freedom of expression and women's rights. The EU engages continuously with Civil Society in the country and abroad on the situation of Human Rights and will continue to do so.

The Universal Periodic Review that the country recently underwent at the UN Human Rights Council has been a good opportunity to discuss the overall situation of Human Rights in Saudi Arabia. The EU will continue to use every opportunity to raise Human Rights issues with its Saudi interlocutors, building in particular on the recommendations made during the UPR.

The EU consistently advocates for all countries to adopt an open and constructive attitude towards UN mechanisms, in particular by extending open invitations to Special Rapporteurs.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004011/14
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Respect des Droits de l'homme aux États-Unis

Alors que le sommet avec Barack Obama a énormément fait parler dans les médias, ne faudrait-il pas profiter de ce genre d'occasion pour rappeler aux États-Unis qu'ils ne respectent pas les Droits de l'homme? Après six ans de mandat, Barack Obama n'a toujours pas tenu une des promesses de sa première campagne: fermer Guantanamo, qui renferme encore aujourd'hui plus de 150 prisonniers. Pourtant, certains d'entre eux ont été reconnus comme libérables autant par le président Bush que par le président Obama.

1. Les autorités européennes discutent-elles avec leurs homologues américains de la libération de ces prisonniers?

2. Quelle est la position de l'Union européenne sur Guantanamo?

3. L'Union européenne pourrait-elle officiellement revoir le statut des prisonniers deGuantanamo?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004481/14
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Respect des Droits de l'homme aux États-Unis

Après six ans de mandat, Barack Obama n'a toujours pas tenu une des promesses de sa première campagne: fermer Guantanamo.

Aujourd'hui encore, ce centre compte plus de 150 prisonniers, alors même que certains ont été reconnus libérables, tant par le président Bush que par le président Obama.

1. Les autorités européennes discutent-elles avec leurs homologues américains de la libération de ces prisonniers?

2. Quelle est la position européenne sur la question de Guantanamo?

Réponse commune donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

L'UE n'a cessé d'affirmer sa position, à savoir que la lutte contre le terrorisme doit être menée dans le plein respect des normes internationales en matière de Droits de l'homme et de l'État de droit. L'UE continue de réclamer la fermeture de la prison de Guantanamo et estime que la détention prolongée, sans jugement, de prisonniers à Guantanamo est incompatible avec le droit international.

L'UE soulève régulièrement ces préoccupations lors de ses contacts avec le gouvernement américain, notamment lors des consultations sur les Droits de l'homme.

À la suite de l'adoption de la loi dite «National Defense Authorization Act» pour 2014, les dispositions concernant le transfert de détenus vers des pays autres que les États-Unis ont été facilitées. La nomination de deux envoyés spéciaux (au département d'État et au département de la défense) vise à faciliter le processus. Un deuxième comité d'examen périodique a aussi ét& constitué et de nouveaux transferts ont été annoncés.

Par le passé, plusieurs États membres de l'UE ont accueilli plus de 20 ex-détenus sur leur territoire. Un cadre spécifique avait été mis sur pied à cette fin au niveau de l'UE. Cependant, le Conseil et les représentants des gouvernements des États membres ont clairement indiqué, en juin 2009, que les États-Unis devaient eux-mêmes assumer la responsabilité première de fermer Guantanamo et de trouver un lieu de résidence pour ses anciens prisonniers.

L'UE continuera à se pencher sur ces questions lors de ses réunions régulières avec les États-Unis.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004011/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rispetto dei diritti umani negli Stati Uniti

Mentre il vertice con Barack Obama è stato di grande attualità nei media, non sarebbe opportuno cogliere l'occasione per ricordare agli Stati Uniti che non rispettano i diritti umani? Dopo sei anni di mandato, Barack Obama non ha tuttora mantenuto una delle promesse della sua prima campagna: chiudere Guantanamo, in cui attualmente sono ancora detenuti più di 150 prigionieri. Tuttavia, tanto il presidente Bush quanto il presidente Obama hanno riconosciuto che alcuni di essi possono essere rilasciati.

1. Esiste un dialogo tra le autorità europee e i loro omologhi americani riguardo alla liberazione di questi prigionieri?

2. Qual è la posizione dell'Unione europea su Guantanamo?

3. Potrebbe l'Unione europea rivedere ufficialmente lo status dei prigionieri di Guantanamo?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004481/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo negli USA

Dopo sei anni di mandato Barack Obama non ha ancora tenuto fede a una promessa della sua prima campagna elettorale: chiudere Guantanamo.

A tutt'oggi vi sono rinchiusi più di 150 prigionieri, alcuni dei quali sia il presidente Bush sia il presidente Obama hanno riconosciuto che potevano essere liberati.

Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante riferire:

1. se le autorità europee discutono con i loro omologhi statunitensi in merito alla liberazione di tali prigionieri;

2. qual è la posizione europea riguardo a Guantanamo?

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

L'UE ha ripetutamente espresso la propria posizione secondo la quale la lotta al terrorismo deve essere portata avanti nel pieno rispetto delle norme internazionali in materia di diritti umani e dello Stato di diritto L'UE continua a chiedere la chiusura del centro di detenzione di Guantanamo Bay e considera la prolungata detenzione senza processo dei prigionieri inammissibile ai sensi del diritto internazionale.

L'UE solleva regolarmente tali questioni nei suoi contatti con il governo statunitense, comprese le consultazioni sui diritti umani.

Dopo l'adozione del «National Defense Authorization Act» per il 2014, le disposizioni relative al trasferimento dei prigionieri in paesi diversi dagli Stati Uniti sono state rese meno rigide. La nomina di due inviati speciali (presso il dipartimento di Stato e il dipartimento della Difesa) mira ad agevolare il processo. È stato inoltre costituito un secondo comitato di revisione periodica e sono stati annunciati nuovi trasferimenti.

In passato diversi Stati membri hanno accolto oltre 20 ex detenuti. A livello di UE è stato predisposto un quadro specifico a tal fine. Nel giugno 2009, tuttavia, il Consiglio e i rappresentanti dei governi degli Stati membri hanno dichiarato esplicitamente che la responsabilità principale della chiusura di Guantanamo e del reperimento del luogo di soggiorno degli ex detenuti incombe agli Stati Uniti.

L'UE continuerà ad occuparsi di tali questioni durante le sue riunioni periodiche con gli Stati Uniti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004011/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — The USA and human rights

Given that the summit with Barack Obama has generated a great deal of media interest, would this not be a good time to remind the United States of its human rights failings? Even after six years in office, President Obama has yet to keep one of the promises he made in his first election campaign: to close Guantanamo Bay, where more than 150 prisoners are still being held today, even though both he and his predecessor President Bush have cleared a number of them for release.

1. Are the European authorities conducting any kind of dialogue with their American counterparts on the possibility of these prisoners being freed?

2. What is the EU's stance on Guantanamo Bay?

3. Could the European Union officially raise the issue of the status of the prisoners in Guantanamo Bay?

Question for written answer E-004481/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Respect for human rights in the United States

Even after six years in office, Barack Obama has yet to keep one of the promises he made in his first election campaign: to close Guantanamo.

To this day there are still more than 150 prisoners at the site, even though some of them have been deemed fit for release, both by President Bush and by President Obama.

1. Are the European authorities conducting any kind of dialogue with their American counterparts on the possibility of these prisoners being freed?

2. What is the EU's position on the Guantanamo issue?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The EU has repeatedly stated its position that the fight against terrorism must be conducted in full compliance with international human rights standards and the rule of law. The EU continues to call for the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility and regards prolonged detention of the Guantanamo detainees without trial as impermissible under international law.

The EU raises these concerns regularly in its contacts with the US Government, including in human rights consultations.

Following the adoption of the National Defense Authorisation Act for 2014, provisions concerning the transfer of detainees to countries other than the United States have been eased. The appointment of two Special Envoys (at the Department of State and the Department of Defense) is aimed at facilitating the process. A second periodic review board has also been completed and new transfers have been announced.

In the past, a number of EU Member States have accepted over 20 ex-detainees for resettlement. A specific framework was set up at EU level for that purpose. However, the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States clearly stated in June 2009 that the primary responsibility for closing Guantanamo and finding residence for the former detainees rest with the United States.

The EU will continue to address these issues in its regular meetings with the United States.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004012/14
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — La liberté de la presse au Swaziland

Le placement en détention illégal du rédacteur en chef d'un magazine et d'un avocat défenseur des droits humains respectés mardi 18 mars, après qu'ils ont critiqué le système judiciaire du Swaziland, prouve à nouveau que la liberté d'expression n'est pas respectée dans ce pays d'Afrique. Aujourd'hui, le Swaziland, oublié des médias et dont le quart de la population est touché par le virus du sida, a besoin d'une aide de l'Union européenne.

1. Quelle est la position de la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle envoyer des observateurs sur place pour rendre compte de la situation dans le pays?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(22 mai 2014)

L'UE est consciente de la détention de M. Thulani Maseko, avocat spécialisé dans la défense des Droits de l'homme, et de M. Bheki Makhubu, rédacteur en chef du magazine swazi «the Nation», qui ont tous deux été arrêtés le 18 mars 2014.

Selon nos sources, cette affaire est le résultat d'une tension existant au sein du système judiciaire.

Dans le cadre de la préparation du sommet Afrique-UE, l'instance judiciaire a été examinée conjointement par le SEAE et l'ambassadeur du Swaziland à Bruxelles.

Le 1er avril 2014, l'Union européenne a publié sur son site internet une déclaration locale à ce sujet, qui peut être consultée en anglais à l'adresse suivante: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/swaziland/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20140401_en.htm.
Cela a abouti, le 6 avril 2014, à la mise en liberté provisoire des deux accusés, qui ont été à nouveau arrêtés le 9 avril 2014.

Cette affaire a ensuite été soulevée par le chef de la délégation de l'UE lors de réunions avec le vice-premier ministre et le ministre des affaires étrangères, qui ont tous deux reconnu que ces arrestations étaient en train de créer un grave problème d'image pour le pays. Ils ont indiqué que la question était en train d'être examinée au niveau gouvernemental, tout en soulignant que l'influence de l'exécutif était limitée et qu'il ne pouvait pas s'immiscer dans l'action du pouvoir judiciaire.

L'UE est réellement préoccupée par l'absence de procédure judiciaire régulière et indépendante.

L'affaire suscite actuellement de vifs débats au sein de la société swazie, ce qui devrait contribuer à trouver une solution à cette crise.

La délégation de l'Union européenne au Swaziland suit cette affaire chaque jour et a assisté à toutes les audiences de l'instance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004012/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Libertà di stampa nello Swaziland

L'arresto illegale dell'autorevole caporedattore di una rivista e di uno stimato avvocato difensore dei diritti umani, martedì 18 marzo 2014, a seguito delle critiche da loro espresse nei confronti del sistema giudiziario dello Swaziland, dimostra nuovamente che in questo paese africano la libertà di espressione non è ancora rispettata . Oggi, lo Swaziland, dimenticato dai mezzi di comunicazione e con un quarto della popolazione colpito dal virus dell'AIDS, ha bisogno di un aiuto dell'Unione europea.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente?

2. Intende la Commissione inviare degli osservatori in loco per riferire in merito alla situazione nel paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

L'UE è al corrente della detenzione dell'avvocato difensore dei diritti umani Thulani Maseko e del redattore della rivista dello Swaziland «*the Nation*», Bheki Makhubu, entrambi arrestati il 18 marzo 2014.

Stando alle nostre fonti, questo è il risultato di tensioni esistenti all'interno del sistema giudiziario.

In preparazione del vertice Africa-UE, il SEAE ha discusso del caso giudiziario con l'ambasciatore dello Swaziland a Bruxelles.

Il 1º aprile 2014 l'UE ha pubblicato sul suo sito web una dichiarazione a livello locale sulla questione: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/swaziland/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20140401_en.htm, in seguito alla quale entrambi gli imputati sono stati temporaneamente rilasciati il 6 aprile 2014 per poi essere nuovamente arrestati il 9 aprile.

Il caso è stato successivamente sollevato dal capo della delegazione UE in occasione di incontri con il vice primo ministro e con il ministro degli Esteri, i quali hanno ammesso che gli arresti stavano creando un serio problema di immagine per il paese e hanno affermato che la questione era oggetto di discussione a livello di consiglio dei ministri, sottolineando tuttavia che l'esecutivo ha un'influenza limitata e non può interferire con il potere giudiziario.

L'UE è sinceramente preoccupata per l'assenza di una processo equo e indipendente.

Le vive reazioni che il caso ha suscitato nella società dello Swaziland dovrebbero contribuire a risolvere la crisi.

La delegazione dell'UE nello Swaziland segue quotidianamente il caso e ha assistito a tutte le udienze in tribunale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004012/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Press freedom in Swaziland

The placing in illegal detention of the highly-regarded editor-in-chief of a magazine and a well-respected human rights lawyer on Tuesday, 18 March, for criticising the judicial system in Swaziland, demonstrates once again that freedom of expression is not respected in that part of Africa. Swaziland, forgotten by the media and with a quarter of its population affected by the AIDS virus, today needs help from the EU.

1. What is the Vice-President's view of this situation?

2. Does the Commission intend to send observers to Swaziland to find out about thesituation at first hand?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The EU is aware of the detention of the Human Rights lawyer, Mr Thulani Maseko, and the editor of Swaziland's '*the Nation*' magazine, Mr Bheki Makhubu, who were both arrested on the 18 March 2014.

According to our sources, the case is the result of an existing tension within the judiciary system.

In preparation of the Africa-EU Summit the court case has been discussed by the EEAS with the Swaziland Ambassador in Brussels.

On 1 April 2014 the EU published a Local Statement on its website about this matter:
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/swaziland/press_corner/all_news/news/2014/20140401_en.htm
This led on 6 April 2014 to a temporary release of both of the accused, who were arrested again on 9 April 2014.

Subsequently, the case has been raised by the EU Head of Delegation during meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who both agreed that the arrests were creating a serious problem of image for the country. They stated that the issue is being discussed at cabinet level but underlined that the executive has limited leverage and cannot interfere with the judiciary.

The EU is sincerely worried about the absence of due and independent judiciary process.

The case is now vividly discussed in Swaziland society which should contribute to finding an answer to the crisis.

The EU Delegation to Swaziland is following the case on a daily basis and assisted at all court hearings.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004013/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: HP et CoCo Cloud

La Commission a sélectionné HP pour coordonner le projet CoCo Cloud (Cloud Confidentiel et Conforme), afin de s'assurer que les utilisateurs pourront échanger des données dans le Cloud de manière sécurisée et confidentielle.

Qu'est-ce qui a déterminé le choix de la Commission?

Quelles sont les garanties données par HP et ses plus-values par rapport aux autres candidats?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(16 mai 2014)

Le projet «Clouds confidentiels et conformes» (CoCo Cloud) est l'un des nombreux projets que la Commission finance pour relever les défis d'aujourd'hui et de demain en matière de cybersécurité et de respect de la vie privée. Il est financé en vertu de la convention de subvention no 610853, au titre du septième programme-cadre de l'Union européenne (7e PC/2007-2013).

Le consortium du projet «CoCo Cloud» se compose de neuf partenaires issus de quatre États membres différents et de la Norvège; l'entreprise Hewlett Packard Italiana Srl, qui est établie dans l'UE et remplit toutes les conditions de participation à des projets du 7e PC, en est la coordonnatrice. Toutes ces entreprises sont soumises au droit de l'UE et en particulier à la législation européenne en matière de protection des données (directives 95/46/CE et 2002/58/CE).

Le projet «CoCo Cloud» a été présenté en réponse à l'appel à propositions «ICT 10», sous l'«objectif ICT- 2013.1.5, fiabilité des TIC» et, plus précisément, le thème «Sécurité et vie privée dans l'informatique dématérialisée».

Il a été évalué en fonction de ses mérites et de ceux des neuf partenaires industriels et universitaires européens qui composent le consortium.

Comme toutes les propositions, il a fait l'objet d'une évaluation rigoureuse de la part d'experts indépendants, au terme de laquelle il a été retenu pour bénéficier d'un financement.

Cette procédure est totalement transparente et les règles de participation sont clairement définies. Toutes les entreprises enregistrées dans un État membre de l'UE ont le droit de participer aux appels à propositions du 7e PC.

Dans le cadre de cette même procédure, onze autres projets de recherche ont été sélectionnés pour bénéficier d'un financement.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004013/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Hp e CoCo Cloud

La Commissione europea ha scelto Hp per coordinare il progetto CoCo (Confidenziale e Conforme) Cloud, finalizzato a garantire agli utenti sicurezza e riservatezza nella condivisione dei dati su Cloud.

Che cosa ha determinato la scelta della Commissione?

Quali sono le garanzie fornite da Hp e il suo valore aggiunto rispetto ad altri candidati?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

CoCo Cloud, acronimo di Confidential and Compliant Clouds, è uno dei numerosi progetti finanziati dalla Commissione per affrontare le sfide attuali e future in termini di cibersicurezza e riservatezza. Il progetto beneficia di un finanziamento del Settimo programma quadro dell'Unione europea (7º PQ per il periodo 2007-2013) nell'ambito della convenzione di sovvenzione n. 610853.

Il consorzio del progetto CoCo Cloud, costituito da nove partner di quattro diversi Stati membri e della Norvegia, è coordinato da Hewlett Packard Italiana SRL, una società con sede nell'UE che soddisfa tutti i prerequisiti necessari per la partecipazione ai progetti del 7º PQ. Tutte queste società sono soggette al diritto dell'UE, in particolare alla normativa in materia di protezione dei dati (direttiva 95/46/CE e 2002/58/CE).

La proposta relativa al progetto CoCo Cloud è stata presentata in risposta al bando TIC 10 del 7º PQ per l'obiettivo ICT-2013.1.5 Trustworthy ICT, in particolare per il tema della sicurezza e della riservatezza nel cloud computing («Security and Privacy in cloud computing»).

La valutazione è stata effettuata sulla base del valore della proposta e dei meriti dei nove partner accademici e industriali europei da cui è costituito il consorzio.

Al pari di tutte le proposte, prima di essere ammessa al finanziamento, è passata al vaglio di un rigoroso processo di valutazione, eseguito da esperti indipendenti.

Il processo è del tutto trasparente e le regole per la partecipazione sono chiare. Tutte le società registrate negli Stati membri hanno il diritto di rispondere a inviti a presentare proposte del 7º PQ.

Oltre al progetto CoCo Cloud, la stessa procedura ha permesso di selezionare e finanziare altri 11 progetti di ricerca.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004013/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: HP and CoCo Cloud

The Commission has selected HP to coordinate the CoCo (confidential and compliant) Cloud project with a view to ensuring that users are able to exchange data in the cloud in a secure and confidential manner.

What led the Commission to make this choice?

What guarantees has HP given, and what made it stand out among the other candidates?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The 'Confidential and Compliant Clouds' (Coco Cloud) project is one of many projects the Commission funds to tackle the cybersecurity and privacy challenges of today and tomorrow. It is funded under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n°610853.

The CoCo Cloud project consortium has nine partners from 4 different EU Member States and Norway with Hewlett Packard Italiana SRL as its coordinator, which is an EU-based company, fulfilling all the necessary prerequisites to participate in FP7 projects. As such all these companies are subject to EC law and particularly EU data protection legislation (Directive 95/46/EC and 2002/58/EC).

The CoCo Cloud proposal was submitted to the FP7 ICT Call 10, Objective ICT-2013.1.5 Trustworthy ICT and specifically the topic on 'Security and Privacy in cloud computing'.

It was evaluated on its merits and those of the nine European Academic and Industrial Partners that make up the consortium.

As all proposals, it went through a rigorous evaluation process, performed by independent expert evaluators, and was subsequently selected for funding.

The process is fully transparent and the rules of participation are clear. All companies registered in EU Member States, have the right to take part in FP7 calls for proposals.

Apart from CoCoCloud, the same procedure led to the selection and funding of another eleven research projects.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004014/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Luxembourg et secret fiscal

Certains accords fiscaux élaborés par le Luxembourg sont dans le viseur de la Commission. Faute d'avoir obtenu les renseignements demandés, l'organe exécutif a lancé deux injonctions obligeant le pays à collaborer, sous peine de porter l'affaire devant la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne.

Ces injonctions concernent, d'une part, les pratiques en matière d'accords fiscaux préalables passés avec certaines entreprises. La Commission rappelle qu'ils ne posent pas de problème, sauf s'ils confèrent un avantage sélectif à certaines sociétés. D'autre part, elles portent sur les régimes fiscaux appliqués à la propriété intellectuelle, plusieurs États membres ayant adopté une fiscalité visant à stimuler l'innovation. En 2008, le Luxembourg a ainsi mis en place un dispositif qui prévoit une exonération fiscale de 80 % pour les bénéfices issus de l'utilisation ou de la concession de droits de propriété intellectuelle tels que les brevets, les marques, les dessins et modèles déposés, les noms de domaines internet et les droits d'auteur sur logiciels, rappelle la Commission européenne.

Dans les deux cas, le Luxembourg a invoqué le «secret fiscal», refusant de se montrer complètement transparent. Mais l'Europe n'est-elle quand même pas en droit de réclamer toute information qu'elle juge nécessaire pour une enquête portant sur des aides d'État et les États membres n'ont-ils pas le devoir de répondre?

1. Dans un tel cas de figure, à quelles sanctions un État s'expose-t-il?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(19 juin 2014)

La Commission peut, de sa propre initiative, examiner les informations concernant une aide présumée illégale, quelle qu'en soit la source ([1]).

Si, dans le cadre d'une enquête, la Commission adresse une demande de renseignements à un État membre et que celui-ci ne lui fournit pas les renseignements demandés, ou les lui fournit de manière incomplète, la Commission exige, par voie de décision (c'est-à-dire une injonction de fournir des informations) les renseignements demandés. Le 24 mars 2013, la Commission a publié un communiqué de presse expliquant qu'elle avait adopté une injonction de fournir des informations ordonnant au Luxembourg de lui fournir des informations sur ses pratiques fiscales ([2]).

Si un État membre refuse d'obtempérer, la Commission peut entamer une procédure d'infraction en vertu de l'article 258 du TFUE, ce qui conduira à un arrêt de la Cour de justice. Si l'État membre ne se conforme pas à l'arrêt de la Cour, la Commission peut demander à cette dernière de lui infliger des sanctions, sur le fondement de l'article 260 du TFEU.

([1]) Voir aussi le règlement (CE) nº 659/1999 du Conseil du 22 mars 1999 portant modalités d'application de l'article 108 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (Journal officiel L 83 du 27.3.1999, p. 1).
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-309_fr.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004014/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Lussemburgo e il segreto fiscale

Taluni accordi fiscali elaborati dal Lussemburgo sono nel mirino della Commissione. Non avendo ottenuto le informazioni richieste, l'organo esecutivo ha emesso due ingiunzioni che obbligano il paese a collaborare, con la minaccia di portare il caso dinanzi alla Corte di giustizia europea.

Tali ingiunzioni riguardano, da una parte, le prassi in materia di accordi fiscali preliminari conclusi con talune imprese. La Commissione ricorda che non costituiscono un problema eccetto quando conferiscono un vantaggio selettivo a talune società. D'altra parte, esse riguardano i regimi fiscali applicati alla proprietà intellettuale tenendo presente che parecchi Stati membri hanno adottato una fiscalità volta a stimolare l'innovazione. La Commissione segnala che, nel 2008, il Lussemburgo ha così introdotto un dispositivo che prevede un'esenzione fiscale dell'80 % per gli utili derivanti dall'utilizzazione o dalla concessione di diritti di proprietà intellettuale quali i brevetti, i marchi, i disegni e i modelli depositati, i nomi di domini Internet e i diritti d'autore sui software.

Nei due casi, il Lussemburgo ha invocato il «segreto fiscale», rifiutando di mostrarsi completamente trasparente. Ma l'Europa non ha comunque il diritto di rivendicare qualsiasi informazione che ritenga necessaria per un'inchiesta relativa agli aiuti di Stato e gli Stati membri non hanno forse il dovere di rispondere?

In questo caso, a quali sanzioni si espone uno Stato?

Risposta di Joaquín Almunia a nome della Commissione
(19 giugno 2014)

La Commissione può, di propria iniziativa, esaminare informazioni su presunti aiuti illegali provenienti da qualunque fonte ([1]).

Se, nel quadro di un'indagine, la Commissione chiede informazioni a uno Stato membro e quest'ultimo non le fornisce (o le fornisce solo in parte), la Commissione può adottare una decisione (chiamata ingiunzione di fornire informazioni) che impone di trasmettere le informazioni richieste. Il 24 marzo 2013 la Commissione ha diramato un comunicato stampa annunciando di aver adottato, nei confronti del Lussemburgo, un'ingiunzione di fornire informazioni per ottenere informazioni sulle sue pratiche fiscali ([2]).

In caso di mancato rispetto, da parte dello Stato membro, dell'ingiunzione di fornire informazioni, la Commissione può avviare una procedura d'infrazione ai sensi dell'articolo 258 del TFUE, che si concluderà con una sentenza della Corte di giustizia. In caso di mancato adempimento, da parte dello Stato membro, della sentenza della Corte, la Commissione può chiedere a quest'ultima di imporre a tale Stato membro sanzioni a norma dell'articolo 260 del TFUE.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 659/1999 del Consiglio, del 22 marzo 1999, recante modalità di applicazione dell'articolo 108 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (GU L 83 del 27.3.1999, pag. 1).
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-309_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004014/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Luxembourg and tax secrecy

The Commission has a number of tax agreements concluded by the Luxembourg authorities in its sights. Having been denied information it was seeking, it has issued two orders designed to force Luxembourg to cooperate or face having the issue referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

The first order concerns the advance tax agreements concluded with various companies. The Commission points out that these agreements do not pose a problem unless they give certain businesses a 'selective advantage'. The second order concerns the taxation of intellectual property, reflecting the fact that a number of Member States have introduced tax arrangements designed to boost innovation. Here, the Commission points out that in 2008 Luxembourg set up a scheme which granted an 80% tax exemption for profits generated from the use or assignment of intellectual property rights, such as patents, trademarks, registered designs and models, Internet domain names and software copyright.

Luxembourg has invoked 'tax secrecy' as the justification for not disclosing the full facts in both cases. Surely the EU has the right to request all the information it deems relevant to an inquiry into state aid schemes, and surely Member States have a duty to provide the information in question?

What penalties can be imposed on a Member State in a case such as this?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

The Commission may on its own initiative examine information regarding alleged unlawful aid from whatever source ([1]).

If the Commission requests information from a Member State in the framework of an investigation and the Member State does not provide the information requested (or provides only incomplete information), the Commission shall by decision (i.e. a so-called information injunction) require the requested information. On 24 March 2013, the Commission issued a press release explaining that it had adopted an information injunction ordering Luxembourg to deliver information on tax practices ([2]).

If a Member State does not comply with such an information injunction, the Commission can start an infringement procedure under Article 258 TFEU, which will lead to a judgment of the Court of Justice. If the Member State does not comply with the judgment of the Court, the Commission can ask the Court to impose penalties under Article 260 TFEU on this Member State.

([1]) See also Council Regulation No 659/1999 of 22.3.1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union of the EC Treaty Official Journal L 83/1, 27.3.1999, p.1-9.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-309_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004015/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Paix en Colombie

La Colombie vit depuis des années dans l'insécurité. Des négociations sont en cours entre le gouvernement et les Farcs pour mettre un terme au conflit qui les oppose. Cela serait une grande avancée pour les Droits de l'homme mais également dans la lutte contre la drogue.

1. L'Union européenne est-elle totalement en phase avec les positions du gouvernement en place?

2. Une problématique discutable concerne les compensations financières aux Farcs. Quelle est la position de la Commission à ce sujet?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, Mme Ashton au nom de la Commission
(2 juin 2014)

L'UE soutient les discussions en cours à La Havane destinées à mettre un terme au conflit qui oppose l'État de Colombie aux FARC, comme l'a redit par exemple le président Barroso durant sa visite en Colombie en décembre dernier, la toute première qu'ait faite un président de la Commission en effet dans ce pays. Comme indiqué par les Honorables Parlementaires, un accord de paix constituerait un progrès important et permettrait aux autorités de consacrer également davantage de ressources au développement social du pays.

Bien que l'UE ne participe pas aux négociations, le SEAE et les services de la Commission en suivent les progrès de près. Selon les informations disponibles, la question des compensations financières à verser aux FARC ne fait pas partie des négociations. Parmi les sujets discutés figurent la participation éventuelle future d'anciens membres des FARC à la vie politique du pays et le régime judiciaire à leur appliquer à titre transitoire.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004015/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Pace in Colombia

La Colombia vive da anni nell'insicurezza. Sono in corso negoziati fra il governo e le Forze armate rivoluzionarie della Colombia (FARC) per porre fine al conflitto che li vede antagonisti. Ciò rappresenterebbe un grande passo avanti non solo per i diritti dell'uomo, ma anche nella lotta contro la droga.

1. L'Unione europea è totalmente in sintonia con le posizioni del governo in carica?

2. Un tema controverso è quello concernente le compensazioni finanziarie a favore delle FARC. Qual è la posizione della Commissione a tale riguardo?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 giugno 2014)

L'UE sostiene le discussioni in corso all'Avana per porre termine al conflitto tra la Colombia e le Forze armate rivoluzionarie della Colombia (FARC), ome ribadito ad esempio dal presidente Barroso durante la sua visita in Colombia nel dicembre scorso, la prima da parte di un Presidente della Commissione in tale paese. Come rilevato dagli onorevoli deputati, un accordo di pace rappresenterebbe effettivamente un importante passo avanti e permetterebbe alle autorità di destinare più risorse anche allo sviluppo sociale del paese.

Sebbene l'UE non sia coinvolta nei negoziati, il SEAE e i servizi della Commissione seguono da vicino i progressi in questo ambito. Secondo le informazioni disponibili, il problema delle compensazioni finanziarie a favore delle FARC non fa parte dei negoziati, mentre tra i punti in discussione vi è l'eventuale futura partecipazione degli ex membri delle FARC nella vita politica del paese e il regime di giustizia di transizione da applicare agli stessi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004015/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Peace in Colombia

Colombia has been unstable for a number of years. Negotiations are taking place between the government and the FARC to bring an end to the conflict between the two sides. This would represent a huge step forward for human rights and also in the fight against drugs.

1. Is the EU on the same wavelength as the Colombian government on this matter?

2. One questionable aspect of the situation concerns financial compensation to the FARC. What is the Commission's position on this issue?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The EU is supporting the current Havana-based discussions with a view to ending the conflict between the Colombian State and the FARC, as reiterated for example by President Barroso during his visit to Colombia last December, the first ever by a President of the Commission to that country. As mentioned by the honourable Members, a peace agreement would indeed represent an important step forward and enable the authorities to allocate more resources also to the social development of the country.

Although the EU is not involved in the negotiations, the EEAS and Commission Services follow closely their progress. According to the available information, the issue of financial compensation to the FARC is not part of the negotiation,, whereas the points under discussion include the possible future participation of former members of the FARC in the political life of the country and the regime of transitional justice to be applied to them.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004016/14
to the Commission
George Lyon (ALDE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Scotland's EU membership

In a recent answer to Written Question P-001676/2014, the Commission cited a number of other Written Questions in response to Part 2, which asked:

'Could a territory which is negotiating secession from a Member State begin negotiations for EU membership before a final agreement on the terms and conditions of the secession is reached between the two separating countries?'.

However, none of the Written Questions cited contain any reference to whether or not a territory which is negotiating secession from a Member State can begin negotiations for EU membership before a final agreement on the terms and conditions of secession is reached between the two separating countries.

Could the Commission reconsider its response to this question and, bearing in mind that this was a priority question, could the Commission respond as quickly as possible?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2014)

The Commission has nothing further to add to its replies to the previous questions cited by the Honourable Member, the reply to Question E-008133/2012 being of particular relevance.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004017/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Étiquetage de la viande

La Commission a présenté, le 24 mars 2014, devant le Conseil des ministres de l'agriculture, son rapport sur l'étiquetage de l'origine des viandes utilisées comme ingrédient dans les plats cuisinés. À l'issue du tour de table, il s'avère que la majorité des États membres s'opposent à l'obligation de la mention du pays d'origine.

Le sujet ne faisant toujours pas l'unanimité au sein des États membres, il est question de poursuivre les travaux d'études sur les coûts et les incidences sur le marché intérieur et le commerce international. Ces investigations pourraient notamment être affinées en fonction des seuils de pourcentage de viande incorporée.

Quelle est la position de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(22 mai 2014)

Lors du Conseil «Agriculture et pêche» du 24 mars 2014, les États membres ont formulé des points de vue divergents sur le problème de l'étiquetage d'origine obligatoire pour la viande utilisée comme ingrédient. Il a été conclu que les discussions sur le rapport de la Commission devraient être poursuivies avec les États membres.

La Commission est d'avis que toute décision sur l'opportunité d'avancer une proposition législative et, dans l'affirmative, sur quels paramètres, devrait être prise seulement à la suite d'une discussion éclairée et approfondie, sur la base du rapport, avec le Conseil et le Parlement européen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004017/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Meat labelling

On 24 March 2014, the Commission gave a presentation to the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on its report on the origin labelling of meat used as an ingredient in ready meals. At the end of the discussion it was clear that most Member States were opposed to mandatory country-of-origin labelling.

Since the Member States have still not reached a unanimous agreement on this issue, we must press ahead with research into the costs of taking such action, and its potential impact on the internal market and international trade. This research could be fine-tuned to take into account the percentage thresholds with regard to the meat used.

What is the Commission's position on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

At the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of 24 March 2014, Member States took diverging views on the issue of mandatory origin labelling of meat as an ingredient. It was concluded that further discussions on the Commission report would take place with Member States.

The Commission is of the opinion that any decision on whether to proceed with a legislative proposal and if so, along which parameters, should only be made once an informed and comprehensive discussion on the basis of the report has taken place with the Council and the European Parliament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004018/14
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Promoting a competitive European flat glass industry

The use of waste glass (cullet) improves the energy efficiency of float glass manufacturing, reduces CO_2 emissions from the process and helps cut production costs. The recycling of flat glass waste is increasingly regarded as critical for the competitiveness of the European flat glass industry.

However, glass manufacturers estimate that less than 5% of end-of-life building glass from building demolitions, building renovations and window replacement is recycled, principally due to the absence of collection points for the material.

As the Commission considers the need to revise and update relevant waste legislation, what options is it considering to promote the collection and recycling of building glass?

In particular, is the Commission giving consideration to proposals requiring Member States to set up specific collection arrangements intended for the disposal of building glass by professionals employed in renovation and demolition work?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2014)

Directive 2008/98/EC ([1]) on waste provides the framework for waste management in the EU. It includes a specific target for construction and demolition waste: by 2020, re-use, recycling and other material recovery of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste shall be increased to a minimum of 70% by weight. The directive also contains an obligation for Member States to set up, by 2015, separate collection schemes for at least paper, metal, plastic and glass.

The Commission is exploring ways to use construction and demolition waste for the production of new construction materials. Also, as part of the review of the revised Waste Framework Directive, the Commission is considering introducing an 'early warning mechanism' allowing it to monitor Member States' performance against the targets set out in the directive.

The economic perspective of improved valorisation of the different streams of construction and demolition waste is currently discussed within the stakeholder group set up in the context of the 'Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its Enterprises' ([2]).

Finally, the Commission is launching a pilot project on 'Resource efficient use of mixed wastes' aimed at identifying best practices and the necessary framework conditions to promote a resource efficient management of construction and demolition waste, as well as the obstacles that have to be surmounted in those Member States where recycling of construction and demolition waste is in its infancy.

([1]) OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.
([2]) COM(2012) 433 final.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004019/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(1 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie niedoreprezentowania urzędników z nowych państw członkowskich w instytucjach UE

W bieżącym roku przypada dziesiąta rocznica przystąpienia Polski oraz dziewięciu innych państw do Unii Europejskiej. Jednym z warunków tego rozszerzenia jak również późniejszego przyjęcia trzech kolejnych krajów, było wprowadzenie parytetów zatrudniania unijnych urzędników. Mają one na celu zagwarantowanie odpowiednich proporcji przedstawicieli nowych państw członkowskich w instytucjach europejskich.

W oparciu o powyższe zwracam się z prośbą o informacje w następujących kwestiach:

1. Jakie czynności dotychczas podjęto, aby kwoty urzędników z nowych państw członkowskich zostały odpowiednio wypełnione na wszystkich poziomach, a w szczególności na poziomie kierownictwa wyższego szczebla?

2. Dlaczego w niektórych departamentach, przykładowo w Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Rynku Wewnętrznego i Usług (szczególnie istotnej dla gospodarczej integracji i spójności społecznej Wspólnoty), na wysokich stanowiskach nie ma obecnie żadnych przedstawicieli nowych państw członkowskich, podczas gdy kraje takie jak Wielka Brytania, Włochy i Belgia posiadają po aż dwóch reprezentantów?

3. Czy i jakie kroki planuje Komisja podjąć celem poprawy tej niekorzystnej dla Polski i dla pozostałych państw członkowskich, które wstąpiły do UE po 2004 r., sytuacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Przewodniczącego Komisji José Manuela Barroso w imieniu Komisji
(23 maja 2014 r.)

Informacje dotyczące spełnienia przez Komisję celów w zakresie zatrudnienia obywateli UE-10 ([1]) i UE-2 ([2]), zostały opublikowane pod koniec odpowiednich okresów przejściowych i jest to wyszczególnione w załączonych dokumentach.

Założone cele procedury naboru dla Chorwacji są w toku, a związane z nią informacje można znaleźć w komunikatach Wiceprzewodniczącego M. Šefčoviča do Komisji ([3]).

Dotychczas Komisja zatrudniła 14 obywateli państw UE-12 na szczeblu dyrektora generalnego lub jego odpowiednika. Ponadto zatrudniono 56 obywateli z państw UE-12 na poziomie stanowiska dyrektora lub równoważnym oraz 255 obywateli państw UE-12 na stanowiskach kierowniczych średniego szczebla.

Instytucje UE zatrudniają pracowników zgodnie z zasadami ustalonymi przez Parlament Europejski i Radę (państwa członkowskie). Oznacza to, że rekrutacja opiera się przede wszystkim na kompetencjach, przy jednoczesnym ułatwieniu uczestnictwa kandydatów ze wszystkich państw członkowskich w możliwie największym stopniu.

Komisja ma na celu utrzymanie szerokiej równowagi pod względem geograficznym w celu zapewnienia równomiernej reprezentacji wszystkich państw UE w ramach instytucji. Komisja nie stosuje kontyngentów na każdym poziomie stanowisk w odniesieniu do swoich urzędników, ani nie bierze pod uwagę narodowości odchodzącego pracownika jako czynnika uwzględnianego przy mianowaniu jego następcy.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/sefcovic/documents/eu-10_recruitments_en.pdf
([2]) 08.02.2012 [SEC (2012)110 /2].
([3]) 12.07.2012 [SEC (2012) 436] i 27.03.2013 [SEC (2013)190].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004019/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: On under-representation of nationals of new Member States among officials in EU institutions

This year we mark the tenth anniversary of the accession of Poland and nine other countries to the European Union. One of the conditions for this phase of enlargement, as well as for the subsequent accessions of three other countries, was the introduction of employment quotas for EU officials. These are aimed at ensuring that an appropriate proportion of the staff of the EU institutions is made up of representatives of the new Member States.

Given the above, I would like to put the following questions:

1. What steps have been taken thus far to appropriately fill the quotas for officials from the new Member States at all levels, with particular reference to senior management positions?

2. Why is it that in some departments — notably the Directorate-General for Internal Market and Services, which is particularly important for the Community's economic integration and social cohesion — there are currently no representatives of the new Member States in senior positions, while countries such as the United Kingdom, Italy and Belgium have two representatives each?

3. What steps does the Commission plan to take in order to remedy this situation, which is disadvantageous to Poland and the other Member States that joined the EU after 2004?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The information regarding the fulfilment, by the Commission, of the recruitment targets for EU-10 ([1]) and EU-2 nationals ([2]), was published at the end of the respective transition periods and it is detailed in the attached documents.

The recruitment targets for Croatia are on-going, and the related information can be found in the communications of Vice-President Šefčovič to the Commission. ([3])

So far, the Commission has recruited 14 EU-12 nationals at the level of Director-General or equivalent. Furthermore, 56 EU-12 nationals were recruited at the level of Director or equivalent, and 255 EU-12 nationals at middle management level.

The EU institutions recruit staff according to the rules established by the European Parliament and the Council (Member States). This means that recruitment is based firstly on merit, while facilitating the participation from all Member States as much as possible.

The Commission aims at maintaining a broad geographical balance in order to ensure a fair spread of all nationalities of the EU within the Institution. The Commission does not apply quotas at any level of posts for its officials nor takes the nationality of an outgoing jobholder as a factor in the appointment of a new occupant of the function.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/sefcovic/documents/eu-10_recruitments_en.pdf
([2]) 8.2.2012 [SEC(2012) 110/2] — Please see document in annex.
([3]) 12.7.2012 [SEC(2012) 436] and 27.3.2013 [SEC(2013) 190] — Please see documents in annex.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004020/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(1 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie podsłuchiwania klientów Orange przez francuskie służby specjalne

Według doniesień dziennika „Le Monde" francuskie służby specjalne nielegalnie monitorują rozmowy telefoniczne oraz inne usługi cyfrowe koncernu telekomunikacyjnego Orange. Proceder ten dotyczyć ma również klientów zagranicznych filii przedsiębiorstwa, w tym polskiej. Pozyskane dane mają być również przekazywane innym krajom. Tymczasem „Orange Polska" obsługuje ok. 15 milionów abonentów, co może powodować zagrożenie niemal całkowitej infiltracji polskiego społeczeństwa przez służby innego kraju. Informacjom dziennikarzy nie zaprzeczył prezes Orange, pan Stephane Richard.

W nawiązaniu do powyższego problemu zwracam się z prośbą o informacje:

1. Czy Komisja potwierdza ujawnione przez „Le Monde" przypadki podsłuchiwania klientów Orange w krajach UE oraz czy pozostaje to w zgodzie z unijnym prawem?

2. Czy i jakie działania zostaną zainicjowane w przypadku stwierdzenia naruszeń regulacji wspólnotowych w przedmiotowej sprawie?

3. W ostatnim czasie rządy kilku państw członkowskich wyrażały negatywny pogląd wobec ujawnionych przypadków podsłuchiwania przez amerykańską Agencję Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego. Czy Komisja rozważa zajęcie stanowiska wobec podobnych działań rodzimych służb specjalnych w państwach UE?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(5 czerwca 2014 r.)

Komisja jest zaniepokojona doniesieniami mediów o programach nadzoru stworzonych przez agencje wywiadowcze państw członkowskich, które wydają się umożliwiać dostęp do danych Europejczyków na dużą skalę oraz umożliwiać ich przetwarzanie.

W następstwie doniesień mediów Komisja podjęła działania w odniesieniu do wspomnianych zarzutów. W kwestii rzekomych działań prowadzonych we Francji, Komisja zwróciła się do władz francuskich o wyjaśnienie zakresu programu francuskiej Dyrekcji Generalnej Bezpieczeństwa Zewnętrznego (DGSE). Komisja zwróciła się również do władz francuskich o dostarczenie informacji dotyczących proporcjonalności tego programu oraz mającego zastosowanie zakresu nadzoru sądowego.

Bez uszczerbku dla uprawnień Komisji Europejskiej, stojącej na straży Traktatów, zapewnienie prawidłowego wdrożenia i egzekwowania unijnych przepisów w zakresie ochrony danych względem podmiotów publicznych i prywatnych w Unii Europejskiej leży w gestii organów krajowych, w tym organów ds. nadzoru nad ochroną danych.

Reforma unijnych przepisów o ochronie danych ([1]) proponowana przez Komisję wzmocniłaby i uzupełniła istniejące przepisy w zakresie ochrony danych osobowych. Ustanowiłaby także kompleksowe przepisy dotyczące ochrony danych osobowych przetwarzanych przez organy ścigania.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/data-protection/news/120125_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004020/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Snooping by French security services on Orange customers

According to reports in the daily *Le Monde*, French security services are illegally monitoring phone conversations and other digital services of the telecommunications company Orange. The practice also affects customers of the company's subsidiaries abroad, including in Poland. It is alleged that the data collected are also sent to other countries. 'Orange Polska' has some 15 million subscribers, and there is thus a danger of almost total infiltration of Polish society by foreign security services. Stephane Richard, Chair and CEO of Orange, does not deny the reports.

1. Can the Commission confirm the allegations made by *Le Monde* concerning snooping on customers in Member States, and state whether this practice is compatible with EC law?

2. Has any action been taken where these kinds of infringements of EU rules have been identified? If so, what has been done?

3. The governments of a number of Member States have recently expressed their disapproval at revelations of snooping by the US National Security Agency (NSA). Is the Commission planning to take a stance against actions of this kind undertaken by security services in the Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission is concerned about media reports on surveillance programmes of intelligence agencies of Member States which appear to enable, on a large scale, access to and processing of data of Europeans.

Following the media reports, the Commission has actively followed-up on these allegations. With regard to the alleged practices in France, the Commission has asked the French authorities to clarify the scope of the programme of the French Directorate General for External Security (DGSE). The Commission has also asked the French authorities to provide information about the proportionality of this programme, and the extent of judicial oversight that applies.

Without prejudice to the competence of the European Commission as guardian of the Treaties, it is for national authorities, including data protection supervisory authorities, to ensure the correct implementation and enforcement of EU data protection legislation *vis-à-vis* public and private bodies in the European Union.

The reform of the EU data protection legislation ([1]) proposed by the Commission would strengthen and enhance existing data protection rules. It would also establish comprehensive rules for the protection of personal data processed in the law enforcement sector.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/data-protection/news/120125_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004021/14
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(1 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Violența împotriva femeilor

Violența împotriva femeilor continuă să fie o problemă stringentă în statele membre ale UE, afectând drepturile fundamentale de bază ale femeilor, precum demnitatea, accesul la justiție și egalitatea de șanse între femei și bărbați. Impactul violenței împotriva femeilor depășește cu mult persoanele imediat implicate — victima (victimele) și autorul (autorii) infracțiunii — afectând familii, comunități și societatea în ansamblu.

Violența împotriva femeilor, sub toate formele sale, reprezintă o problemă gravă la nivelul Uniunii, foarte multe femei fiind supuse violenței fizice în cursul vieții lor de adult și foarte multe femei fiind victime ale violenței sexuale.

1. În condițiile actuale de criză socio-economică, consideră Comisia necesară elaborarea unui studiu de evaluare a impactului măsurilor adoptate de Uniunea Europeană pentru a combate violența domestică, în general, și violența împotriva femeilor, în particular, atât la nivel general european, cât și în cazurile specifice de la nivelul fiecărui stat membru?

2. Consideră Comisia că ar trebui elaborată o nouă strategie la nivelul UE pentru combaterea violenței împotriva femeilor — de exemplu, printr-o nouă legislație care să prevadă armonizarea legilor existente sau programe de creștere a gradului de conștientizare a acestei probleme în rândul cetățenilor UE?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(6 iunie 2014)

Comisia dorește să invite distinsa membră să consulte răspunsurile la întrebările E-3512/2014, E-3078/2014, E-2787/2014, E-2662/2014 și E-2581/2014 ([1]).

Măsurile deja întreprinse de Comisie pentru a sprijini statele membre în vederea prevenirii și eliminării tuturor formelor de violență împotriva femeilor constituie un cadru solid și cuprinzător de acțiuni concrete, care produc rezultate tangibile.

Comisia sprijină în mod activ toate statele membre îndrumându-le în implementarea măsurilor juridice în domeniul justiției civile și penale care protejează drepturile victimelor de sex feminin ale violenței pe criterii de gen.

Comisia sprijină statele membre în prevenirea violenței împotriva femeilor prin schimburi de bune practici și prin activități de sensibilizare, cea mai recentă fiind o cerere de propuneri pentru o sumă de 3,7 milioane EUR (2013). În plus, sensibilizarea cu privire la violența împotriva femeilor a fost una dintre prioritățile ultimei cereri de propuneri pentru granturi de sprijinire a acțiunilor în cadrul programului DAPHNE III. ([2])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2013_dap_ag_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004021/14
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Violence towards women

Violence towards women remains a particularly acute problem in the EU Member States, undermining their dignity and calling into question their fundamental rights, such as access to justice and gender equality. It also has consequences extending far beyond those immediately involved, that is to say the victim(s) and perpetrator(s), affecting families, communities and society as a whole.

This problem, in all its forms, is an extremely serious issue at EU level, many women being subjected to physical violence, including sexual abuse, in the course of their adult lives.

1. Given the current social and economic crisis, does the Commission consider it necessary to assess the impact of EU measures to combat domestic violence in general and violence towards women in particular at European and Member State level and to examine individual cases?

2. Is the Commission envisaging a new EU strategy to combat violence towards women, for example through the harmonisation of existing laws or the launching of EU public awareness programmes?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the replies to questions E-3512/2014, E-3078/2014, E-2787/2014, E-2662/2014 and E-2581/2014 ([1]).

The measures already undertaken by the Commission to support Member States in preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women constitute a solid and comprehensive framework for concrete action, bringing tangible results.

The Commission actively assists all Member States with guidance in implementing legal measures in the field of criminal and civil justice which safeguard the rights of female victims of gender based violence.

The Commission supports Member States in preventing violence against women through exchanges of good practices and awareness raising activities, recently with a call for proposals for an amount of EUR 3.7 million (2013). In addition awareness-raising on violence against women was one of the priorities of the last call for proposals for action grants under the Daphne III programme ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2013_dap_ag_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004022/14
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: EU support for Makassed Hospital in East Jerusalem

The Makassed Hospital is situated on the Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem and is the principal teaching and referral hospital for difficult and complicated cases among the Palestinian community in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

1. The hospital has received funding from the EU in the past. Will the Commission state how much has been paid from the EU budget and for what purposes?

2. Is the Commission satisfied that, despite the difficult circumstances of Israeli occupation, the hospital is providing a high standard of medical training and patient care?

3. Is the Commission satisfied that the EU funds allocated to support projects and services at the hospital have been spent effectively and for the intended purposes?

4. Can the Commission confirm that the Geneva Convention requires an occupying power to provide for the welfare of the people living under occupation? If so, can the Commission explain why it has proven necessary to provide EU funds to the hospital when the responsibility should surely rest with the Government of Israel?

5. Is the Commission aware that the Israeli authorities are asking the hospital to license its doctors and nurses, even though the majority of them live in the West Bank and the Israeli licensing authorities refuse to license nurses with Palestinian ID?

6. Will the Commission make the strongest possible representations to the Government of Israel to the effect that measures having the consequence of threatening the operation of the hospital and the health of Palestinian patients living under occupation would be regarded as intolerable by the EU?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

1. In 2013, an allocation of EUR 13 million was set aside for the payment of outstanding bills from the Palestinian Ministry of Health for referrals of patients to the Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem. Of this, 7.01 million Israeli Shekels (EUR 1.45 million) was used for the payment of bills for patients referred to Makassed Hospital.

2. Thanks to support from the EU and World Health Organisation, Makassed Hospital has been awarded the three-year Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation for quality and patient safety. The Joint Commission is a US-based organisation that has established patient safety and quality service standards and goals for health service facilities.

3. Post payment assurance was carried out by an EU-contracted auditor to verify that funds were disbursed correctly. The report showed that the payments were executed according to the EU's authorisation.

4. While agreeing with the Honourable Member's views on the responsibilities of Israel as an occupying power, the financial crisis of the Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem is such that failure to intervene would almost certainly result in the closure of these institutions which are vital to the fabric of Palestinian society in the city.

5. The Commission has not received information on this point.

6. The Commission/EEAS will make representations on this subject during the next EU-Israel Political Dialogue Sub-Committee.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004023/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Plan Hidrológico del Ebro y caudal ecológico

Considerando la aprobación del Plan Hidrológico del Ebro y todo lo expuesto en la pregunta E-002404/2014;

Considerando que este plan plantea la construcción de 43 nuevos embalses que se sumarían a los 109 que hay en la actualidad, mayoritariamente para usos de riego, y supone el aumento de 450 000 hectáreas de regadío que se suman a las 950 000 existentes, previendo un aumento sustancial del consumo de agua del río;

Considerando que el catedrático de Ecología de la Universidad de Barcelona, Narcís Prat, afirmó que este Plan Hidrológico no tiene en cuenta criterios científicos y prevé una reducción del caudal que hará que no lleguen sedimentos al Delta, de manera que en 25 años el Delta estará por debajo del mar, quedando afectado todo el ecosistema del Delta;

Considerando que el «Plan para salvaguardar los recursos hídricos de Europa» propone limitar los recursos que se asignan a los diferentes usos humanos y productivos en aquellas cuencas que sufran o puedan sufrir estrés hídrico;

Considerando que, como respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-014177/13, E-014175/13 ([1]), la Comisión afirma que «el Plan para salvaguardar los recursos hídricos de Europa subrayaba la necesidad de definir el concepto de caudal ecológico —es decir, la cantidad de agua requerida para el ecosistema acuático— en tanto que herramienta para resolver la posible asignación excesiva»; la Comisión también afirma que, en el marco de la Estrategia Común de Aplicación de la Directiva Marco del agua, la Comisión está trabajando con las partes interesadas y los Estados miembros para acordar una definición de caudal ecológico que sea común para toda la UE y un método para calcularlo, así como para determinar las buenas prácticas en relación con su aplicación, y que este trabajo se plasmará en un documento orientativo para uso de los Estados miembros en la aplicación del próximo ciclo de los planes hidrológicos de cuenca;

¿Considera la Comisión que la cuenca del Ebro y el Delta del Ebro pueden sufrir estrés hídrico debido al Plan Hidrológico del Gobierno y que, por lo tanto, se deberían limitar los recursos que se asignan a los diferentes usos humanos y productivos en el Plan Hidrológico tal y como contempla el Plan para salvaguardar los recursos hídricos de Europa? ¿Considera la Comisión que este plan prevé una asignación excesiva de agua a los usos de riego? ¿Considera la Comisión que el Plan Hidrológico debería incluir una definición de caudal ecológico avalada científicamente y que cumpla los mínimos establecidos por la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de mayo de 2014)

Como se indica en la respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-002404/2014, E-002572/2014 y P-003998/2014 ([2]), el Plan Hidrológico de Cuenca del río Ebro fue notificado a la Comisión en febrero de 2014. La Comisión evalúa actualmente el contenido de ese plan y su conformidad con los requisitos de la Directiva Marco del Agua. En junio de 2014 estará terminada una evaluación preliminar de todos los planes españoles adoptados hasta esa fecha. De acuerdo con el planteamiento adoptado con todos los demás Estados miembros, los resultados de la evaluación preliminar serán objeto de un debate bilateral entre los servicios de la Comisión y las autoridades españolas. A continuación, la Comisión publicará sus conclusiones y decidirá si adopta otras medidas adecuadas.

Por tanto, la Comisión no puede responder en estos momentos a las preguntas formuladas por su Señoría.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-014175&language=ES#def2
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004023/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Water management plan for the Ebro river — ecological flow

I should like to refer the Commission to the approval of the Ebro river water management plan and to the full text of Written Question E-002404/2014.

The management plan in question proposes the building of 43 new dams (mainly for irrigation purposes) in addition to the 109 existing ones, and an increase in irrigation land of 450 000 hectares, in addition to the existing area of 950 000 hectares. This will entail a substantial increase in consumption of water from the river.

Narcís Prat, professor of ecology at the University of Barcelona, has stated that the water management plan fails to take scientific criteria into account and envisages a reduction in flow that will mean that sediment does not reach the delta. This in turn means that in 25 years the delta will be below sea level, affecting its entire ecosystem.

The 'Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources' proposes restricting the resources allocated for various human and production uses in river basins that are suffering, or may suffer, from water stress.

In its reply to written questions E-014177/13 and E-014175/13, the Commission stated that '[t]he Blueprint stressed the need to define ecological flow, i.e. the amount of water required for the aquatic ecosystem, as a tool to address potential over-allocation'. The Commission also stated that '[a]s part of the Common Implementation Strategy of the Water Framework Directive, the Commission is working with stakeholders and Member States to agree on an EU definition of ecological flow, a method to calculate it, and to identify good practices for its application. This work will result in a guidance document to be used by Member States in the implementation of the next cycle of River Basin Management Plans'.

Bearing all of the above in mind, does the Commission believe that the Ebro river basin and the Ebro Delta could suffer water stress as a result of the government's water management plan? Does it think that the resources that the water management plan allocates for various human and production uses should be restricted as suggested in the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources? Does the Commission take the view that the Blueprint allocates too much water for irrigation purposes? Does the Commission take the view that the water management plan ought to include a scientifically approved definition that complies with EU minimum levels?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

As stated in the reply to written questions E-002404/2014, E-002572/2014 and P-003998/2014 ([1]), the Ebro River Basin Management Plan has been communicated to the Commission in February 2014. The Commission is currently assessing the content of this plan and its compliance with the requirements of the WFD. A preliminary assessment will be finalised in June 2014 for all Spanish plans adopted by that date. Following the approach taken with all other Member States, the results of the preliminary assessment will then be the subject of a bilateral discussion between the Commission services and the Spanish authorities. The Commission will then publish its findings and decide on appropriate further actions.

The Commission therefore cannot reply at this stage to the questions formulated by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004024/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Buoni fruttiferi postali: normative comunitarie in materia di obblighi informativi e trasparenza del mercato del risparmio

I buoni fruttiferi postali a termine — BFP — sono titoli garantiti dallo Stato Italiano, emessi da Cassa Depositi e Prestiti e collocati in esclusiva da Poste Italiane. Usati massicciamente come strumento di raccolta soprattutto durante gli anni '80, i BFP erano stati largamente pubblicizzati in quegli anni dai Ministeri delle Poste e del Tesoro come prodotti affidabili, capaci di offrire rendimenti certi e differenziati a seconda della durata dell'investimento. Negli ultimi mesi molti cittadini titolari di BFP si sono recati presso gli uffici postali per riscuotere le somme spettanti, ma si sono visti negare il pagamento dell'importo che sarebbe stato loro dovuto secondo le condizioni sottoscritte all'atto dell'acquisto dei BFP e riportate sui titoli in loro possesso. Con il decreto ministeriale del 13 giugno 1986 n.148 — c.d. decreto «Gava Goria» — lo Stato italiano aveva, infatti, retroattivamente e considerevolmente decurtato (dal 20 % a più del 50 %) i tassi d'interesse dei BFP emessi negli anni precedenti, pubblicando poi il decreto nella Gazzetta Ufficiale ma senza fornire alcuna comunicazione personale e tempestiva ai cittadini sottoscrittori, così impossibilitati a esercitare efficacemente e consapevolmente il diritto di recesso. Preso atto che le abnormi dimensioni della decurtazione retroattiva operata nel 1986 sul rendimento dei BFP sono state tali da alterare in maniera sostanziale i termini del rapporto contrattuale tra l'Ente emittente e i cittadini sottoscrittori; tenuto conto che la Corte costituzionale italiana, con sentenza 463 del 1997, ha ritenuto che l'emissione di BFP, nei sui aspetti generali, presenta connotazioni contrattuali analoghe ai servizi resi sul mercato delle imprese bancarie;

La Commissione:

1. ritiene che a prodotti finanziari quali i BFP sia applicabile la normativa UE che regola il mercato dei servizi bancari e finanziari?

2. alla luce della normativa comunitaria vigente allora (1986) ed oggi, in quale forma l'ente che ha emesso/emette i BFP avrebbe dovuto/dovrebbe informare i singoli sottoscrittori e in basi a quali normative comunitarie?

3. ritiene che la modifica retroattiva dei tassi di interesse dei BPF senza una contestuale comunicazione personale, tempestiva e circostanziata ai sottoscrittori rappresenti una violazione degli obblighi informativi e di trasparenza cui sono tenuti i soggetti imprenditoriali che operano nel mercato europeo del risparmio e dei prodotti finanziari, considerando anche che il sottoscrittore in tal caso è chiaramente da identificarsi quale contraente debole del rapporto contrattuale?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004025/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Buoni fruttiferi postali: principio di legittimo affidamento nei confronti della Pubblica Amministrazione e distorsione della libera concorrenza e della trasparenza nel mercato del risparmio

I buoni fruttiferi postali a termine — BFP — sono titoli garantiti dallo Stato Italiano, emessi da Cassa Depositi e Prestiti e collocati in esclusiva da Poste Italiane. Usati massicciamente come strumento di raccolta soprattutto durante gli anni '80, i BFP erano stati largamente pubblicizzati in quegli anni dai Ministeri delle Poste e del Tesoro come prodotti affidabili capaci di offrire rendimenti certi e differenziati a seconda della durata dell'investimento. Negli ultimi mesi molti cittadini titolari di BFP si sono recati presso gli uffici postali per riscuotere le somme spettanti, ma si sono visti negare il pagamento dell'importo che sarebbe stato loro dovuto secondo le condizioni sottoscritte all'atto dell'acquisto dei BFP e riportate sui titoli in loro possesso. Con il decreto ministeriale del 13 giugno 1986 n.148 — c.d. decreto «Gava Goria» — lo Stato italiano aveva, infatti, retroattivamente e considerevolmente decurtato (dal 20 % a più del 50 %) i tassi d'interesse dei BFP emessi negli anni precedenti, pubblicando poi il decreto nella Gazzetta Ufficiale ma senza fornire alcuna comunicazione personale e tempestiva ai cittadini sottoscrittori, così impossibilitati a esercitare efficacemente e consapevolmente il diritto di recesso. Preso atto che le abnormi dimensioni della decurtazione retroattiva, non personalmente comunicata ai sottoscrittori, operata nel 1986 sul rendimento dei BFP sono state tali da alterare in maniera sostanziale i termini del rapporto contrattuale tra l'Ente emittente e i cittadini sottoscrittori, la Commissione:

1. ritiene che la possibilità di decurtare retroattivamente i tassi dei BPF fosse e sia tuttora compatibile con il principio di legittimo affidamento, principio generale dell'ordinamento comunitario?

2. ritiene che la decurtazione retroattiva dei tassi sia stata compiuta nel rispetto della normativa comunitaria allora vigente (1986), considerando che la legge del 1973 autorizzava, come poi successo nei casi segnalati, riduzioni retroattive indeterminate del rendimento dei buoni rispetto a quanto stabilito all'atto della sottoscrizione?

3. ritiene che tali consistenti e retroattive decurtazioni rappresentino una forma di distorsione della libera concorrenza nel mercato del risparmio e dei prodotti finanziari, o ritiene che siano invece compatibili con i principi dell'ordinamento comunitario in materia di concorrenza e mercato, considerando che i sottoscrittori attratti dagli alti rendimenti dei buoni avrebbero potuto non sottoscrivere i buoni se anticipatamente edotti, o quantomeno debitamente informati di una decurtazione di queste dimensioni, in seguito all'emanazione del decreto ministeriale del 1986?

Risposta congiunta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione

(6 giugno 2014)

Per accertare in che misura la normativa unionale che disciplina il mercato dei servizi bancari e finanziari si applichi a prodotti finanziari quali i Buoni Fruttiferi Postali (BFP), occorre in particolare stabilire se essi rientrino nelle categorie di prodotti finanziari o depositi in essa definite. La Commissione non dispone tuttavia di informazioni sui BFP sufficienti a permetterle di rispondere a questo e ad altri quesiti.

Per quanto riguarda l'informazione dei singoli sottoscrittori, emerge da informazioni pubblicamente consultabili che il decreto del Ministro del Tesoro del 13 giugno 1986 citato nell'interrogazione (pubblicato nella Gazzetta Ufficiale 28 giugno 1986, n. 148) abbia modificato sia il saggio d'interesse sia l'imposta corrispondente applicabili alle serie O e P dei BFP. Questa duplice modifica può spiegare perché non sia più valido l'esatto importo di liquidazione indicato nella tabella sul retro dei BFP in questione (espresso in funzione dell'imposta applicabile alla data di emissione del Buono). Stando alle citate informazioni pubbliche, le modifiche sono state adottate a norma dell'articolo 173 del Codice postale (D.P.R. 29 marzo 1973, n. 156), che aveva all'epoca previsto la possibilità di estendere le variazioni dei saggi d'interesse sui BFP «ad una o più delle precedenti serie». Sempre secondo tali informazioni pubbliche, la riduzione in questione non si configurerebbe come conseguenza di una modifica dei termini e condizioni dei BFP, bensì come elemento di diritto che acquista per principio efficacia alla pubblicazione senza dover essere comunicato singolarmente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004024/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Postal savings bonds: EU legislation on requirements regarding savings-market information and transparency

The fixed term postal savings bonds known as 'Buoni Fruttiferi Postale' (BFPs) are securities guaranteed by the Italian State, issued by the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti and sold solely by the Italian Post Office. They were a very popular means of saving in the 1980s when they were widely advertised by the Postal Service and Treasury Ministries as a reliable product offering a sure return which increased with the length of time sums were invested.

In recent months, many members of the public who hold BFPs have gone to post offices to collect the amounts due to them, only to be refused payment of the sums to which they are entitled under the terms and conditions they accepted in the BFP purchase document and which are set out on the bonds in their possession. The Italian State had, in fact, retroactively cut the interest rates on BFPs issued in previous years by a considerable amount (between 20% and over 50%) by means of Ministerial Decree No 148 of 13 June 1986 — known as the 'Gava Goria' Decree. The Decree was published in Italy's Official Journal without members of the public who had subscribed to these bonds being notified promptly and in person, thereby making it impossible for them to exercise their right to withdrawal efficiently and in full knowledge of the facts.

Given that the 1986 retroactive cut in returns on BFPs was so abnormally large as to alter substantially the terms of the contractual relationship between the issuer and members of the public who had subscribed, and that the Italian Constitutional Court found in 1997, in judgment No 463, that the general features of the BFP issue meant that, in contractual terms, it was comparable to services provided on the banking market:

1. Does the Commission believe that EU legislation governing the banking and financial services market is applicable to financial products such as BFPs?

2. In light of the EU legislation in force then (1986) and now, how should the body issuing BFPs have notified/notify individual subscribers, and on the basis of which EU rules and regulations?

3. Does the Commission consider that the fact that subscribers were not provided at that time with prompt and detailed information in person on this retroactive change in BFP interest rates constitutes an infringement of the mandatory information and transparency requirements for businesses operating in the EU savings and financial products market, particularly since the subscribers can clearly be qualified in this case as the weaker party in the contractual relationship?

Question for written answer E-004025/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Postal savings bonds: the principle of legitimate expectations vis-à-vis the public authorities and distortion of free competition and transparency in the savings market

Italian postal savings bonds, known as BFPs, are securities guaranteed by the Italian Government, issued by the Cassa Deposito e Presiti (Deposit and Loans Bank) and sold exclusively by the Italian Post Office. Used extensively as a method of saving, especially during the 1980s, BFPs had been widely publicised at the time by the Ministry of the Post Office and the Treasury as reliable products that would offer assured returns, differentiated according to the duration of the investment. In recent months, many BFP holders have been to the post office to collect the money owed to them, but have been denied payment of the amount which should have been due under the conditions they accepted when purchasing the BFPs, which are printed on the securities in question.

The reason for this is that, by Ministerial Decree No 148 of 13 June 1986 — the so-called Gava Goria decree — the Italian Government had, in fact, retroactively and substantially reduced (by between 20% and over 50%) the interest rates of BFPs issued in previous years. It had then published the decree in the Official Journal without providing any direct and timely information to subscribers, who were thus unable to effectively and consciously exercise their right of withdrawal. Given that the abnormal extent of such retroactive reduction of BFP interest rates in 1986, which was not personally announced to subscribers, was such as to substantially alter the terms of the contractual relationship between the issuing entity and subscribers, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it believe that the retroactive reduction of BPF interest rates was, and is still, compatible with the principle of legitimate expectations — a general principle of EC law?

2. In its view, was the retroactive rate reduction carried out in compliance with the Community legislation then in force (1986), given that the 1973 law did in fact allow — as later occurred in the cases reported — indeterminate retroactive reductions of bond yields compared to what had been established at the time of subscription?

3. In its view, are these substantial, retroactive rate cuts a form of distortion of free competition in the savings and financial products market, or are they, rather, consistent with the principles of EU competition and market law, given that the subscribers attracted by the high bond yields could have refrained from subscribing for them had they been informed in advance, or at least in due course, of such a major cut in the wake of the 1986 ministerial decree?

Joint answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The extent to which EU legislation governing the banking and financial services market is applicable to financial products such as Buoni Fruttiferi Postali (BFPs) depends notably on whether these products belong to the categories of financial instruments or deposits as defined under EU legislation. However, the Commission does not dispose of sufficient information on BFPs to respond to this and other questions.

On the question on the information to individual investors, according to publicly available information, the Minister of the Treasury's Decree of 13 June 1986 (*Gazzetta Ufficiale* n. 148 published on 28 June 1986), mentioned in the question, has both changed the interest rate and the corresponding tax applicable to Series 'O' and 'P' of BFPs. This may explain why the exact liquidation amount of the reimbursement indicated in the table on the back of these BFPs (expressed in accordance with tax applicable at the time of their issuance) is no longer valid. According to this public information these changes were adopted on the basis of Article 173 of the postal code (D.P.R. 29 March 1973, n. 156), that foresaw at that time the possibility to extend interest-rate variations on BFPs 'to one or more of the previous series'. According to this public information, it would seem that this reduction was not a consequence of a change of the BFP's terms and conditions but a matter of law which by principle becomes effective by publication without need of individual notification.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004027/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(1 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Mard rewmatiku u muskoloskeletriku

In-numru ta' nies li jbatu minn mardiet rewmatiċi u muskoloskeletriċi żdied f'dan l-aħħar 20 sena u dan in-numru mistenni li jogħla aktar fis-snin li ġejjin.

1. X'biħsiebha tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tgħin lill-Istati Membri jżidu s-sensibilizzazzjoni, il-prevenzjoni u l-immaniġġjar ta' dawn il-mardiet?

2. Il-Kummissjoni se toffri appoġġ għar-riċerka u l-innovazzjoni fir-rigward ta' dawn il-mardiet partikolari permezz tal-programm qafas Orizzont 2020?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' Mejju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja tal-piż li joħloq il-mard rewmatiku u muskoloskeletali fl-Unjoni Ewropea.

Il-Kummissjoni ffinanzjat għadd ta' proġetti li jaqgħu taħt il-Programm tas-Saħħa sabiex tagħti appoġġ lill-Istati Membri biex jindirizzaw il-mard muskoloskeletali, inkluż in-"Netwerk dwar l-Informazzjoni u s-Sorveljanza dwar il-Kundizzjonijiet Muskoloskeletali" (EUMUSC.NET) ([1]) b'kontribuzzjoni mill-Kummissjoni ta' aktar minn EUR 980 000.

Fir-rigward tal-prevenzjoni ta' ċertu mard li jappartjeni għall-grupp ta' mard muskoloskeletali, il-Kummissjoni qed tindirizza l-fatturi ta' riskju permezz tal-politika tagħha dwar in-nutrizzjoni u l-attività fiżika ([2]).

L-organizzazzjoni tal-kura tas-saħħa għal persuni li jbatu minn dan il-mard taqa' fi ħdan il-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri.

Ir-riċerka dwar il-mard rewmatiku u muskoloskeletali kienet prijorità tul is-Seba' Programm Kwadru għall-attivitajiet ta' riċerka, ta' żvilupp teknoloġiku u ta' dimostrazzjoni (FP7, 2007-2013) ([3]), li ddedika aktar minn EUR 300 miljun għar-riċerka ta' konverżjoni f'dan il-qasam bil-għan li jipprovdi biżżejjed għarfien bażiku li jwassal għal dijanjosi bikrija, approċċi preventivi u terapewtiċi.

Orizzont 2020 — Il-Programm Kwadru għar-Riċerka u l-Innovazzjoni (2014-2020) ([4]), se joffri aktar opportunitajiet għal appoġġ għar-riċerka f'dan il-qasam permezz tal-isfida soċjali dwar is-"Saħħa, it-tibdil demografiku u l-benesseri" ([5]).

([1]) http://eumusc.net/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004027/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases

The number of people suffering from rheumatic and musculoskeletal conditions has increased in the last 20 years and it is predicted that this number will rise even further in the coming years.

1. What does the Commission intend to do to help Member States increase awareness, prevention and management of these diseases?

2. Will the Commission offer support for research and innovation in relation to these particular diseases through the Horizon 2020 framework programme?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the burden of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases in the European Union.

The Commission has funded a number of projects under the Health Programme to support Member States in addressing musculoskeletal diseases, including the 'European Musculoskeletal Conditions Surveillance and Information Network' (eumusc.net) ([1]) with a Commission contribution of more than 980 000 Euro.

With regard to the prevention of certain diseases belonging to the group of musculoskeletal diseases, the Commission is addressing risk factors through its policy on nutrition and physical activity ([2]).

The organisation of healthcare for people suffering from these diseases lies within the competence of the Member States.

Research on rheumatic and musculoskeletal disorders has been a priority throughout the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) ([3]), which devoted over EUR 300 million to translational research in this field aimed at bringing basic knowledge through to early diagnosis, preventive and therapeutic approaches.

Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]), will offer further opportunities to support research in this field through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge ([5]).

([1]) http://eumusc.net/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004028/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(1 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Riforma tal-qafas leġiżlattiv tal-UE dwar id-drittijiet tal-awtur

Il-Kummisjoni tista' tipprovdi informazzjoni fuq jekk is-sentenza mill-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-Unjoni Ewropea fil-Każ C-314/12 *UPC Telekabel Wien GmbH* v *Constantin Film Verleih GmbH u Wega Filmproduktionsgesellschaft mbH* mogħtija fis-27 ta' Marzu 2015, li tgħid li fornitur tas-servizz tal-internet jista' jiġi ordnat jibblokka l-aċċess għal websajt li qiegħda tikser id-drittijiet tal-awtur, hix se tiġi kkunsidrata fl-analiżi li qiegħda għaddejja tal-qafas leġiżlattiv tal-UE dwar id-drittijiet tal-awtur?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Mejju 2014)

Fis-sentenza tagħha tas-27 ta' Marzu 2014 fil-Kawża C-314-12 ([1]) il-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-Unjoni Ewropea kkonfermat il-ġurisprudenza ta' qabel tagħha, b'mod notevoli is-sentenza fil-Kawża C-70/10 ([2]) u l-ordni fil-Kawża C-557/07 ([3]). Skont il-Qorti, il-fornituri tas-servizz tal-internet jistgħu taħt kundizzjonijiet speċifiċi (li jinkludu r-rispett tad-drittijiet fundamentali bħal-libertà ta' intrapriża u l-libertà ta' informazzjoni tal-utenti tal-internet) jiġu ordnati jillimitaw jew jimblukkaw l-aċċess għal ċerti servizzi jew websajts sabiex jitwaqqaf jew jiġi evitat il-ksur tad-drittijiet tal-awtur.

Kif iddikkjarat fil-Komunikazzjoni tagħha dwar il-kontenut fis-suq uniku Diġitali ([4]), għaddej rieżami tal-qafas tad-drittijiet tal-awtur tal-UE bil-ħsieb li jiġi żgurat li d-drittijiet tal-awtur u prattiki relatati mad-drittijiet tal-awtur jibqgħu adegwati għall-għan tagħhom f'dan il-kuntest ġdid diġitali. Dan huwa eżerċizzju wiesa' li jinkludi wkoll il-valutazzjoni ta' regoli ta' nfurzar tal-UE eżistenti relatati mad-drittijiet tal-awtur. Il-ġurisprudenza, li sa issa saret estensiva sew, tal-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-Unjoni Ewropea hija naturalment fost l-elementi meqjusa f'din il-valutazzjoni.

([1]) UPC Telekabel Wien GmbH vs Constantin Film Verleih GmbH u Wega Filmproduktionsgesellschaft mbH Upc.
([2]) Scarlet Extended SA vs Société belge des auteurs, compositeurs et éditeurs SCRL (SABAM).
([3]) LSG-Gesellschaft zur Wahrnehmung von Leistungsschutzrechten GmbH vs Tele2 Telecommunication GmbH.
([4]) COM(2012)789finali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004028/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Reform of the EU copyright legislative framework

Can the Commission provide information on whether the ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C-314/12 UPC Telekabel Wien GmbH v Constantin Film Verleih GmbH and Wega Filmproduktionsgesellschaft mbH delivered on 27 March 2014, stating that an Internet service provider may be ordered to block its customers' access to a copyright-infringing website, will be taken on board in the on-going review of the EU copyright legislative framework?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

In its judgment of 27 March 2014 in Case C-314/12 ([1]) the Court of Justice of the European Union confirmed its earlier case-law, notably judgment in Case C-70/10 ([2]) and order in Case C-557/07 ([3]). According to the Court, Internet service providers may under specific conditions (which include the respect of fundamental rights such as the freedom to conduct a business and the freedom of information of Internet users) be ordered to limit or block access to certain services or websites in order to end or prevent copyright infringements.

As stated in its communication on content in the Digital single market ([4]), a review of the EU copyright framework is on-going with a view of ensuring that copyright and copyright-related practices stay fit for purpose in this new digital context. This is a broad exercise that also includes assessing existing EU enforcement rules related to copyright. The, by now rather extensive, case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union is naturally amongst the elements taken into account in this assessment.

([1]) UPC Telekabel Wien GmbH v Constantin Film Verleih GmbH and Wega Filmproduktionsgesellschaft mbH Upc.
([2]) Scarlet Extended SA v Société belge des auteurs, compositeurs et éditeurs SCRL (SABAM).
([3]) LSG-Gesellschaft zur Wahrnehmung von Leistungsschutzrechten GmbH v Tele2 Telecommunication GmbH.
([4]) COM(2012) 789 final.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004029/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(1 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Esponiment għal problemi ambjentali

Rapport reċenti tal-Eurostat fl-okkażjoni tal-Jum Internazzjonali tal-Ferħ, ippubblikat fid-19 ta' Marzu 2014, juri li l-perċentwal ta' nies li jirrappurtaw li huma esposti għat-tniġġis, ħmieġ u problemi ambjentali oħra f'Malta huwa iktar mid-doppju tal-medja Ewropea.

1. Il-Kummissjoni se tieħu azzjoni fuq dawn is-sejbiet statistiċi sabiex l-esponiment għal problemi ambjentali jiġi mminimizzat?

2. Jekk iva, x'passi se tieħu l-Kummissjoni rigward dan is-suġġett?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Mejju 2014)

Meta jkun hemm evidenza li possibilment hemm ksur ta' dispożizzjonijiet konkreti tal-liġi tal-UE u li l-awtoritajiet nazzjonali mhumiex qed jieħdu azzjoni biex jindirizzawh, il-Kummissjoni tista' tieħu azzjonijiet ta' infurzar jew fuq l-inizjattiva tagħha stess jew b'reazzjoni għall-ilmenti.

L-implimentazzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni Ewropea hija r-responsabbiltà tal-awtoritajiet kompetenti tal-Istati Membri, soġġetta għal proċeduri ta' stħarriġ ġudizzjarju nazzjonali. Iċ-ċittadini li jirrappurtaw li huma esposti għal tniġġis, ħmieġ u problemi ambjentali oħra għandhom, għalhekk, iqajmu din il-kwistjoni primarjament mal-awtoritajiet nazzjonali kompetenti tagħhom.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004029/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Exposure to environmental problems

A recent Eurostat report to mark the International Day of Happiness, published on 19 March 2014, shows that the proportion of people who report being exposed to pollution, grime and other environmental problems in Malta is more than twice the European average.

1. Will the Commission follow up on these statistical findings in order to minimise exposure to environmental problems?

2. If so, what action does the Commission intend to take on this matter?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

When there is evidence that there is a possible breach of concrete provisions of EC law and that the national authorities are not taking action to address it, the Commission can take enforcement actions either on its own initiative or as a follow-up to complaints.

The implementation of European legislation is the responsibility of Member States' competent authorities, subject to national judicial review procedures. Citizens who report being exposed to pollution, grime and other environmental problems should, therefore, raise this issue primarily with their competent national authorities.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004030/14
an die Kommission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(1. April 2014)

Betrifft: Einschränkungen/Verbote beim Bahnlärm

Nach einem vor kurzem erschienenen und vom Umweltministerium Rheinland-Pfalz in Auftrag gegebenem Gutachten des Eisenbahnrechtlers Prof. Dr. Urs Kramer sind Geschwindigkeits- sowie Durchfahrtsbeschränkungen im besonders bahnlärmbetroffenen Mittleren Rheintal mit geltendem EU-Recht vereinbar.

Kann die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund dieses Gutachtens folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Ist ein generelles Betriebsverbot für Güterzüge in einer bestimmten Zeitspanne — beispielsweise in der Nacht — nach geltendem EU-Recht zulässig? Welchen Einschränkungen bzw. Maßstäben würde die Festlegung der Zeiten unterliegen?

2. Ist ein Verbot schneller Züge, mithin von Zügen, deren Betrieb eine gewisse zumutbare Anzahl an Dezibel überschreiten, zu bestimmten Nachtzeiten zulässig, vor allem vor dem Hintergrund der Wahrung des Diskriminierungsverbotes, hier in Bezug auf langsamere Züge, deren Betrieb fortgeführt werden könnte?

3. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob eine generelle Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzung für Güterzüge in einzelnen Gebieten, wie dem Mittleren Rheintal, zu bestimmten Zeiten möglich wäre? Hierbei ist von besonderem Interesse, inwieweit eine solche Regelung mit der als Maßstab zu nehmenden Verhältnismäßigkeit eingeschränkt wird.

4. Ist es richtig, dass nach geltendem EU-Recht zur Geschwindigkeits- und Betriebsbeschränkung von Bahnlärm den Behörden auf der Rechtsfolgenseite ein Ermessen bezüglich des Erlasses von Verboten wie auch Einschränkungen zugeteilt wird?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(28. Mai 2014)

1./2. Nach Auffassung der Kommission verstoßen nationale Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Lärmemissionen von Güterzügen, etwa Geschwindigkeitsbeschränkungen oder Betriebsbeschränkungen zu bestimmten Tages- oder Nachtzeiten, nicht gegen den Grundsatz des freien Waren- und Dienstleistungsverkehrs. Bei diesen Maßnahmen sollte jedoch der Grundsatz der Nichtdiskriminierung befolgt werden, d. h. sie sollten für alle Güterzugbetreiber im nationalen Hoheitsgebiet unabhängig von ihrer Herkunft gleichermaßen gelten, und sie sollten den freien Waren- und Dienstleistungsverkehr nicht wesentlich beeinträchtigen. In diesem Zusammenhang sollte jede nationale Maßnahme einzeln auf ihre Vereinbarkeit mit dem Unionsrecht geprüft werden.

3. Eine allgemeine Geschwindigkeitsbeschränkung für Güterzüge im Rheintal sollte den oben genannten Grundsätzen entsprechen. Die Vereinbarkeit mit dem Grundsatz der Verhältnismäßigkeit kann nur geprüft werden, wenn der Kommission alle relevanten Daten, auch zu den voraussichtlichen Auswirkungen auf künftige Verkehrsströme, übermittelt werden.

4. Es gibt keine spezifischen EU-Rechtsvorschriften für Geschwindigkeits- und Betriebsbeschränkungen zur Verringerung der Lärmemissionen im Schienenverkehr. Als Hüterin der Verträge muss die Kommission prüfen, ob nationale Maßnahmen den freien Waren- und Dienstleistungsverkehr in der Union beeinträchtigen und ob sie verhältnismäßig sind. Etwaige Verbote und Beschränkungen im Zusammenhang mit den Lärmemissionen des Schienenverkehrs müssen einer solchen Prüfung unterzogen werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004030/14
to the Commission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Restrictions/prohibitions regarding railway noise

According to a report by railway legal expert Prof. Dr Urs Kramer which was commissioned by the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of the Environment, restrictions on speed and access in the Middle Rhine Valley are compatible with EC law.

In the light of this, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Is a general ban on freight train operations during a particular period, such as at night, permissible under EC law? What restrictions/measures would determine the period(s) involved?

2. Is a ban on fast trains — and consequently on trains which make more than a reasonable amount of noise — permissible at certain times during the night, particularly considering the need to safeguard the prohibition of discrimination, in this case with regard to slower trains which may continue to be operated?

3. Does the Commission know whether it would be possible to impose an overall speed limit for freight trains in certain areas, such as the Middle Rhine Valley? It would be instructive to know the extent to which such a rule would be restricted by the proportionality principle, which is the yardstick here.

4. Is it right that, according to EU legislation on speed and operating restrictions with a view to reducing railway noise, a judgment on prohibitions and restrictions should be delivered to the authorities with regard to the legal consequences involved?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

1 and 2. The Commission is of the opinion that national measures to fight against the noise of freight trains, such as speed limits or restrictions to circulate at certain times of the day or night, do not violate the principle of free movement of services and goods. However these measures should respect the principle of non-discrimination, i.e. apply equally to all operators of freight trains traveling on the national territory, regardless of the origin of these operators, and they should not affect substantially the freedom of movement of services and goods. In this regard, any national measures should be analysed individually as to their compatibility with Union law.

3. The overall speed limit for freight trains in the Rhine Valley should respect the principles mentioned above. The compatibility with the proportionality principle could only be assessed when all relevant data, including the estimated impact on future traffic flows, is provided to the Commission.

4. No specific EU legislation relating to speed and operating restrictions with a view to reducing railway noise exists. The Commission, as the guardian of the Treaties, has to verify whether national measures affect the free movement of goods and the freedom to provide services in the Union, and whether they are proportional. Any eventual prohibitions and restrictions connected with rail noise must be subject to such an assessment.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004031/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Definizione e contrasto dell'ecoterrorismo da parte dell'Unione europea

L'Unione europea ha adottato un'efficace strategia contro gli attentati terroristici di grande portata, ma non ha previsto azioni specifiche contro altri generi di attentati terroristici, di portata inferiore, ma non meno drammatici e nocivi per la sicurezza, la libertà e i valori dell'Unione europea e dei suoi cittadini. Tra questi vi sono gli attentati perpetrati da organizzazioni ecologiste o animaliste, per ragioni politiche legate all'ambientalismo o all'animalismo, o animate dalla volontà di ottenere visibilità tramite un obiettivo spesso di natura simbolica. Tali organizzazioni, come quelle politiche clandestine, generalmente dispongono sia di un movimento non violento, il quale tramite lobbying e azioni dimostrative esercita pressioni su decisori e media tentando di guadagnare consenso dall'opinione pubblica, sia di un gruppo ultraviolento che esercita l'azione diretta, con metodi sempre più radicali: una vera e propria «jihad» ecologista/animalista. Mentre negli Stati Uniti l'FBI ha coniato una definizione di «ecoterrorismo» e il governo ha introdotto leggi federali (Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act) che perseguono in maniera specifica ogni atto che danneggi le strutture economiche, e non solo, connesse agli animali, recando loro danni o perdite di beni reali o personali o portando le persone a un ragionevole timore di subire lesioni, in Europa, anche se poco a poco le imprese e gli Stati membri prendono coscienza di queste nuove forme di terrorismo, si è ancora poco preparati a farvi fronte: non esiste nemmeno una definizione giuridica univoca di «ecoterrorismo». La mancanza di uno specifico riferimento normativo fa sì che spesso i sistemi giudiziari dei Paesi membri derubrichino reati che proprio a tale forma di terrorismo andrebbero ascritti, producendo non solo condanne non significative ai fini del contrasto del fenomeno, ma anche la non trascurabile ricaduta di far percepire all'opinione pubblica che sussista una sorta di «intoccabilità» di chi si macchi di tali reati perpetrati per ragioni politiche legate all'ambientalismo o all'animalismo.

Tutto ciò considerato, si chiede alla Commissione:

— quali provvedimenti urgenti intenda adottare per fornire agli Stati membri precisi e univoci riferimenti normativi rispetto all'ecoterrorismo e al suo contrasto;

— se intenda promuovere uno strumento diretto a favore delle imprese danneggiate o minacciate;

— se intenda prevedere che la problematica del contrasto all'ecoterrorismo diventi una priorità nell'agenda politica UE in materia di giustizia e sicurezza.

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

La decisione quadro 2002/475/GAI ([1]) (come modificata) definisce il quadro giuridico dell'UE per la lotta contro tutte le forme di terrorismo e impone agli Stati membri di perseguire penalmente atti quali attentati nei confronti delle persone, la distruzione di infrastrutture o di proprietà private, nonché la minaccia di commettere tali atti, come reati di terrorismo commessi al fine di intimidire gravemente la popolazione o di costringere indebitamente le pubbliche autorità a compiere o astenersi dal compiere un qualsiasi atto, o di destabilizzare gravemente o distruggere le strutture fondamentali di un paese. La Commissione ha pubblicato due relazioni che forniscono una panoramica dettagliata delle misure adottate per attuare la decisione quadro del 2002 ([2]).

La maggior parte degli Stati membri dell'UE perseguono gli atti di terrorismo mediante norme di diritto penale e non in applicazione di specifiche leggi antiterrorismo, senza distinguere fra le motivazioni di fondo. Se soddisfano le condizioni delle misure nazionali di attuazione, gli atti di violenza commessi da organizzazioni ambientali o animaliste possono essere oggetto di indagine e di azione penale, alla stregua dei reati di terrorismo. In altri casi le violenze possono essere investigate e perseguite come reati di diritto comune.

Europol opera un monitoraggio del cosiddetto «terrorismo legato a una singola causa», compresi l'estremismo per i diritti degli animali e i gruppi ambientalisti violenti ([3]). Sulla base dei dati forniti dagli Stati membri, nel 2012 si sono registrati diversi incidenti, ma nessun attentato o arresto è stato classificato dagli Stati membri come atto di terrorismo.

([1]) Decisione quadro 2002/475/GAI del Consiglio, del 13 giugno 2002, sulla lotta contro il terrorismo (GU L 164 del 22.6.2002, pag. 3), modificata dalla decisione quadro 2008/919/GAI del Consiglio. Versione consolidata: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02002F0475-20081209&qid=1399040677583.

([2]) Prima relazione di attuazione dell'8 giugno 2004 (COM(2004) 409 def. e SEC(2004) 688 def.) e seconda relazione di attuazione del 6 novembre 2007 (COM(2007) 681 def.) e CE (2007) 1463).

([3]) Per l'ultima relazione TE-SAT 2013, cfr.: https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/europol_te-sat2013_lr_0.pdf

Spetta in primo luogo agli Stati membri adottare le misure che ritengono appropriate, alla luce delle minacce poste dal terrorismo ambientale o animalista, al fine di stabilire la cornice giuridica che consenta un efficace perseguimento dei reati, preveda sanzioni dissuasive e disponga un adeguato risarcimento delle vittime.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004031/14
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Eco-terrorism: EU definition and countermeasures

The EU has adopted an effective strategy to counteract major terrorist attacks, but has made no specific provision to deal with terrorist attacks of other kinds, which, though on a smaller scale, are no less disquieting and harmful from the point of view of security, freedom, and the values espoused by the EU and its citizens. This latter category includes attacks perpetrated by environmental or animal rights organisations for political reasons linked to environmentalism or animal rights, or stemming from the desire to raise their profile by singling out what is often a symbolic target. Like underground political organisations, these organisations generally have both a non-violent wing, which exerts pressure on decision-makers and the media through lobbying and protest in an attempt to win over the public, and a violent extremist wing, which carries out direct action by increasingly more radical methods amounting to nothing short of an environmentalist/animal rights 'jihad'. In the United States, the FBI has coined a definition of 'eco-terrorism', and there are federal laws (the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act) expressly directed against any act that targets animal-related facilities, businesses and otherwise, by damaging or causing the loss of real or personal property or placing persons in reasonable fear of injury. In Europe, on the other hand, although business and Member States are gradually becoming aware of these new forms of terrorism, they are still ill prepared to cope: there is not even a clear legal definition of 'eco-terrorism'. Because there is no legal frame of reference, the Member States' judicial systems tend to underestimate the seriousness of offences that should be classed as terrorism of this sort. This means not only that sentences have little deterrent value, but also — and rather worryingly — that the public are given the impression that offenders are in a way 'untouchable' when they commit crimes for political reasons linked to environmentalism or animal rights.

In the light of the foregoing:

— What steps will the Commission take, as a matter of urgency, to provide Member States with a clear-cut specific frame of reference regarding eco-terrorism and the related countermeasures?

— Will it provide a means of assisting businesses that have been damaged or threatened?

— Will it make measures to combat eco-terrorism a priority on the EU's justice and security policy agenda?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA ([1]) (as amended) sets the EU legal framework for combating all forms of terrorism, requiring Member States to criminalise acts such as attacks on persons, destruction of infrastructure facilities or private property as well as threats to commit any such acts as terrorist offences when committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, or unduly compelling a Government to perform or abstain from performing any act, or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental structures of a country. The Commission has published two reports which provide a detailed overview of the measures adopted to implement the 2002 Framework Decision ([2]).

Most EU Member States prosecute acts of terrorism under criminal law provisions and not under specific counter-terrorism laws, without distinguishing between the underlying motivations. Where violent acts committed by environmental or animal rights organisations fulfil the conditions of the national implementing measures they may be investigated and prosecuted as terrorist offences. Others may be investigated and prosecuted as common law criminal offences.

Europol's monitors so-called 'single-issue terrorism', including animal rights extremism and violent environmental groups ([3]). Based on the data submitted by Member States, in 2012 there were several incidents, but no attacks or arrests which were qualified by Member States as terrorist acts.

It is primarily for Member States to take the measures they deem appropriate in light of the threats posed by environmental or animal rights terrorism, to establish the legal framework for an effective prosecution of criminal acts, set deterrent sanctions and to provide for an appropriate compensation of victims.

([1]) Council Framework Decision of 13 June 2002 on combating terrorism (2002/475/JHA) (OJ L 164, 22.6.2002, p.3), as amended by Framework Decision 2008/919/JHA; Consolidated version: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1399040677583&uri=CELEX:02002F0475-20081209

([2]) First implementation report of 8 June 2004 (COM(2004) 409 final and SEC(2004) 688) and second implementation report of 6 November 2007 (COM(2007) 681 final and EC(2007) 1463).

([3]) For the latest TE-SAT report 2013, see: https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/europol_te-sat2013_lr_0.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004032/14
an die Kommission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(1. April 2014)

Betrifft: Bedingungen für den Auslauf von Legehennen im Freien gemäß Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008

In Anhang II Absatz 1(a) der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008 wird festgelegt, dass die Erzeuger von Eiern ihren Legehennen tagsüber uneingeschränkten Zugang zu einem Auslauf im Freien ermöglichen müssen. Begründet mit guter Tierhaltungs- und landwirtschaftlicher Praxis darf dieser Zugang auf einen befristeten Zeitraum am Morgen beschränkt werden.

Dies führt in der Praxis dazu, dass die Auslegung dieser Vorschriften durch die zuständigen Behörden witterungsunabhängig einen Zugang für Hennen zum Auslauf im Freien für den restlichen Tag vorsieht.

Schlechtes Wetter wirkt sich auf die Gesundheit der Tiere aus, zum Beispiel durch die Aufnahme von verunreinigtem Wasser aus Pfützen.

In Artikel 14 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 834/2007 über die ökologische/biologische Produktion wird der Zugang zu Freigelände tageszeitunabhängig und gemessen an den Witterungsbedingungen geregelt.

1. Aus welchen Gründen hat die Kommission in Anhang II Absatz 1(a) der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008 den Morgen und nicht eine andere Tageszeit als maßgeblichen Zeitpunkt festgelegt?

2. Welche Gründe sprechen dagegen, Anhang II Absatz 1(a) der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008 nach den gleichen Kriterien zu formulieren wie Artikel 14 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 834/2007?

Antwort von Herrn Cioloş im Namen der Kommission
(13. Juni 2014)

Der „Zeitraum am Morgen" nach Nr. 1 Buchstabe a von Anhang II der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008 ([1]) wurde in Übereinstimmung mit der guten Tierhaltungspraxis gewählt. Das typische Legeintervall beträgt 24-25 Stunden, im Dunkeln legen Hennen aber keine Eier. Liegt der Zeitpunkt des Eierlegens im Legezyklus einer Henne nach der Abenddämmerung, so legt sie das Ei nicht an dem betreffenden Tag, sondern erst am folgenden Morgen. Deshalb sollte die Legehenne zu dieser Tageszeit, also während des „Zeitraums am Morgen" geschützt werden. Was etwaige andere außergewöhnliche Umstände betrifft, die eine Beschränkung des Zugangs zum Auslauf ins Freie nahelegen, wie z. B. Überschwemmungen, außergewöhnliche Witterungsbedingungen usw., so wird darauf in Nr.1 Buchstabe a Absatz 2 von Anhang II der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008 eingegangen, der wie folgt lautet: „*Im Falle anderer Beschränkungen, einschließlich … veterinärrechtlicher Beschränkungen …*".

Die Bestimmung in Nummer 1 Buchstabe a von Anhang II der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 589/2008 und die Bestimmungen in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 834/2007 ([2]) zur ökologischen/biologischen Produktion stimmen nicht überein, denn die einzige Voraussetzung dafür, dass ein Ei von „Freilandhennen" gilt, ist der Auslauf ins Freie. Damit ein Ei als ökologisch/biologisch angesehen wird, muss dagegen eine Reihe von Vorschriften eingehalten werden, mit denen spezielle Ziele auf Basis der Grundsätze der ökologischen/biologischen Produktion verfolgt werden.

([1]) ABl. L 163 vom 24.6.2008.
([2]) ABl. L 189 vom 20.7.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004032/14
to the Commission
Britta Reimers (ALDE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Rules on open-air runs for laying hens under Regulation (EC) No 589/2008

Annex II, point 1(a), of Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 calls for egg producers to allow their laying hens continuous daytime access to open-air runs. However, if this is consistent with good animal husbandry and farming practice, access may be restricted to a limited period in the morning.

In practice, the authorities interpret these provisions to mean that hens should have access to an open-air run for the rest of the day, regardless of the weather.

Bad weather adversely affects hens' health because, for example, they can swallow dirty water from puddles.

Under the rules laid down in Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production, access to open-air areas is allowed — no matter what the time of day — whenever weather conditions so permit.

1. Why, in point 1(a) of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 589/2008, did the Commission choose to make 'the morning hours' the relevant time, excluding every other time of day?

2. Why should point 1(a) of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 not be worded according to the same criteria as Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The 'morning hours' have been chosen in point 1(a) of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 ([1]) following the good husbandry practices. Actually, the typical interval between eggs laid is about 24-25 hours but hens do not lay eggs in the dark. Therefore, once a hen's laying cycle reaches dusk time, it will not lay that actual day but will wait until the following morning. Therefore, the layer should be protected during this specific time of the day, the 'morning hours'. As regards any other exceptional circumstances that may suggest to restrict the access to the open air runs, as for example floods, extreme weather conditions and so on, the issue is addressed in the second paragraph of point 1(a) of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 589/2008, which reads: 'In case of other restrictions, including veterinary restrictions…'.

The rule in point 1(a) of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 and those in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 ([2]) for Organic farming are not the same because for an egg to be considered as produced by an 'open air' layer, the only parameter is the open air run. To be considered as 'Organic', the egg production needs to comply with a set of rules pursuing specific objectives and based in the principles of organic production.

([1]) OJ L 163, 24.6.2008.
([2]) OJ L 189, 20.7.2007.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004033/14
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (NI)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Funding opportunities

Spay Aware is a voluntary initiative whereby professionals donate their skills and expertise, and is supported by Veterinary Ireland, the ISPCA, Dogstrust and the Irish Blue Cross.

The Spay Aware initiative is about prevention and tackling the issue where it stems from, rather than a fire-fighting approach, which is what rescues and pounds are consigned to. It is indiscriminate breeding by members of the public that inundates Ireland's rescues and pounds with animals. Spay Aware wants to make the Irish public aware of the importance of spaying and neutering animals in order to deal with the issue of overbreeding in Ireland.

4 500 dogs were killed in pounds in 2012 in Ireland. An estimated 180 000 kittens die each year due to starvation and neglect and a very large, but unknown, number of animals are being cared for by rescues.

Education has proven to be cost-effective in the long run in many areas, and it is also needed in the area of animal welfare with regard to spaying and neutering.

Are there any European funding opportunities available for this initiative?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 and E-005276/2013 ([1]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

EU competences do not allow the Commission to fund stray dogs control programs.

However, the Commission is active in promoting systematic and common information and education strategies on dog welfare and it cooperates with other organisations to the development 'Carodog' ([2]), and 'Carocat' ([3]) websites informative platforms on canine and feline population management leading to responsible animal ownership as basic principle for the promotion of companion animal welfare in the EU.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.carodog.eu/
([3]) http://www.carocat.eu/

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-004034/14
till kommissionen
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(1 april 2014)

Angående: Tortyr av politiska fångar i Egypten

I Egypten har mer än femhundra oppositionella nyligen dömts till döden i en och samma rättsvidriga rättegång. Förtrycket i landet blir allt värre. Tortyr av politiska fångar sker närmast regelmässigt. Sexuella övergrepp och våldtäkter drabbar många gripna kvinnor.

I ett uttalande från rådet den 10 februari 2014 framhåller EU att; ”The EU welcomes that the new constitution enshrines human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, assembly and womens rights”.

Amnesty International konstaterar däremot i sin 41-sidiga rapport om Egypten ”Roadmap to repression” (23/1 2014) att man inte kan se något slut på brotten mot de mänskliga rättigheterna.

Bland de många oskyldigt fängslade i Egypten finns också en svensk medborgare vid namn Ahmed Tag Eldin, som greps den 6 oktober 2013.

1. Anser kommissionen att formuleringarna i rådets uttalande den 10 februari överensstämmer med verkligheten i Egypten idag

2. Avser kommissionen vidta några konkreta åtgärder, t.ex. politisk bojkott, för att påverka den egyptiska regimen att stoppa avrättningarna, respektera de mänskliga rättigheterna och upphöra med tortyr mot människor som fängslats?

3. Avser kommissionen att agera specifikt för att den egyptiska regimens övergrepp mot kvinnor ska upphöra?

4. Avser kommissionen agera i fallet med den svenska medborgaren Ahmed Tag Eldin?

Svar från den höga representanten/vice ordföranden Catherine Ashton på kommissionens vägnar
(11 juni 2014)

På rådets möte den 10 februari 2014 välkomnade EUs utrikesministrar de positiva åtgärder som vidtagits i fråga om den nya konstitutionen. De uttryckte dock även sin oro för den selektiva rättvisa som tillämpas för den politiska oppositionen och den försämrade situationen vad beträffar de mänskliga rättigheterna.

Den höga representanten/vice ordföranden har vid upprepade tillfällen tagit upp dessa frågor med de egyptiska interimsmyndigheterna. Dessutom har EU:s särskilda representant för mänskliga rättigheter, Stavros Lambrinidis, granskat situationen på plats under sitt femte besök i Egypten i februari 2014. Han håller regelbunden kontakt med de egyptiska myndigheterna och det civila samhället.

I sin lägesrapport om den europeiska grannskapspolitiken för 2013 uppmanar EU Egypten att trygga skyddet av kvinnors rättigheter och jämställdhet mellan könen och se till att de många fallen av våld, bl.a. sexuella övergrepp, verkligen utreds och att gärningsmännen snabbt åtalas. EU förväntar sig att de egyptiska interimsmyndigheterna fullgör sina åtaganden avseende de mänskliga rättigheterna, däribland kvinnors rättigheter. EU stöder aktivt främjandet av jämställdhet mellan könen och ställer sin sakkunskap till de egyptiska myndigheternas förfogande, inte minst i fråga om lagstiftningen om våld mot kvinnor.

I dag finansierar EU nio jämställdhetsrelaterade projekt ledda av organisationer i det civila samhället till ett belopp av sammanlagt 3,3 miljoner euro. Inom ramen för den europeiska grannskapspolitiken finansierar EU dessutom FN-projektet ”Spring forward for women” med 7 miljoner euro för perioden 2012–2016. Slutligen är kvinnors rättigheter en av de viktigaste aspekterna i Egyptens landstrategi för mänskliga rättigheter.

Enligt våra källor blev Ahmed Tag Eldin som arresterades i samband med konflikterna den 6 oktober 2013 frigiven för två veckor sedan. För tillfället väntar han på sitt pass och utresetillstånd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004034/14
to the Commission
Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Torture of political prisoners in Egypt

In Egypt, more than 500 members of the opposition have recently been sentenced to death in a single unlawful court case. Repression is getting worse and worse in the country. Torture of political prisoners is virtually a regular occurrence. Many women detainees are subject to sexual abuse and rape.

In a statement of 10 February 2014, the Council stated that: 'The EU welcomes that the new Constitution enshrines human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, assembly and women's rights'.

On the other hand, Amnesty International observes in its 41-page report on Egypt, 'Roadmap to repression' (23/1 2014), that no end to the human rights violations is in sight.

The numerous innocent prisoners in Egypt include a Swedish national called Ahmed Tag Eldin, who was detained on 6 October 2013.

1. Does the Commission consider that the formulations in the Council's statement of 10 February accord with reality in today's Egypt?

2. Does the Commission intend to take any practical measures, for example imposing a political boycott, to persuade the Egyptian regime to cease the executions, respect human rights and cease to torture people who have been imprisoned?

3. Will the Commission take action specifically to put an end to the Egyptian regime's abuse of women?

4. Will the Commission take action on the case of the Swedish national Ahmed Tag Eldin?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The EU Foreign Ministers indeed welcomed in their Council Conclusions of 10 February 2014 the positive steps undertaken with the new Constitution, but also expressed concern over selective justice against political opposition and about the deteriorating human rights situation.

These concerns have been raised at numerous occasions by the HR/VP with the Egyptian interim authorities. Also the EUSR for Human Rights, S. Lambrinidis, during his fifth visit to Egypt in February 2014, assessed the HR situation on the ground, being in regular contact with the Egyptian authorities and civil society.

In the 2013 ENP Progress Report, the EU invites Egypt to 'ensure the protection of women's rights and gender equality' and 'ensure that investigations on the many cases of violence, including sexual abuse, are carried out and that the perpetrators are promptly brought to justice'. The EU expects the Egyptian interim authorities to respect their Human Rights commitments, including women's rights. The EU is actively engaged in the promotion of gender equality and is providing Egyptian authorities with its expertise, e.g. specifically on the law on violence against women.

Currently, the EU is financing 9 CSOs projects on gender, for a total amount of EUR 3.3 million. In the framework of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, the EU is also funding the 2012-2016 UN program 'Spring forward for women', (EUR 7 million). Lastly, women's rights are a key priority in the Human Rights Country Strategy for Egypt.

According to our information Ahmed Tag Eldin, who was arrested during clashes on 6 October 2013, was released two weeks ago. He is currently waiting to receive his passport and an exit clearance to leave the country.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004035/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR) e Barbara Matera (PPE)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Diritti delle donne in Afghanistan

In seguito all'annuncio del ritiro delle forze NATO in Afghanistan, si è verificata un'escalation della violenza nei confronti delle donne e delle bambine, in particolare di quelle che frequentano corsi scolastici prima banditi dal regime talebano che imponeva alle donne di vivere nell'ignoranza e di non emanciparsi. Nel distretto di Pusht Rud nello scorso gennaio un commando di talebani ha fatto irruzione in una scuola, prelevando un'insegnante e chiedendo una dozzina di fucili AK-47 come riscatto. Nonostante le aperture verificatesi in seguito alla caduta dei talebani, la condizione delle donne in Afghanistan rimane difficile: istruzione e cure mediche sono limitate, le donne subiscono violenze e percosse senza ricevere tutele adeguate e sono economicamente dipendenti dagli uomini, trovando difficoltà, non solo economica ma anche sociale, nella ricerca di un lavoro e di indipendenza.

La Commissione:

1. Sta facendo pressioni sul governo afgano al fine di salvaguardare i diritti delle donne e l'accesso all'istruzione?

2. Sta adeguatamente monitorando se i fondi comunitari messi a disposizione del governo afgano per le politiche di cooperazione sono effettivamente utilizzati per l'educazione della popolazione, in particolare per le fasce socialmente più deboli e prive di diritti durante il regime dei talebani?

3. Può chiarire il ruolo del SEAE nella collaborazione con le guardie di frontiera di Afghanistan e Pakistan per eliminare il commercio di armi?

4. Non ritiene che i suoi eventuali osservatori nell'ambito delle elezioni in Afghanistan debbano prestare maggiore attenzione al diritto di voto delle donne?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 maggio 2014)

L'AR/VP continua a nutrire notevole preoccupazione per le difficoltà incontrate dalle ragazze e dalle donne afghane che cercano di rivendicare e di difendere i propri diritti umani, compreso il diritto all'istruzione. La salvaguardia dei progressi compiuti in termini di diritti delle donne e la promozione di un'applicazione integrale delle disposizioni di legge in vigore sono obiettivi prioritari dell'Afghanistan, a cui l'UE dà notevole sostegno. In occasione delle elezioni presidenziali in corso, la squadra di osservazione elettorale dell'UE rivolge particolare attenzione alle condizioni in cui le donne possono esercitare il proprio diritto di voto.

Dopo tanti anni di conflitto, l'Afghanistan ha bisogno di una tregua affinché i cambiamenti economici e sociali possano consolidarsi. Per questo motivo l'UE insiste sulla necessità di sostenere lo sviluppo a lungo termine del paese. Il quadro di Tokyo sulla responsabilità reciproca rimane il principale riferimento per monitorare i progressi compiuti, in particolare a livello di diritti umani e istruzione. L'UE continua a svolgere un ruolo guida in questo contesto, riservando particolare attenzione ai diritti e al ruolo delle donne.

Ora che sono stati istituiti uno stretto coordinamento e una divisione dei compiti fra i diversi donatori internazionali, e in particolare europei, i finanziamenti dell'UE vengono destinati principalmente alla sanità, allo sviluppo rurale, alla governance e allo Stato di diritto.

Nell'ambito del processo «Cuore dell'Asia», l'UE sostiene attivamente la cooperazione regionale tra l'Afghanistan e i suoi vicini, compreso il Pakistan. L'Unione ha contribuito a migliorare la gestione delle frontiere ai principali punti di transito lungo il confine Afghanistan-Pakistan. Col tempo, una migliore gestione delle frontiere dovrebbe ridurre il trasporto transfrontaliero di beni illeciti, come le armi, agevolando al tempo stesso il commercio lecito nella regione. Va osservato tuttavia che il confine è lungo circa 2 430 km e attraversa molte zone isolate e teatro di conflitti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004035/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR) and Barbara Matera (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Women's rights in Afghanistan

Following the announcement that NATO troops are to be withdrawn from Afghanistan, there has been an upsurge in violence against women and girls, in particular those attending school — an activity that was banned under the Taliban regime, which was intent on preventing women from learning and becoming emancipated. In January 2014 a group of Taliban insurgents broke into a school in the Pusht Rud district, kidnapped a teacher and demanded a dozen AK-47 rifles as a ransom. Despite the improvements that followed the fall of the Taliban regime, women continue to have a difficult life in Afghanistan, being allowed limited access to education and healthcare, subjected to violence and mistreatment, with no proper attempt being made to protect them, and continuing to be financially dependent on men because of the economic and social barriers to them finding work and becoming independent.

1. Is the Commission putting pressure on the Afghan Government to uphold women's rights and guarantee them access to education?

2. Is it monitoring the use the Afghan Government is making of EU cooperation policy funding, to make sure that it is going into education, in particular for the most vulnerable sections of society who were deprived of their rights when the Taliban were in power?

3. Can it say exactly what role the EEAS is playing in joint efforts by the Afghan and Pakistani border guard services to put a stop to arms trafficking?

4. Would it not agree that EU observers sent to monitor the elections in Afghanistan should focus in particular on ensuring that women can exercise their right to vote?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The HR/VP remains deeply concerned about the challenges Afghan girls and women continue to face in claiming and defending their human rights, including the right to education. Safeguarding the advances made in women's rights and promoting the full implementation of existing statutory provisions are priorities for Afghanistan and strongly supported by the EU. During the current presidential elections, the EU Electoral Assessment Team is paying particular attention to the conditions under which women can exercise their right of voting.

Afghanistan needs a respite from the years of conflict before economic and social change can take root. That is why the EU is insistent on the need to support Afghanistan's development over the long term. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework remains the basis for monitoring the progress made, notably in the field of Human Rights and Education. The EU continues playing a leading role in this context with strong focus on the rights and role of women.

Following established close coordination and partition of labour between international, and in particular European, donors, EU funding is mainly directed to the areas of health, rural development, governance and rule of law.

In the Heart of Asia process, the EU supports actively the regional cooperation of Afghanistan and its neighbours, including Pakistan. The EU has supported improved border management at major transit points on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Over time, improved border management is expected to reduce the transport of illicit commodities, such as arms, over the border while facilitating legal trade within the region. But it should be noted that the border is approximately 2430 km and traverses many remote and conflict-afflicted areas.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004036/14
à la Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Efficacité énergétique

L'adoption en janvier 2014 par le Parlement européen de la directive sur les marchés publics (en particulier son article 22, paragraphe 4), ainsi que les déclarations du directeur général Dominique Ristori concernant l'efficacité énergétique dans le secteur de la construction, au cours d'un échange de vues en commission ITRE le 17 mars 2014, montrent l'importance des mesures visant à promouvoir l'efficacité énergétique dans les bâtiments, ce dans le cadre de la stratégie énergétique de l'Europe.

En vue de l'adoption imminente de la future communication sur les bâtiments durables par la Commission, prévue pour fin mars 2014:

1. La Commission entend-elle décrire comment des technologies, telles que des outils de modélisation électronique des données du bâtiment, pourraient jouer un rôle important dans la stratégie de l'Europe pour promouvoir l'efficacité énergétique dans les bâtiments?

2. Dans le cadre de la future communication, la Commission procédera-t-elle à un examen des bonnes pratiques existantes au niveau des États membres en vue de permettre l'application des outils de modélisation électronique des données du bâtiment et de définir la façon dont ces technologies peuvent contribuer à des travaux publics plus rentables et d'une grande efficacité énergétique?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(12 mai 2014)

1. La communication sur les bâtiments durables complétera les dispositions de la directive sur la performance énergétique des bâtiments (DPEB) (2010/31/CE) et de la directive relative à l'efficacité énergétique (2012/27/UE) en intégrant des aspects environnementaux comme les incidences liées au choix des matériaux de construction ou la prévention des déchets et réutilisation.

La Commission promeut le développement technologique, la démonstration et la pénétration sur le marché des technologies améliorant l'efficacité énergétique dans le cadre d'Horizon 2020 et étudie la contribution éventuelle des technologies, y compris des outils de modélisation électronique des données du bâtiment, à la réalisation des objectifs d'Europe 2020. Cette analyse sera prise en compte dans la feuille de route et le plan d'action pour les technologies énergétiques, qui devraient être présentés en 2014.

2. Un des principaux objectifs de la communication est de faire en sorte que les parties prenantes dans la chaîne de valeur tiennent compte des informations sur les incidences environnementales au moment de prendre leurs décisions. Les outils de modélisation des données du bâtiment (building information modelling ou BIM) peuvent jouer un rôle important, mais les BIM existants ne tiennent pas pleinement compte des aspects environnementaux, en raison d'incertitudes quant à la manière d'évaluer et de consigner les performances environnementales.

La mise au point d'un ensemble d'indicateurs pour l'évaluation de la performance environnementale globale des bâtiments rendra possible la création d'un corpus de données fiables et comparables.

La mise en place d'un cadre d'évaluation environnementale commun pour l'UE permet de mieux intégrer les aspects environnementaux dans les BIM. La législation en matière d'efficacité énergétique met en exergue le rôle d'exemple des bâtiments publics en énonçant des exigences spécifiques visant à renforcer les codes nationaux de la construction de manière rentable, compte tenu des coûts initiaux et des économies d'énergie tout au long du cycle de vie des bâtiments.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004036/14
to the Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Energy efficiency

Parliament's adoption in January 2014 of the public procurement directive (Article 22(4) of which is particularly relevant) and Director-General Dominique Ristori's statements concerning energy efficiency in the construction sector made at the meeting of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy held on 17 March 2014 demonstrate the importance attached to promoting energy efficiency in buildings as part of the EU's energy strategy.

Looking ahead to the adoption of its communication on sustainable buildings, scheduled for the end of March 2014:

1. Does the Commission intend to outline the major role that technologies, such as building information modelling tools, could play in Europe's strategy for promoting energy-efficient buildings?

2. In the forthcoming communication, will the Commission review best practices in the Member States, with a view to fostering the use of such technologies and describing exactly how they can make public buildings more cost- and energy-efficient?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

1. The communication on Sustainable buildings will complement the provisions of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) (2010/31/EC) and Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) with environmental aspects like embodied impacts in construction materials or waste prevention and reuse.

The Commission promotes technological development, demonstration and market uptake of energy efficiency technologies through Horizon 2020 and is exploring the role technologies, including building information modelling tools, can play towards meeting the 2020-targets. This analysis will be reflected in the Energy Technology Roadmap and Action Plan due later in 2014.

2. A main objective in the communication is to ensure that stakeholders in the value chain integrate information on environmental impacts in decision-making. Building information modelling (BIM) tools can play an important role, but existing BIMs do not take environmental aspects into full account due to uncertainty about how to assess and report environmental performance.

The development of a set of indicators for assessment of the overall environmental performance of buildings will provide the possibility to build up robust and comparable data.

By providing a common EU environmental assessment framework better integration of environmental aspects into BIMs are enabled. The energy efficiency legislation highlights the exemplary role of public buildings with specific requirements to strengthen national building codes in a cost-effective way, considering up-front costs and energy savings through the buildings life cycle.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004037/14
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Principes de légalité, d'égalité de traitement, de proportionnalité et de non-discrimination par la République de Pologne

Pendant la période transitoire allant jusqu'au 1er mai 2016, l'acquisition de biens immobiliers agricoles par un étranger de l'Union européenne requiert l'obtention d'un permis délivré par le ministre de l'intérieur sous réserve d'un contrôle préalable du ministre de l'agriculture, qui bénéficie d'un droit d'opposition. La pratique communément employée se révèle dans les faits être une utilisation arbitraire, même lorsque les ressortissants étrangers remplissent les critères objectifs requis.

De surcroît, l'Agence des biens immobiliers agricoles (agence d'État) peut limiter la participation à l'appel d'offres aux agriculteurs résidant dans la commune concernée. Pour qu'un agriculteur puisse concourir, il doit présenter un certificat d'enregistrement de résidence permanente (pol. meldunek stały). Afin d'obtenir ce certificat, tout étranger doit présenter la preuve du droit de séjour permanent, ce qui n'est possible qu'après cinq ans de résidence en Pologne, chaque citoyen polonais pouvant l'obtenir automatiquement.

La pratique des ministres polonais susmentionnés relative à l'application des dispositions de la loi interne polonaise, consistant à refuser, de façon conséquente et arbitraire, la délivrance d'un permis d'acquisition d'un bien immobilier agricole malgré la satisfaction aux critères définis dans la loi, est-elle conforme au droit européen, notamment aux principes de légalité, d'égalité de traitement, de proportionnalité et de non-discrimination? La Commission envisage-t-elle de prendre des mesures à l'encontre de la République de Pologne afin de faire cesser les pratiques incompatibles avec le droit de l'Union européenne?

Le conditionnement de la participation à un appel d'offres pour l'acquisition de biens immobiliers agricoles à des critères administratifs (meldunek) qui peuvent être remplis automatiquement par chaque citoyen polonais, tandis que tout ressortissant étranger de l'Union européenne doit attendre cinq ans, ne constitue-t-il pas une discrimination indirecte manifeste? Ne viole-t-il pas, par conséquent, les principes d'égalité, de proportionnalité et de non-discrimination invalidant ainsi toute acquisition des biens dans le cadre de tels appels d'offres? La Commission compte-t-elle prendre des mesures à l'encontre de la République de Pologne afin de faire cesser les pratiques incompatibles avec le droit de l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(5 mai 2014)

Conformément au traité d'adhésion, la Pologne peut maintenir en vigueur, pendant douze ans à compter de la date d'adhésion, les règles établies dans la loi polonaise du 24 mars 1920 sur l'accession des étrangers à la propriété (Dz.U. 1996, Nr 54, poz. 245 et amendements). Par conséquent, en ce qui concerne l'acquisition de biens immobiliers agricoles, la Commission ne peut contester les discriminations au motif de la nationalité qui découlent de cette loi avant l'expiration, en 2016, de la période transitoire.

Toutefois, les services de la Commission étudieront la question de savoir si les procédures d'appel d'offres évoquées par l'Honorable Parlementaire sont soumises à des restrictions plus strictes que les dispositions de la loi de 1920. Ces procédures ont fait l'objet de plaintes auprès de la Commission, qui sont actuellement en cours d'examen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004037/14
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Application of the principles of legality, equal treatment, proportionality and non-discrimination by the Republic of Poland

During the transitional period which will end on 1 May 2016, non-Polish EU citizens wishing to purchase agricultural property are required obtain a permit issued by the Ministry of the Interior subject to the completion of prior checks by the Ministry of Agriculture, which has the right to object to a sale. In practice, however, the rules have been applied arbitrarily, even when foreign nationals meet the relevant criteria.

What is more, the Agricultural Property Agency (a state agency) can restrict participation in tender procedures to farmers resident in the municipality in question. In order to take part, farmers must produce a certificate (*meldunek stały* in Polish) proving that they are permanently resident in the area. Foreign nationals wishing to obtain this certificate are required to present evidence of a permanent right of residence, for which they are eligible only after having lived in Poland for five years; Polish citizens can obtain the certificate automatically.

Is this use of Polish domestic law in order to consistently and arbitrarily deny people permits to purchase agricultural property, even if they meet the criteria laid down by law, compatible with EC law and, in particular, the principles of legality, equal treatment, proportionality and non-discrimination?

Is it not a clear form of indirect discrimination to make participation in tender procedures for agricultural properties contingent on possession of a document (*meldunek*) which is automatically available to all Polish citizens, whilst foreign nationals are obliged to wait five years before obtaining it? Does this not violate the principles of equal treatment, proportionality and non-discrimination, thus rendering null and void all property purchases concluded by means of such tender procedures? Does the Commission plan to take steps against the Republic of Poland in order to put a stop to practices which are incompatible with EC law?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(5 May 2014)

According to the Accession Treaty, Poland may maintain in force for twelve years from the date of accession the rules laid down in the Polish Act of 24 March 1920 on the Acquisition of Real Estate by Foreigners (Dz.U. 1996, Nr 54, poz. 245 with amendments). Consequently, the Commission cannot challenge discriminations on grounds of nationality with respect to the acquisition of agricultural real estate which result from this Act before the expiry of the transitional period in 2016.

The Commission services will, however, examine whether there are restrictions going beyond the 1920 Act with respect to the tender procedures mentioned by the Honourable Member. These procedures have been the subject of complaints to the Commission which are currently under examination.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-004038/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(1 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Atrasos na aprovação da Política Agrícola Comum

Existem indícios de um possível atraso na aprovação da futura Política Agrícola Comum. A concretizar-se este atraso, isso significará uma perda de 500 milhões de euros do Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural a que Portugal tem direito em 2015. Acresce a este facto o risco de este atraso perturbar a operacionalização atempada da campanha de 2015 do 1.° pilar da PAC.

1. Confirma a Comissão a possibilidade deste atraso?

2. A que deve esse possível atraso?

3. Há risco de uma verba de 500 milhões de euros se perder em 2015?

4. Que verba em concreto se pode perder com este atraso?

5. Caso tal venha a acontecer, perde-se a possibilidade de a usar sem cofinanciamento nacional?

6. Caso se confirme esta perda, que medidas serão tomadas para que os pequenos e médios agricultores e a agricultura familiar, já por si afetados e com maior fragilidade económica, não sejam ainda mais afetados?

7. Está prevista alguma possibilidade de compensação aos países afetados?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(28 de maio de 2014)

A conclusão do quadro jurídico da PAC 2014-2020 exige a adoção de um certo número de atos delegados e de atos de execução por parte da Comissão. Os atos delegados necessários foram adotados em 11 de março de 2014 e o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho não se opuseram a nenhum deles. Os atos de execução estão prestes a ser concluídos. Tanto os atos delegados como os atos de execução correspondentes deverão ser publicadas antes do período de férias de verão. Atendendo a que um dos atos delegados relacionados com a declaração especial recentemente adotada ([1]) foi alterado e que os Estados-Membros podem fazer as suas escolhas durante os próximos meses, o novo sistema de pagamentos diretos entrará plenamente em vigor em 1 de janeiro de 2015. Entretanto, a elaboração e adoção dos acordos de parceria e dos programas de desenvolvimento rural estão a decorrer, ao passo que a elegibilidade das operações já começou em 1 de janeiro de 2014.

No que se refere concretamente a Portugal, o Acordo de Parceria foi apresentado no dia 4 de fevereiro. Os 3 programas de desenvolvimento rural já foram apresentados por Portugal. Até 2016, existe a possibilidade de Portugal utilizar uma contribuição do Feader de 100 %, no valor de 500 milhões de euros. Por conseguinte, a Comissão considera que não existe qualquer risco.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/newsroom/161_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004038/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Delays in the adoption of the common agricultural policy

There are signs of a possible delay in the adoption of the future common agricultural policy. If such a delay indeed occurs, this will entail a loss of EUR 500 million in the rural development programme to which Portugal is entitled in 2015. Moreover, this delay could make it difficult for the first pillar of the CAP to come into operation in time for 2015.

1. Can the Commission confirm that such a delay is possible?

2. What are the reasons for this possible delay?

3. Is there a risk that appropriations worth EUR 500 million might be lost in 2015?

4. What specific appropriations could be lost as a result of this delay?

5. In this event, will the possibility of using this money without national co-financing alsobe lost?

6. If this loss is confirmed, what action will be taken to ensure that small and medium-sizedfarmers and family farms, which are already being affected and are economically morefragile, will not be even harder hit?

7. Is any provision being made for the possibility of compensating the countries affected?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The completion of the legal framework for the CAP 2014-2020 requires the adoption of a number of delegated and implementing acts by the Commission. The necessary delegated acts were adopted on 11 March 2014 and the European Parliament and the Council did not oppose any of them. The implementing acts are about to be finalised. Both the delegated acts and the corresponding implementing acts are scheduled to be published before the summer break. Taking into consideration the amendment of one of the Delegated Acts linked to the special declaration recently adopted ([1]) as well as the choices Member States can make over the next months, the new Direct Payment system will fully enter into force on 1 January 2015. In the meantime the preparation and adoption of the Partnership Agreements and Rural Development Programmes is under way, while the eligibility of operations had already started on 1 January 2014.

Concerning Portugal specifically, its Partnership Agreement was submitted on the 4th of February; the 3 Rural Development Programmes have already been submitted by Portugal. The possibility provided for Portugal to use an EAFRD contribution of 100% for an amount of EUR 500 million is available until 2016; therefore, the Commission does not consider it at risk.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/newsroom/161_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004039/14
to the Commission
Stephen Hughes (S&D)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Youth employment data gathering by Member States

Given that policy interventions to tackle youth unemployment/disengagement must be underpinned by comprehensive data and robust evidence about the numbers, characteristics, location and specific needs of this target group, what steps should be taken by all Member States to ensure that data gathering is consistent and reliable, and that effective mapping and tracking systems are put in place?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

Eurostat collects and disseminates on its website employment and unemployment statistics based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS), including for young people. The LFS are implemented in all Member States (MS) on the basis of EC law. Data comparability is ensured by strict application of common concepts and definitions. Precision requirements also have to be fulfilled to ensure the reliability of the results. Quality reports are transmitted by each MS and evaluated by Eurostat. Micro-data are transmitted by each country and are subject to in-depth validation.

The Youth Guarantee (YG) Recommendation ([1]) sets out that MS should 'monitor and evaluate all YG actions and programmes, so that more evidence-based policies and interventions can be developed on the basis of what works, where and why'. The Commission is called upon to 'monitor the implementation of this recommendation, and establish through the Employment Committee (EMCO) a multilateral surveillance'. In that context the EMCO Indicators Sub-Group is looking at the data requirements for monitoring the YG, and on the basis of a Commission proposal, will come forward with recommendations on the collection of information at EU level.

MS cooperate through the EMCO and the Social Protection Committee with the Commission on a Joint Assessment Framework, an indicator-based assessment system covering policy areas under the Employment Guidelines. A sub-policy area 'Measuring implementation, results and impact of the YG' will be created ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF
([2]) Under the JAF Policy Area 3: Active labour market policies.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004040/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αύξηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας στην Ελλάδα

Το 2010 η Επιτροπή, στην ερώτηση E-2656/2010, δήλωνε ότι «Πρέπει να αξιολογηθεί η δυνατότητα μιας ευρωπαϊκής πλατφόρμας συνεργασίας μεταξύ των επιθεωρήσεων εργασίας για την πρόληψη και καταπολέμηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας με τον καθορισμό μιας σειράς επιλογών. Αναμένεται να παραγάγει αποτελέσματα κατά το τέλος του 2010». Το 2013 στην ερώτηση E-4906/2013, απαντούσε ότι «επί του παρόντος εργάζεται για την δημιουργία μιας ευρωπαϊκής πλατφόρμας για την ενίσχυση της συνεργασίας, ιδιαιτέρως με τη συγκέντρωση πληροφοριών και βέλτιστων πρακτικών σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, των φορέων επιβολής του νόμου των κρατών μελών, όπως οι επιθεωρήσεις εργασίας, οι φορολογικές αρχές και οι αρχές κοινωνικής ασφάλισης, και άλλων ενδιαφερόμενων μερών, με σκοπό την πιο αποτελεσματική και αποδοτική προσέγγιση για την πρόληψη και την αποτροπή της αδήλωτης εργασίας». Δηλαδή, καμία πρόοδος, καμία ενέργεια δεν έγινε στην κατεύθυνση της πάταξης της αδήλωτης εργασίας, στο διάστημα 2007-2013.

Με δεδομένα τα ανωτέρω και ότι, από το 2009 και μετά, όταν ξέσπασε η οικονομική κρίση στην Ελλάδα, τεράστιος αριθμός μεταναστών, οι οποίοι συνέβαλαν ουσιαστικά στο αυξημένο ποσοστό αδήλωτης εργασίας, εγκατέλειψε τη χώρα, και ενώ θα ανέμενε κανείς ότι στο διάστημα αυτό θα υπήρχε πτώση του ποσοστού ανασφάλιστης εργασίας, πρόσφατη έρευνα του Ευρωβαρόμετρου, ανέδειξε για άλλη μία φορά την ένταση του προβλήματος στην Ελλάδα, αφού καταδεικνύει ότι στο διάστημα 2007-2013, η ανασφάλιστη εργασία στην Ελλάδα αυξήθηκε κατά 7%.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Γιατί δεν προχωρά στη λήψη μέτρων για την πάταξη της αδήλωτης εργασίας;

Γιατί δεν συνηγορεί για την Ελλάδα στη λήψη μέτρων για την πάταξη της αδήλωτης εργασίας;

Μπορεί να πείσει τον ελληνικό λαό, αλλά και τους λαούς της Ευρώπης, ότι η εσκεμμένη αυτή καθυστέρηση δεν συντηρεί σκόπιμα την ύπαρξη της «μαύρης» εργασίας, ώστε να συμπιέζονται διαρκώς οι μισθοί, οι συντάξεις και τα επιδόματα;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2014)

1 και 3. Στις 9 Απριλίου 2014, η Επιτροπή εξέδωσε πρόταση ([1]) σχετικά με τη δημιουργία ευρωπαϊκής πλατφόρμας με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της συνεργασίας σε επίπεδο ΕΕ μεταξύ των κρατών μελών για την αποτελεσματικότερη καταπολέμηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας. Στην εν λόγω πλατφόρμα θα συμμετέχουν φορείς επιβολής του νόμου των κρατών μελών, όπως οι επιθεωρήσεις εργασίας και οι αρχές κοινωνικής ασφάλισης, φορολογίας και μετανάστευσης.

2. Η πάταξη της αδήλωτης εργασίας στην Ελλάδα και η αναμόρφωση του Σώματος Επιθεώρησης Εργασίας είναι οι απαιτήσεις της ενότητας 4.4 (*Πάταξη της αδήλωτης εργασίας και των άτυπων μορφών απασχόλησης και μείωση του κόστους συμμόρφωσης*) του Μνημονίου συνεννόησης για τους ειδικούς όρους οικονομικής πολιτικής. Η ΕΕ συνδράμει την Ελλάδα στην πάταξη της αδήλωτης εργασίας μέσω της συστημικής παρέμβασης με τίτλο «Αναβάθμιση των μηχανισμών για την παρακολούθηση της αδήλωτης εργασίας» στα πλαίσια του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού», που συγχρηματοδοτείται από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο ([2]). Φορέας υλοποίησης του υπό εξέλιξη προγράμματος είναι το Σώμα Επιθεώρησης Εργασίας. Για περαιτέρω πληροφορίες ο κ. βουλευτής μπορεί να επικοινωνήσει με τη διαχειριστική αρχή ([3]) του ελληνικού επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού».

([1]) Πρόταση απόφασης του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου σχετικά με τη δημιουργία μιας ευρωπαϊκής πλατφόρμας με σκοπό την ενίσχυση της συνεργασίας για την πρόληψη και την αποτροπή της αδήλωτης εργασίας (COM(2014)221 τελικό της 9ης Απριλίου 2014).

([2]) Ο συνολικός προϋπολογισμός για τα εν λόγω μέτρα ανέρχεται σε 7 εκατ. ευρώ περίπου.

([3]) Κοραή 4, 105 64 Αθήνα Τηλ. +30 210 5201200 φαξ: Τηλ. +30 210 5241311 Ηλ. διεύθυνση: eydanad@mou.gr. Ο ιστότοπος του ελληνικού επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος «Ανάπτυξη ανθρώπινου δυναμικού» είναι:
http://www.epanad.gov.gr/. Για αναλυτικότερες πληροφορίες για το ΕΚΤ στην Ελλάδα βλέπε: http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/Default.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004040/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Increase in undeclared work in Greece

In 2010, the Commission, in its answer to Question E-2656/2010, stated that: 'It should also assess the feasibility of establishing a European platform for cooperation between labour inspectorates in preventing and fighting undeclared work by setting out a range of options. It is expected to produce results towards the end of 2010.' In 2013, in its answer to Question E-4906/2013, it stated that 'the Commission is currently working to establish a European platform to step up cooperation, in particular by pooling information and best practice at EU level between Member State enforcement bodies, such as labour inspectorates, tax and social security authorities and other stakeholders, with a view to a more effective and efficient approach to preventing and deterring undeclared work.' In other words, no progress was made and no action taken to combat undeclared work in 2007-2013.

Since 2009, when the economic crisis burst in Greece, a huge number of migrants, who were substantially responsible for the increased level of undeclared work, have left the country, but instead of the percentage of undeclared labour during this period declining, as was to be expected, the opposite has occurred: a recent Eurobarometer survey shows that in 2007-2013, the percentage of undeclared work in Greece actually increased by 7%, thereby highlighting once again the intensity of the problem facing Greece.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Why does it not take measures to combat undeclared work?

Why does it not recommend that Greece take measures to combat undeclared work?

Can it convince the Greek people, and also the other peoples of Europe, that this delay is not a deliberate ploy designed to maintain the existence of 'black labour' so as to keep wages, pensions and benefits down?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

1 and 3. On 9 April 2014 the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) to establish a European Platform to improve cooperation at EU level between the Member States in tackling undeclared work more effectively. It will bring together such Member State enforcement bodies as the labour inspectorates and the social security, tax and migration authorities.

2. Fighting against undeclared work in Greece and reforming the Greek labour inspectorate are requirements in Section 4.2 (Fighting undeclared work and informality and lowering compliance costs) of the memorandum of understanding on Specific Economic Policy Conditionality. The EU assists Greece in combating undeclared work through the systemic intervention entitled 'Upgrading of mechanisms to monitor undeclared work' under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme co-financed by the European Social Fund ([2]). The implementing body for the programme, currently in progress, is the Greek labour inspectorate. For further information the Honourable Member could contact the managing authority ([3]) for the Greek Human Resources Development Operational Programme.

([1]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9.4.2014).

([2]) The total budget for these measures amount to approximately EUR 7 million.

([3]) 4 Korai St., 10564 Athens; tel. +30 210 5201200; fax: +30 210 5241311; e-mail: eydanad@mou.gr. The website of the Greek Human Resources Development Operational Programme is: http://www.epanad.gov.gr/
For overall information on the ESF in Greece see: http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/Default.aspx

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004041/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αθέτηση συμβατικών υποχρεώσεων στις νέες αναδρομικές αλλαγές των καθεστώτων στήριξης των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας

Σε παλαιότερη ερώτησή μου (E-005660/2011) η Επιτροπή απάντησε ότι η ίδια «έχει επανειλημμένως και δημοσίως αντιταχθεί στις αναδρομικές αλλαγές των καθεστώτων στήριξης των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας, με τις οποίες είναι αντίθετος ο κλάδος και οι οποίες υπονομεύουν την εμπιστοσύνη των επενδυτών». Την δήλωση αυτή επανέλαβε απαντώντας και σε επόμενη ερώτησή μου (E-008987/2012).

Σε αντίθεση όμως με αυτή την θέση, στην Ελλάδα έχουν γίνει, μέχρι σήμερα, μειώσεις στις λεγόμενες εγγυημένες τιμές και έχει επιβληθεί αναδρομική «έκτακτη εισφορά» στον τζίρο των παραγωγών. Πρόσφατα, ψηφίστηκαν νέες μειώσεις που κυμαίνονται μεταξύ 33% και 12%, με το σκεπτικό μείωσης του ελλείμματος του Ειδικού Λογαριασμού ΑΠΕ.

Με δεδομένα τα ανωτέρω και ότι

1. το Πορτογαλικό μνημόνιο επέβαλε την επαναδιαπραγμάτευση των εγγυημένων τιμών με σκοπό να μειωθούν οι εγγυημένες τιμές αναδρομικά, και ότι

2. αντίστοιχη πολιτική μείωσης των εγγυημένων τιμών που ακολουθήθηκε από την Ισπανία είχε ως αποτέλεσμα η χώρα να έχει δεχτεί, από το 2011 ως τον Δεκέμβριο του 2013, 7 αγωγές από 22 μεγάλες εταιρίες που είχαν επενδύσει στον κλάδο, διεκδικώντας εκατομμύρια ευρώ από το ισπανικό κράτος λόγω των ζημιών που υπέστησαν από την εκ των υστέρων αλλαγή των τιμών. Οι αγωγές αυτές έχουν κατατεθεί σε διεθνή διαιτητικά όργανα, αλλά και στο Διεθνές Δικαστήριο της Χάγης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Για ποιους λόγους πιστεύει η Επιτροπή ότι αυξάνεται το χρέος του ειδικού λογαριασμού ΑΠΕ της Ελλάδας; Ποια είναι αυτή την στιγμή η θέση της Επιτροπής ως προς τις αναδρομικές αλλαγές των καθεστώτων στήριξης των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας στην Ελλάδα και ειδικά ως προς τους μικρούς παραγωγούς; Συνάδει η πολιτική που ακολουθείται με τις προτάσεις που γίνονται από την Επιτροπή στην 3η αναθεώρηση για το Δεύτερο Πρόγραμμα Δημοσιονομικής Προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας;

Απάντηση του κ. Oettinger εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή επιβεβαιώνει την αντίθεσή της με τις αναδρομικές αλλαγές σε καθεστώτα στήριξης ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας, παρόλο που αναγνωρίζει ότι πολλά κράτη μέλη, όπως η Ελλάδα, πρέπει να μειώσουν τη στήριξη που παρέχουν για τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές παράλληλα με τη μείωση του κόστους παραγωγής.

Όσον αφορά την Ελλάδα, όπως προκύπτει από επίσημα στοιχεία που δημοσίευσε ο Λειτουργός της Αγοράς Ηλεκτρικής Ενέργειας (ΛΑΓΗΕ ΑΕ), εξαιτίας της καταβολής εγγυημένων τιμών αγοράς στους παραγωγούς ανανεώσιμης ενέργειας, υπερβαίνουσες κατά πολύ τις χρηματοοικονομικές εισροές, ο ελληνικός λογαριασμός ΑΠΕ παρουσιάζει διαρθρωτικό έλλειμμα και αυξανόμενο χρέος. Έχει, επομένως, καταστεί σαφές στις ελληνικές αρχές ότι οι αποζημιώσεις για επενδύσεις σε ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας έπρεπε να επανέλθουν σε αποδοτικό από άποψη δαπανών επίπεδο για τη σταθεροποίηση του συστήματος, μέσω μέτρων που διατηρούν παράλληλα ένα συνολικά θετικό επενδυτικό κλίμα. Η Επιτροπή έχει ενημερώσει τις αρχές ότι ενδεχόμενη προσαρμογή πρέπει να γίνει χωρίς να τεθεί σε κίνδυνο η οικονομική βιωσιμότητα των υφισταμένων σχεδίων και ταυτόχρονα χωρίς να επιβαρύνει σημαντικά τους καταναλωτές. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή στηρίζει, μέσω τεχνικής βοήθειας, την Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση στις προσπάθειές της για τη μεταρρύθμιση του κανονιστικού και νομοθετικού πλαισίου για τις ανανεώσιμες πηγές ενέργειας τόσο βραχυπρόθεσμα όσο και μεσοπρόθεσμα.

Σύμφωνα με την αρχή της επικουρικότητας, η Ελληνική Κυβέρνηση είναι αρμόδια να επιλέξει τον πλέον ενδεδειγμένο τρόπο για την επίτευξη των προαναφερθέντων πιεστικών στόχων, καθώς και να αποφασίσει για τον επιμερισμό των προσπαθειών μεταξύ των παραγωγών ενέργειας από ανανεώσιμες πηγές και μεταξύ αυτών και των καταναλωτών. Σύμφωνα με την ανάλυση της Επιτροπής, η οποία λαμβάνει υπόψη όλα τα μέτρα, η μείωση του σταθερού τιμολογίου τροφοδότησης εξακολουθεί να εγγυάται, κατά μέσο όρο, έναν εσωτερικό συντελεστή απόδοσης της τάξης του 12-17 % για τα έργα στον τομέα των ανανεώσιμων πηγών ενέργειας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004041/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Breach of contractual obligations in the new retroactive changes to renewable energy support schemes

In its answer to my previous Question E-005660/2011, the Commission had stated that it 'has consistently and publicly opposed retroactive changes to renewable energy support schemes which are opposed by industry and undermine investor confidence'. It repeated this statement in its answer to a subsequent question of mine (E 008987/2012).

However, in contradiction with this position, reductions have been made in Greece in supposedly guaranteed prices and 'a special levy' has been retroactively imposed on producers' turnovers. Recently, new reductions ranging from 12% to 33% have been adopted on the grounds of reducing the RES Special Account deficit.

Given the above and also that

1. The Portuguese memorandum required the renegotiation of guaranteed prices in order to reduce the guaranteed rates retroactively; and that

2. A corresponding policy of reducing guaranteed prices pursued by Spain resulted, between 2011 and December 2013, in seven lawsuits being filed by 22 major companies that had invested in the sector, claiming millions of euros from the Spanish state because of losses they had incurred on account of the retroactive change in prices. These lawsuits have been filed with international arbitration bodies and with the International Court of Justice in The Hague;

Will the Commission say:

Why does it believe that RES special account deficit in Greece is increasing? What is the Commission's current position regarding the retroactive changes to renewable energy support schemes in Greece, in particular with regard to small producers? Is the policy being pursued compatible with the proposals made by the Commission in its Third Review of the Second Economic Adjustment Programme for Greece?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Commission confirms that it remains opposed to retroactive changes to renewable energy support schemes, while acknowledging that several Member States like Greece need to reduce their support to renewables in line with the reduction of production costs.

As regards Greece, as shown by official data published by the Operator of Electricity Markte (LAGIE), due to feed-in-tariff payments to renewable energy (RES) producers largely exceeding financial inflows, the Greek RES account has had a structural deficit and a growing debt. It has threfore become evident to the Greek authorities that compensations for investment in renewable energy needed to be brought back to cost-efficient levels to stabilise the system, through measures which nevertheless preserve an overall positive investment climate. The Commission has made the authorities aware that any adjustment should be done without endangering the economic viability of existing projects and at the same time without putting an excessive burden on consumers. The Commission is also supporting, through Technical Assistance, the Greek Government in its efforts to reform the renewable energy regulatory and legislative framework in the short to medium-term.

Following the subsidiarity principle, the Greek Government is responsible for identifying the most appropriate way to achieve the abovementioned and pressing objectives, including deciding how to share the efforts amongst renewable energy producers and between them and consumers. According to the Commission analysis, taking into account all measures, the reduction in feed-in tariffs still guarantees, on average, an internal-rate of return of 12-17% for renewable energy projects.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004042/14
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: The quality of fuels in Member States

Given that the Commission is proposing a 40% GHG reduction target in its 2030 Communication, GHG reductions within the transport sector will also be required if we are to achieve said goal. In the same proposal, however, the Commission does not see fit to propose a mandatory renewables target or a sector-specific GHG reduction target for transport. Instead, it has stated that it believes that Member States will adopt national renewable targets in transport, mostly to be fulfilled with biofuels.

In the light of these observations:

1. Given that the maximum biofuel blend in conventional biofuels that the automotive sector has agreed on is B7 in diesel and E10 in gasoline — as higher blends of conventional biofuels will cause problems in engines — and considering that some Member States would already like to deviate from these commonly agreed fuel blend limits, how will the Commission ensure the compatibility of fuels for consumers across the EU if Member States are to implement different levels of biofuel mandates in the EU?

2. What measures will the Commission implement to promote the use of advanced high- quality biofuels, which can in fact be blended into fuel without any technical blending limits?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

At present, and despite the uniform EU renewable energy target for transport for 2020, the share of biofuels in total fuel in Member States varies to a considerable extent. The EU Fuel Quality Directive ([1]) (FQD) ensures, and the European Standards Organisation (CEN) ([2]) facilitates, vehicle and fuel compatibility across the EU for petrol containing up to 10% ethanol and diesel containing up to 7% conventional biodiesel.

Some biofuels such as hydro-treated vegetable oil (HVO) can already be blended with diesel fuel beyond 7% without causing technical problems so long as other FQD specifications and definitions are met. Furthermore, Member States can introduce high blends such as E85 although these need a dedicated fuel infrastructure and flex fuel vehicles.

1. The Commission sees no new EU fuel quality issue arising from its 2030 Communication on a policy framework for climate and energy ([3]) but will continue to monitor developments in the fuel market and make proposals in case this becomes necessary. The Commission will also continue to provide support and input in the setting of new, and the adaptation of existing, fuel standards by CEN, particularly as regards aligning new and existing standards with EU legislation. Most — but not all (e.g. ethanol from lingo-cellulosic material) — advanced biofuels known today are fully compatible with existing fuel standards and their use is thus not constrained by current blending limits.

2. The Commission will table possible legislative proposals following the 2030 Communication based on the input from the European Parliament, Member States and stakeholders in due course. Regarding the promotion of advanced biofuels the Commission has presented its view in the communication ([4]).

([1]) 98-70-EC.
([2]) EN 590 for diesel, EN 228 for gasoline, and EN 589 for automotive LPG.
([3]) COM(2014) 15 final.
([4]) COM(2014) 15 final, page 7.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004043/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Agenzia spaziale europea: richiesta di informazioni sulla concessione di finanziamenti

L'Agenzia spaziale europea (ESA) è l'organismo preposto allo sviluppo delle capacità spaziali europee.

L'ESA riceve finanziamenti dagli Stati UE e finanzia la realizzazione di progetti in maniera che ad ogni Stato contribuente ritornino, sotto forma di contratti con le imprese, PMI e centri di ricerca, fondi per un ammontare quanto più possibile uguale all'importo finanziato. Questa modalità di finanziamento prende il nome di Ritorno Geografico.

Può accadere tuttavia che non sia possibile, nel breve periodo, mantenere questo rapporto perfettamente bilanciato.

In particolare, in un periodo di crisi economica come quello attuale, alcuni Stati sono in ritardo o si trovano a diminuire gli stanziamenti al bilancio dell'ESA. Tale situazione potrebbe provocare una riduzione dei progetti per questi paesi con molteplici ripercussioni: perdita di posti di lavoro, chiusura di progetti di ricerca, riduzione dei centri di eccellenza dedicati a supportare programmi spaziali, ecc.

Premesso che le attività di ricerca e di sviluppo dell'ESA comportano dei vantaggi economici diretti ed indiretti per le industrie europee, e che molte aziende hanno sviluppato dei derivati dei prodotti dell'ESA o migliorato la propria produzione sfruttando l'esperienza tecnologica acquisita prendendo parte ad un programma dell'ESA, può la Commissione:

1. fornire un quadro generale relativo al bilancio dell'ESA e alle contribuzioni da parte degli Stati membri;

2. prevedere una formula di flessibilità del criterio del Ritorno Geografico, per consentire agli Stati membri momentaneamente non in linea con la contribuzione di vedere tutelati i progetti e le attività dei centri e delle PMI, al fine di salvaguardare l'occupazione e di tutelare il know-how acquisito?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

1. Secondo dati pubblicamente disponibili, l'ESA gestisce un bilancio stimato di 4 102,1 milioni di euro per il 2014. Questo bilancio dell'ESA è principalmente finanziato dagli Stati membri e dovrebbe includere anche finanziamenti connesse all'attuazione di programmi UE.

2. Poiché l'ESA è un'Agenzia intergovernativa, le norme applicabili ai programmi dell'ESA sono prerogativa degli Stati che ne sono membri. Il meccanismo del *ritorno geografico* non si applica al finanziamento dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004043/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: European Space Agency: request for information on the allocation of funding

The European Space Agency (ESA) is the body in charge of developing Europe's space-related capabilities.

The ESA receives funding from EU Member States, which it uses to finance projects in such a way that every contributing Member State gets back as much of its investment as possible, through contracts with companies, SMEs and research centres. This specific type of funding is known as 'Geographical Return'.

However, it is sometimes not possible, in the short term, to maintain this perfect balance between the amounts invested and received.

In particular, during periods of financial crisis like the one we are currently going through, some Member States either reduce their contributions to the ESA's budget or are late in paying them. This could subsequently lead to fewer projects being carried out for these countries, which in turn could have many severe repercussions, such as jobs being lost, research projects being scrapped, centres of excellence dedicated to supporting space programmes being closed down, and so on.

The ESA's research and development activities economically benefit European industries in a number of ways, both directly and indirectly, and many companies have been able to develop derivatives of products initially devised by the ESA or improve their production processes by using the technological expertise they acquired while taking part in an ESA programme.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission provide an overall framework of the ESA's budget and the contributions made by each Member State?

2. Can it devise a formula to allow for some degree of flexibility in the Geographical Return criterion, so that if a Member State is temporarily unable to make its full contribution, this would have no detrimental effect on the projects and activities being carried out by its research centres and SMEs, thereby safeguarding jobs and protecting the levels of expertise already acquired?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

1. As per public data ESA manages an estimated budget of EUR 4.1021 billion for 2014. This budget comes mainly from ESA Member States and would also include funding related to the implementation of EU programmes.

2. ESA being an intergovernemntal agency, the rules applicable to ESA programmes are the prerogative of its Member States. The geographical return mechanism does not apply to European Union funding.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004044/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(1 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Declaración de LIC y ZEPA de «Ses Fontanelles»

Ses Fontanelles es una zona húmeda de alto valor medioambiental situada en la isla de Palma, en las Illes Balears. Este enclave privilegiado representa una extensión de alrededor de 32,5 hectáreas y ha sido desprotegido de manera sistemática por parte de las autoridades estatales y autonómicas. Esta situación de indefensión ha sido denunciada en 2012 mediante la pregunta E-011364/2012, en la que la Comisión Europea afirmó no tener intención de tomar medidas ante los proyectos de urbanización de la zona, dado que Ses Fontanelles no forma parte de la red Natura 2000. La no inclusión de Ses Fontanelles es, sin duda, una anomalía muy importante, ya que el hábitat 1510 (estepas salinas mediterráneas, Limonietalia) es muy escaso en las Illes Balears, y la zona en cuestión es probablemente la muestra más extensa, continua y hasta ahora mejor conservada de todo el archipiélago. Esta zona, además, es un gran espacio de nidificación, alimentación, paso e hibernación de multitud de especies protegidas por la Directiva 2009/147/CE (modificación de la anterior 79/409/CEE), relativa a la conservación de aves silvestres. En concreto, se hallan en esta zona las siguientes especies incluidas en su Anexo I: *Ardeola ralloides*, *Egretta garzetta*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Himantopus himantopus* y *Burhinus oedicnemus*.

Actualmente, se ha empezado a realizar movimientos de tierras con el fin de construir un gran complejo comercial en los terrenos que ocupan los mencionados hábitats de interés comunitario y los hábitats de las especies estrictamente protegidas mencionadas. Dichas actuaciones son completamente incompatibles con la conservación de estos valores naturales. La jurisprudencia emanada del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea es clara en su aplicación de la Directiva 2009/147/CE: en su sentencia de 2 de agosto de 1993, asunto C-355/90, destaca que deben primar los criterios ornitológicos, por una parte, y la calificación de un hábitat como zona húmeda, por otra parte.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión la posibilidad de que Ses Fontanelles se convierta en un lugar de interés comunitario (LIC), pasando a formar parte de los espacios protegidos por la red Natura 2000?

2. ¿Entiende necesario la Comisión que Ses Fontanelles sea reconocida como una zona de especial protección para las aves (ZEPA) al amparo de la Directiva 2009/147/CE?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de mayo de 2014)

Corresponde a los Estados miembros proponer la designación de lugares de importancia comunitaria (LIC) con arreglo a la Directiva de Hábitats ([1]). Sobre la base de las listas nacionales propuestas, la Comisión actualiza las listas de la Unión y evalúa anualmente la suficiencia de la red Natura 2000. Según la última evaluación, el tipo de hábitat 1510 «Estepas salinas mediterráneas (Limonietalia)» está suficientemente representado en la red correspondiente a España. Varios lugares han sido declarados espacios Natura 2000 en las Islas Baleares para la protección de ese tipo de hábitat. Por tanto, la Comisión no considera necesario proponer nuevos LIC para ese tipo de hábitat en España.

De conformidad con la Directiva de Aves ([2]), los Estados miembros identifican y clasifican directamente las Zonas Especiales de Protección para las Aves (ZEPA) sobre la base de criterios ornitológicos pertinentes. El Reino de España amplió su red de ZEPA en noviembre de 2009. La Comisión considera que la red de ZEPA existente actualmente en España se ajusta a los requisitos de la Directiva de Aves y que, a la luz de la información disponible, no es necesario clasificar Ses Fontanells como ZEPA.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992 relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004044/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Designating 'Ses Fontanelles' an SCI and SPA

Ses Fontanelles is an environmentally precious wetland located on the island of Palma in the Balearics. This valuable enclave covers around 32.5 hectares but has been left systematically unprotected by the national and autonomous authorities. The failure to protect this site was reported in Question E-011364/2012, in answer to which the Commission stated that it did not intend to take any action against urbanisation plans in the area because Ses Fontanelles was not included in the Natura 2000 network. The non-inclusion of Ses Fontanelles is certainly a glaring omission, since habitat 1510 (Mediterranean salt steppes, *Limonietalia*) is very scarce in the Balearic Islands, and the area in question is probably the most extensive, continuous and, up until now, best preserved example of it in the entire archipelago. This area is also a key breeding, feeding, passage and wintering site for a whole range of species that are protected under Directive 2009/147/EC (amending the earlier Directive 79/409/EEC) on the conservation of wild birds. More specifically, it is a habitat for the following species listed in Annex I: *Ardeola ralloides*, *Egretta garzetta*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Himantopus himantopus* and *Burhinus oedicnemus*.

Earthmoving work has recently begun for the construction of a large shopping centre on land occupied by the above habitats of Community importance and habitats for strictly protected species. These activities are totally incompatible with the conservation of these natural assets. The case-law established by the Court of Justice of the European Union in relation to the application of Directive 2009/147/EC is clear: in its judgment of 2 August 1993 in case C-355/90, it stressed that priority must be given to ornithological criteria, on the one hand, and the designation of a habitat as a wetland area, on the other.

1. Is the Commission considering the possibility that Ses Fontanelles could become a site of Community importance (SCI) and be included among the areas protected by the Natura 2000 network?

2. Does the Commission see the need for Ses Fontanelles to be recognised as a special protection area for birds (SPA) under Directive 2009/147/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The responsibility for proposing sites of Community importance (SCI) under the Habitats Directive ([1]) lies with the Member States. On the basis of the proposed national lists, the Commission updates the Union Lists and assesses the sufficiency of the Natura 2000 network on an annual basis. According to the last assessment, the habitat type 1510 'Mediterranean salt steppes (Limonietalia)' is sufficiently represented in the network for Spain. Several Natura 2000 sites designated within the Balearic Islands have been designated for the protection of this habitat type. The Commission therefore does not consider that additional SCI needs to be proposed for this habitat type in Spain.

Pursuant to the Birds Directive ([2]), Special Protection Areas (SPA) are identified and classified directly by the Member States on the basis of relevant ornithological criteria. The Kingdom of Spain extended its SPA network in November 2009. The Commission considers that the current SPA network in Spain complies with the requirements of the Birds Directive and that, in light of the available information, there is no need to classify Ses Fontanells as an SPA.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 30 November 2009, on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004045/14
à la Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE) et Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Suspicion de faux indépendants au sein de la compagnie Ryanair

Certains journaux français ont récemment établi que la compagnie aérienne irlandaise à bas coût Ryanair contreviendrait à la législation européenne et aux droits du travail de ses employés, en développant un système de faux travailleurs indépendants, tirant ainsi bénéfice de la suppression des charges sociales par rapport à des contrats «classiques» avec ses pilotes.

Si ces pratiques étaient avérées, elles devraient être durement sanctionnées, dans un contexte où la majorité des compagnies aériennes européennes jouent le jeu de la concurrence et du respect des législations sociales européennes, alors même qu'elles subissent une période de crise économique difficile pour le transport aérien européen.

Le Comité européen du dialogue social pour l'aviation civile vient de lancer un projet d'enquête sur ce dossier en particulier, et un échange de vues a récemment été organisé au sein de la commission de l'emploi et des affaires sociales du Parlement européen.

1. La Commission a-t-elle mené ou compte-t-elle mener une enquête sur ces faits qui, s'ils étaient avérés, remettraient sérieusement en cause la protection sociale des travailleurs de ce secteur ainsi qu'une concurrence libre et non faussée entre les différents acteurs?

2. Si l'enquête ouverte par la Commission venait à confirmer ces faits, la Commission envisagerait-elle d'ores et déjà de prendre rapidement les mesures nécessaires pour assurer que cette situation ne puisse perdurer?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(5 juin 2014)

1. Les services de la Commission ont réalisé une étude intitulée «Study on the effects of the implementation of the EU aviation common market on employment and working conditions in the Air Transport Sector over the period 1997/2010» (Étude sur les effets de la mise en œuvre du marché commun de l'aviation de l'UE sur l'emploi et les conditions de travail dans le secteur du transport aérien pendant la période 1997/2010), qui a été publiée l'année dernière ([1]). Il ressort de ce rapport que les compagnies aériennes sont de plus en plus nombreuses à externaliser des fonctions essentielles telles que les prestations des équipages de conduite et du personnel de cabine. Les relations entre la compagnie aérienne et son personnel peuvent être complexes et ne pas toujours être transparentes. Les partenaires sociaux européens du secteur de l'aviation civile réalisent actuellement des études, cofinancées par une subvention de l'UE, sur les nouvelles formes (atypiques) d'emploi du personnel navigant, notamment le faux travail indépendant. La Commission en examinera attentivement les conclusions dès que celles-ci seront disponibles.

2. La responsabilité en matière d'application et de contrôle du droit du travail et des conditions de travail incombe, en principe, aux États membres. Le 9 avril 2014, la Commission a proposé de créer une plateforme européenne dans le but d'améliorer la coopération entre les États membres à l'échelle de l'Union pour lutter plus efficacement contre le travail non déclaré ([2]). Cette initiative réunira des organes nationaux chargés de faire appliquer la législation, tels que les inspections du travail et les organismes de sécurité sociale, les administrations fiscales et les services d'immigration. L'objectif de la plateforme est notamment d'améliorer la coopération entre les services répressifs des États membres au niveau de l'UE afin de prévenir et de décourager, de manière plus efficace et plus efficiente, le travail non déclaré ainsi que le faux travail indépendant.

([1]) Texte complet disponible sur le site web de la Commission, à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/studies/doc/internal_market/employment_project_final_report_for_publication.pdf

([2]) Proposition de décision du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant une plateforme européenne dans l'objectif de renforcer la coopération visant à prévenir et à décourager le travail non déclaré [COM(2014) 221 final du 9 avril 2014].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004045/14
to the Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE) and Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Suspected bogus self-employment at Ryanair

A number of French newspapers recently reported that the Irish budget airline Ryanair had was infringing EC law and its staff's employment rights by having developed a system of bogus self-employment, thus benefiting from no longer having to pay social security contributions (unlike under 'traditional' contracts with its pilots).

Such a practice, should it actually be taking place, ought to be severely penalised at a time when most airlines are playing by the rules, competing with each other and complying with EU social legislation, despite the economic crisis affecting European air transport.

The European committee for sectoral social dialogue in civil aviation recently launched an inquiry into this issue, and not long ago there was an exchange of views in Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

1. Has the Commission conducted an inquiry into this practice, which, should it actually be taking place, would seriously call into question social safeguards for workers in the sector, as well as free and undistorted competition between airlines? If not, does it intend to do so?

2. Should the inquiry by the Commission confirm the facts, will it promptly take the necessary action to put an end to the situation?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

1. The services of the Commission have conducted a study on the effects of the implementation of the EU aviation common market on employment and working conditions in the Air Transport Sector, published last year ([1]). This report highlights that there is a growing trend amongst airlines to outsource core functions, such as provision of flight and cabin crew. The relationship between the airline and these personnel can be complex and not always transparent. Studies are being carried out, with co-financing provided through an EU grant, by the European social partners in civil aviation on new (atypical) forms of employment in air crew, especially bogus self-employment. The Commission will examine the findings carefully once available.

2. The responsibility for enforcing and monitoring labour law and working conditions rests in principle on the Member States. On 9 April 2014 the Commission put forward a proposal to establish a European Platform to improve cooperation at EU level between the Member States in tackling undeclared work more effectively ([2]). It will bring together Member State enforcement bodies, such as the labour inspectorates and the social security, tax and migration authorities. The aim of the Platform is *inter alia* to improve cooperation between the Member States' enforcement authorities at EU level to prevent and deter undeclared work as well as bogus self-employment, more efficiently and effectively.

([1]) Full text available on the Commission's website:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/studies/doc/internal_market/employment_project_final_report_for_publication.pdf

([2]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9.4.2014).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004046/14
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(1er avril 2014)

Objet: Consultations publiques et multilinguisme

La Commission a lancé entre le 5 décembre 2013 et le 5 mars 2014 une consultation publique sur la révision des règles de l'Union européenne en matière de droit d'auteur. Alors que l'objectif d'une consultation publique est d'obtenir un maximum de contributions des citoyens européens et des parties prenantes sur un thème défini par la Commission européenne, la publication d'une consultation dans une seule langue officielle est un obstacle de taille à la réalisation de cet objectif. La représentativité des réponses est contestable à cause de la barrière de la compréhension de la langue, en l'occurrence la langue anglaise.

Le questionnaire concerné a été préparé avec des réponses pré-remplies par défaut, ce qui est également une source de confusion et un nouvel obstacle à la représentativité des réponses.

1. Quelle est la politique de la Commission en matière de multilinguisme concernant la publication des consultations publiques?

2. La Commission peut-elle indiquer la raison de la publication des questions de la consultation publique mentionnée en anglais uniquement?

3. La Commission est-elle de l'avis que les formulaires avec des réponses pré-remplies par défaut ne participent pas à la clarté et l'objectivité des informations délivrées?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2014)

1 et 2. La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à la réponse donnée à la question parlementaire P-001088/2014 ([1]).

3. La Commission a tout fait pour assurer l'accessibilité des documents de consultation aux experts en droits d'auteur ainsi qu'aux citoyens de l'UE et aux consommateurs en pleine égalité. Certaines questions étaient présentées comme particulièrement pertinentes pour une catégorie spécifique de titulaires de droits (ce qui n'excluait en aucun cas la possibilité pour les représentants d'autres catégories d'y répondre) et/ou consistaient en des questions à choix multiples (oui/non). Les personnes interrogées pouvaient cependant répondre à toutes les questions et étayer leurs réponses par des observations sur chacun des sujets. Le document de consultation ne contenait aucune réponse pré-remplie par défaut.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2014-001088&language=FR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004046/14
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Multilingualism in public consultation procedures

From 5 December 2013 to 5 March 2014 the Commission held a public consultation procedure on the review of EU copyright rules. Since the purpose of such a procedure is to gather as much feedback as possible from EU citizens and stakeholders on a topic chosen by the Commission, drawing up the relevant questionnaire in only one official language, in this instance English, makes no sense whatsoever. The language barrier and the comprehension issues it raises also call into question the representativeness of the answers, as does the further confusion created by the Commission including default answers on the questionnaire.

1. What is the Commission's policy on multilingualism in public consultation procedures?

2. Can the Commission say why it drew up the questionnaire in English only?

3. Does the Commission agree that the use of pre-completed questionnaires undermines the accuracy and objectivity of the information gathered?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

1 and 2. The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply it has given to the Parliamentary Question P-001088/2014 ([1]).

3. The Commission made its best efforts to make sure that the consultation document could be equally accessible to copyright experts as well as to citizens and users. Accordingly, some questions were labelled as particularly relevant for a specific category of rightholders (which by no means excluded the possibility for representative of other categories to reply to them) and/or were multiple choice (yes/no) questions. Respondents had the possibility to reply to all questions and to substantiate their reply with comments on each of the topics. The consultation document did not contain any pre-completed or default answer.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2014-001088&language=EN

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004048/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1. April 2014)

Betrifft: Studie zur Kennzeichnung sogenannter Halal-Schlachtungen

In der Antwort des Herrn Dalli vom 2. Mai 2012 auf die Anfrage E-003280/2012 wurde auf eine für das Jahr 2013 geplante Studie verwiesen, die im Rahmen der Strategie der EU für den Schutz und das Wohlergehen von Tieren (KOM(2012)6) durchgeführt werden sollte.

Im Rahmen dieser Studie sollten die Möglichkeiten in Betracht gezogen werden, die Verbraucher über die Art der Betäubung von Tieren vor deren Schlachtung zu informieren.

1. Wurde eine solche Studie wie geplant umgesetzt? Wenn ja, zu welchem Schluss kam man in der Studie? Wenn nein, ist eine Durchführung noch geplant?

2. Erkennt die Kommission einen ursächlichen Zusammenhang zwischen einer gesteigerten Zahl von Neuinfektionen mit E. Coli unter Kindern und Heranwachsenden (insbesondere in Frankreich) und der im Betrachtungszeitraum gestiegenen Zahl von Schlachtungen, die „Halal"-konform durchgeführt wurden?

3. Falls ja, sieht die Kommission die Kennzeichnung von Produkten mit einer gesteigerten Kontaminationsgefahr von E. Coli, die sich aus einer „Halal"-konformen Schlachtungsart ergibt, als ausreichende Maßnahme zum Schutz der Verbraucher vor einer Infektion an?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2014)

1. Die Kommission hat im Jahr 2013 eine Studie über die Information der Verbraucher bezüglich der Betäubung von Tieren in Auftrag gegeben. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie werden voraussichtlich im Dezember 2014 vorliegen.

2. Der Kommission sind keine wissenschaftlichen Studien bekannt, die einen ursächlichen Zusammenhang zwischen der Infektion mit E. coli bei Kindern und Jugendlichen und der Praxis der Halal-Schlachtung nachweisen.

3. Gemäß den einschlägigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften dürfen lediglich sichere Lebensmittel in der Union in den Verkehr gelangen. Die Kennzeichnung von Lebensmitteln gewährleistet, dass die Verbraucher in vollem Umfang über die Art und die Merkmale der Lebensmittel, die sie verzehren, informiert sind, sie ist jedoch kein Instrument der Lebensmittelsicherheit.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004048/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Study of labelling of halal meat

In Commissioner Dalli's reply of 2 May 2012 to Question E-003280/2012, reference was made to a study to be conducted in 2013 in the context of the European Union Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals (COM(2012) 6).

The study would consider the opportunity of providing consumers with information on the stunning of animals before they are slaughtered.

1. Has the planned study been carried out? If so, what conclusions were reached? If not, are there still plans to carry it out?

2. Is the Commission aware of a causal relationship between the increase in the number of fresh cases of infection with E. coli among children and adolescents (particularly in France) and the increase in the practice of halal slaughter during the period in question?

3. If so, does the Commission consider that labelling products with an increased risk of contamination from E. coli resulting from halal slaughter provides consumers with adequate protection from infection?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1. The Commission has mandated a study on the information to consumers on the stunning of animals in 2013. The results of the study are now expected to be available in December 2014.

2. The Commission is not aware of any scientific studies proving a causal relationship between infection with E. coli in children and adolescents and the practice of halal slaughter.

3. According to the EU legislation, safety is the fundamental prerequisite for any food to be placed on the Union market. Food labelling ensures consumers are fully informed about the nature and characteristics of the food they consume but is not a food safety tool.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004049/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Fondi UE all'Ucraina

Autorevoli fonti di stampa riferiscono che entro giugno saranno versati i primi 850 milioni di euro di aiuti europei all'Ucraina.

Qualificate fonti europee specificano che ad aprile sarà versata la prima tranche da 100 milioni di euro (sbloccata dalla firma della parte politica dell'accordo di associazione) degli aiuti macroeconomici per complessivi 1,6 miliardi. Una seconda tranche da 500 milioni è prevista a giugno, mentre a maggio sarà la volta di 250 milioni del contributo per la costruzione di edifici pubblici.

La Commissione può specificare la destinazione dettagliata degli aiuti UE all'Ucraina? Come monitorerà l'utilizzo di tali fondi UE da parte dell'Ucraina?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2014)

Il 5 marzo 2014, la Commissione ha annunciato l'approvazione del pacchetto di assistenza globale di almeno 11 miliardi di euro, il cui utilizzo previsto durerà diversi anni. Parte di tale importo, pari a 1,61 miliardi di euro, sarà stanziato sotto forma di prestiti a titolo di assistenza macrofinanziaria (AMF), mentre 1,5 miliardi di euro circa saranno devoluti sotto forma di aiuti allo sviluppo.

Il programma di AMF di 610 milioni di euro è stato approvato nel 2002 e nel 2010. La prima rata di 100 milioni di euro è stata erogata il 20 maggio 2014. Il memorandum d'intesa relativo al nuovo programma di 1 miliardo di euro in prestiti a titolo di assistenza macrofinanziaria a favore dell'Ucraina è stato ratificato dal parlamento ucraino il 20 maggio. La prima rata di 500 milioni di euro è stata erogata all'inizio di giugno.

Per quanto riguarda l'assistenza allo sviluppo, il 29 aprile 2014 la Commissione ha adottato una misura speciale di 365 milioni di euro per sostenere la transizione del paese e rafforzare il ruolo della società civile. La parte più cospicua di questa misura speciale è costituita da un'operazione di sostegno al bilancio di 355 milioni di EUR (il cosiddetto contratto di potenziamento istituzionale). Il primo versamento nel quadro di tale programma (250 milioni di EUR a titolo del contratto di potenziamento istituzionale) è stato effettuato a metà giugno.

Oltre al normale controllo finanziario e ai consueti meccanismi di monitoraggio utilizzati dalla Commissione, durante la visita a Kiev dei Commissari Füle e Lewandowski del 25-26 marzo 2014, l'Ufficio europeo per la lotta antifrode (OLAF) si è offerto di fornire le competenze necessarie per l'istituzione di un'autorità antifrode e di lotta alla corruzione. Per quanto riguarda il controllo dell'utilizzo dei fondi da parte dell'Ucraina, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare le sue risposte alle interrogazioni parlamentari E-3304/14 e E-4173/14 ([1]).

L'onorevole deputato potrà trovare ulteriori informazioni nella nota della Commissione contenente l'aggiornamento sul sostegno dell'Unione europea a favore dell'Ucraina, pubblicata il 9 aprile 2014 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.htmlhtml
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-279_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004049/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: EU funding for Ukraine

According to authoritative media sources, Ukraine will receive EUR 850 million in aid from the EU between now and June 2014.

Reliable EU sources have said that the first EUR 100 million instalment (released as a result of the signing of the political part of the association agreement) of a macroeconomic aid package worth a total of EUR 1.6 billion will be paid in April. A second instalment of EUR 500 million will be paid in June, while an EUR 250 million grant for strengthening state institutions is scheduled to be paid in May.

Can the Commission say exactly what the EU aid for Ukraine is intended for? How will it go about monitoring the use of the funds by Ukraine?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2014)

On 5 March 2014, the Commission announced a comprehensive assistance package of at least EUR 11 billion over the coming years. Part of this amount, EUR 1.61 billion, will take the form of macro-financial assistance (MFA) loans and about EUR 1.5 billion will be development assistance.

The MFA programme of EUR 610 million was approved in 2002 and 2010. The first tranche of EUR 100 million was disbursed on 20 May 2014. The Memorandum of Understanding on the new EUR 1 billion Macro-Financial Assistance loan programme to Ukraine was ratified by the Ukrainian parliament on 20 May. The first instalment of EUR 500 million was disbursed in early June.

Concerning development assistance, on 29 April 2014 the Commission adopted a special measure worth EUR 365 million to support the country's transition and to boost the role of civil society. The largest part of this special measure is a budget support operation of EUR 355 million (called State Building Contract). The first disbursement under this programme (EUR 250 million under the State Building Contract) took place mid-June.

In addition to the Commission's normal financial control and monitoring mechanisms, during the visit to Kiev by Commissioners Füle and Lewandowski on 25-26 March 2014, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) offered to provide expertise for the establishment of an anti-fraud/anti-corruption authority. With regard to the monitoring of the use of the funds by Ukraine the Commission would like to invite the Honourable Member to consult its replies to the Parliamentary Questions E-3304/14 and E-4173/14 ([1]).

The Honourable Member can also find further information in the Commission MEMO on the 'European Union's support to Ukraine — update' which was published on 9 April 2014 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-279_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004050/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(1º aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Sito internet Politically.eu

È on line il sito Politically.eu, che ha lo scopo di condividere idee e proposte sull'UE in tema di economia e politica attraverso l'organizzazione, sotto l'egida della Rappresentanza in Italia della Commissione europea, di incontri e workshop, con tappe tematiche che in Italia hanno toccato nel 2013 Milano, Torino e Fiesole e nel 2014 Napoli e Roma.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

— l'esigenza di dar vita a questo sito proviene dalla Commissione o dall'Italia?

— A quanto ammontano i costi per questo sito internet?

— Questo sito riguarda l'Italia. La Commissione ha impiegato fondi e/o aiutato l'Italia con finanziamenti europei per l'apertura e lo sviluppo di questo sito? Chi sostiene i costi di ogni singola tappa (organizzazione, trasferimenti, relatori)?

Alla fine del mese di marzo 2014, 185 persone hanno espresso apprezzamento per questo sito e la quasi totalità degli argomenti postati non hanno ricevuto alcun commento. È evidente che questa piattaforma non è molto conosciuta dai cittadini. Quali strategie pubblicitarie sono state impiegate per far conoscere il sito e con quali costi?

Altri Stati membri hanno un sito internet simile? In caso positivo, quali sono questi Stati e hanno ricevuto finanziamenti europei e per quali somme?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(20 maggio 2014)

La rappresentanza della Commissione europea in Italia ha lanciato e finanziato la realizzazione del ciclo di eventi POLITICALLY.EU, illustrato in dettaglio nel sito web dedicato (www.politically.eu). Si tratta di una serie di cinque eventi complementari svoltisi sul territorio italiano, cui hanno partecipato i principali soggetti interessati alle tematiche in causa. Gli eventi erano finalizzati a promuovere il dibattito a livello nazionale su questioni specifiche e comprendevano due sessioni, una pubblica e una ristretta (in forma di «workshop deliberativo» sulla base di un metodo di lavoro innovativo, interattivo e co-creativo). Tutti i dettagli sono reperibili nel sito dedicato all'indirizzo politically.eu, finalizzato a raccogliere tutte le informazioni utili alla realizzazione del ciclo di eventi POLITICALLY.EU. Per il momento non sono previsti né una specifica strategia pubblicitaria né l'impiego di fondi europei. È impossibile stimare i costi connessi col sito web in quanto il bando prevedeva un costo forfettario per l'insieme dei servizi richiesti nel quadro dell'iniziativa POLITICALLY.EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004050/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: The Politically.eu website

The aim of the Politically.eu website is to share ideas and proposals on economic and political matters concerning the EU by organising, under the aegis of the European Commission Representation Office in Italy, a series of theme-based conventions and workshops in various Italian cities (Milan, Turin and Fiesole in 2013, and Naples and Rome so far in 2014).

1. Who instructed this website to be set up: the Commission or the Italian Government?

2. How much has this website cost to date?

3. This website relates to Italy. Has the Commission used funds and/or provided Italy with European financial assistance to set up and develop this website? Who pays for each convention or workshop (organisation, transport, speakers)?

4. By the end of March 2014, only 185 people had expressed their appreciation for this website, and hardly any of the articles posted on it had received any comments. It is clear that the vast majority of citizens do not know that this platform exists. What publicity strategies have been launched to make the website more well-known, and how much have they cost?

5. Do any other Member States have similar websites, and if so, which? In addition, did these Member States receive any European financial assistance, and if so, how much?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

The European Commission Representation in Italy has launched and funded the realisation of the Politically.EU cycle of events, duly described and detailed on the dedicated website (www.politically.eu). It has been a path of five complementary events throughout Italy attended by the key players in the selected subjects. The events were aimed at fostering the national debate on the selected issues and included two sessions: 1. a public one; 2. a restricted one (in the form of 'deliberative workshop' based on an innovative, interactive and co-creative working method). All the details are available in the politically.eu website, set up in order to gather all the information relevant to the Politically.EU cycle of events. For the time being no specific publicity strategy has been foreseen nor paid for. It is impossible to estimate the website cost because the tender provided for an all-inclusive cost for all the services requested in the Politically.EU framework.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004051/14
alla Commissione
Guido Milana (S&D)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Vongola Venus

La Commissione è stata interrogata sulla possibilità di introdurre un margine di tolleranza (del 5 %) alla taglia minima della vongola (Venus spp.), stabilita dal regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 a 25 mm, laddove lo stock è oggetto di gestione attiva.

L'interrogante non ha posto un quesito sulla possibilità o meno di concedere un de minimis rispetto all'obbligo di sbarco di cui al regolamento (UE) n. 1380/2013 su cui, invece, verte la risposta del commissario Damanaki. È ben chiaro che un tale de minimis verrà concesso per alcune specie ittiche qualora siano dimostrate l'impossibilità di aumentare la selettività degli attrezzi di cattura o la sproporzione dei costi per la trasformazione di catture accidentali.

Tenuto conto di ciò, si ricorda che la Commissione veniva interrogata sul caso specifico in cui lo stock di vongola è oggetto di gestione attiva (con semine di novellame, rotazione delle zone di prelievo per consentirne l'accrescimento fino alla taglia media commerciale, fermi tecnici periodici, quote di cattura massima giornaliera, ecc.). Le particolari condizioni di questa «aquaculture-based fisheries», ben documentate in letteratura e che rendono il principio della taglia minima di cattura ampiamente discutibile se non ingiustificato, non vengono minimamente considerate nella risposta della Commissione, alla quale ribadiamo la questione:

1. Può la Commissione prevedere l'introduzione di una deroga al margine di tolleranza 0, con l'ammissibilità di una tolleranza del 5 % alla taglia minima della vongola (Venus spp.) laddove lo stock è oggetto di gestione attiva?

2. Considerando che l'obbligo di sbarcare il sottotaglia entrerà in vigore a seguito dell'attuazione dell'articolo 15 del regolamento sulla politica comune della pesca, non è opportuno autorizzare gli Stati membri ad anticipare l'obbligo nel caso specifico della vongola Venus?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(12 maggio 2014)

Nel ringraziare l'onorevole parlamentare per gli ulteriori chiarimenti forniti, la Commissione desidera ricordare che la taglia minima delle vongole quale definita all'allegato III del regolamento (CE) n. 1967/2006 del Consiglio (regolamento «Mediterraneo») è in vigore dal gennaio 2007 e non prevede alcun margine di tolleranza. L'introduzione di un margine di tolleranza comporterebbe una revisione di detto regolamento o del relativo allegato III.

Le misure di gestione applicate agli stock di vongola dai consorzi italiani, alcune delle quali sono citate nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare, erano già in vigore al momento dell'adozione del regolamento «Mediterraneo». Inoltre l'Italia non ha ancora adottato un piano nazionale di gestione per la pesca della vongola con draghe, come disposto all'articolo 19 del regolamento «Mediterraneo».

Poiché dall'adozione del regolamento per il Mediterraneo il quadro di gestione applicabile alla pesca delle vongole in Italia non ha subito modifiche, la Commissione non ritiene necessario né giustificato rivedere le norme vigenti.

Quanto alla possibilità di anticipare l'entrata in vigore dell'obbligo di sbarco, si ritiene che un'eventuale deroga da tale obbligo per una specie con elevati tassi di sopravvivenza quale la vongola dovrebbe essere elaborata e sottoposta a valutazione scientifica nell'ambito del pertinente piano relativo ai rigetti di cui all'articolo 15, paragrafo 6, del regolamento (UE) n. 1380/2013 relativo alla politica comune della pesca.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004051/14
to the Commission
Guido Milana (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Venus clam

Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 stipulates that the minimum size for Venus spp. clams shall be 25 mm. The Commission was asked whether or not it would be possible to introduce a tolerance margin of 5% in cases where stocks are being actively managed.

I did not ask in my question whether or not it would be possible to allow a *de minimis* exemption to the landing obligation in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, which was, however, the focus of Commissioner Damanaki's answer. It is perfectly clear that a *de minimis* exception of this kind would be allowed for some fish species in cases where increasing gear selectivity is demonstrably not possible or the costs of handling unwanted catches are shown to be disproportionate.

The Commission was in fact asked about the specific case in which clam stocks are being actively managed (fry planted out, rotation of fishing grounds to ensure clams grow to average market size, regular fishing moratoria, maximum daily catch quotas, etc.). The Commission's answer did not consider in the slightest the specific conditions pertaining to aquaculture-based fisheries of this kind. Well documented in literature, these conditions turn minimum catch size into an extremely contentious, if not indeed unjustified, principle. That being so, we repeat the question:

1. Will the Commission consider introducing an exemption to zero tolerance, allowing a tolerance of 5% under the minimum size for Venus spp. clams, in cases where stocks are actively managed?

2. As the obligation to land undersized catch will come into force once Article 15 of the common fisheries policy Regulation has been implemented, would it not be appropriate to authorise Member States to introduce this obligation in advance in the specific case of the Venus clam?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for further clarifying his question.

The Commission would like to recall that the minimum size of clams as defined in Annex III of Council Regulation No 1967/2006 (the 'Mediterranean Regulation') has been in force since January 2007 and does not foresee any margin of tolerance. The introduction of such margin of tolerance would imply a revision of the Mediterranean Regulation or of its Annex III.

The management measures applied to the clams stocks by the Italian consortia, some of which are recalled by the Honourable Member in his request, were already in force at the time of adoption of the Mediterranean Regulation. Moreover, Italy has not yet adopted a valid national management plan for dredges exploiting clams, as required by Article 19 of the Mediterranean Regulation.

Since the management framework of clams in Italy has not changed since the adoption of the Mediterranean Regulation, the Commission sees no reason or justification to revise the rules.

As for the possibility to anticipate the entry into force of the landing obligation: an exemption from the landing obligation of clams as a species with high survival rates would need to be elaborated and scientifically assessed in the context of the relevant discard plan as referred to in Article 15(6) of Regulation (EU)1380/2013 on the CFP.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-004052/14
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(2. travnja 2014.)

Predmet: Revizija vizne politike Europske unije

Europska komisija iznijela je danas prijedlog o reviziji vizne politike Europske unije za posjetitelje iz trećih zemalja koji se odnosi na njihov ulazak i boravak u Schengenskom prostoru. Glavni cilj revizije je skraćenje i pojednostavnjenje procesa za posjetitelje koji žele doći u EU na kraći boravak, s ciljem poticanja gospodarskih aktivnosti i otvaranja novih radnih mjesta.

Prema istraživanjima koja je objavila Europska komisija, samo u 2012. godini Europska unija „izgubila" je 6,6 milijuna potencijalnih turista zbog neliberalizirane vizne politike prema trećim zemljama.

Prilikom predstavljanja Komisija je iznijela procjene prema kojima bi se liberalnijom viznom politikom u narednih pet godina otvorilo 1,3 milijuna novih radnih mjesta i ostvario profit od čak 130 milijardi eura, što je iznos gotovo jednak godišnjem proračunu Unije.

Turizam je od izuzetne važnosti za najnoviju članicu Unije, Hrvatsku, s obzirom na to da su prihodi Hrvatske od turizma 2013. godine iznosili 7,2 milijarde eura, što ukupno čini 16,5 posto godišnjeg BDP-a Hrvatske.

Pristupanjem Europskoj uniji 1. srpnja prošle godine Hrvatska je započela s implementacijom vizne politike Unije, što je značilo uvođenje viza za pojedine države s kojima je Hrvatska imala uspostavljen bezvizni režim i što je rezultiralo osjetnim gubicima za turistički sektor.

Slijedom iznesenog prijedloga revizije koji se odnosi samo na zemlje u Schengenskoj zoni, da li i kada Komisija planira reviziju vizne politike koja obuhvaća i Hrvatsku, čiji proces pristupanja Schengenskom prostoru još uvijek traje, posebice prema zemljama s kojima je Hrvatska prije pristupanja Uniji imala bezvizni režim?

Odgovor gđe Malmström u ime Komisije
(20. svibnja 2014.)

U Uredbi (EZ) br. 539/2001 naveden je popis trećih zemalja čiji državljani moraju imati vizu pri prelasku vanjskih granica i zemalja čiji su državljani izuzeti od tog zahtjeva ([1]). Ta je uredba dio pravila schengenske pravne stečevine koja obvezuju i koja su primjenjiva na sve nove države članice od dana pristupanja. To znači da Hrvatska od 1. srpnja 2013. mora primjenjivati isti popis zemalja kojima treba i kojima ne treba viza kao i schengenske države. To je logičan korak u okviru priprema za buduće puno sudjelovanje Hrvatske u Schengenskom prostoru.

Iako je moguća posljedica primjene tih popisa činjenica da Hrvatska sada mora tražiti vize za građane zemalja koji su prije mogli putovati u Hrvatsku bez vize, Unija ima sporazume o lakšem izdavanju viza s nekima od tih zemalja, uključujući Ukrajinu i Rusiju. To znači da je državljanima Rusije i Ukrajine znatno olakšan postupak dobivanja schengenske vize ili hrvatske vize.

Uskoro će biti donesena odluka ([2]) kojom bi se omogućilo jednostrano priznanje Hrvatske da su određeni dokumenti ekvivalentni njezinim nacionalnim vizama. Ako Hrvatska odlučiti koristiti dozvolu jednostranog priznanja koja se omogućava tom Odlukom, vlasnicima valjane schengenske vize bit će dopušten prolazak kroz Hrvatsku ili kratkotrajan boravak u Hrvatskoj, a da pritom ne trebaju imati hrvatsku vizu. Time će se državljanima trećih zemalja koji su obvezni imati vizu pri putovanju u Hrvatsku olakšati putovanje u Hrvatsku. Očekuje se da će to imati pozitivan učinak na hrvatsku turističku industriju.

([1]) Uredba Vijeća (EZ) br. 539/2001 od 15. ožujka 2001. o popisu trećih zemalja čiji državljani moraju imati vizu pri prelasku vanjskih granica i zemalja čiji su državljani izuzeti od tog zahtjeva; SL L 81, 21.3.2001., str. 1-7 i naknadne izmjene.

([2]) Prijedlog Komisije za Odluku Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o uvođenju pojednostavljenog režima kontrole osoba na vanjskim granicama na temelju jednostranog priznavanja Hrvatske da su određeni dokumenti ekvivalentni njezinim nacionalnim vizama za potrebe tranzita preko njezina državnog područja ili planiranih boravaka na njezinom državnom području ne duljih od 90 dana u bilo kojem razdoblju od 180 dana. COM (2013) 441 od 21. lipnja 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004052/14
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Review of EU visa policy

The Commission has put forward a proposal to review the EU's visa policy for third-country visitors who want to visit or stay in the Schengen area. The main objective of the review is to shorten and simplify the procedure for short-term visitors, with a view to boosting economic activity and job creation.

According to studies carried out by the Commission, in 2012 alone, 6.6 million potential tourists were put off travelling to the EU by the EU's current, non-liberalised visa policy for third countries.

While presenting the proposal, the Commission also put forward assessments showing that a more liberal visa policy would create some 1.3 million new jobs and bring in revenues of as much as EUR 130 billion over the next five years — an amount almost equal to the EU's entire annual budget.

Tourism is tremendously important to the EU's newest Member State, Croatia, which earned EUR 7.2 billion — or 16.5% of its annual GDP — from tourism in 2013.

When Croatia joined the European Union on 1 July 2013, it began to implement the EU's visa policies. This meant that Croatia had to introduce visa regimes for particular countries with which it had already established visa-free regimes, resulting in significant losses for the tourism industry.

With reference to its proposal for a review, which would only concern countries in the Schengen area, does the Commission plan to review the visa policies that affect Croatia — which is still in the process of attempting to join the Schengen area — especially as regards countries with which Croatia had visa-free regimes prior to accession?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

Regulation 539/2001 lists the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement ([1]). This regulation is one of the rules of the Schengen *acquis* that are binding on, and applicable in, all new Member States from the date of their accession. This means that Croatia had to apply the same lists of visa-required and visa-free countries as the Schengen states from 1 July 2013. This is a logical step in preparation for the future full participation of Croatia in the Schengen area.

Although the application of these lists may have had as a consequence that Croatia now has to impose visas on citizens of countries who could previously visit Croatia visa-free, the Union has visa facilitation agreements with some of those countries, including Ukraine and Russia. This means that for Russian and Ukrainian citizens there are significant facilitations for obtaining a Schengen visa or a Croatian visa.

A decision ([2]) concerning the unilateral recognition by Croatia of certain documents as equivalent to their national visas will soon be adopted. Should Croatia decide to use the authorisation for unilateral recognition offered by this decision, holders of valid Schengen visas will be allowed entry for transit or short stay in Croatia, without the need to hold a Croatian visa. This will facilitate travel to Croatia for the citizens of the third states who are obliged to hold a visa when travelling to Croatia. This is expected to be beneficial to its tourist industry.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement; OJ L 81, 21.3.2001, p. 1-7, and subsequent amendments.

([2]) Commission proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council introducing a simplified regime for the control of persons at the external borders based on the unilateral recognition by Croatia of certain documents as equivalent to their national visas for transit through or intended stays on its territory not exceeding 90 days in any 180-day period. COM(2013) 441 of 21 June 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004053/14
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(2 april 2014)

Betreft: Erasmus+: medefinanciering vrijwilligerswerk

In het Youth in Action programma erkende de Europese Commissie vrijwilligerswerk in de boekhouding als inbreng in natura. Zo konden jongerenorganisaties vrijwilligerswerk inbrengen als medefinanciering én konden ze meedingen naar een Europese beurs. Helaas blijkt deze administratieve mogelijkheid niet meer te bestaan in het nieuwe programma Erasmus+.

Artikel 127 (2) van de nieuwe financiële regels van het Erasmus+ programma is voor interpretatie vatbaar: De bevoegde ordonnateur mag bijdragen in natura als medefinanciering aanvaarden, indien dit noodzakelijk of passend wordt geacht. Wanneer medefinanciering in natura wordt aangeboden ter ondersteuning van subsidies van kleine bedragen en de bevoegde ordonnateur heeft besloten dit te weigeren, dient hij te motiveren waarom dit onnodig of ongepast is.

Door deze persoonlijke interpretatie mogelijk te maken zien vele jongerenorganisaties door de bomen het bos niet meer en zijn ze volledig overgeleverd aan de gunst van het nationale agentschap. Zo kan er oneerlijke behandeling en afgunst ontstaan.

Opnieuw vrijwilligerswerk automatisch toestaan als medefinanciering zodat jongerenorganisaties een beurs kunnen aanvragen, is noodzakelijk. De administratieve rompslomp van het inbrengen van vrijwilligerswerk als medefinanciering afwegen tegen de meerwaarde voor de jongerenorganisatie kan niet de bedoeling zijn en is in strijd met de Europese waarden waar wij voor staan.

1. Hoe denkt de Commissie dit artikel toe te passen zonder dat er oneerlijke behandeling kan ontstaan?

2. Hoe monitort de Commissie de werking van deze nieuwe financiële regels?

3. Welke rol speelt het nationale agentschap in de interpretatie van artikel 127 (2) en in de monitoring?

4. Wanneer zal er een eerste evaluatie van Erasmus+ worden opgezet?

5. Waarom roept de Commissie administratieve redenen in als uitleg voor het afdanken van een regel die jongerenorganisaties een hart onder de riem kan steken?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(25 april 2014)

Voor verschillende subacties binnen „Jeugd in actie" werden de subsidies toegekend als een terugbetaling van een bepaald percentage van de werkelijk gemaakte subsidiabele kosten van de begunstigden, maar de subsidies voor activiteiten in het kader van niet-formeel leren voor jongeren die gefinancierd worden door het programma „Erasmus+", worden eenvoudigheidshalve hoofdzakelijk toegekend door middel van vaste bedragen, eenheidskosten of forfaitaire financiering. Voor de subsidies in de vorm van dergelijke automatische financiering dient geen rekening te worden gehouden met de werkelijk gemaakte subsidiabele kosten van de begunstigde of met welke bijdragen in natura ook ten behoeve van het project.

Voor twee activiteiten is deze algemene aanpak niet van toepassing. Exploitatiesubsidies voor Europese ngo's die actief zijn in de jeugdsector worden toegekend op basis van een terugbetaling van een bepaald percentage van de werkelijk gemaakte subsidiabele kosten van de begunstigden; voor die subsidies kan vrijwilligerswerk ten voordele van de begunstigden als bijdrage in natura in aanmerking worden genomen. Ook subsidies van activiteiten met het oog op ontwikkeling, capaciteitsopbouw en uitwisseling van kennis via partnerschappen tussen organisaties uit landen die deelnemen aan het programma en uit partnerlanden worden gedeeltelijk op die manier toegekend; deze subsidies vertegenwoordigen slechts 4,5 % van het budget dat voor activiteiten in het kader van niet-formeel leren voor jongeren is uitgetrokken.

De verordening tot vaststelling van het programma „Erasmus+" bepaalt dat de Commissie uiterlijk op 31 december 2017 een tussentijds evaluatieverslag zal indienen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004053/14
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Erasmus+: co-financing of voluntary work

In the Youth in Action programme, the Commission recognised voluntary work in the accounts as a contribution in kind. Youth organisations were allowed to contribute voluntary work as co-financing and could also compete for a European grant. Regrettably, it has become apparent that this administrative possibility now no longer exists in the new Erasmus+ programme.

Article 127(2) of the new funding rules for the Erasmus+ programme is open to interpretation: the authorising officer may accept contributions in kind as co-financing if this is deemed necessary or appropriate. If co-financing in kind is offered in support of subsidies for small amounts and the authorising officer has decided to reject this, he must indicate why this is unnecessary or inappropriate.

Because this personal interpretation has been made possible, many youth organisations can no longer see the wood for the trees and they are completely at the mercy of the national agency. This paves the way for unfair treatment and envy.

It is necessary once again to automatically permit voluntary work as co-financing, so that youth organisations can apply for a grant. Weighing the administrative effort involved in contributing voluntary work as co-financing against the added value to the youth organisation cannot be what is intended, and is contrary to the European values for which we stand.

1. How does the Commission intend to apply this article so as to render unfair treatment impossible?

2. How will the Commission monitor the operation of the new funding rules?

3. What role will the national agency play in the interpretation of Article 127(2) and in monitoring?

4. When will a first evaluation of Erasmus+ take place?

5. Why does the Commission invoke administrative reasons to explain the abandonment of a rule which can be a shot in the arm for youth organisations?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(25 avril 2014)

Alors que, pour plusieurs sous-Actions du programme Jeunesse en Action, les subventions étaient octroyées sur base du remboursement d'un pourcentage déterminé des coûts éligibles réellement exposés par les bénéficiaires, les subventions pour les activités d'apprentissage non-formel pour les jeunes financées par le programme Erasmus+ sont principalement octroyées, par souci de simplification, en recourant à l'utilisation de montants forfaitaires, de coûts unitaires ou de financements à taux forfaitaire. Pour les subventions accordées sous ces formes de financement automatique, il n'y a lieu de prendre en compte ni les coûts éligibles réellement exposés par un bénéficiaire ni quelque forme que ce soit de contribution en nature qu'il aurait mis à disposition du projet.

Deux activités échappent à cette approche générale. Les subventions de fonctionnement aux ONG européennes intervenant dans le domaine de la jeunesse sont octroyées sur base du remboursement d'un pourcentage déterminé des coûts éligibles réellement exposés par les bénéficiaires; pour ces subventions, les bénéficiaires peuvent prendre en compte comme contribution en nature les prestations bénévoles dont ils bénéficient. Sont également octroyées partiellement de cette manière les subventions visant les activités de développement, renforcement des capacités et échange de connaissances à travers des partenariats entre organisations de pays participant au programme et de pays partenaires; ces subventions ne représentent que 4,5 % du budget alloué aux activités d'apprentissage non-formel pour les jeunes.

Le règlement établissant le programme Erasmus+ dispose que la Commission soumettra un rapport d'évaluation à mi-parcours au plus tard le 31 décembre 2017.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004054/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Cambiamenti climatici e sicurezza alimentare

Nel quinto rapporto pubblicato molto recentemente a Yokohama dagli esperti dell'Ipcc — Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change — che verrà utilizzato come base dei negoziati sul clima, emerge che i cambiamenti climatici non sono una minaccia distante e futura per la sicurezza alimentare, ma una realtà con cui fare i conti da subito. In un mondo dove un miliardo di persone soffrono la fame, tali mutamenti causano già mancanza di cibo per milioni di famiglie; non è quindi necessario essere uno scienziato per capire che minori raccolti ed un contestuale aumento della domanda di cibo non genereranno maggiore sicurezza alimentare, bensì una crescita sproporzionata dei prezzi degli alimenti.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione comunicare:

1. se è a conoscenza del documento summenzionato;

2. quali soluzioni intenda presentare?

Risposta di Connie Hedegaard a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza di questo rapporto e delle relative conclusioni.

2. Nel 2013 la Commissione ha adottato la strategia dell'UE di adattamento ai cambiamenti climatici ([1]), che affronta, tra l'altro, questioni riguardanti l'agricoltura e l'approvvigionamento alimentare. La politica agricola comune (PAC), in particolare, svolge un ruolo importante nel rafforzare la resilienza delle aree rurali dell'Unione europea agli effetti dei cambiamenti climatici. La strategia fornisce orientamenti sulle modalità volte a garantire una maggiore integrazione delle misure in materia di adattamento ai cambiamenti climatici previste dalla PAC.

La cooperazione con i paesi terzi in tema di adattamento ai cambiamento climatici è portata avanti mediante le politiche UE di allargamento e di vicinato e la politica di cooperazione allo sviluppo. Il sostegno è fornito integrando la problematica dei cambiamenti climatici in programmi tematici globali e in programmi pluriennali nazionali e regionali. L'alleanza mondiale contro i cambiamenti climatici promossa dall'UE è un'iniziativa che offre nello specifico un sostegno tecnico e finanziario ai paesi in via di sviluppo più vulnerabili ([2]). Gli Stati membri dell'UE finanziano anche il Fondo per l'adattamento per integrare i cambiamenti climatici nelle politiche di sviluppo e nei bilanci dei paesi in via di sviluppo.

La comunicazione «L'approccio dell'Unione alla resilienza» ha definito la sicurezza alimentare e lo sviluppo della resilienza come obiettivi centrali delle politiche di cooperazione. Il «Piano d'azione per la resilienza nei paesi soggetti a crisi» ([3]) contempla la realizzazione di interventi umanitari, la cooperazione allo sviluppo a lungo termine e l'impegno politico.

Per il ciclo di programmazione 2014-2020, la Commissione intende lavorare con 50 paesi in via di sviluppo per promuovere l'intensificazione sostenibile dei sistemi di produzione agricoli con l'obiettivo di cercare di produrre più cibo con risorse di base che scarseggiano e in un contesto caratterizzato dai cambiamenti climatici.

([1]) Strategia dell'UE di adattamento ai cambiamenti climatici (COM/2013/216 final). http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0216

([2]) "Dar vita ad un'alleanza mondiale contro il cambiamento climatico tra l'Unione europea e i paesi poveri in via di sviluppo maggiormente esposti" COM(2007) 540 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0540:FIN:IT:PDF; http://www.gcca.eu/

([3]) L'approccio dell'UE alla resilienza: imparare dalle crisi della sicurezza alimentare COM(2012) 586 + SWD (2013) 227. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/food-security/documents/20121003-comm_en.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/com_2013_227_ap_crisis_prone_countries_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004054/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Climate change and food security

The fifth assessment report published by the group of experts on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was very recently unveiled in Yokohama and will serve as the basis for future climate negotiations, reveals that climate change, far from being a phenomenon that could pose a threat to food security at some point in the distant future, actually requires urgent attention right now. In a world where a billion people are already starving, such changes to the climate result in food shortages for millions of families; it therefore doesn't take a scientist to understand that poorer harvests coupled with an ever-increasing demand for food will not lead to greater food security, but rather to a disproportionate rise in the cost of foodstuffs.

1. Is the Commission aware of the report cited above?

2. What solutions does it intend to propose?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

1. The Commission is well aware of this report and its conclusions.

2. In 2013 the Commission adopted the EU Adaptation Strategy ([1]), which addresses *inter alia* agriculture and food supply issues. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in particular plays an important role in increasing the resilience of EU rural areas to the effects of climate change. The strategy provides guidance on how to further integrate climate adaptation under the CAP.

Cooperation with third countries on climate adaptation is channelled through the EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood as well as Development Cooperation policies. Support is provided by mainstreaming climate change into global thematic programs, as well as in country and regional multiannual programs. The EU's Global Climate Change Alliance initiative specifically provides technical and financial support to the most vulnerable developing countries ([2]). EU Member States also contribute to the Adaptation Fund, to integrate climate change into development policies and developing countries budgets.

The communication 'The EU Approach to Resilience' underscored food security and resilience building as a central aim of cooperation policies. The 'Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries' ([3]) brings together humanitarian action, long-term development cooperation and political engagement.

For the programming cycle 2014-2020, the Commission intends to work with 50 developing countries to promote the sustainable intensification of agricultural production systems so as to tackle the challenge of producing more food with a dwindling resource base and in the context of climate change.

([1]) 'EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change' COM(2013)216. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0216

([2]) 'Building a Global Climate Change Alliance between the European Union and poor developing countries most vulnerable to climate change' COM(2007) 540. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0540:FIN:EN:PDF and http://www.gcca.eu/

([3]) 'The EU Approach to Resilience- Learning from Food Crises' COM(2012) 586 + SWD (2013) 227 http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/food-security/documents/20121003-comm_en.pdf and http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/com_2013_227_ap_crisis_prone_countries_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004055/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Emergenza profughi in Italia

A fronte di un numero crescente di arrivi di profughi sulle coste italiane, l'Associazione nazionale dei comuni italiani (Anci) ha lanciato un allarme: davanti a questa situazione che «rischia di diventare ancora più drammatica» sono necessari finanziamenti e nuove risorse.

Considerato che nel 2013 sono stati quasi 43 mila i profughi sbarcati in Italia; preso atto che nei primi tre mesi del 2014 ne sono già arrivati 10.724; considerato che il sottosegretario del Ministero dell'interno che segue la questione dei rifugiati ha affermato che «Quest'anno ci aspettiamo un numero di sbarchi uguale o anche superiore a quello dell'anno scorso»; preso atto che fonti di intelligence parlano di 90 mila profughi siriani già arrivati in Libia e di un'avanguardia di 900 mila in movimento verso l'Europa;

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. intende erogare fondi e risorse straordinarie a favore dell'Italia e del suo sistema sociale ormai in tilt a causa degli sbarchi ingestibili di un numero abnorme di profughi?

2. intende attivare misure straordinarie che prevedano il coinvolgimento di tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE nella gestione di questa emergenza?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

1. A seguito del tragico naufragio al largo di Lampedusa, la Commissione europea ha stanziato per l'Italia 30 milioni di euro a titolo di finanziamento d'emergenza, che vengono ad aggiungersi ai 2 milioni già assegnati nell'agosto 2013. A tutt'oggi, di questi 30 milioni, 7,9 sono stati mobilitati per rafforzare la presenza dell'Agenzia europea per la gestione della cooperazione operativa alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea (Frontex) nel Mediterraneo, mentre 17,7 sono stati assegnati a titolo della componente dell'assistenza di emergenza del Fondo europeo per i rifugiati e del Fondo per le frontiere esterne (rispettivamente, 10 e 7,7 milioni). L'importo residuo dev'essere ancora assegnato. Questi stanziamenti di emergenza vengono ad aggiungersi alla dotazione annuale dei fondi SOLID assegnata all'Italia, il cui importo per il 2013 si aggirava sui 140 milioni di euro.

Integra questi finanziamenti l'azione di Frontex e dell'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo (EASO) a supporto dell'Italia nella gestione delle frontiere e nel rafforzamento del sistema di asilo.

2. Per trovare soluzioni operative che permettessero di ridurre i decessi in mare, la Commissione europea ha presieduto la Task Force «Mediterraneo», i cui lavori sono sfociati in raccomandazioni, adottate nella forma di una comunicazione ([1]) il 4 dicembre 2013, cui tutti i soggetti implicati, Stati membri compresi, stanno dando attuazione. La Commissione europea traccerà entro maggio una prima panoramica completa delle iniziative scaturite dalle raccomandazioni della Task Force, al fine di informare le discussioni del Consiglio «Giustizia e affari interni», del Consiglio europeo e del Parlamento europeo.

([1]) COM(2013) 869 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004055/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Refugee crisis in Italy

The rising number of refugees entering Italy via its coastline has prompted the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) to issue a stark warning: funding and new resources are urgently needed to quell this phenomenon that 'risks growing even more out of hand'.

Close to 43 000 refugees flocked to Italy in 2013, and a further 10 724 have already entered the country in the first three months of 2014. The Junior Minister at the Italian Ministry of the Interior who is monitoring the refugee situation recently announced that 'we are expecting the number of refugees this year to equal or even surpass the number recorded for last year'. Meanwhile, intelligence sources suggest that some 90 000 Syrian refugees have already arrived in Libya, with a further 900 000 also now making their way to Europe.

1. In light of the above, does the Commission intend to allocate funds and extraordinary resources to Italy and its social welfare system, which has now reached breaking point owing to the unmanageable influx of refugees streaming to the country?

2. Does it intend to implement any extraordinary measures that would call upon all the other Member States in the EU to assist in managing this crisis?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

1. Following the tragic shipwreck off Lampedusa, the European Commission earmarked EUR 30 million in emergency funding for Italy on top of the 2 million already allocated in August 2013. Of these 30 million, so far 7.9 million have been mobilised to strengthen the presence of Frontex in the Mediterranean and 17.7 million were allocated through the Emergency Assistance component of the European Refugee Fund and the External Borders Fund (10 million and 7.7 million respectively). The remaining amount is still to be allocated. These emergency allocations came on top of the annual allocation for Italy under the SOLID funds which, in 2013, amounted to around 140 million.

This funding is currently complemented by action undertaken by Frontex and EASO to support Italy in managing its borders and strengthening its asylum system.

2. The European Commission chaired a Task Force Mediterranean (TFM) in order to find operational solutions to decrease the number of deaths at sea. The recommendations emerging from the Task Force were adopted in the form of a communication ([1]) on 4 December 2013 and they are being implemented by all players involved, including Member States. The European Commission will provide a first comprehensive picture of the steps taken following the recommendations of the TFM by the end of May, in order to inform the discussions in the Justice and Home Affairs Council as well as in the European Council and in the European Parliament.

([1]) COM(2013) 869 final: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/docs/20131204_communication_on_the_work_of_the_task_force_mediterranean_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004056/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Disoccupazione: raggiunto il tasso record in Italia

Secondo l'Istituto Nazionale Italiano di Statistica ISTAT, in Italia i giovani occupati sono meno di un milione e, rispetto allo scorso anno, se ne contano oltre 100 mila in meno. Si tratta di dati preoccupanti, soprattutto se si considera che in valore assoluto la disoccupazione ha toccato in Italia i massimi livelli. Il tasso di disoccupazione si attesta oggi al 13 %, sostanzialmente stabile rispetto a gennaio (12,9 %) ma in aumento di 1,1 punti percentuali nei dodici mesi: è il dato più alto dal 1977.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza di questi dati?

2. come intende sostenere i disoccupati italiani che si trovano ad affrontare un futuro sempre più incerto?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dei dati citati dall'onorevole deputata. In particolare la direzione generale Occupazione, affari sociali e integrazione effettua con regolarità valutazioni dell'occupazione e degli sviluppi sociali dell'UE e ne rende noti i risultati in pubblicazioni quali il rapporto annuale *Employment and Social Developments in Europe* ([1]) (Occupazione e sviluppi sociali in Europa) e il rapporto trimestrale *EU Employment and Social Situation* ([2]) (Occupazione e situazione sociale dell'UE). Tali pubblicazioni forniscono all'UE e ai governi degli Stati membri dati utili per guidare l'elaborazione di politiche e sono alla base delle relazioni annuali sull'occupazione, parte delle analisi annuali della crescita che stabiliscono a loro volta le priorità dell'UE per potenziare la crescita e la creazione di posti di lavoro nell'anno successivo.

2. Raggiungere un alto livello di occupazione nell'Unione europea è una delle priorità dell'UE e la strategia Europa 2020 per una crescita intelligente, inclusiva e sostenibile ha tra i suoi obiettivi primari la crescita del tasso di occupazione. La strategia europea per l'occupazione offre agli Stati membri un quadro per condividere informazioni e coordinare le loro politiche dell'impiego.

Gli strumenti finanziari dell'UE, quali i fondi strutturali e d'investimento europei, sostengono gli Stati membri nei loro sforzi per incoraggiare la crescita e l'occupazione. L'Italia riceverà 32,2 miliardi di EUR dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e dal Fondo sociale europeo per il periodo 2014-2020. Il Fondo sociale europeo ([3]) sostiene gli sforzi volti a promuovere l'occupazione, in particolare mediante progetti per formare le persone, aiutarle a trovare un lavoro, modernizzare gli enti che si occupano di lavoro e promuovere l'inclusione sociale. Ulteriori risorse sono disponibili nell'ambito dell'iniziativa a favore dell'occupazione giovanile (compresi 567 milioni di EUR per l'Italia) per sostenere l'attuazione dei piani nazionali di garanzia per i giovani degli Stati membri.

([1]) L'ultimo numero (2013) è disponibile all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=2023&furtherNews=yes
([2]) L'ultimo numero (marzo 2014) è disponibile all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=2054&furtherNews=yes
([3]) Vedi http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004056/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Unemployment in Italy reaches record levels

According to ISTAT, Italy's national office of statistics, less than 1 million young people are currently employed in Italy, a drop of more than 100 000 compared to last year. These figures are very alarming, especially given that, in absolute terms, the unemployment rate in Italy has reached record levels. Today, 13% of the workforce is unemployed, and while this figure has not substantially changed since January (12.9%), it is still 1.1% greater than it was twelve months ago, and has not been this high since 1977.

1. Is the Commission aware of these figures?

2. How does it intend to support Italy's unemployed citizens, who are facing an increasingly uncertain future?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the figures cited by the Honourable Member. The Directorate-General for Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion in particular regularly assesses employment and social developments across the EU and publishes its findings in such publications as the annual 'Employment and Social Developments in Europe' review ([1]) and the EU 'Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review' ([2]). These provide the EU and the Member State governments with useful evidence for steering policymaking and underpin the annual joint employment reports, which form part of the annual growth surveys, which in turn set the EU's priorities for boosting growth and job creation in the following year.

2. Achieving high employment across the European Union is one of the EU's priorities and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth ([3]) includes a headline target for increasing the employment rate. The European Employment Strategy ([4]) provides a framework for the Member States to share information and coordinate their employment policies.

EU financial instruments, such as the European Structural and Investment Funds, support the Member States in their efforts to foster growth and employment. Italy will receive EUR 32.2 billion from the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund for 2014-20. The European Social Fund ([5]) provides support for efforts to boost employment, in particular through projects to train people, help them to find a job, modernise employment institutions and promote social inclusion. Additional resources are available under the Youth Employment Initiative (including EUR 567 million for Italy) to support the implementation of the Member States' national Youth Guarantee plans.

([1]) The latest issue (2013) is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=2023&furtherNews=yes
([2]) The latest issue (March 2014) is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=2054&furtherNews=yes
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=101
([5]) See http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004057/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Aggiornamento situazione marò

Il tribunale speciale indiano che si sta occupando dell'incidente in cui sono coinvolti i due marò italiani, Massimiliano Latorre e Salvatore Girone, ha deciso di rinviare l'udienza al 31 luglio.

Può l'Alto Rappresentante riferire circa gli sviluppi dei suoi contatti con le autorità indiane?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004058/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento situazione marò

Il tribunale speciale indiano che si sta occupando dell'incidente in cui sono coinvolti i due marò italiani, Massimiliano Latorre e Salvatore Girone, ha deciso di rinviare l'udienza al 31 luglio.

Può la Commissione riferire circa gli sviluppi dei suoi contatti con le autorità indiane?

Risposta congiunta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

L'AR/VP segue con estrema attenzione sin dall'inizio il caso dei due marò italiani, tenendosi in contatto sia con le autorità italiane che con quelle indiane. La questione riguarda altresì la lotta mondiale contro la pirateria, oggetto di un fermo impegno dell'UE.

Secondo le ultime informazioni disponibili, benché dall'incidente siano trascorsi quasi due anni, non sono ancora stati depositati i capi d'imputazione contro i marò italiani, che restano in carcere a New Delhi.

Negli ultimi tempi l'AR/VP e alti esponenti dell'Unione europea hanno colto tutte le occasioni possibili per sollevare la questione con il governo indiano a diversi livelli, ivi compreso durante le consultazioni UE-India sulla politica estera svoltesi il 24 gennaio a New Delhi, e continueranno ad esercitare pressioni sempre più forti al riguardo.

In particolare, l'AR/VP ha esortato l'India a trovare rapidamente una soluzione soddisfacente a questa situazione che si protrae da tempo, nel pieno rispetto della convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare e del diritto internazionale.

Le decisioni dell'India su questo caso saranno oggetto di un attento esame.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004057/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Update on the situation involving two Italian marines

The special court in India that is presiding over the incident involving the two Italian marines, Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone, has now postponed the date of the hearing to 31 July.

Can the High Representative report of any developments that she may have learnt from her contacts with the Indian authorities?

Question for written answer E-004058/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Update on the situation involving two Italian marines

The special court in India that is presiding over the incident involving the two Italian marines, Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone, has now postponed the date of the hearing to 31 July.

Can the Commission report of any developments that it may have learnt from its contacts with the Indian authorities?

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The HR/VP has been following very closely the case of the two Italian marines since its beginning, in contact with both the Italian and Indian authorities. This issue has also a bearing on the global fight against piracy, to which the EU is strongly committed.

According to the latest available information, the Italian marines are still being held in New Delhi, with no charge sheet having been issued despite almost two years have passed since the incident.

The HR/VP and top-ranking representatives from the European Union have raised this issue with the Indian government at various levels whenever possible in the recent past, including at the EU-India Foreign Policy Consultations of 24 January 2014 in New Delhi, and will continue to do so with increasing emphasis.

In particular, the HR/VP has encouraged India to find, as a matter of urgency, a satisfactory outcome to this long-standing case as soon as possible, based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and international law.

Any decision by India on this case will be carefully assessed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004059/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Indonesia: rafforzamento del radicalismo islamico e applicazione della Sharia'a

L'amministrazione provinciale di Aceh, territorio indonesiano ricco di petrolio, popolato da circa 5 milioni di abitanti, e il suo Consiglio legislativo hanno approvato la Qanun Jinayat, una legge che obbliga tutti, musulmani e non musulmani, a seguire la Shari'a, il codice legale islamico.

Il Qanun impone che tutti i presunti violatori della Shari'a siano processati in base alla legge islamica, indipendentemente dalla loro religione. Se il crimine di cui sono accusati ricade sotto il Codice penale del paese, possono scegliere da quale tribunale essere giudicati, se invece non ricade sotto il Codice penale, automaticamente sarà il tribunale religioso a giudicare. Vale la pena ricordare che tra i «crimini» non da Codice penale rientrano: il bere alcolici, il «khalwat» cioè il contatto affettuoso fra persone non sposate, non portare il velo etc. Preso atto che nei giorni scorsi 62 persone, tra i quali due non musulmani, sono state fermate perché «indossavano abiti impropri»,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti?

2. ritiene che questo provvedimento lesivo dei diritti umani e della libertà religiosa di tutti i cittadini non musulmani ne pregiudicherà l'incolumità e la sicurezza?

3. ha intenzione di avviare un'indagine attraverso il SEAE per accertare che non si verifichino abusi soprattutto nei confronti delle minoranze cristiane?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente dell'applicazione della sharia nella provincia di Aceh e continuerà a seguire attentamente la situazione delle minoranze religiose in Indonesia, ponendo il problema anche nel quadro del prossimo dialogo sui diritti umani con il paese.

La sharia, concetto generico che abbraccia diversi aspetti giuridici, conosce diverse interpretazioni nei paesi in cui si applica e tra gli studiosi. L'Unione non intende quindi addentrarsi in questioni riguardanti le fonti del diritto ma interviene nei casi di applicazione di leggi o quadri giuridici che violino le norme internazionali sui diritti umani e operino discriminazioni nei confronti di gruppi o minoranze.

Suscitano quindi apprensione le conseguenze del *Qanun Jinayat* sulle minoranze musulmane e l'Unione porrà ulteriormente il problema con le autorità indonesiane, in linea con gli orientamenti UE in materia di promozione e protezione della libertà di religione o di opinione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004059/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Islamic radicalism on the rise in Indonesia, and the application of Sharia law

The provincial authorities in Aceh, the oil-rich region of Indonesia with a population of around 5 million, and its Legislative Council have recently approved the *Qanun Jinayat*, a law that obliges everyone, both Muslims and non-Muslims alike, to adhere to Sharia law.

The *Qanun Jinayat* stipulates that anyone suspected of having broken Sharia law must be tried by an Islamic court, regardless of their religion. If the alleged crime also falls under the country's Criminal Code, then the accused can choose which type of court they will be tried by, but if it is not included in that code, then they will automatically be tried by a religious court. It is worth recalling that the 'crimes' that are not listed in the Criminal Code include drinking alcohol, committing khalwat (close contact between unmarried people) and not wearing the veil, to name but three examples. In the last few days, 62 people (including two non-Muslims) have been arrested for 'wearing inappropriate clothing'.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation described above?

2. Does it believe that this law infringes upon the human rights and religious freedom of all non-Muslim citizens, and will jeopardise their safety and security?

3. Does it intend to launch an investigation via the EEAS to make sure that no abuse is being perpetrated, especially against the minority Christian population?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of issues over the implementation of Sharia law in Aceh and will continue to follow closely the situation of all religious minorities in Indonesia including by raising the subject at the forthcoming EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue.

Sharia is a general concept that encompasses differrent legal aspects and is the subject of varying interpretations both in the countries where it is applied and among specialists. Questions related to the sources of law are therefore, as such, not a matter in which the EU will engage. The EU is, however, concerned with the application of any law or legal framework, when it constitutes a violation of international human rights norms and proves discriminatory towards certain group or minorities.

For thease reasons, the EU remains concerned with the impact of the *Qanun Jinayat* on non-muslim minorities while the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief will guide EU action in order to further address this issue with the Indonesian authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004060/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo sistema di autorizzazione dei diritti di impianto a partire dal 2016

Con la Nuova PAC 2014-2020 è stato sancito lo stop alla liberalizzazione selvaggia dei vigneti. Il sistema dei diritti di impianto si conclude nel 2015, tuttavia un nuovo sistema di autorizzazione viene introdotto a partire dal 2016 e fino al 2030. Gli Stati membri che si avvalgono del sistema di autorizzazione dei diritti d'impianto hanno facoltà di decidere se passare al nuovo sistema entro il 2020.

Può la Commissione:

1. spiegare nel dettaglio come avverrà il passaggio al nuovo sistema di autorizzazione?

2. spiegare se il nuovo sistema rispetterà i ruoli delle istituzioni locali e delle regioni produttrici, per quanto riguarda i bandi relativi alla distribuzione dell'autorizzazione dei diritti, senza un eccessivo aggravio burocratico?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

Il regime transitorio relativo ai diritti di impianto si concluderà il 31 dicembre 2015, e il nuovo sistema di autorizzazioni per gli impianti viticoli entrerà in vigore il 1º gennaio 2016. Dopo tale data gli impianti viticoli potranno essere effettuati solo se autorizzati.

L'articolo 68 del regolamento (UE) n. 1308/2013 (regolamento OCM) ([1]) stabilisce che i diritti di impianto in corso di validità detenuti dai produttori possono essere convertiti in autorizzazioni se la relativa richiesta è presentata entro il 31 dicembre 2015. Tuttavia, gli Stati membri possono decidere di posticipare il termine per tale conversione fino al 31 dicembre 2020, e in tal caso i produttori possono presentare le proprie richieste dopo il 2016. Gli Stati membri devono quindi organizzare una procedura a livello nazionale e decidere il termine entro cui deve avvenire tale conversione (qualsiasi data tra il 2016 e il 2020). Tuttavia, anche in questo caso i trasferimenti di diritti di impianto non sono più possibili dopo il 31 dicembre 2015.

Il ruolo delle organizzazioni professionali (OP) è definito all'articolo 65 del regolamento sull'OCM. Le OP rappresentative e riconosciute possono rivolgere raccomandazioni agli Stati membri (previo accordo raggiunto nella zona geografica di riferimento in cui opera l'OP) in relazione ai limiti annuali da stabilire per la concessione delle autorizzazioni di nuovi impianti. Tali limiti possono essere fissati a livello regionale, a livello DOP/IGP o per zone senza indicazione geografica. Le decisioni sui limiti devono essere prese dagli Stati membri, che possono basarsi sulle raccomandazioni eventualmente formulate dalle OP, e devono essere conformi alle condizioni stabilite all'articolo 63, paragrafo 3. La partecipazione delle OP a tale processo decisionale deve necessariamente essere organizzata negli Stati membri secondo una procedura pubblica trasparente e ben definita a livello nazionale o regionale.

([1]) GU L 347 del 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004060/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: New system for awarding wine planting rights as from 2016

The new common agricultural policy for the period from 2014 to 2020 has put a stop to the unbridled liberalisation of wine growing. The current system for awarding wine planting rights will expire in 2015, but a new system is to be introduced for the period from 2016 to 2030. The Member States which employ the existing system have until 2020 to decide if they wish to switch to the new one.

1. Can the Commission explain in detail how the transition to the new system will take place?

2. Can it say whether the new system will take due account of the role played by local organisations and wine-producing regions in the procedures for awarding wine planting rights without increasing the amount of red tape involved unnecessarily?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The transitional planting rights regime will end on 31 December 2015, and the new scheme of authorisations for vine plantings will enter into force on 1 January 2016. After this date vine plantings can only be done with authorisations.

As mentioned in Article 68 of Regulation (UE) No1308/2013 (CMO Regulation) ([1]), valid planting rights in the hands of producers may be converted into authorisations if a request is presented before 31 December 2015. However, Member States may decide to postpone the deadline for such conversion until 31 December 2020, and in that situation producers may submit their requests after 2016. Member States must therefore organise a procedure at national level and decide the deadline to allow for such conversion to take place (which may be any time between 2016 and 2020). Nevertheless, even in this case the transactions of planting rights are not possible after 31 December 2015.

The role of professional organisations (PO's) is defined in Article 65 of the CMO Regulation. Recognised and representative PO's may issue recommendations to Member States (following an agreement reached in the reference geographical area where such PO operates) in relation to annual limits to be established for the granting of authorisations for new plantings. Those limits may be set at regional level, PDO/PGI level or for areas without geographical indication. These decisions on limits must be made by Member States, may be based on recommendations they may receive from PO's, and shall comply with the conditions established in paragraph 3 of Article 63. The involvement of PO's in such decision-making process should necessarily be done according to a transparent, public and well defined procedure at national or regional level in Member States.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004061/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Possibile risparmio dei costi di stampa nelle istituzioni dell'UE modificando i font di redazione dei documenti

Un giovane studente americano, in uno studio inizialmente limitato agli istituti scolastici facenti parte del suo distretto, poi ampliato alle amministrazioni sia del governo federale americano sia di quello di tutti gli Stati Uniti, ha dimostrato che i «font» più usati per la redazione di documenti ufficiali sono «Times New Roman» e «Century Gothic» e che se questi venissero sostituiti dal «Garamond» si abbatterebbero i costi di stampa di circa 400 milioni di dollari l'anno.

La Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti?

2. intende far sviluppare uno studio simile per quanto riguarda i documenti prodotti dalle istituzioni dell'UE, così da valutarne i termini di risparmio e, se risultasse vantaggioso, applicare questo accorgimento?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

La Commissione ringrazia l'onorevole deputato per la presente interrogazione. Come l'onorevole deputato forse saprà, la Commissione e le altre istituzioni hanno deciso di utilizzare il font Times New Roman per tutte le comunicazioni ufficiali. La Commissione non può tuttavia rispondere a nome delle altre istituzioni.

La Commissione migliora costantemente le proprie prestazioni ambientali nel contesto del suo sistema di gestione ambientale EMAS ([1]). La Commissione è a conoscenza dei fatti descritti dall'onorevole deputato. In base all'analisi ambientale periodica svolta nel contesto di EMAS ([2]), la questione dell'utilizzo di font diversi potrebbe essere approfondita in futuro. In caso di valutazione positiva, una corrispondente azione potrebbe essere inserita in una dichiarazione ambientale formulata nell'ambito del regolamento EMAS.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1221/2009 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 novembre 2009, sull'adesione volontaria delle organizzazioni a un sistema comunitario di ecogestione e audit (EMAS), che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 761/2001 e le decisioni della Commissione 2001/681/CE e 2006/193/CE.

([2]) L'analisi periodica stabilisce gli aspetti ambientali significativi per la Commissione e assegna le risorse limitate a tali aspetti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004061/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Scope for reducing printing costs in the EU institutions through the use of a different font

In a study which initially focused on educational establishments in his area, but which was then broadened to cover all branches of the federal and state authorities in the USA, a young American student has shown that the fonts most frequently used in official documents are *Times New Roman* and *Century Gothic* and that if they were to be replaced by *Garamond* printing costs would be reduced by roughly USD 400 million per year.

1. Is the Commission aware of the facts outlined above?

2. Does it intend to have a similar study carried out of the documents produced by the EU institutions with a view to assessing the possible savings and, should its benefits be confirmed, introducing the change which is being proposed?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission thanks the Honourable Member for this question. As the Honourable Member may be aware, the Commission and the others Institutions have decided to use Times New Roman for all official communication, however the Commission cannot answer for the other Institutions

The Commission itself is continuously improving its environmental performance in the context of its environmental management system EMAS ([1]). It is aware of the facts outlined by the Honourable Member. Depending on the periodic environmental review ([2]) in the context of EMAS, the question of font use could be further analysed in the future. In case of a positive assessment, a corresponding action could be reported in the environmental statements drafted under the EMAS regulation.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), repealing Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 and Commission Decisions 2001/681/EC and 2006/193/EC.

([2]) This periodic review establishes the significant environmental aspects for the Commission and allocates the limited resources to those aspects.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004062/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Ritardo dei pagamenti e procedura d'infrazione per l'Italia

In tema di ritardo dei pagamenti e rispetto della direttiva 2011/7/UE, il commissario Antonio Tajani ha dichiarato di aver dato mandato ai «servizi di avviare le pratiche necessarie per l'invio di una lettera di messa in mora all'Italia» dopo essere «rimasto insoddisfatto dalla risposta lapalissiana dell'Italia a Eu Pilot», la fase che precede l'avvio di una procedura d'infrazione.

Alla luce di questi fatti, la Commissione:

1. può fare chiarezza sulle circostanze e i fatti che hanno determinato questa decisione?

2. può indicare quando la lettera di messa in mora verrà spedita all'Italia?

3. può far sapere a quanto potrebbero ammontare le sanzioni pecuniarie che l'Italia dovrà pagare per il mancato rispetto della direttiva?

4. non ritiene che l'eventuale esborso pecuniario comminato all'Italia dovrebbe essere devoluto dalla Commissione europea a tutte quelle aziende che ancora aspettano di essere pagate dalla pubblica amministrazione italiana?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(2 giugno 2014)

La Commissione ha contattato le autorità italiane per chiedere chiarimenti in merito al recepimento nell'ordinamento italiano della direttiva e circa la sua corretta attuazione.

Per quanto riguarda il recepimento, le autorità italiane hanno reagito positivamente e hanno annunciato di essere in procinto di modificare la legislazione nazionale, come richiesto dalla Commissione. La Commissione è ora in attesa dell'approvazione di tali modifiche per poter archiviare tale questione.

Per quanto riguarda l'attuazione della direttiva, la Commissione è stata informata del fatto che le autorità pubbliche italiane non rispettano i termini di pagamento in essa stabiliti. Il 10 marzo 2014 le autorità italiane hanno risposto alla richiesta di chiarimenti della Commissione la quale sta attualmente valutando tutte le informazioni raccolte e, qualora reputi che l'applicazione delle norme in tema di ritardi di pagamento da parte delle autorità pubbliche non sia soddisfacente, può avviare un procedimento d'infrazione a norma dell'articolo 258 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea ([1]).

Le sanzioni pecuniarie possono essere comminate dopo che lo Stato membro non si sia conformato alla sentenza della Corte di giustizia. Sarebbe quindi prematuro valutare la possibile entità della sanzione pecuniaria.

Come spiegato nella comunicazione della Commissione sull'applicazione dell'articolo 228 del trattato CE (ora art. 260 TFUE) ([2]), la penalità e la somma forfettaria si configurano come «altre entrate» nell'ambito del sistema delle risorse proprie dell'UE.

([1]) Se tale procedura non pone fine alla carenza da parte dello Stato membro, la Commissione può adire la Corte di giustizia per per violazione del diritto dell'UE. Se la Corte riconosce che in effetti l'Italia non ha adempiuto ad un obbligo ad esso incombente, lo Stato membro deve mettere fine alla violazione senza indugio. Se lo Stato membro non si è conformato alla sentenza della Corte di giustizia, questa può, su richiesta della Commissione, comminargli il pagamento di una somma forfettaria o di una penalità.

([2]) [SEC(2005) 1658].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004062/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Delays in payments, and infringement proceedings against Italy

With reference to delays in payments and compliance with Directive 2011/7/EU, Commissioner Antonio Tajani has stated that he has instructed his administration to take the necessary steps to send a letter of formal notice to Italy on the grounds that he is not satisfied with Italy's self-evident reply to EU Pilot, the sending of such a letter being the preliminary to the initiation of infringement proceedings.

1. Can the Commission clarify the circumstances and facts which led to this decision?

2. Can the Commission indicate when the letter of formal notice will be sent to Italy?

3. Can the Commission indicate the possible size of the financial penalty which may be imposed on Italy for failure to comply with the directive?

4. Does not the Commission consider that it ought to use any payment which may be levied from Italy to transfer money to all the businesses which are still waiting to be paid by the Italian public administration?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission has contacted the Italian authorities to ask for clarifications as regards the transposition of the directive into Italian law as well as its correct implementation.

As regards the transposition, the Italian authorities reacted positively and announced that they would amend the national law as requested by the Commission. The Commission is now waiting for the approval of such amendments in order to close the transposition case.

Concerning the implementation of the directive, the Commission has been alerted to the fact that the Italian public authorities are not respecting the payment periods established by the directive. The Italian authorities replied on 10 March 2014 to the Commission's request of clarification. The Commission is currently assessing all the information gathered. If the situation is deemed not satisfactory as concerns the application of the rules on late payments by public authorities, the Commission has the right to initiate infringement proceedings according to Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([1]).

As concerns financial penalties, they can be imposed following the failure of the Member State to comply with the judgment of the Court of Justice. It would thus be premature to assess the possible size of the financial penalty.

As explained in the communication from the Commission on the Application of Article 228 of the EC Treaty (now Art. 260 TFEU) ([2]), the penalty and lump sum payments constitute a part of the system of own resources of the EU as 'other revenue'.

([1]) If this procedure would not result in termination of the failure by the Member State, an action for breach of EC law may be brought before the Court of Justice. If the Court finds that indeed the obligation has not been fulfilled by Italy, the Member State must terminate the breach without any delay. If the Member State has not complied with the Court of Justice's judgment, it may upon the request of the Commission, impose it a fixed or a periodic financial penalty.

([2]) [SEC(2005) 1658].

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004063/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Smantellamento di navi in Bangladesh

Sulla costa di Chittagong, uno dei principali porti del Bangladesh, è nato uno dei più grandi cantieri al mondo per la demolizione delle grandi navi. Intorno agli scheletri di vecchie petroliere, portaerei e navi passeggeri oltre 40 000 uomini lavorano in condizioni disumane, con una paga minima ed esposti alle esalazioni di sostanze tossiche rimaste nei serbatoi delle imbarcazioni.

La Commissione:

1. è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. come intende agire per restituire a questi operai sicurezza e tutela della salute?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2014)

La Commissione sa che nei paesi dell'Asia meridionale l'industria del riciclaggio delle navi è nota per lo scarso rispetto delle norme ambientali e di quelle relative alla sicurezza sul lavoro. Questo è all'origine di incidenti gravi, in molti casi mortali, ma anche di malattie di lunga durata per i lavoratori che manipolano l'amianto e altre tossine in assenza di impianti di smaltimento sicuri. Il regolamento sul riciclaggio delle navi (regolamento (UE) 1257/2013) ([1]), che è entrato in vigore il 30 dicembre 2013, introduce tuttavia norme più rigorose per la demolizione e il riciclaggio delle navi che battono bandiera di uno Stato membro dell'UE.

Per quanto riguarda il sostegno ai paesi in via di sviluppo affinché migliorino le norme tecniche dei loro impianti di riciclaggio delle navi, va sottolineato che esistono già programmi di supporto tecnico in questo settore, gestiti dai segretariati delle convenzioni di Basilea e Hong Kong e sostenuti finanziariamente dall'UE tramite le convenzioni stesse.

Il patto di sostenibilità per il Bangladesh adottato a luglio 2013 dopo il crollo della fabbrica di indumenti dovrebbe avere effetti positivi in altri settori, compresa l'industria del riciclaggio delle navi.

L'assistenza allo sviluppo fornita attualmente dall'UE al Bangladesh mira a migliorare le capacità, anche attraverso l'istruzione e la formazione, e a rafforzare il quadro generale di governance per offrire fonti di reddito alternative alla popolazione.

Per garantire condizioni di lavoro dignitose nel settore del riciclaggio delle navi occorreranno interventi dell'industria e delle autorità in collaborazione con le parti sociali. Le decisioni relative ai programmi UE di assistenza allo sviluppo saranno prese nell'ambito dei regimi pertinenti.

([1]) GU L 330 del 10.12.2013, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004063/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Ship-breaking in Bangladesh

On the coast of Chittagong (one of Bangladesh's main ports), one of the biggest ship-breaking yards in the world has come into being, where large vessels are dismantled. Around the skeletons of old oil-tankers, aircraft carriers and passenger ships, more than 40 000 men work in inhumane conditions, for minimal pay, while being exposed to fumes from toxic substances which remain in their tanks.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What action will the Commission take to give these workers a working environment with acceptable health and safety standards?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The Commission is aware that the ship recycling industry in South-Asian countries is notorious for its poor environmental and labour safety records. This has not only led to serious accidents, many of them fatal, but also to long-term illnesses suffered by workers handling asbestos and other toxins without safe disposal facilities. Hence, stringent rules to oversee the dismantling and recycling of EU-flagged ships were included in the Ship Recycling Regulation (Regulation (EU) 1257/2013) ([1]), which entered into force on 30 December 2013.

As regards support for developing countries to upgrade the technical standards of their ship recycling facilities, it should be underlined that technical support programmes in this area exist, operated by the secretariats of the Basel and Hong Kong Conventions, and financially supported through these Conventions by the EU.

The Sustainability Compact for Bangladesh, adopted in July 2013 after the factory collapse in the Ready Made Garment sector, is expected to have a positive impact on other economic sectors, including the ship recycling industry.

The EU's current development assistance in Bangladesh is geared towards capacity building, including education and skills training, as well as strengthening the overall governance framework, in order to provide people with income earning alternatives.

Addressing decent work deficits in the ship recycling sector will require actions by both the industry and authorities in cooperation with social partners. Decisions on EU development assistance programmes will be taken in the context of the relevant development assistance arrangements.

([1]) OJ L 330, 10.12.2013, p. 1-20.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004064/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Visita del presidente cinese Xi Jinping alle istituzioni europee

In occasione della visita del presidente cinese Xi Jinping almeno duecento persone si sono radunate davanti alla sede del Parlamento europeo a Bruxelles per chiedere il rispetto dei diritti umani in Cina mentre almeno una cinquantina di uomini e donne tibetani si sono rasati la testa in segno di solidarietà nei confronti delle 133 persone che si sono date fuoco in Tibet dal 2009 ad oggi. Preso atto che il presidente non ha partecipato a nessun incontro con la stampa, la Commissione:

1. può spiegare quanto è costato ai contribuenti europei il protocollo di accoglienza del presiedente cinese?

2. può spiegare se e in che termini si è discusso di politica commerciale? Se e in che termini si è parlato dei dazi cinesi sui prodotti europei? Come ha inteso rappresentare le istanze degli imprenditori europei che subiscono la concorrenza sleale di questo paese?

3. può spiegare se e in che termini si è discusso di rispetto dei diritti umani?

4. come ha inteso rappresentare le istanze di tutti coloro che sono perseguitati in Cina per motivi religiosi?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(8 luglio 2014)

1. I costi per l'accoglienza del Presidente cinese sono stati coperti dalle normali dotazioni di bilancio di cui dispongono il Consiglio e la Commissione per ricevere i visitatori di alto livello di paesi terzi.

2. Nel corso degli incontri bilaterali con il Presidente Xi Jinping del 31 marzo si è discusso di economia e commercio. La UE ha sottolineato l'importanza delle riforme nazionali per riequilibrare l'economia cinese verso un maggiore sviluppo del settore dei servizi e del consumo in Cina che, peraltro, offrirebbe opportunità alle imprese dell'UE. Inoltre, la UE ha chiesto una maggiore apertura del mercato cinese agli investitori stranieri, una tutela adeguata dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale e della certezza del diritto. I negoziati attualmente in corso per un accordo bilaterale sugli investimenti saranno cruciali sotto questo aspetto.

Per quanto riguarda le tariffe doganali, i dazi sulle importazioni applicati dalla Cina sono conformi ai suoi impegni internazionali. Gli sforzi al fine di un'ulteriore riduzione o dell'eliminazione dei dazi si concentrano ora sui negoziati plurilaterali per la revisione dell'accordo sulla tecnologia dell'informazione e su una nuova iniziativa plurilaterale sui beni ecologici. Nel corso dell'incontro la UE ha sottolineato l'importanza cruciale del contributo cinese e della sua effettiva partecipazione a tali trattative ai fini di una loro buona conclusione.

3.-4. La UE ha sottolineato la centralità dei diritti umani nelle relazioni UE-Cina ricordando quanto la tutela del diritto alla libertà di espressione sia un valore importante per l'Unione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004064/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Visit of Xi Jinping, President of China, to the EU institutions

At least 200 people gathered outside the seat of the European Parliament in Brussels on the occasion of the visit of Xi Jinping, President of China, to call for respect for human rights in that country, while at least fifty Tibetan men and women shaved their heads in solidarity with the 133 people who have set themselves on fire in Tibet since 2009. Since the President did not meet the press at any point, can the Commission state:

1. how much hosting the Chinese President cost the European taxpayer;

2. whether trade policy and Chinese duties on European products were discussed, and what line was taken? How did the Commission represent the interests of European businesses confronted with unfair competition from China;

3. whether the issue of respect for human rights was discussed, and what line was taken;

4. how it sought to represent the interests of all those people in China who are being persecuted on the grounds of their religion?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(8 July 2014)

1. The cost of hosting the Chinese President was covered within the normal budget allocations of the Council and Commission for receiving top level visitors from third countries.

2. During the bilateral meetings with President Xi Jinping on 31st March, the leaders discussed economic and trade issues. The EU underlined the importance of domestic reforms to rebalance China's economy that should lead to a more significant services sector and more consumption in China, which in turn should provide opportunities for EU companies. The EU also advocated a further opening of China's market to foreign investors, adequate Intellectual Property Rights protection, and rule of law. The on-going negotiations on a bilateral Investment Agreement will be crucial in this respect.

Concerning tariffs, China's applied import duties are in line with its international commitments. Efforts towards further tariff lowering or elimination are now focused on plurilateral negotiations for the revision of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and a new plurilateral initiative on Green Goods. The EU recalled at the meeting how China's contribution to and effective participation in these talks will be crucial to their successful conclusion.

3 and 4. The EU underlined the importance of human rights in EU-China relations and recalled the EU's attachment to protection of the right to freedom of expression.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004065/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Blasfemia e Pakistan

In Pakistan si è verificato un nuovo caso di un cristiano condannato a morte per blasfemia.

Un rapporto del Dipartimento di Stato degli Stati Uniti ha dichiarato che il Pakistan è il paese che ricorre più frequentemente al mondo alla legge contro la blasfemia: sono almeno 14 i condannati nel braccio della morte e 19 i detenuti che stanno scontando l'ergastolo per tale reato.

Si invita la Commissione a rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. come intende agire per tutelare i fedeli cristiani che vivono in tale paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 giugno 2014)

1. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ringrazia l'onorevole parlamentare per aver attirato la sua attenzione sul rapporto menzionato nell'interrogazione. I dati sui fatti in questione variano a seconda delle fonti: secondo Human Rights Watch nel 2012 almeno 17 persone si trovavano nel braccio della morte a seguito di una condanna per blasfemia, mentre 20 erano condannate all'ergastolo. La posizione dell'UE sulla questione resta tuttavia chiara, come illustrato nella risposta E-004233/2014.

2. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alle risposte date alle interrogazioni scritte E-008959/2013 e E-011378/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004065/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Blasphemy and Pakistan

Yet another Christian has been sentenced to death for blasphemy in Pakistan.

According to a report published by the US State Department, Pakistan invokes blasphemy laws more often than any other country in the world. At least 14 people have been sentenced to death for this crime, while 19 others are serving life sentences.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the above facts;

2. what action it will take to protect practising Christians in Pakistan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

1. The HR/VP thanks the Honourable Member for drawing the report to her attention. Whilst facts vary according to source (according to Human Rights Watch in 2012 at least 17 people remained on death row for blasphemy, while another 20 served life sentences) the EU's position on the issue of the blasphemy laws is clear, as set out in E-004233/2014.

2. The HR/VP refers the honourable member to the replies to written questions E-008959/2013 and E-011378/2013 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004066/14
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Cross-border Healthcare Directive

How does the Commission characterise the implementation by Ireland of the Cross-border Healthcare Directive, and in particular the establishment of a functioning national contact point?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patient's rights in cross-border healthcare was due to be transposed into national legislation by Member States by 25 October 2013. At the time of writing the Republic of Ireland has not notified the Commission of any transposition measures. However, the Republic of Ireland has notified the Commission of the details of the National Contact Point for cross-border healthcare (this can be found at: http://hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/schemes/cbd/).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004067/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(2 april 2014)

Betreft: Inbreukprocedure havenarbeid België versus ontwerp havenverordening

Afgelopen vrijdag, 28 maart, maakte de Europese Commissie een ingebrekestelling bekend in verband met de wet op de havenarbeid in België (Zaak 2014/2088). Over de modernisering van de havenarbeid in België wordt er al jaren sociaal overleg gepleegd en worden op regelmatige tijdstippen in consensus tussen werkgevers en werknemers stappen gezet. In de mededeling van de Commissie „Havens: een motor voor groei" (COM(2013)0295) op initiatief van Commissaris Kallas, staat letterlijk het volgende te lezen:

Actie 6

Overeenkomstig de artikelen 151 en 154 VWEU is de Commissie bereid de sociale dialoog op EU-niveau te faciliteren door technische en administratieve ondersteuning te verlenen. De sociale partners in de EU hebben een huishoudelijk reglement en een open gezamenlijk werkprogramma aangenomen en men verwacht dat het comité op 19 juni 2013 zal worden opgericht. Hoewel zij de autonomie van de sociale partners eerbiedigt, rekent de Commissie erop dat de sociale partners in de EU erin zullen slagen om een antwoord te vinden op een aantal

problemen inzake arbeidsorganisatie en -omstandigheden.

In samenwerking met alle sociale partners in de EU zal de Commissie de werking en voortgang van de Europese sociale dialoog voor de havensector en de situatie op het gebied van goederenafhandeling en passagiersdiensten in 2016 evalueren.

Hoe rijmt de Commissie het feit dat wordt ingezet op de „voortgang van de Europese sociale dialoog voor de havensector en de situatie op het gebied van goederenafhandeling en passagiersdiensten" met het tegelijk starten van inbreukprocedures tegen de lidstaten over dezelfde deeldomeinen van het havenbeleid. Vreest de Commissie niet dat door deze eenzijdige initiatieven van de Commissie succes van dergelijke sociale dialoog bij voorbaat bemoeilijkt wordt?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004068/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(2 april 2014)

Betreft: Inbreukprocedure havenarbeid België — neutraliteit Commissaris

Afgelopen vrijdag, 28 maart, maakte de Europese Commissie een ingebrekestelling bekend in verband met de wet op de havenarbeid in België (Zaak 2014/2088). Deze ingebrekestelling is onder meer het rechtstreekse gevolg van een klacht door een logistiek ondernemer uit België die de Belgische wet op de havenarbeid strijdig acht met Europese regelgeving. Deze ondernemer heeft zelf ook bevestigd dat hij bij de Europese Commissie hierover een klacht heeft ingediend. De relatie tussen de klacht enerzijds en de ingebrekestelling anderzijds wordt ruim gedocumenteerd in de Nederlandstalige Belgische pers.

In dezelfde periode (2012-2013) dat deze ondernemer bekend maakte dat hij een klacht zou indienen bij de Europese commissie, ontwikkelde zijn bedrijf belangrijke logistieke activiteiten in de haven Riga, Estland met een investering ten bedrage van 30 miljoen euro.

Niettemin maakte de Commissie bij de lancering van haar nieuw voorstel van havenverordening (COM(2013)0295) duidelijk dat ze organisatie van de havenarbeid wilde overlaten aan sociaal overleg op Europees niveau. De hoger vermelde ingebrekestelling door de Europese Commissie, op initiatief van transportcommissaris, lijkt hier in te gaan tegen de eerder bepaalde beleidslijn bij lancering van de nieuwe verordening.

Hoe garandeert de Commissie de neutraliteit van behandeling van dergelijke klacht, in de wetenschap dat de aanleiding voor de ingebrekestelling een klacht is van een ondernemer die binnen het beleidsdomein én in het land van herkomst van de betrokken Europees commissaris belangrijke investeringen doet?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(28 mei 2014)

Het is de taak van de Commissie erop toe te zien dat lidstaten de EU-wetgeving respecteren, met inbegrip van de beginselen van de Verdragen.

Zoals reeds blijkt uit de mededeling „Havens: een motor voor groei" ([1]), geeft de Commissie haar volle steun aan het opzetten van een sociale dialoog om problemen inzake arbeidsorganisatie en -omstandigheden in havens op te lossen. Zij erkent ook de positieve bijdrage die de sociale dialoog kan leveren aan een correcte toepassing van de verdragsregels.

De hierboven aangehaalde mededeling bevestigt de mogelijkheid om onrechtmatige beperkingen geval per geval te vervolgen als die tegen de bepalingen van het Verdrag ingaan. Dit geldt in het bijzonder voor goederenafhandeling en passagiersdiensten, aangezien die in het door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde verordeningsvoorstel niet worden gedekt door de bepalingen inzake transparantie van de markttoegang.

Wat de Belgische havenwetgeving betreft, heeft de Commissie drie formele klachten ontvangen van vijf bedrijven die gebruikmaken van Belgische havens. Deze bedrijven zijn van mening dat de Belgische arbeidsregels en -praktijken in strijd zijn met de verdragsregels, in het bijzonder met het beginsel van vrijheid van vestiging. Het Verdrag sluit elke nationale maatregel uit die de vrijheid van vestiging rechtstreeks bemoeilijkt of minder aantrekkelijk maakt.

De ingebrekestelling van België vormt de eerste stap van een inbreukprocedure. Hierdoor krijgt de lidstaat de kans om zijn standpunt voor te stellen en/of maatregelen voor te stellen om tot overeenstemming met de EU-regelgeving te komen.

([1]) COM(2013)0295.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004067/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Infringement proceedings concerning dock work in Belgium versus proposal for a ports regulation

Last Friday, 28 March, the Commission announced a letter of formal notice in connection with the law on dock work in Belgium (Case 2014/2088). The social partners have been negotiating about the modernisation of dock work in Belgium for years, and steps are regularly taken by consensus between employers and employees. The Commission communication 'Ports: an engine for growth' (COM(2013) 295) contains the following passage:

'Action 6 In line with Articles 151 and 154 of the TFEU, the Commission is willing to facilitate the Social Dialogue at Union level by providing technical and administrative support. The EU social partners have already agreed rules of procedures and an open joint work programme and expect the Committee to be formally established on 19 June 2013.

While respecting the autonomy of the social partners, the Commission expects that the EU social partners will be in the capacity to tackle issues related to work organisation and working conditions.

The Commission in coordination with all the EU social partners foresees a review in 2016 that will assess the functioning and progress of the European Social Dialogue for the ports sector and the situation in respect of the provision of both cargo handling and passenger services.'

If the Commission seeks 'progress of the European Social Dialogue for the ports sector and the situation in respect of the provision of both cargo handling and passenger services', how does it reconcile this with a decision to simultaneously bring infringement proceedings against the Member States in relation to the same fields of ports policy? Does not the Commission fear that these unilateral initiatives on its part will in advance impede progress in such social dialogue?

Question for written answer E-004068/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Infringement proceedings relating to dock work in Belgium — Commissioner's neutrality

Last Friday, 28 March, the Commission announced a letter of formal notice relating to the law on dock work in Belgium (Case 2014/2088). This is, *inter alia*, a direct consequence of a complaint by a logistics entrepreneur from Belgium who considers Belgium's law on dock work to be contrary to European law. This entrepreneur has himself also confirmed that he has complained to the Commission about the matter. The relationship between the complaint and the letter of formal notice is amply documented in the Dutch-language Belgian press.

During the same period (2012-2013) in which this entrepreneur announced his intention of complaining to the Commission, his business engaged in large-scale logistical operations in the port of Riga in Estonia, investing EUR 30 million.

Nonetheless, when the Commission launched its new proposal for a regulation on ports (COM(2013) 295), it made it clear that it intended to treat the organisation of dock work as a matter for decision purely on the basis of consultation between the social partners at European level. In this respect, the abovementioned letter of formal notice from the Commission, drawn up at the initiative of the Transport Commissioner, seems to represent a departure from the policy previously adopted when proposing the new regulation.

How will the Commission guarantee the neutrality of consideration of such a complaint, when the letter of formal notice was prompted by a complaint from an entrepreneur who makes major investments both in the particular field of policy and in the country of origin of the Commissioner concerned?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission has to ensure that Member States comply with EC law, including the Treaty principles.

As indicated in the communication 'ports: an engine for growth' ([1]), the Commission fully supports the development of a social dialogue to tackle issues related to work organisation and working conditions in ports, and acknowledge the positive contribution that the social dialogue can make to a proper application of the Treaty rules.

The abovementioned Communication confirms the possibility to pursue cases of abusive restrictions breaching the Treaty principles on a case by case basis, in particular as cargo-handling and passenger services are not covered by the provisions on the transparency of the market access in the proposal for a regulation mentioned by the Honourable Member.

As to the Belgian port labour legislation, the Commission received three formal complaints, representing five companies which use Belgian ports and which consider that Belgian labour rules and practices are in breach of the Treaty rules, in particular the principle of freedom of establishment. The Treaty precludes any national measure which hinders or renders less attractive the exercise of the freedom of establishment.

The letter of formal notice addressed to Belgium is the first step of an infringement procedure. It gives the possibility to the Member State to present its position and/or to propose measures to comply with EU rules.

([1]) COM(2013) 295.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004069/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2. April 2014)

Betrifft: Verschmutzung der Europäischen Binnengewässer durch Plastikpellets

In jüngster Zeit gerät die Umweltverschmutzung durch Grundstoffe für die Plastikherstellung, sogenannte Pellets, Flakes und Spherule, zunehmend in den Fokus öffentlicher Wahrnehmung. Die Meldungen hierzu konzentrieren sich dabei zumeist auf die Verschmutzung der Weltmeere.

Kürzlich wurde im Leitartikel der österreichischen Zeitung „Die Presse" vom 29.3.2014 eine Studie bekannt, wonach sich in den Jahren 2010 bis 2012 laut „vorsichtiger Hochrechnung" 1 533 Tonnen Plastikgrundstoffe mit einer Größe zwischen 0,5 und 50 mm jährlich in die Donau ergossen.

1. Sind der Kommission Zahlen der Verschmutzung der europäischen Binnengewässer mit diesen Plastikgrundstoffen bekannt? Wenn ja, von wann stammen die entsprechenden Datensätze? Wenn nein, ist eine Erhebung hierzu geplant?

2. Sind der Kommission konkrete Ursachen für die Kontamination der Binnengewässer mit diesen Pellets etc. bekannt?

3. Falls die Kommission den Herstellungsprozess der Plastikgrundstoffe als solchen als (mit-)ursächlich ansieht, welche Möglichkeiten einer Eindämmung der Verschmutzung werden auf dieser Ebene angedacht?

4. Falls die Kommission den Prozess der Verladung oder der Herstellung der Endprodukte als (mit-)ursächlich ansieht, welche Möglichkeiten der Eindämmung der Kontamination der Binnengewässer werden angedacht?

5. Strebt die Kommission Maßnahmen zur Identifikation der Verursacher und ggf. monetäre Sanktionen im Falle derartiger Verschmutzungen an?

6. Ist eine Aufnahme der Problematik in die europäische Donauraumstrategie angedacht? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(2. Juni 2014)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf die Antwort zur schriftlichen Anfrage E-003937/2014 ([1]).

Darüber hinaus fällt es in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten, die Einhaltung anderer Umweltrechtsvorschriften, die auf die Verschmutzung durch Plastikmüll Anwendung finden, zu gewährleisten (unter anderem der Richtlinie über Industrieemissionen ([2]) und der Abfallrahmenrichtlinie ([3])) und Sanktionen im Einklang mit diesen Rechtsvorschriften zu verhängen.

Die EU-Strategie für den Donauraum enthält im Rahmen des Schwerpunktbereichs 4 „Wasserqualität" eine Maßnahme (Nummer 5) „zum Anlegen von Pufferstreifen entlang des Flusses, um den Nährstoffeintrag zu vermindern und eine alternative Abfallsammlung und -behandlung in kleinen ländlichen Siedlungen zu fördern." Vor kurzem wurde eine Studie über die Bedingungen bei der Bewirtschaftung fester Abfälle in kleinen ländlichen Siedlungen in sämtlichen Donauländern durchgeführt. Dabei lag der Fokus besonders auf lokalen festen Abfällen sowie der Verschmutzung durch Plastikmüll. Vorläufige Ergebnisse zeigen die Notwendigkeit einer stärkeren Koordinierung der einzelnen Behörden. In Zukunft müssen diese nicht mehr nur regelmäßig Informationen austauschen, sondern auch bei der Überwachung und Durchführung zusammenarbeiten und dabei die Öffentlichkeit verstärkt beteiligen.

Die Kommission geht gegen das Problem der Verschmutzung der Seen und Flüsse durch Plastik vor. Erst kürzlich hat sie den Vorschlag präsentiert, den Absatz von leichten Einweg-Plastiktüten um 80 % zu verringern. Dieser Vorschlag liegt gegenwärtig den beiden gesetzgebenden Organen vor (Parlamentsbericht der Abgeordneten Auken).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Richtlinie 2010/75/EU ABl.
([3]) Richtlinie 2008/98/EG ABl.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004069/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Pollution of European rivers and lakes with plastic pellets

In recent months, the level of public concern about pollution of the environment with the raw materials for plastics manufacturing, so-called pellets, flakes and spherules, has been increasing. Most of the press reports dealing with this kind of pollution focus on the world's oceans.

A leading article in the 29 March 2014 edition of the Austrian newspaper *Die Presse* drew attention to a study whose findings include the 'conservative estimate' that over the period from 2010 to 2012 1 533 tonnes of particles between 0.5 and 50 millimetres across, the raw materials for plastics manufacturing, were dumped into the Danube every year.

1. Is the Commission aware of any statistics concerning the degree to which rivers and lakes in Europe are polluted with plastic particles? If so, how recent are these statistics? If not, does it plan to have such statistics compiled?

2. Can the Commission explain precisely why rivers and lakes in Europe are polluted with these pellets and other particles?

3. If the Commission sees the plastics manufacturing process as the cause, or one cause, of this pollution, what measures is it planning to take to tackle the problem?

4. If the Commission sees the process of loading or manufacturing end products as the cause, or one cause, of this pollution, what measures is it planning to take to tackle the problem?

5. Does the Commission plan to take steps to ensure that polluters are identified and, where appropriate, fined?

6. Are there plans to deal with this problem in the context of the European Danube Region Strategy? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-003937/2014 ([1]).

In addition, it is the responsibility of Member States to ensure compliance with other environmental legislation relevant to plastic pollution, *inter alia* the Industrial Emissions Directive ([2]) and the Waste Framework Directive ([3]), and to apply penalties in accordance with the provisions of such legislation.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region includes in the framework of the Priority Area 4 'Water quality' an Action (number 5) 'To establish buffer strips along the rivers to retain nutrients and to promote alternative collection and treatment of waste in small rural settlements'. A survey of the situation of management of solid waste in small rural settlements in all Danube countries has been carried out recently, focusing on local solid waste, and also covering plastic pollution. Preliminary results demonstrate the need to strengthen the coordination of the different administrations, going from the regular exchange of information, to performing joint monitoring and implementation efforts, combined with increased public participation.

The Commission is tackling the issue of pollution of rivers and lakes by plastic, most recently through its proposal to reduce the marketing of lightweight single-use plastic bags by 80%. This proposal is currently before the co-legislators (EP Auken Report).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Directive 2010/75/EU OJ.
([3]) Directive 2008/98/EC OJ.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004070/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Privatización de los beneficios de un monopolio público como Aena sin liberalización — competencia en el sistema aeroportuario y beneficio para los consumidores

El presidente del operador aeroportuario español, José Manuel Vargas, a través de una reciente entrevista concedida al periódico *The Wall Street Journal*, afirmó que «posiblemente este año» se privatizará «el 60 % del capital de Aena» ([1]).

Algunos ven tras la privatización de Aena la entrega de sectores públicos estratégicos, financiados con los recursos de todos los españoles, en beneficio exclusivo de unos pocos accionistas del sector privado.

El Gobierno ya cuenta con un informe del Consejo Consultivo de Privatizaciones para poner en el mercado el 60 % del capital de Aena Aeropuertos: un 30 % para «grandes socios» y otro 30 % para los pequeños accionistas en bolsa. Vargas, además, apunta un precio bajo: apenas 10 000 millones por todo el paquete, casi la mitad del precio tasado hace solo tres años ([2]) ([3]).

Cabe recordar el precedente de las privatizaciones de Telefónica, Argentaria y Repsol, que no comportaron una liberalización del mercado en forma de precios más bajos para beneficio de los consumidores.

A la luz de lo anterior:

1. ¿Ha recibido la Comisión la notificación de las autoridades españolas sobre este plan de privatización? ¿Nos la puede facilitar?

2. ¿Cumple este plan de privatización las disposiciones contenidas en la Directiva 2004/18/CE sobre contratación pública?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que esta privatización ayudará a mejorar la eficiencia del sistema así como la competencia? ¿No cree que para mejorar la competencia en el sistema aeroportuario sería necesaria una liberalización y descentralización de la gestión de cada aeropuerto?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2014)

Si la privatización de una empresa estatal da lugar a la adquisición de su control por parte de una o más empresas y ello se produce dentro de determinados umbrales de volumen de negocios especificados en el Reglamento de concentraciones, la Comisión es la autoridad competente para examinar la transacción.

La venta de activos pertenecientes a autoridades públicas a operadores privados no necesariamente tiene que ser notificada a la Comisión en virtud de las normas sobre ayudas estatales. En general, no existen ayudas estatales cuando el Estado miembro se comporta en el curso de la venta como lo haría un agente económico privado en una economía de mercado.

No se ha producido por el momento ninguna notificación de este tipo (concentración o ayuda estatal) en relación con AENA.

La Directiva 2004/18/CE ([4]) se refiere a la adjudicación de contratos públicos, que se definen como los contratos celebrados por los poderes adjudicadores y cuyo objeto es la ejecución de obras, el suministro de productos o la prestación de servicios. Por lo tanto, dichas normas no son aplicables, en principio, a las situaciones en las que las autoridades públicas se limitan a vender sus activos (por ejemplo, participaciones en una sociedad). En cambio, las normas de contratación pública podrían aplicarse a las citadas operaciones si la empresa privatizada se hubiera beneficiado de contratos públicos adjudicados sin competencia, sobre la base de una relación interna.

([1]) http://www.expansion.com/2014/03/11/empresas/transporte/1394552983.html
([2]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/empresas/2014-03-20/ana-pastor-rechaza-el-troceo-de-aena-que-exige-la-cnmc-de-cara-a-la-privatizacion_104318/
([3]) http://www.nuevatribuna.es/opinion/rafael-simancas/pp-entrega-ave-y-aena-amigos-negocio-privado/20140323120219102008.html
([4]) Directiva de 31 de marzo de 2004 sobre coordinación de los procedimientos de adjudicación de los contratos públicos de obras, de suministro y de servicios (DO L 134 de 30.4.2004, p. 144).

Los Tratados europeos son neutros desde el punto de vista de la propiedad de las empresas (públicas o privadas), ya que el Derecho europeo se aplica tanto a las empresas públicas como a las privadas. Por lo tanto, la Comisión no está en posición de evaluar de forma abstracta si la privatización de AENA mejoraría la eficiencia del sector y aumentaría la competencia. Además, la Directiva relativa a las tasas aeroportuarias autoriza a los Estados miembros a establecer una red de aeropuertos, a saber, un grupo de determinados aeropuertos gestionados por una única entidad gestora, como AENA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004070/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Privatising the profits of a state-owned monopoly such as Aena without liberalisation — competition in the airport industry, and benefits to consumers

In a recent interview for the Wall Street Journal, José Manuel Vargas, chairman of Spanish airport operator Aena, declared that 60% of the company could be privatised this year ([1]).

Some see this privatisation as the handing-over of a key part of the public sector, funded by Spanish tax-payers, to a small number of private sector shareholders, who alone will benefit.

The Advisory Board on Privatisations has already delivered a report to the Government on listing 60% of Aena Aeropuertos on the stock exchange: 30% to 'major partners' and the other 30% for smaller stock market traders. Furthermore, the price Vargas has set is low, at just EUR 10 billion for the whole package, when only three years ago it was valued at almost double that ([2]) ([3]).

It is also worth remembering that privatising Telefónica, Argentaria and Repsol did not lead to the kind of market liberalisation that would result in lower prices for consumers.

1. Have the Spanish authorities notified the Commission about this privatisation plan? Can it make the notification available?

2. Does this plan comply with Directive 2004/18/EC on public contracts?

3. Does the Commission think privatising Aena will enhance industry efficiency and increase competition? Does it not think that market liberalisation and decentralisation of all airport management would be required for competition to be increased?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

If the privatisation of a state-owned company leads to the acquisition of control over it by one or more undertakings, and subject to certain turnover thresholds specified in the Merger Regulation being met, the Commission is the competent authority to examine the transaction.

The sale of assets belonging to public authorities to private players does not necessarily have to be notified to the Commission under state aid rules. In general, State aid will not exist when the Member State's behaviour in the course of the sale is consistent with that of a private market economy operator.

No such notification (merger or state aid) has taken place in relation to AENA at this stage.

Directive 2004/18/EC ([4]) relates to the award of public contracts, defined as contracts concluded by contracting authorities and having as their object the execution of works, the supply of products or the provision of services. Therefore, those rules do not apply, in principle, to situations in which public authorities merely sell their assets, such as shares in a company. On the contrary, public procurement rules might apply to such operations if the privatised company benefitted from public contracts awarded without competition, on the basis of in-house relationship.

The European treaties are neutral in terms of company ownership (public or private) — European law applies to public and private undertakings alike. The Commission is therefore not in a position to assess in the abstract whether the privatisation of AENA would enhance industry efficiency and increase competition. In addition, the European Directive on airport charges allows Member States to set up an airport network, namely a group of designated airports managed by a single airport management body, such as AENA.

([1]) http://www.expansion.com/2014/03/11/empresas/transporte/1394552983.html
([2]) http://www.elconfidencial.com/empresas/2014-03-20/ana-pastor-rechaza-el-troceo-de-aena-que-exige-la-cnmc-de-cara-a-la-privatisacion_104318/
([3]) http://www.nuevatribuna.es/opinion/rafael-simancas/pp-entrega-ave-y-aena-amigos-negocio-privado/20140323120219102008.html
([4]) Directive of 31.3.2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts. OJ L134, 30.4.2004, p.144.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004075/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Atentados en Afganistán

El Ministro del Interior de Afganistán ha atribuido a la red Haqqani el atentado perpetrado el 19 de marzo de 2014 en el hotel de lujo Serena, en el que cuatro jóvenes asaltantes mataron a tiros nueve civiles, incluidos mujeres, niños y cuatro extranjeros. El atentado ha merecido condenas generalizadas en Afganistán y el resto del mundo. Entre los muertos se cuenta el conocido periodista afgano Sardar Ahmad, reportero de la Agence France Presse (AFP) y padre de dos niñas que también perdieron la vida. Dos misiones extranjeras de observación y apoyo electorales han evacuado a su personal de Afganistán después de un atentado talibán a un hotel de Kabul, lo que puede mermar la confianza en el resultado de las elecciones del próximo mes.

1. ¿Qué pasos está dispuesta a dar la UE para pedir al Gobierno afgano que garantice la seguridad de sus propios ciudadanos y de los representantes de organizaciones internacionales en vista de estos atentados terroristas?

2. ¿Ha solicitado el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior al Gobierno afgano que ofrezca a la delegación de observación electoral de la UE las condiciones de seguridad requeridas y un acceso ininterrumpido que le permita realizar su labor?

3. Teniendo en cuenta que las fuerzas de la coalición abandonarán Afganistán en 2014, ¿ha pedido la Comisión al Gobierno afgano que presente un plan de acción para luchar contra el terrorismo y proteger a las mujeres y a los grupos minoritarios a partir de entonces?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de mayo de 2014)

Los grupos insurgentes siguen constituyendo una amenaza real en Afganistán, como han demostrado los recientes atentados. La UE condena estos atentados indiscriminados contra los civiles afganos, así como los dirigidos específicamente contra los activistas de los derechos humanos, los periodistas y los observadores electorales. Durante la transición en materia de responsabilidad de la seguridad en Afganistán, hemos observado la creciente capacidad de las fuerzas de seguridad nacionales afganas para prevenir y hacer frente a estos ataques.

El equipo de evaluación de elecciones de la UE (*Electoral Assessment Team*, EAT) se encuentra en Afganistán para observar las elecciones por invitación del Gobierno de ese país. En este sentido, la UE espera que el EAT siga contando con la plena cooperación de las autoridades afganas en el cumplimiento de su mandato. Todos los funcionarios de la UE en Afganistán, incluidos los miembros del EAT, siguen enfrentándose a un difícil entorno de seguridad. La Delegación de la UE, la misión EUPOL Afganistán y el EAT evalúan de manera permanente la situación en cuanto a la seguridad sobre el terreno para reducir al mínimo los riesgos para todo el personal.

La UE plantea normalmente las cuestiones de política y seguridad en el marco de su diálogo con el Gobierno afgano y confía en que, tras las elecciones presidenciales actuales, el nuevo gobierno afgano siga cooperando estrechamente a este respecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004075/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Attacks in Afghanistan

The Ministry of Interior Affairs of Afghanistan has linked the Haqqani network to the attack of 19 March 2014 on the upscale Serena Hotel in Kabul, where nine civilians, including women, children and four foreign nationals, were gunned down by four young assailants. The attack has received wide condemnation in Afghanistan and internationally. Among those killed was well-known Afghan journalist Sardar Ahmad, a reporter for Agence France Presse (AFP) and the father of two young girls who were also killed. Two foreign election observer and support missions have pulled staff out of Afghanistan after a Taliban attack on a hotel in Kabul, in a move that could undermine confidence in the outcome of next month's vote.

1. What steps is the EU willing to take to ask the Afghan Government to ensure the safety of its own people and of representatives of international organisations in the face of such terrorist attacks?

2. Is the European External Action Service asking the Afghan Government to provide the necessary security and uninterrupted access for the EU election observation delegation enabling it to fulfil its task?

3. Bearing in mind that coalition forces will withdraw from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, is the Commission asking the Afghan Government to provide a post-2014 action plan regarding the fight against terrorism and the protection of women and minority groups?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

Insurgent groups continue to pose a very real threat in Afghanistan as recent attacks have demonstrated. The EU condemns these indiscriminate attacks on Afghan civilians as well as the specific targeting of human rights activists, journalists or election observers. During the transition of responsibility for security in Afghanistan, we have witnessed the increasing competence of ANSF to prevent and to deal with these attacks.

The EU Electoral Assessment Team (EAT) are in Afghanistan to observe the elections at the invitation of the Government of Afghanistan. As such, the EU expects that the EAT will continue to benefit from the on-going full cooperation of the Afghan authorities in fulfilling its mandate. All EU officials in Afghanistan, including the members of the EAT, continue to face a particularly difficult security environment. The EU Delegation, the EUPOL Afghanistan mission and the EAT continuously evaluate the security situation on the ground to minimise the risk to all personnel.

The EU raises political and security issues regularly in dialogue with the Afghan government and is confident that, following the current presidential elections, the new Afghan administration will continue cooperating closely on these matters.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004076/14
an die Kommission
Annette Koewius (PPE)
(2. April 2014)

Betrifft: Case-ID: 0775693

Für folgende Anfrage (Case-ID: 0775693/4793887) vom 1.8.2013 von Herrn Markus Riemenschneider an die GD für Beschäftigung, Soziales und Integration bitte ich um Beantwortung:

Die Notarkasse ist die in § 113 Abs. 1 BNotO genannte Anstalt des öffentlichen Rechts. Die Notarkasse beschäftigt als Arbeitgeber ca. 900 fachkundige Mitarbeiter („Kassenangestellte"). Die Notarkasse weist diese Kassenangestellten den Notaren zur Dienstleistung zu. Diese Kassenangestellten werden von der Notarkasse auch versetzt, sind daher nur zeitweise (variiert von Monaten zu Jahren) bei den Notaren tätig. Die Kassenangestellten bleiben stets Arbeitnehmer der Notarkasse.

Gemäß der Abgabensatzung der Notarkasse haben die Notare zum einen für einen Kassenangestellten einen Besoldungsbeitrag und zum anderen eine Staffelabgabe zu entrichten. Der Besoldungsbeitrag für den ersten Kassenangestellten beträgt pro Monat 1 900 EUR und für den zweiten 3 800 EUR. Der Besoldungsbeitrag deckt bei weitem nicht die Arbeitgebergesamtkosten der Notarkasse. Die Kosten für die Kassenangestellten werden daher über die Staffelabgabe, die auch solche Notare zahlen müssen, denen kein Kassenangestellter zugewiesen wurde, subventioniert.

Folge dieser Subvention ist, dass kein anderes Leiharbeitsunternehmen solche qualifizierte Mitarbeiter anbietet, da der Besoldungsbeitrag bei weitem nicht kostendeckend ist.

In Hinblick auf § 113 Abs. 6 BNotO wird nunmehr die Rechtsauffassung vertreten, dass die Notare verpflichtet sind, solche Kassenangestellten zu beschäftigen und infolge von § 113 Abs. 6 BNotO auf diese Kassenangestellten das Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetz (nationales Gesetz zur Umsetzung der Leiharbeits-Richtlinie 2008/104/EG) sowie die Leiharbeits-Richtlinie 2008/104/EG nicht anzuwenden. Die Folge ist, dass der Notar andere Arbeitnehmer — auch solche aus dem EU-Ausland — entweder nicht anstellen kann bzw. ggf. entlassen muss, sofern und soweit die Notarkasse auf der Beschäftigungspflicht besteht.

Nach Auffassung der Verfasserin verstößt die vorstehend vertretene Einschränkung des Anwendungsbereichs des Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetzes gegen die Leiharbeits-Richtlinie 2008/104/EG. Der nationale Gesetzgeber kann die Anwendung der Leiharbeits-Richtlinie 2008/104/EG nicht dadurch verhindern bzw. aushebeln, dass er eine Beschäftigungspflicht von Arbeitnehmern gesetzlich anordnet, wenn dieselben Arbeitnehmer ansonsten Leiharbeitnehmer eines Leiharbeitsunternehmens im Sinne der Richtlinie wären.

Welche Auffassung vertritt die Kommission zu dem geschilderten Sachverhalt?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(28. Mai 2014)

Gemäß Artikel 1 der Richtlinie 2008/104/EG ([1]) gilt diese für Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmer, die mit einem Leiharbeitsunternehmen einen Arbeitsvertrag geschlossen haben oder ein Beschäftigungsverhältnis eingegangen sind und die entleihenden Unternehmen zur Verfügung gestellt werden, um vorübergehend unter deren Aufsicht und Leitung zu arbeiten. Die Richtlinie ist auf öffentliche und private Unternehmen anzuwenden, bei denen es sich um Leiharbeitsunternehmen oder entleihende Unternehmen handelt, die eine wirtschaftliche Tätigkeit ausüben, unabhängig davon, ob sie Erwerbszwecke verfolgen oder nicht.

Die Richtlinie 2008/104/EG wurde mit dem *Ersten Gesetz zur Änderung des Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetzes — Verhinderung von Missbrauch der Arbeitnehmerüberlassung* ([2]) vom 28. April 2011 in deutsches Recht umgesetzt. Im März 2014 hat die Kommission einen Bericht über die Anwendung der Richtlinie in den Mitgliedstaaten ([3]) veröffentlicht.

Was den konkreten Fall der Deutschen *Notarkasse* betrifft, möchte die Kommission darauf verweisen, dass die Richtlinie 2008/104/EG zwar als auf die Notarkasse anwendbar zu betrachten ist, jedoch keiner der von der Frau Abgeordneten geschilderten Umstände nahelegt, dass Deutschland die Richtlinie verletzt.

([1]) Richtlinie 2008/104/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 19. November 2008 über Leiharbeit, ABl. L 327 vom 5.12.2008.
([2]) Bundesgesetzblatt 2011, Teil I Nr. 18, 29. April 2011.
([3]) Bericht über die Anwendung der Richtlinie 2007/104/EG über Leiharbeit (KOM(2014)176 endg. vom 21. März 2014).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004076/14
to the Commission
Annette Koewius (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Case ID: 0775693

I would like to ask for a reply to the following question (case ID: 0775693/4793887) of 1 August 2013 by Markus Riemenschneider to the Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion:

The notaries' fund ('Notarkasse') is the public institution referred to in Section 113(1) of the Federal Notary Act ('BNotO'). The fund employs, as an employer, around 900 specialist staff ('fund employees') whom it assigns to notaries. They are also transferred by the fund and thus work with the notaries only temporarily, for periods varying from months to years. They remain employees of the fund.

According to the fund's rules on contributions, notaries are obliged to pay a salary contribution for each fund employee posted with them and also a graduated contribution. The monthly salary contribution is EUR 1 900 for the first such employee and EUR 3 800 for the second. This falls well short of covering the fund's total employer's costs. The costs arising from employing such staff are therefore subsidised by the graduated contribution, which must also be paid by notaries who have not been assigned any fund employees.

The result of this subsidy is that no other temporary work agency makes available staff of this calibre, as the salary contribution falls well short of covering costs.

Section 113(6) of the BNotO will henceforth be interpreted as stating that notaries must employ staff provided in this way and, as a result of this provision, that they must not apply the law on temporary employment (the national law implementing Directive 2008/104/EC (the directive on Temporary Agency Work)) or the directive itself. As a result, notaries will either be unable to employ other people — including citizens of other Member States — or they will have to release staff if the fund insists on enforcing the employment obligation.

In the author's opinion, the restriction of the scope of the law on temporary employment described above is in breach of Directive 2008/104/EC (the directive on Temporary Agency Work). The national legislator may not prevent or annul implementation of this directive by legislating for an obligation to employ staff if said staff would otherwise, according to the directive, be temporary employees from a temporary employment agency.

What is the Commission's interpretation of this situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

In accordance with Article 1 of Directive 2008/104/EC ([1]), the latter applies to workers with a contract of employment or an employment relationship with a temporary-work agency who are assigned to user undertakings to work temporarily under their supervision and direction. The directive is applicable to public and private undertakings which are temporary-work agencies or user undertakings engaged in economic activities, whether or not they are operating for gain.

Directive 2008/104/EC was transposed into German law by the 'Erstes Gesetz zur Änderung des Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetzes — Verhinderung von Missbrauch der Arbeitnehmerüberlassung' ([2]) (First Act amending the Temporary Agency Work Act — Prevention of abuse of temporary agency work) of 28 April 2011. In March 2014 the Commission published a report ([3]) on the application of the directive in the Member States.

As regards the specific case of the German 'Notarkasse' (notaries' fund), the Commission would point out that, although Directive 2008/104/EC should be considered applicable to the fund, none of the circumstances described by the Honourable Member suggests that Germany is in breach of the directive.

([1]) Directive 2008/104/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on temporary agency work, OJ L 327, 5.12.2008.
([2]) Bundesgesetzblatt 2011, Part I No 18, 29.4.2011.
([3]) Report on the application of Directive 2008/104/EC on temporary agency work (COM(2014) 176 final of 21.3.2014).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004077/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Stato vedovile: politiche e iniziative di sostegno a livello dell'Unione europea

Il problema della vedovanza è un tema che non gode di adeguata risonanza e attenzione.

Eppure nell'ambito della vedovanza esiste un ampio elenco di difficoltà civili, giuridiche e sociali che necessitano di un'attenzione particolare. Solo in Italia, secondo gli ultimi dati Istat, ci sono circa 5 milioni di persone vedove. Oltre alle difficoltà emotive e sociali legate alla ridefinizione del proprio ruolo all'interno della famiglia, ai problemi nell'educazione dei figli, si aggiungono difficoltà economiche e iniquità giuridiche estremamente penalizzanti. Maggiori problemi sorgono quando le persone vedove costituiscono nuclei familiari mono-genitoriali, dal momento che la presenza di figli, minori nella maggioranza dei casi, richiede misure di equità sociale e politiche di sostegno adeguate.

In particolare, si sottolinea la condizione ancor più fragile delle famiglie vedove giovani, quando il coniuge lavoratore deceduto non ha raggiunto la contribuzione minima per consentire al coniuge superstite e ai figli di disporre della pensione di reversibilità.

L'attività di assistenza, di sostegno e di sensibilizzazione per la promozione di politiche a favore di coloro che si trovano ad affrontare la scomparsa del coniuge e il superamento delle sperequazioni e delle iniquità giuridiche nei confronti del coniuge superstite e dei figli sono obiettivi che le istituzioni devono affrontare al fine di fornire risposte adeguate.

Alla luce di quanto premesso, si chiede alla Commissione quanto segue:

1. quali misure a livello europeo sono previste al fine di incentivare la categoria delle persone vedove?

2. quali azioni intende intraprendere l'UE per ridurre le iniquità giuridiche, in particolare in ambito fiscale e previdenziale, che si trovano ad affrontare le persone vedove?

3. quali sono le migliori pratiche a livello dell'Unione europea in materia di politiche di assistenza, sostegno e sensibilizzazione a favore di coloro che si trovano ad affrontare la scomparsa del coniuge?

4. considerando che in Italia i contributi versati dal coniuge lavoratore deceduto vanno persi qualora non venga raggiunto il livello minimo di contribuzione per ottenere una pensione di reversibilità, cosa accade negli altri Stati dell'UE e quali sono le migliori pratiche a livello europeo nella gestione delle prestazioni previdenziali al coniuge e ai figli superstiti?

5. può la Commissione fornire un quadro generale delle misure a livello UE volte a sostenere le persone vedove?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

Spetta agli Stati membri la responsabilità fondamentale per definire e attuare le politiche di protezione sociale, anche riguardo alla pensione di reversibilità. L'UE può adottare norme comuni, nella misura necessaria per favorire la libertà di circolazione dei lavoratori e la parità di trattamento.

Il regolamento che coordina i sistemi di sicurezza sociale ([1]) permette ai lavoratori migranti e ai loro familiari di non perdere i diritti di sicurezza sociale acquisiti, come le prestazioni ai superstiti, quando si spostano in un altro Stato membro. La direttiva recentemente adottata sui diritti pensionistici complementari ([2]) stabilisce che i superstiti di lavoratori mobili hanno diritto a conservare e a essere informati sui loro diritti nell'ambito del regime pensionistico professionale del coniuge deceduto.

Al fine di agevolare lo scambio di informazioni sulle legislazioni nazionali di protezione sociale, che comprendono la pensione di reversibilità, la UE ha istituito il sistema di informazione reciproca sulla protezione sociale (*Mutual Information System on Social Protection* — MISSOC). La maggior parte degli Stati membri prevede un periodo contributivo minimo ai fini del riconoscimento del diritto alle prestazioni di reversibilità. Informazioni più dettagliate si possono ottenere dalla banca-dati MISSOC all'indirizzo: www.missoc.org.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 883/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo al coordinamento dei sistemi di sicurezza sociale.
([2]) Direttiva 2014/50/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 aprile 2014 , relativa ai requisiti minimi per accrescere la mobilità dei lavoratori tra Stati membri migliorando l'acquisizione e la salvaguardia di diritti pensionistici complementari (GU L 128 del 30 aprile 2014, pag. 1).

MISSOC non contiene informazioni specifiche sulla destinazione dei contributi delle persone che beneficiano di una assicurazione sociale ma non soddisfano il periodo minimo necessario ad acquisire il diritto alla prestazione; tuttavia tali contributi non sono, di solito, ereditabili.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004077/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-wide policies and initiatives for supporting widows and widowers

The problems associated with widowhood are currently not receiving the levels of attention and consideration that they merit.

When a husband or wife dies, the surviving partner faces a whole host of civil, legal and social difficulties that require particular attention. According to the latest figures published by ISTAT, there are around 5 million widowed people in Italy alone. In addition to the emotional and social difficulties linked with redefining their role within their family, and the issues concerning the education of any children, widows and widowers also face extremely harsh financial difficulties and legal inequalities. Major problems arise when the surviving partner also has to look after any children that they had with their deceased husband or wife, as in most cases these children are still minors; such instances require sufficient social justice measures and support policies.

Particular attention is drawn to the increasingly severe plight being faced by the families of young widows and widowers, where the deceased partner was the main breadwinner but had failed to make the minimum social security contribution needed to allow their surviving partner and their children to have access to a reversible pension.

In order to provide an adequate response, authorities need to engage in assistance, support and awareness-raising initiatives to promote policies in favour of those who find themselves having to cope with the loss of their spouse, and do away with the imbalances and legal inequalities that face the surviving partner and their children.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission indicate what Europe-wide measures are expected to be put in place in order to subsidise widows and widowers?

2. What actions does the EU intend to take in order to reduce the legal inequalities, especially those relating to tax and social security, that widowed people have to face?

3. On an EU level, what are the best practices to follow in terms of implementing assistance, support and awareness-raising policies in favour of those who find themselves having to cope with the loss of their spouse?

4. In Italy, the social security contributions paid by the deceased breadwinner are lost when they do not reach the minimum level required for obtaining a reversible pension; what is the situation in other EU Member States, and what are the best practices to follow on a European level in terms of managing the social security services provided to surviving spouses and any children?

5. Can the Commission provide a general overview of the EU-wide measures currently in place to support widowed people?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The fundamental responsibility for defining and implementing social protection policies, including as regards survivor's benefits, lies with the Member States. The EU may adopt common rules insofar as it is required to bring about the freedom of movement for workers and equal treatment.

The social security coordination Regulation ([1]) ensures that mobile workers and their family members do not lose out on their social security entitlements, including survivor's benefits, when they move to another Member State. The recently adopted Directive on supplementary pension rights ([2]) stipulates that survivors of mobile workers are entitled to preservation of and information about their rights under the occupational pension scheme of the deceased spouse.

In order to facilitate exchange of information about national social protection legislations, including survivor's benefits, the EU has set up the Mutual Information System on Social Protection (Missoc). Most Member States apply a minimum qualifying period for granting entitlement to survivor's benefits. More detailed information can be obtained from the Missoc data base on www.missoc.org.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29.4.2004 on the coordination of social security systems.
([2]) Directive 2014/50/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16.4.2014 on minimum requirements for enhancing worker mobility between Member States by improving the acquisition and preservation of supplementary pension rights (OJ L128 of 30.4.2014).

Missoc does not include specific information about the treatment of contributions of socially insured persons who fail to fulfil the minimum period required for an entitlement to benefit, however such contributions are typically not inheritable.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004078/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Sottrazione internazionale di minori in Austria — mancato rientro e totale assenza di rapporti con il genitore che ha subito la sottrazione

L'ufficio del Mediatore del Parlamento europeo per i casi di sottrazione internazionale di minori ha ricevuto un caso relativo alla sottrazione e trattenimento di minori in Austria.

In base alle informazioni ricevute, dall'unione di un cittadino italiano e una cittadina austriaca sono nati due figli (nel 1998 e nel 2001) in Italia, dove la coppia aveva stabilito la propria residenza.

In seguito a separazione della coppia e decreto di affido congiunto dei minori, la madre nel 2012 porta illegalmente i bambini in Austria, senza il consenso del padre e contravvenendo a un decreto che aveva prescritto alla madre di garantire ai minori la permanenza in Italia.

Dopo le pronunce dei tribunali italiani sul rientro dei minori, anche il tribunale austriaco decreta il rimpatrio, ma non lo fa eseguire, sospendendolo in attesa di appello da parte del genitore austriaco.

Anche la Corte di appello conferma il rientro, non lo fa eseguire e lo sospende in attesa di ricorso alla Corte suprema.

La Corte suprema cassa con rinvio perché i minori non sarebbero stati ascoltati sufficientemente; la Corte di appello li ascolta di nuovo e i minori, finora legatissimi al padre, dopo la sottrazione e l'interruzione totale dei rapporti con il padre, sembrerebbero non avere intenzione di rivederlo né di rientrare in Italia.

Inoltre, le sentenze del tribunale italiano che dispongono il collocamento presso il padre e che dovrebbero essere riconosciute in base al regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 vengono completamente ignorate.

Di fatto, sono trascorsi due anni e il padre, oltre ad aver subito la sottrazione, è anche impossibilitato a vedere e avere qualsiasi contatto con i figli, lamentando anche che la madre ha cambiato il cognome dei bambini a sua insaputa.

Alla luce di quanto descritto, può la Commissione precisare se il caso in questione può dare adito a una procedura di infrazione contro l'Austria per quanto riguarda la corretta applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 2201/2003 e quali misure urgenti possono essere intraprese per garantire l'esercizio del diritto di visita al padre in attesa del rientro dei bambini in Italia?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

La Commissione informa l'onorevole deputata che il padre può chiedere l'assistenza delle autorità centrali dello Stato membro interessato ai fini dell'effettivo esercizio del proprio diritto di visita.

La Commissione deplora che il caso abbia subito l'evoluzione descritta, perché l'obiettivo della normativa applicata, ossia il regolamento Bruxelles II bis, è proprio garantire che il minore sottratto possa ritornare rapidamente nel paese di residenza abituale. Prima di prendere posizione accusando le autorità austriache di non aver applicato correttamente il regolamento Bruxelles II bis, occorre tuttavia esaminare approfonditamente il merito della questione. A tal fine la Commissione dovrebbe disporre delle copie delle principali decisioni assunte e di qualsiasi altra informazione pertinente in possesso del padre.

Le informazioni sul caso trasmesse dall'onorevole deputata risultano utili alla Commissione, che ne terrà conto nel monitoraggio costante dell'attuazione del regolamento Bruxelles II bis. La Commissione ha adottato una relazione sull'attuazione del regolamento e procede in parallelo alla raccolta di dati statistici al riguardo, anche in ordine al procedimento di esecuzione previsto negli Stati membri. Alla luce di tutti questi dati e informazioni la Commissione deciderà se sia opportuno proporre modifiche del regolamento per migliorarne l'efficacia in fase attuativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004078/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: International child abduction in Austria — retention and lack of any contact with the parent from whom they were abducted

The European Ombudsman's office for cases of international child abduction has received a case concerning the abduction and withholding of children in Austria.

According to the information received, an Italian man and an Austrian woman had two children, who were born in 1998 and 2001 in Italy, where the couple were living.

The couple separated and were given joint custody of the children, but the mother took the children to Austria illegally in 2012, without their father's consent and in breach of an order stating that the mother had to guarantee that the children would remain in Italy.

Following Italian court rulings that the children should return to Italy, the Austrian court also ordered their repatriation, but suspended enforcement pending an appeal by the Austrian parent.

The Court of Appeal confirmed the ruling that the children should return to Italy, but suspended enforcement pending an appeal before the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court reinstated the proceedings because the children had not been sufficiently heard; the Court of Appeal heard them again and it would seem that, following the abduction and the cutting of all contact with their father, the children have no intention of seeing him again or of returning to Italy, even though they had previously been very close to him.

The Italian court rulings stating that the children should be placed with their father, which should have been recognised in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003, have also been completely ignored.

Two years have passed and the father, in addition to having his children abducted from him, has not been able to see them or have any contact with them. He is also concerned that the mother has changed the children's surname without his knowledge.

In the light of the above, can the Commission say whether the case in question might give rise to infringement proceedings against Austria as regards correct enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 and any other urgent measures that might be taken to guarantee the father's right to visit, pending the children's return to Italy?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that the father may seek assistance of central authorities in the Member State concerned to secure the effective exercise of access rights.

The Commission regrets that the circumstances of the case have arisen given that the goal of the Brussels II a regulation which has been applied to this case, is, once an abduction has taken place, to secure a swift return of the child to his or her country of habitual residence. However, before taking a position on whether the Austrian authorities have failed to apply correctly the Brussels IIa regulation the merits of the case would need to be assessed in detail. To this end, the Commission would need copies of the principal decisions and any other relevant information that the father may have.

The information regarding the case forwarded by the Honourable Member is useful to the Commission and will be taken into account in its on-going monitoring of the implementation of the Brussels II a regulation. The Commission has adopted a report on the implementation of the regulation. In parallel, the Commission is collecting statistics on implementation of the regulation, including the enforcement procedure in the Member States. The Commission will decide on the basis of all these findings whether to propose amendments to make the application of the regulation more effective.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-004079/14
upućeno Komisiji
Sandra Petrović Jakovina (S&D)
(2. travnja 2014.)

Predmet: Mogućnost sufinanciranja zatvora iz fondova Europske unije

Zatvorski sustav u Hrvatskoj karakterizira prenapučenost, a slijedom toga i neprimjerena zdravstvena skrb zatvorenika, nehigijenski uvjeti, nedostatak stručnog osoblja, privatnosti i tome slično. Zakonodavnim izmjenama u području pritvora te alternativnih kazni i angažmanom Ureda za probaciju broj zatvorenika se osjetno smanjio (s 5 162 zatvorenika 2010. godine na 4 508 krajem 2013. godine), no u hrvatskim je zatvorima još uvijek 30 % više zatvorenika no što smještajni kapaciteti mogu podnijeti. Kao što se vidi iz navedenoga, nisu dovoljne zakonodavne izmjene i poboljšanja na administrativnoj razini, već je nužno povećanje smještajnog kapaciteta zatvora.

Uzevši u obzir nalaz Vijeća Europe (njegova Odbora za sprječavanje mučenja i nečovječnog ili ponižavajućeg postupanja ili kažnjavanja), Republika Hrvatska zatražila je zajam kod Razvojne banke Vijeća Europe za proširenje i obnovu kaznionica u Zagrebu i Šibeniku. Kako ni ovim projektima problem neće biti riješen u potpunosti niti na zadovoljavajući način, zanima me može li se Komisija izjasniti o sljedećim pitanjima:

1. Može li se izgradnja i obnova zatvora sufinancirati novcem iz fondova Europske unije?

2. Ako je odgovor na prvo pitanje pozitivan, koji su fondovi prikladni za korištenje?

Odgovor gđe Reding u ime Komisije
(6. lipnja 2014.)

Ne smatra se da ulaganja u zatvore pridonose razvoju i strukturnoj prilagodbi regija (članak 176. UFEU-a) te ih se stoga ne može smatrati ulaganjima u infrastrukturu za koja je dostupna potpora iz Europskog fonda za regionalni razvoj (EFRR). Sredstva za modernizaciju zatvora stoga nisu predviđena među aktivnostima sufinanciranima u okviru EFRR-a u programskom razdoblju 2014. — 2020.

Osim toga, ne postoje nikakva druga sredstva EU-a koja bi se mogla upotrijebiti u svrhu izgradnje i obnove zatvora.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004079/14
to the Commission
Sandra Petrović Jakovina (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Possibility of co-financing prisons from EU funds

Croatia's prison system is overcrowded, and the consequences of this include inadequate healthcare provision for prisoners, unhygienic conditions, a lack of qualified staff and an absence of privacy, etc. Thanks to legislative changes relating to prisons and alternative punishments and to the participation of the Probation Service, the number of prisoners in Croatia has fallen significantly, from 5 162 in 2010 to 4 508 at the end of 2013. Nonetheless, Croatia's prison system is still housing 30% more prisoners than it has the capacity to handle. As the above demonstrates, legislative changes and administrative improvements are not enough: it is now vital that the capacity of prisons be increased.

In view of the findings of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Croatia tried to interest the Council of Europe Development Bank in expanding and updating the prisons in Zagreb and Šibenik. Since even these projects will not be able to fully — or even satisfactorily — resolve the problem, I should like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Could the construction and updating of prisons be financed from European Union funds?

2. If so, which funds would be suitable for such a use?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

Investments in prisons are not considered to contribute to the development and structural adjustment of regions (Article 176 TFEU) and hence, they cannot be considered as investments in infrastructure which could benefit from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) support. Funding for prison upgrading is therefore not foreseen among the actions co-financed by ERDF within the framework of the 2014-2020 programming period.

Moreover, there are no other EU funds which could be used for the purpose of construction and renovation of prisons.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004080/14
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Effect of Diclofenac on vultures

A few years ago, it became evident that vulture numbers were in decline. The culprit was the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug Diclofenac, which is widely used in human medicine to reduce pain and inflammation. Farmers routinely used it on their cattle for mastitis, bumps and bruises, etc. Unfortunately, this drug is very toxic to vultures: a single feed from a contaminated carcass is enough to kill a vulture. Within a few years, 99% of India's vultures had been killed.

Diclofenac has recently been authorised for agricultural use in Spain and Italy. These two countries are home to most of Europe's vultures. These vultures are of the same family as the Indian birds and will undoubtedly be wiped out.

What can and will the Commission do to save Europe's vulture population?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(1 June 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-003382/2014 ([1]) by the Honourable Member Nuno Melo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004081/14
to the Commission
Struan Stevenson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Access to higher education for non-nationals

Following the ruling by the European Court of Justice in the Bressol case, does the Commission believe that discrimination against non-national EU citizens in the area of access to higher education could be legal under the objectively justified test on grounds other than a risk to public health?

Even including public health grounds, would the Commission regard discrimination in the area of higher education access targeted at specific nationals, i.e. those originating from one Member State, rather than all non-national EU citizens to be legal under EC law?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Article 18 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union specifically prohibits any discrimination on grounds of nationality within the scope of the application of the Treaties.

In the case mentioned by the Honourable Member ([1]), the Court of Justice of the European Union acknowledged two possible factors which could potentially justify a difference in treatment between some students: namely, the prevention of a risk to the existence of a national education system and to its homogeneity; and the prevention of a risk to the protection of public health. The Court in this judgment looked only into justifications related to the protection of public health. ([2]) It must be stressed that these conclusions only apply to situations where the difference in treatment is not directly based on nationality.

It cannot therefore be excluded that grounds other than a risk to public health might be accepted by the Court as justifying a difference in treatment between students, if this difference is indirectly based on their nationality; however, the Commission cannot speculate about hypothetical situations.

([1]) Judgment of the Court of 13 April 2010, Case C-73/08, Nicolas Bressol and Others and Céline Chaverot and Others v Gouvernement de la Communauté française.
([2]) See paragraphs 53 and 54 of the judgment.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004082/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika — Ebola

Is-summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika tat-2 u t-3 ta' April 2014 stabbilixxa pjan ta' azzjoni biex irażżan it-tifqigħa tal-Ebola fil-Ginea, li jista' jkun li nfirxet għal pajjiżi ġirien bħal-Liberja?

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004083/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Is-summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika — Ebola (2)

Is-summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika tat-2 u t-3 ta' April 2014 ħa l-impenn li jwaqqaf tim speċjalizzat biex jiġi ddeterminat l-"annimal ospitanti" ta' dan il-virus fatali, ladarba din l-identifikazzjoni tkun definittivament ta' siwi biex il-marda titrażżan?

Tweġiba konġunta mogħtija mis-Sinjura Georgieva f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Mejju 2014)

Is-Samit bejn l-UE u l-Afrika tat-2 u tat-3 ta' April 2014 ma indirizzax speċifikament it-tifqigħa riċenti ta' Ebola fil-Ginea u fil-Liberja, il-pajjiż ġar. Madankollu din tqajmet waqt laqgħa tal-Ministri tas-Saħħa tal-ECOWAS (il-Komunità Ekonomika tal-Istati tal-Afrika tal-Punent) fil-Monrovja fil-11 u t-12 ta' April, fejn ftiehmu li jżidu l-kooperazzjoni reġjonali.

Ġew ipprovduti EUR 1.4 miljun f'appoġġ umanitarju mill-baġit tal-UE, biex jgħinu fil-ħidma tagħhom lill-WHO, lill-Médecins sans Frontières u lil tas-Salib l-Aħmar għal perjodu ta' tliet xhur. L-Istrument għall-Istabbiltà tal-UE ffinanzja wkoll laboratorju mobbli li twaqqaf fil-Ginea, u ċ-Ċentru Ewropew għall-Prevenzjoni u l-Kontroll tal-Mard ipprovda persunal issekondat. Bis-saħħa ta' ħidmiethom u l-istrateġija ta' rispons tal-awtoritajiet tas-saħħa fir-reġjun, jidher li t-tifqigħa attwali qiegħda fi proċess ta' kontenjment. Il-miżuri attwali ta' rispons għandhom iservu wkoll bħala bażi għall-pjanijiet ta' kontinġenza futuri.

Il-Kummissjoni ġiet żgurata, li f'dawn il-każijiet il-WHO tipprova tiddetermina l-kawża tat-tifqigħa. It-tali tip ta' vajrus diġà ġie iżolat. Hemm evidenza minn tifqigħat preċedenti li l-infezzjoni tal-bniedem tittieħed minn annimal ospitanti (ħafna drabi l-friefet il-lejl), iżda dan għadu ma ġiex ippruvat fil-Ginea. Madankollu, hi x'inhi l-kawża, il-miżuri li jrażżnu t-tifqigħa (id-dijanjożi bikrija, l-iżolament tal-pazjenti u tal-kadavri, l-ittraċċar tal-kuntatti u s-sensibilizzazzjoni tal-popolazzjoni) għadhom l-istess. Ovvjament, l-identifikazzjoni ta' annimal ospitanti speċifiku se tgħin sabiex jitnaqqas ir-riskju tal-infezzjonijiet li joħorġu mill-ġdid.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004082/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Africa leaders' summit — Ebola

Has the EU-Africa leaders' summit of 2 and 3 April 2014 set up an action plan to contain the recent outbreak of Ebola in Guinea, which may have spread to neighbouring countries such as Liberia?

Question for written answer E-004083/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Africa leaders' summit — Ebola (2)

Has the EU-Africa leaders' summit of 2 and 3 April 2014 undertaken to set up a specialised team to determine the 'host animal' of this deadly virus, as that will definitely help to contain it?

Joint answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

The EU-Africa summit of 2-3 April 2014 did not specifically address the recent outbreak of Ebola in Guinea and neighbouring Liberia. However it was raised at a meeting of Ecowas (Economic Community of West African States) Health Ministers in Monrovia on 11 — 12 April where it was agreed to increase regional cooperation.

EUR 1.4 million in humanitarian support has been provided from the EU Budget to assist the work of WHO, Médecins sans Frontières and the Red Cross for a three month period. The EU's Instrument for Stability has also funded a mobile laboratory that has been set up in Guinea and the European Centre for Disease Control has seconded staff. Thanks to their work and the response strategy of the health authorities in the region, it appears that the current outbreak is in the process of being contained. The current response measures should also serve as the basis for future contingency plans.

The Commission has been assured that in these cases the WHO will try to determine the cause of the outbreak. The virus type has already been isolated. There is evidence from previous outbreaks that the human infection is acquired from an animal reservoir (often bats) but this has not yet been proven in Guinea. Nonetheless, whatever the cause, the measures to contain the outbreak (early diagnosis; isolation of patients and corpses, tracing of contacts and the sensitisation of the population) remain the same. Obviously, identification of a specific animal reservoir will greatly assist in mitigating the risk of renewed infections.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004084/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika — Ebola (3)

Is-summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika tat-2 u t-3 ta' April 2014, minbarra l-erba' dikjarazzjonijiet fuq l-aġenda (li jikkonċernaw it-tibdil fil-klima, l-agrikoltura, il-migrazzjoni u l-iżvilupp internazzjonali), mexa 'l quddiem biex ir-relazzjoni jagħmilha aktar strateġika, bl-ekonomija fil-qofol tagħha?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Mejju 2014)

Ir-4 summit UE-Afrika adotta dikjarazzjoni politika li tirrifletti l-impenn tal-mexxejja tal-UE u dawk Afrikani biex imexxu r-relazzjonijiet minn approċċ ta' donatur-benefiċjarju għal sħubija awtentika bejn partijiet ugwali hekk kif minquxa fl-Istrateġija Konġunta UE-Afrika adottata fl-2007. Id-dikjarazzjoni tidentifika bosta suġġetti ta' tħassib komuni li għalihom iż-żewġ kontinenti jaqsmu interessi strateġiċi. Dawn jinkludu l-enerġija, l-infrastruttura, il-kummerċ, il-paċi u s-sigurtà (inklużi sfidi mhux tradizzjonali għall-paċi u s-sigurtà f'oqsma bħat-tibdil fil-klima, l-ilma, l-enerġija u ċ-ċibersigurtà), governanza tajba, l-industrijalizzazzjoni, l-agrikoltura jew l-edukazzjoni għolja biex insemmu biss xi ftit. Barra minn hekk, it-tema tas-summit "ninvestu fin-nies, fil-prosperità u l-paċi" u diskussjonijiet tas-summit urew l-enfasi qawwija fuq il-ħtieġa għat-tisħiħ tar-rabtiet ekonomiċi, kummerċjali u tal-investiment bejn l-UE u l-Afrika. Il-modi ta' kif jista' jinkiseb dan il-għan jinsabu dettaljati fil-Pjan direzzjonali adottat ukoll fis-summit li jirrappreżenta l-kooperazzjoni kontinentali għas-snin 2014-2017. Il-promozzjoni ta' tkabbir ekonomiku inklussiv, l-investiment u l-iżvilupp tas-settur privat għandha post prominenti f'dan il-qafas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004084/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Africa leaders' summit — Ebola (3)

Has the EU-Africa leaders' summit of 2 and 3 April 2014, in addition to the four declarations on the agenda (concerning climate change, agriculture, migration and international development), moved on to make the relationship more strategic, with economics as its centrepiece?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The 4th EU-Africa summit adopted a political declaration which reflects the EU and African leaders' commitment to move relationships from a donor-recipient approach to a true partnership of equals as enshrined in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy adopted in 2007. The declaration identifies numerous topics of common concerns for which both continents share strategic interests. These include energy, infrastructure, trade, peace and security (including non-traditional challenges to peace and security in areas such as climate change, water, energy and cybersecurity), good governance, industrialisation, agriculture or higher education to name but a few. In addition, the summit theme 'investing in people, prosperity and peace' and summit discussions illustrated the strong emphasis put on the need to strengthen the economic, trade and investment ties between the EU and Africa. The ways to achieve that goal are detailed in the Roadmap also adopted at the summit which frames continental cooperation for the years 2014-2017. The promotion of inclusive economic growth, investment and the development of the private sector features high in this framework.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004085/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Is-summit tal-mexxejja UE-Afrika — paċi, prosperità u nies

L-attendenza għas-summit tal-EU-Afrika mistennija tkun għolja, b'40 mexxej Afrikan u 20 Ewropew. Madanakollu, is-summit biħsiebu jipproduċi dikjarazzjonijiet u/jew deċiżjonijiet dwar il-kwistjonijiet numerużi li l-UE tiddeskrivi b'mod ġenerali bħala "paċi, prosperità u nies"?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Mejju 2014)

L-attendenza għar-Raba' Samit UE-Afrika kienet għolja b'iktar minn 80 delegazzjoni mill-UE u l-Afrika li attendew, madwar 60 immexxija mill-Kapijiet ta' Stat jew ta' Gvern. Diversi osservaturi għolja attendew ukoll. It-tema tas-samit "ninvestu fin-nies, il-prosperità u l-paċi" enfasizzat l-impenn kondiviż biex tavvanza r-relazzjoni kontinentali minn approċċ donatur-benefiċjarju għal sħubija ta' ugwaljanza kif stabbilita fl-Istrateġija Konġunta Afrika-UE. Biex isir hekk, is-samit adotta dikjarazzjoni politika li tkopri s-suġġetti kollha tal-interess konġunt. Adotta wkoll il-Pjan ta' Direzzjoni li jiddeskrivi l-kooperazzjoni kontinentali għall-perjodu 2014-2017 madwar ħames oqsma ta' prijorità: (1) il-paċi u s-sigurtà; (2) id-demokrazija, governanza tajba u d-drittijiet tal-bniedem; (3) l-iżvilupp tal-bniedem; (4) l-iżvilupp u t-tkabbir sostenibbli u inklussiv, u l-integrazzjoni kontinentali; (5) il-kwistjonijiet globali u emerġenti. Barra minn hekk, is-samit adotta dikjarazzjoni tematika dwar il-migrazzjoni u l-mobbiltà li tiddeskrivi aktar kooperazzjoni futura f'dan il-qasam.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004085/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Africa leaders' summit — peace, prosperity and people

Attendance at the EU-Africa summit is expected to be high, with 40 African and 20 European leaders. However, does the summit intend to produce declarations and/or decisions on the numerous issues that the EU describes broadly as 'peace, prosperity and people'?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

Attendance at the 4th EU-Africa summit was high with more than 80 delegations from the EU and Africa attending, around 60 being led by Heads of State or Government. Several high level observers also attended. The summit theme 'investing in people, prosperity and peace' highlighted the shared commitment to further move the continental relationship from a donor-recipient approach to a partnership of equals as established in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. To do so, the summit adopted a political declaration which encompasses all topics of joint interest. It also adopted a Roadmap detailing continental cooperation for the period 2014-2017 around five priority areas: 1) peace and security; 2) democracy, good governance and human rights; 3) human development; 4) sustainable and inclusive development and growth, and continental integration; 5) global and emerging issues. In addition, the summit adopted a thematic declaration on migration and mobility detailing further future cooperation in that area.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004086/14
komissiolle
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(2. huhtikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Muovijäte ja kansainvälinen merten muovisopimus

Jokainen Euroopan 508 miljoonasta kansalaisesta käyttää keskimäärin 198 kertakäyttöistä kevytmuovipussia vuodessa. Muovijäte aiheuttaa suurta vahinkoa ympäristölle. Kelluva muovijäte uhkaa merten ekosysteemejä. Monet muoveista eivät maadu ollenkaan vaan ne vain hajoavat pienemmiksi palasiksi.

Meriin hajonneet muovinpalaset päätyvät meressä elävien tai siitä ravintonsa saavien eläinten ravinnoksi ja tätä kautta lopulta myös meidän ruokapöytiimme. Lisäksi peräti 94 prosenttia Pohjanmeren linnuista kärsii muovijätteistä vatsalaukussa.

Asiaa on tutkittu Suomessa merentutkimusalus Arandalla. Meren muovijätehiukkaset sitovat itseensä jopa miljoonakertaisia määriä ympäristömyrkkyjä meriveteen verrattuna. Osalle Itämeren kaloista on jo asetettu syöntirajoituksia.

Euroopan unioni on huomioinut muovikassien ympäristöhaitat. Komission aiheesta laatima vihreä kirja sekä Euroopan parlamentin kannanotto korostavat, että ongelman taustalla on muun muassa EU:n jätelainsäädännön puutteellinen täytäntöönpano.

Ottaen huomioon tämän ja parlamenttiedustajien asiasta aiemmin esittämät kysymykset:

1. Onko komissio kartoittanut yhteistyössä jäsenmaiden kanssa mahdollisuuksia toimia YK:ssa kansainvälisen merten muovisopimuksen alullepanijana?

2. Millä tavoin komissio aikoo tukea parlamentin vaatimusta kaikkein vaarallisimpien muovien, kuten ohutmuovipussien, poistamisesta kokonaan Euroopan markkinoilta?

3. Millä tavoin komissio aikoo tukea parlamentin esittämiä sitovia keräämis- ja lajittelutavoitteita, pakollisia kierrätettävyysvaatimuksia sekä keräyksen, lajittelun ja yleisen jätehuollon vaatimusten yhdenmukaistamista?

4. Sitoutuuko komissio esittämään vuoden loppuun mennessä parlamentin vaatimia ehdotuksia, joilla lopetettaisiin kierrätettävän ja talteen otettavan jätteen vieminen kaatopaikalle vuoteen 2020 mennessä ja vähennettäisiin näin muovien polttamista?

5. Tehokkain tapa vähentää kertakäyttöisten muovikassien määrää on periä niistä maksu. Nyt kukin jäsenmaa saa itse päättää keinoista vähentää muovikassien määrää 80 prosentilla. Harkitseeko komissio esittävänsä yhtenäistä maksuvaatimusta muovikasseille, mikäli jäsenmaat eivät saavuta tavoitetta?

Janez Potočnikin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(11. kesäkuuta 2014)

EU:n meristrategian puitedirektiivissä asetetaan tavoitteeksi saavuttaa tai pitää ennallaan EU:n merivesien hyvä tila vuoteen 2020 mennessä ja varmistaa, että roskaantuminen ei aiheuta haittaa meriympäristölle ([1]).

Kansainvälisellä tasolla komissio on YK:n Rio+20 -konferenssissa sitoutunut toteuttamaan toimia ”meren roskaantumisen vähentämiseksi merkittävässä määrin ja rannikko- ja meriympäristölle aiheutuvien haittojen estämiseksi” vuoteen 2025 mennessä. Tämän tavoitteen saavuttamiseksi komissio harkitsee Euroopan tason vähennystavoitetta. Se ei aio ehdottaa merten muovijätettä koskevaa YK:n yleissopimusta.

Pakkauksista ja pakkausjätteistä annettuun direktiiviin ([2]) ehdotettujen muovipusseja koskevien muutosten tarkoituksena on vähentää kaikenlaisten kevytmuovikassien, joiden seinämän paksuus on alle 50 mikronia, käyttöä. Erittäin ohuiden pussien, joita käytetään usein irtomyynnissä olevien elintarvikkeiden pakkaamiseen, täydellistä poistamista markkinoilta ei harkita tässä vaiheessa. Komission ehdotus antaisi kuitenkin jäsenvaltioille mahdollisuuden kieltää kevyiden muovisten kantokassien markkinoille saattaminen soveltamalla poikkeusta sisämarkkinasäännöistä.

([1]) Ks. meristrategiadirektiivi 2008/56/EY, liite I, kuvaaja 10.
([2]) Ehdotus direktiiviksi pakkauksista ja pakkausjätteistä annetun direktiivin 94/62/EY muuttamisesta kevyiden muovisten kantokassien kulutuksen vähentämiseksi.

Jätteen keruun ja käsittelyn parantamiseksi komissio aikoo antaa lähikuukausien aikana lainsäädäntöehdotuksen jätepuitedirektiivin ([3]), pakkausdirektiivin ([4]) ja kaatopaikkadirektiivin ([5]) muuttamiseksi. Ensiksi mainittuun direktiiviin sisältyy jo velvoite muovijätteen keräämisestä erikseen vuoteen 2015 mennessä.

Muovisten kantokassien käytön vähentämiseen tähtäävässä komission ehdotuksessa korostetaan jo, kuinka merkittäviä taloudelliset välineet, kuten verot ja maksut, voivat olla tässä asiassa. Ehdotuksella ei kuitenkaan pyritä yhdenmukaistamaan maksuja EU:n laajuisesti.

([3]) Direktiivin 2008/98/EY (9 artiklan c alakohta ja) 11 artiklan 4 kohta.
([4]) Direktiivin 94/62/EY 6 artiklan 5 kohta.
([5]) Direktiivin 1999/31/EY 5 artiklan 2 kohta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004086/14
to the Commission
Mitro Repo (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Plastic waste and an international convention on plastics in the oceans

Each of Europe's 508 million inhabitants uses an average of 198 non-reusable light plastic bags per annum. Plastic waste causes serious damage to the environment. Floating plastic waste is a threat to marine ecosystems. Much of the plastic does not decompose at all but merely disintegrates into smaller pieces.

Pieces of plastic which break up in the sea end up as food for animals which live in the sea or obtain nourishment from it, and thus ultimately make their way onto our plates too. Moreover, no fewer than 94% of birds in the Gulf of Bothnia are suffering from plastic waste in their stomachs.

This subject has been studied on the Finnish marine research vessel Aranda. Plastic particles in the sea bind to themselves as much as a million times more pollutants than are found in the same quantity of seawater. Consumption limits have already been introduced for some Baltic fish.

The European Union has taken note of the environmental problems caused by plastic bags. The Commission green paper on the subject and the European Parliament's opinion stress that one cause of the problem is inadequate implementation of EU waste legislation.

In view of this and of the questions previously put by Members of Parliament on the subject:

1. Has the Commission, in cooperation with Member States, surveyed the options for proposing an international marine plastics convention at the UN?

2. How will the Commission support Parliament's call for the most hazardous plastics of all, such as thin plastic bags, to be completely withdrawn from the European market?

3. How will the Commission support Parliament's proposals for binding targets for collection and separation, compulsory recyclability requirements and harmonisation of recycling, separation and general waste management requirements?

4. Will the Commission undertake to submit by the end of the year the proposals called for by Parliament to put an end to the landfilling of recyclable and recoverable waste by 2020 and thus to reduce the incineration of plastics?

5. The most effective way of reducing the number of non-reusable plastic bags is by levying a charge on them. At present, each Member State is permitted to decide for itself how to reduce the number of plastic bags by 80%. Will the Commission consider proposing a uniform charging requirement for plastic bags if Member States do not attain the target?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

Within the EU, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive sets the goal of achieving or maintaining 'Good Environmental Status' for all EU marine waters by 2020, including to ensure that litter does not cause harm to the marine environment ([1]).

At the international level, the Commission is committed to taking forward the commitment made at the UN RIO+20 conference to 'achieve significant reductions in marine debris to prevent harm to the coastal and marine environment' by 2025. To carry out this objective, the Commission is considering a European level reduction target. It does not plan to propose a UN marine plastics convention.

The objective of the proposed amendments to the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive ([2]) on plastic bags is the reduction of consumption of all types of lightweight plastic carrier bags with a wall thickness below 50 microns. Complete withdrawal from the market of very thin bags, often used for packaging loose unpacked foods, is not envisaged at this stage, however the Commission's proposal would enable Member States to prohibit marketing of lightweight plastic bags under a derogation from single market rules.

([1]) see Annex I, Descriptor 10, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, 2008/56/EC.
([2]) Proposal for a directive amending Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste to reduce the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags.

To improve the collection and management of waste, the Commission intends to adopt a legislative proposal to amend the Waste Framework Directive ([3]), the Packaging Directive ([4]) and the Landfill Directive ([5]) in the next months. The latter already includes an obligation for separate collection of plastic waste by 2015.

The Commission proposal to reduce the consumption of plastic carrier bags already highlights the important role that economic instruments such as levies and charges can play in this respect. However, it does not plan to harmonise charges at EU level.

([3]) (Art. 9c) and Art. 11.4 of Directive 2008/98/EC.
([4]) Art. 6.5 of Directive 94/62/EC.
([5]) Art. 5.2 of Directive 1999/31/EC.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004087/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Social market contro la povertà

La lotta alla povertà figura certamente nell'ambito del set di obiettivi che l'Europa contempla sin dall'origine nelle sue politiche. Peraltro, l'attuale crisi economica ha inasprito maggiormente le condizioni esistenziali di differenti categorie sociali, in modo tale da ritagliare per l'emergenza sociale un posto di rilievo nell'agenda politica europea.

Le stesse cornici programmatiche istituite nell'ambito del nuovo ciclo di finanziamenti 2014-2020 approntano strategie che mirano a rintracciare e sperimentare nuove formule occupazionali inclusive e che eleggono la cittadinanza attiva e le pratiche condivise e solidali della società civile quali preziosi strumenti per fronteggiare il disagio sociale.

In ordine a quanto asserito, si menziona un'interessante iniziativa posta in essere dall'associazionismo di alcune città italiane settentrionali, che organizza spazi commerciali «sociali», deputati a sostenere le categorie svantaggiate relativamente alle spese quotidiane. Difatti, i supermercati sociali, autosovvenzionati, offrono beni di prima necessità a prezzi non di mercato. Peraltro, il progetto in questione contempla il reimpiego di beni immobili sequestrati alla criminalità organizzata.

Tale esperienza registra attualmente degli incoraggianti risultati.

A fronte di quanto sopra, può la Commissione fornire informazioni in merito ad esperienze analoghe nel contesto europeo, soprattutto in relazione ai risultati conseguiti e alla sostenibilità delle stesse nel lungo periodo?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

I supermercati sociali sono una realtà in espansione diffusa in tutta l'Unione europea, in particolare in paesi quali Austria, Belgio, Grecia, Francia, Lussemburgo, Romania, Spagna e Regno Unito.

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di studi specifici relativi a tutti i paesi dell'UE. Alcune informazioni sul caso della Francia, dove questo tipo di supermercati iniziò a svilupparsi alla fine degli anni Ottanta, è disponibile sul sito web dell'associazione nazionale francese per lo sviluppo delle *Épiceries Solidaires* ([1]) (A.N.D.E.S.).

([1]) cfr http://www.epiceries-solidaires.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004087/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: The social market against poverty

Fighting poverty has undoubtedly been one of the European Union's policy objectives from the outset. However, the current economic crisis has made life much more difficult for many social groups, to the extent that the social crisis has acquired a prominent place on Europe's political agenda.

The programming framework established with the new financing period 2014-2020 introduces strategies that aim to design and test new inclusive employment schemes and that promote active citizenship and the sharing and solidarity of civil society as invaluable tools for tackling social unrest.

In that respect, we refer to an interesting initiative developed by community organisations in a number of cities in northern Italy, which organise 'social' shops designed to help disadvantaged groups with their daily expenses. These self-funded social supermarkets sell necessities at below-market prices. The project is also considering reusing properties seized from organised criminal groups.

The results of the initiative are so far encouraging.

In view of the above, can the Commission provide information on similar initiatives across Europe, especially with regard to the results achieved and their sustainability over the long term?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

Social supermarkets are indeed an increasing reality spread across the European Union, including Austria, Belgium, Greece, France, Luxembourg, Romania, Spain and United Kingdom.

The Commission is not aware of any specific study covering all the EU countries. Some information on the French case, where this kind of supermarket started to develop in the late 1980s can be found on the website of the French National Association for the development of Épiceries Solidaires ([1]) (A.N.D.E.S.).

([1]) See http://www.epiceries-solidaires.org/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004088/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Accesso alla cultura per i minori

L'attenzione dei minori in riferimento alla cultura acquisisce una valenza di non poco conto per i disegni progettuali di qualsivoglia società. Molteplici sono le iniziative dedicate a questa fascia d'età, con un particolare interesse e impegno espresso dalle case editrici (e dal multimediale). Del resto, i padiglioni fieristici letterari di consueto registrano cifre confortanti e una risposta, in fatto di pubblico, lusinghiera: come si suol dire, piccoli lettori crescono. In consonanza con quanto affermato, un evento di carattere internazionale (che ha trovato luogo recentemente in Italia) ha rilevato un crescente interesse da parte di minori e famiglie nei confronti del libro.

Alla luce di quanto sopra può la Commissione comunicare:

1. dati relativi alla fruizione culturale da parte dei giovanissimi cittadini europei;

2. informazioni in merito all'incentivazione, da parte dell'UE, dei consumi culturali per i minori?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2014)

L'onorevole deputato sarà a conoscenza del fatto che, a norma dell'articolo 165 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, la responsabilità dei contenuti e dell'organizzazione dei sistemi di istruzione e di formazione spetta interamente agli Stati membri. La Commissione sostiene le attività di collaborazione, lo scambio di buone pratiche e l'apprendimento tra pari tra gli Stati membri, al fine di trovare delle soluzioni alle problematiche comuni.

La Commissione ha istituito un gruppo indipendente ad alto livello di esperti nel settore dell'alfabetizzazione per valutare la ricerca, le politiche efficaci e le buone pratiche intese a ridurre il numero di giovani e di adulti sprovvisti delle competenze basilari di lettura e scrittura. Nella sua relazione finale, pubblicata nel settembre 2012 ([1]), tra le raccomandazioni formulate il gruppo ha sottolineato l'importanza di creare un ambiente più favorevole all'alfabetizzazione, caratterizzato da una maggior disponibilità di libri e di altri materiali per la lettura in casa, nelle scuole, nelle biblioteche e altrove.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004088/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Children and culture

Getting children interested in culture is important for any society. There have been many initiatives devoted to this age group, and publishers (and the multimedia industry) have shown particular interest and commitment. Book fairs are reporting encouraging figures and a gratifying audience response; as they say, small readers become big readers. What is more, an international event that recently took place in Italy showed there to be a growing interest in books among children and families.

In view of the above, can the Commission provide information on:

1. young children's engagement with culture in the European Union;

2. how the EU encourages children to take an interest in culture?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The Honourable Member will be aware that, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. The Commission supports collaborative work, exchanges of good practice, and peer learning between Member States in order to find solutions to common challenges.

The Commission established an independent High Level Group of experts in the field of Literacy to examine research, effective policies, and good practices to reduce the number of young people and adults who lack basic reading and writing skills. In their final report which was published in September 2012 ([1]) the Group underlined, among its recommendations, the importance of creating a more literate environment in which books and other reading materials are easily available in the home, in schools, libraries and beyond.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004089/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Amnesty international: Nigeria, crimini contro l'umanità

Il conflitto che da lungo tempo infiamma la Nigeria riporta agli onori della cronaca pratiche mai abbandonate, tristemente ricorrenti nella storia dell'umanità: l'eccidio e i crimini di guerra contro le popolazioni civili (vedi in particolar modo anziani, minori e donne) si riconfermano quale modalità privilegiata di attacco, con cui spogliare un popolo della propria dignità — oltreché del diritto alla vita.

I fatti recenti — attestati in Nigeria — uniti a un rapporto stilato da *Amnesty international* (e che trova risonanza nelle ultime ore) parlano chiaramente: nello Stato africano si consumano quotidianamente crimini contro l'umanità. Millecinquecento sarebbero le vittime negli ultimi tre mesi; e le scuole il facile bersaglio, preferito dalle milizie integraliste.

In relazione a tale situazione, l'ONG responsabile del rapporto chiede a gran voce indagini tempestive e trasparenti.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, si chiede alla Commissione, nella veste dell'Alto Rappresentante, di precisare quanto segue:

quale posizione assume in merito alla richiesta di indagini dettagliate formulata dalla ONG di cui sopra?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

L'AR/VP è estremamente preoccupata per le ripetute violenze nella Nigeria nord-orientale.

L'attacco del 14 marzo contro la caserma di Giwa, a Maiduguri, è un fatto estremamente grave. L'UE concorda con Amnesty International sulla necessità di condurre indagini approfondite sulle presunte uccisioni commesse da militari nigeriani.

L'UE collabora con le autorità nigeriane per contribuire ad arginare la spirale di violenza attraverso un dialogo politico costante che riguarda, tra l'altro, la necessità di condurre indagini e di combattere l'impunità, e aiuti mirati volti ad eliminare le cause profonde della violenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004089/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Amnesty International: Crimes against humanity in Nigeria

The long-term conflict in Nigeria is hitting the headlines again with the kind of acts that sadly have never been relinquished but have been repeated throughout human history. Massacres and war crimes against civilian populations (especially the elderly, women and children) are still preferred forms of attack, which are used to deprive people of their dignity as well as their right to life.

Recent events in Nigeria, together with a report by Amnesty International (which has been vindicated in the last few hours), make it quite clear: crimes against humanity are being committed all the time in that country. There have been 1 500 deaths in the last three months, and schools are an easy target favoured by fundamentalist militias.

The non-governmental organisation that produced the report is demanding an urgent, transparent investigation into the situation.

In view of the above, can the Commission, in the person of the High Representative, state what position it is adopting with regard to Amnesty International's call for a thorough investigation?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The continued violence in the North East of Nigeria is indeed of great concern for the HR/VP.

What happened on 14 March at the Giwa military barracks in Maiduguri is very serious. The EU shares Amnesty International's view that thorough investigations into the killings allegedly perpetrated by the Nigerian military have to be conducted.

The EU is working with the Nigerian authorities to help bring an end to the cycle of violence through continuous political dialogue — including on the need for investigations and the fight against impunity — and targeted aid interventions focusing on the underlying root causes for violence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004090/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: La casa smart, a basso impatto ambientale

Le innovazioni tecnologiche, che fanno della sostenibilità ambientale il criterio guida, si susseguono sullo scenario internazionale e propongono modelli in linea con gli obiettivi enunciati nelle recenti strategie europee. Nello specifico, si fa menzione di una collaborazione che vede impegnati soggetti del mondo industriale e della ricerca scientifica, di rilievo internazionale, in *partnership* per la realizzazione di un prototipo abitativo ecocompatibile. La «casa del futuro» si impianta su un sistema intelligente di riconoscimento e autoregolazione, che predispone flessibilmente la gestione dei consumi energetici e idrici quotidiani, abbattendo sensibilmente le emissioni inquinanti (in primis quelle CO2). A conferire maggior interesse al caso presentato è l'adesione al modello abitativo da parte di sedici grattacieli della Grande Mela.

In merito a tale innovazione, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. Intende fornire informazioni in ordine alla concreta applicazione di sistemi intelligenti nelle strutture residenziali delle città europee (al di là della semplice presentazione degli stessi)?

2. Intende indicare le misure messe in atto dall'UE per incentivare l'applicazione effettiva di tali sistemi e la loro diffusione?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(16 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni dettagliate in merito. Tuttavia, la Commissione è in procinto di pubblicare una relazione nella quale sono analizzati i piani di introduzione dei sistemi di misurazione intelligenti per elettricità e gas nelle abitazioni e nei fabbricati dell'UE. La relazione mostra che, secondo i piani degli Stati membri, entro il 2020 oltre l'80 % dei consumatori disporrà di sistemi di misurazione intelligente del consumo di elettricità.

2. La direttiva sul mercato interno dell'elettricità impone agli Stati membri di effettuare un'analisi costi-benefici relativa all'introduzione di sistemi di misurazione intelligenti e prevede l'installazione di tali sistemi nell'80 % degli edifici valutati positivamente. La direttiva sull'efficienza energetica approvata nel 2012 consentirà ai consumatori di utilizzare sistemi intelligenti per gestire meglio i propri consumi energetici grazie ad un accesso libero e agevole ai dati storici e la consultazione in tempo reale del consumo di energia. Rientrano nel programma quadro Orizzonte 2020 il partenariato pubblico-privato per edifici efficienti sotto il profilo energetico (che per il periodo 2014-2020 gode di un contributo UE indicativo pari a 600 milioni di euro) e l'iniziativa «Città e comunità intelligenti», mirati a sviluppare tecnologie innovative tra cui le tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione a livello di edificio e di quartiere. Tutti i progetti finanziati prevedono un'ampia diffusione dei risultati, in modo da rendere più facile replicarli altrove. I fondi strutturali e di investimento europei pongono un accento particolare sugli investimenti per l'efficienza energetica nell'edilizia. Gli Stati membri sono incoraggiati a sviluppare i risultati del programma Orizzonte 2020 e le attività di ricerca e innovazione finanziate dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale nell'ambito delle strategie di specializzazione intelligente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004090/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Smart homes: houses with a low environmental impact

There has been a rapid succession of technological innovations on the international scene that have environmental sustainability as their guiding principle. The models they propose are in line with targets recently announced in European strategies. We refer here specifically to a partnership between industry and top international scientific research teams working on a prototype eco-efficient home. This 'house of the future' is built around an intelligent monitoring and control system that gives users flexibility in managing their daily energy and water consumption while appreciably reducing polluting emissions (particularly of CO2). The fact that 16 skyscrapers in the Big Apple have signed up to this model for sustainable living shows how significant it is.

1. Can the Commission provide information on the actual use of intelligent systems in residential buildings in European cities (as against mere presentations of such systems)?

2. Can it say what measures have been introduced by the EU to encourage effective and more widespread use of these systems?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

1. The Commission has no detailed information at its disposal. The Commission is however about to publish a report that analyses the roll-out plans of intelligent electricity and gas metering systems in homes and buildings in the EU. This report shows that, according to the Member States' plans, more than 80% of all consumers will have intelligent electricity metering systems by 2020.

2. The internal electricity market Directive obliges all Member States to perform a cost-benefit analysis for the implementation of intelligent metering systems, and install them for 80% of the consumers that are assessed positively. The energy efficiency directive approved in 2012 will empower consumers to use intelligent systems to better manage their energy consumption through free and easy access to historical and real-time energy consumption. Under the EU framework programme Horizon 2020, a contractual private- public partnership (PPP) on Energy-efficient Buildings with an indicative EU contribution for the period 2014-2020 of EUR 600 million as well as the Smart Cities and Communities initiative, aim to develop affordable breakthrough technologies including information and communication technologies (ICT) at building and district scale. All supported projects include extensive dissemination of their results, facilitating a wider replication. The European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds put a particular emphasis on investments on energy efficiency in buildings. Member States are encouraged to build on results from Horizon 2020 activities as well as research and innovation financed by the European Regional Development Fund in the context of the smart specialisation strategies.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004091/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Sulla gestione dell'oro blu

La gestione razionale di una risorsa che, oramai, nel linguaggio comune viene definita «oro blu» è certamente una necessità ineludibile. È notorio come tale ricchezza, dinanzi al progressivo esaurimento delle risorse terrestri, costituisca un fattore di tensione sullo scenario geo-politico; e come si abbisogni di un armonico quadro normativo che favorisca un impiego intelligente e razionale della stessa. Tale questione ben si inserisce fra le sfide societali riconosciute dall'Unione europea.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione illustrare la posizione dell'UE relativamente a proposte che caldeggiano una maggiore definizione delle responsabilità in merito all'utilizzo dell'acqua (da parte di diversi attori sociali)?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare al Piano dell'Unione europea per la salvaguardia delle risorse idriche ([1]), del 2012, che delinea le priorità in materia di politica idrica per i prossimi anni, anche per quanto riguarda il ruolo che i diversi settori svolgono per il conseguimento degli obiettivi stabiliti in questo ambito.

Inoltre, in linea con la direttiva quadro sulle acque ([2]), gli Stati membri sono responsabili per la consultazione di tutti i soggetti interessati e degli utilizzatori di risorse idriche in vista dell'elaborazione dei piani di gestione dei bacini idrografici; a partire dalle informazioni raccolte, gli Stati membri possono poi adottare decisioni in materia di distribuzione dell'acqua ai diversi utenti, chiarendone i diritti e le responsabilità.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([2]) Direttiva 2000/60/CE (GU L 327 del 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004091/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Managing 'blue gold'

We cannot ignore the fact that water — a resource that is becoming known in common parlance as 'blue gold' — has to be managed rationally. As the earth's resources are gradually being depleted, it is clearly an asset that causes tensions to rise on the geopolitical scene, and it is equally clear that we need a well-balanced legislative framework to encourage its intelligent and rational use. This issue is one of the acknowledged challenges facing society in the European Union.

In this respect, can the Commission describe the EU's position on proposals calling for a more precise definition of responsibilities regarding water use (by various social players)?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its Water Blueprint ([1]) which sets out the priorities for EU water policy for the years to come, including with regard to the role that different sectors play in the achievement of water policy objectives.

Furthermore, in line with the EU Water Framework Directive ([2]), Member States are responsible for the consultation of all relevant stakeholders and water users in the preparation of their River Basin Management Plans and, on that basis, take decisions on water allocation to different users, clarifying their rights and responsibilities.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/blueprint/index_en.htm
([2]) 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004092/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Aumento delle dipendenze: possibili interventi

Recenti indagini condotte a livello europeo evidenziano i tassi di dipendenza fra la popolazione, relativamente a sostanze stupefacenti, alcool, gioco.

Si registra un aumento delle dipendenze, tale da interessare ben 14 milioni di individui solo per l'alcool. Inoltre, paesi quali l'Italia mostrano un incremento ancor maggiore, con un abbassamento della fascia d'età riguardo all'assunzione di alcolici.

Le ricerche condotte, tra l'altro, pongono una relazione causale fra il fenomeno in questione e condizioni esistenziali penalizzanti (non ultimi fattori di natura economica).

Di conseguenza, si individua nelle pratiche psicologiche una possibile strategia, atta ad affrontare efficacemente il problema.

In ordine a quanto sopra esplicitato, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. può fornire ulteriori informative statistiche che disegnino la mappa delle dipendenze in Europa.

2. può indicare le misure e le strategie contemplate dall'UE al fine di fornire una metodologia efficace al fenomeno?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

La Commissione collabora con l'OCSE e l'OMS per migliorare le conoscenze sui danni derivanti dal consumo di alcool. La principale fonte di dati sul consumo di alcool è il Sistema di informazione globale sull'alcool e la salute dell'OMS. La Commissione dispone di dati sul consumo autodichiarato e il cosiddetto binge drinking («bere sino ad ubriacarsi») ricavati dall'Indagine europea sulla salute condotta mediante interviste del 2008; una nuova indagine è attualmente in corso.

La Commissione persegue gli obiettivi della strategia dell'UE in materia di alcool ([1]) e in particolare sostiene le azioni in questo settore nell'ambito del Comitato per le politiche e le azioni nazionali in materia di alcool. Il Comitato sta attualmente elaborando un piano d'azione sui giovani e sull'assunzione occasionale di alcool in misura smodata che incoraggia gli Stati membri e le parti interessate ad adottare azioni in questo campo.

La ricerca sui vari tipi di dipendenze è stata finanziata dai programmi UE in materia di salute, dal programma Prevenzione e informazione in materia di droga (2007-2013), dal programma Giustizia (2014-2020), dal Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (2007-2013) e da Horizon 2020.

La strategia dell'Unione in materia di droga (2013-2020) sottolinea la necessità di garantire un adeguato finanziamento dei programmi di ricerca e sviluppo in questo campo a livello UE e a livello nazionale. L'Osservatorio europeo delle droghe e delle tossicodipendenze fornisce un panorama dei problemi collegati alle droghe in Europa.

La Commissione sta attualmente finanziando il progetto di ricerca «ALICE RAP» ([2]) che studia il fenomeno delle dipendenze in Europa, compresi il gioco, le droghe e l'alcool. Si tratta di un ampio studio pluridisciplinare che utilizza gli strumenti delle scienze sociali e biologiche e delle scienze mediche per analizzare in che modo gli stili di vita hanno un impatto sulle dipendenze. I giovani sono parte del gruppo di destinatari.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52006DC0625&qid=1396344271734&from=EN

([2]) Avviato nel 2011, il progetto ALICE-RAP (Ridefinire la dipendenza e gli stili di vita nell'Europa di oggi — Ricontestualizzazione del progetto sulle dipendenze) è un progetto quinquennale (che si concluderà nell'aprile 2016) transnazionale e interdisciplinare finanziato nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro, il cui scopo è contribuire alla discussione sulle norme vigenti e sulle implicazioni future delle dipendenze e degli stili di vita in Europa nei prossimi 20 anni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004092/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: The rise in addictions: possible action

Recent surveys conducted throughout Europe have revealed the rates of drug, alcohol and gambling addiction in the population at large.

Addiction is on the increase, to the extent that some 14 million people are dependent on alcohol alone. Furthermore, countries such as Italy are showing an even greater rise, with younger age groups now drinking spirits.

Among other things, the research points to a causal relationship between this problem and adverse living conditions (not least economic factors).

Accordingly, psychological support has been identified as a possible way to tackle the problem effectively.

1. Can the Commission provide additional statistical reports that sketch out a map of addiction in Europe?

2. Can it say what measures and strategies the European Union is considering in order to develop an effective approach to the problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

The Commission is cooperating with the OECD and WHO to improve knowledge on alcohol related harm. The main data source on alcohol consumption is the WHO's Global Information System on Alcohol and Health. The Commission has data on self-reported consumption and binge drinking from the European Health Interview Survey in 2008, and a new survey is currently being conducted.

The Commission pursues the objectives of the EU Alcohol Strategy ([1]) and in particular fosters action in this regard within the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action. The Committee is currently preparing an Action Plan on youth and heavy episodic drinking, encouraging Member States and stakeholders to implement action in this area.

Research on addictions has been supported through the EU Health Programmes, the Drug Prevention and Information Programme (2007-2013), the Justice Programme (2014-2020), the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013) and Horizon 2020.

The EU Drugs Strategy (2013-2020) stresses the need to ensure adequate financing for drug-related research and development projects at EU and national level. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction provides an overview of European drug problems.

The Commission is currently funding the research project 'Alice-Rap' ([2]) which is studying the phenomenon of addiction in Europe, including gambling, drugs and alcohol. It is an extensive multi-disciplinary study stretching across social sciences and biological and medical sciences to analyse how lifestyle has an impact on addiction. Young people are part of the target group.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52006DC0625&qid=1396344271734&from=EN

([2]) Commencing in 2011, Alice-Rap (Addiction and lifestyles in contemporary Europe-reframing addictions project) is a 5 year (due to finish in April 2016) transitional and interdisciplinary project funded through the 7th framework Programme aimed at contributing to the debate on current norms and future implications of addiction and lifestyles in Europe over the next 20 years.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004093/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Salute, scienza e società civile

Quando società civile, attori economici e agenzie scientifiche uniscono i propri sforzi in un progetto condiviso, probabilmente i risultati non si faranno attendere. Tale è quanto occorso riguardo a un progetto che si è prefisso di creare una struttura sanitaria, altamente specializzata, deputata all'accoglienza di piccoli pazienti. Il lavoro congiunto di diverse forze territoriali — nell'Italia del Nord — ha permesso la concretizzazione di un progetto, che solo un anno prima esisteva solo «sulla carta». Ulteriormente, in seno a tale struttura, sono state poste le basi per lo sviluppo di futuri progetti di natura scientifica.

Alla luce di quanto sopra, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. può fornire informazioni in merito alla copertura delle esigenze sanitarie dei minori, specialmente riguardo alla presenza di strutture adeguate — se non d'eccellenza — nei contesti europei?

2. può inoltre fornire informazioni in merito ad esperienze analoghe a quella sopra menzionata, esempi di impegno e progettualità condivisa fra diversi attori locali?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

EuroHealth, la pubblicazione dell'Osservatorio europeo sui sistemi e le politiche sanitarie, ha recentemente pubblicato un articolo, *Strengthening child health and services* (Rafforzare la salute dei bambini e i servizi) ([1]), che richiama l'attenzione sui problemi della salute dei bambini e dei servizi sanitari in Europa e sulle reti di riferimento in campo dell'assistenza sanitaria ([2]). La Commissione europea è membro dell'Osservatorio europeo dal 2009 ([3]).

L'organizzazione dell'assistenza sanitaria rientra nelle competenze di ciascuno Stato membro. La Commissione, per sostenere gli Stati membri nel loro compito, incoraggia la cooperazione e lo scambio di buone pratiche in tale ambito.

I programmi dell'UE per la salute e la ricerca hanno sostenuto una serie di grandi reti specializzate, seppure spesso informali, dedicate alle malattie pediatriche, in particolare alle malattie rare ([4]), al cancro pediatrico ([5]) e alle malattie neurologiche complesse ([6]).

In seguito alla recente adozione di misure di esecuzione relative alle reti di riferimento europee ([7]), come previsto dalla direttiva 2011/24/UE ([8]), in futuro tali reti permetteranno agli operatori sanitari e ai centri di eccellenza di diversi paesi di condividere le conoscenze su come affrontare le malattie complesse, a bassa prevalenza o rare che richiedono cure specializzate. Le reti di riferimento, in quanto tali, fungeranno da centri di ricerca e di conoscenza per assistere i pazienti di tutta l'UE e garantire la disponibilità di strutture di cura ove necessario.

Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013), l'UE ha finanziato azioni, quali CHICOS ([9]) e RICHE ([10]), per definire le priorità della ricerca nell'ambito della salute infantile in base a un approccio globale delle esigenze in Europa.

([1]) http://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/partners/observatory/eurohealth/strengthening-child-health-and-health-services
([2]) http://apps.who.int/bookorders/anglais/detart1.jsp?codlan=1&codcol=34&codcch=129
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/eu_world/international_organisations/index_it.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/rare_diseases/european_reference_networks/index_it.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20131207
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20131203
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2014/IT/3-2014-1408-IT-F1-1.Pdf
([8]) http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/health/cross_border_care/policy/index_en.htm
([9]) CHICOS — 241604 — Developing a Child Cohort Research Strategy for Europe www.chicosproject.eu
([10]) RICHE — 242181 — A platform and inventory for child health research in Europe www.childhealthresearch.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004093/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Health, science and civil society

When civil society, economic operators and scientific agencies join forces in a joint project, the outcome is likely to be unexpected. That is what happened with a project that set out to establish a highly specialised hospital for young patients. The combined efforts of several regional players in northern Italy brought to fruition a project that just a year earlier had only existed on paper. Moreover, the foundations have been laid within the hospital for developing future scientific work.

1. Can the Commission provide information regarding how well children's health needs are covered across Europe, especially in terms of suitable centres, if not centres of excellence?

2. Can the Commission also provide information regarding undertakings similar to the one mentioned above, in which a number of local players pool their commitment and planning abilities?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Eurohealth, the publication of the European Observatory on Health System and Policies, has recently published an article, Strengthening child health and services ([1]), to draw attention to the challenges of child health and health services in Europe and on Reference Networks in Health Care ([2]). The European Commission is a partner of the European Observatory since 2009 ([3]).

The organisation of healthcare is under the responsibility of each Member State. To support Member States in this regard, the Commission fosters cooperation and exchange of good practice in this area.

Albeit informal in most cases, a number of highly specialised networks focusing on children's diseases were supported through the EU Health and Research Programmes, in particular in the area of rare diseases ([4]), paediatric cancer ([5])and neurological complex diseases ([6]).

Following the recent adoption of implementing measures on European reference networks ([7]) (ERNs), in line with Directive 2011/24/EU ([8]), the future ERN will help professionals and centres of expertise in different countries to share knowledge on how to tackle complex, low prevalence or rare diseases requiring specialised care. As such the reference networks are to serve as research and knowledge centres treating patients across the EU, and to ensure the availability of treatment facilities where necessary.

Under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), the EU funded actions such as CHICOS ([9]) and RICHE ([10]) for defining research priorities in child health based on a comprehensive needs approach in Europe.

([1]) http://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/partners/observatory/eurohealth/strengthening-child-health-and-health-services
([2]) http://apps.who.int/bookorders/anglais/detart1.jsp?codlan=1&codcol=34&codcch=129
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/eu_world/international_organisations/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/rare_diseases/european_reference_networks/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20131207
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20131203
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2014/EN/3-2014-1408-EN-F1-1.Pdf
([8]) http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/health/cross_border_care/policy/index_en.htm
http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/health/cross_border_care/policy/index_en.htm
([9]) CHICOS — 241604 — Developing a Child Cohort Research Strategy for Europe www.chicosproject.eu
([10]) RICHE — 242181 — A platform and inventory for child health research in Europe www.childhealthresearch.eu

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004094/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Attentato terroristico in Libano

Un terrorista suicida si è fatto esplodere con la propria vettura in Libano, contro un checkpoint lungo il confine siriano, nei pressi della città di Arsal, provocando la morte di tre militari e il ferimento di altri quattro. La città ha accolto alcune migliaia di rifugiati siriani, ma anche diversi ribelli anti-Assad, ma si trova in un'area caratterizzata dalla forte presenza di Hezbollah, che invece sostiene il governo siriano e che poche ore prima dell'attentato aveva fatto sapere che Hezbollah si impegna a difendere il Libano dagli attacchi dei militanti sunniti.

In merito a questa situazione, può la Commissione chiarire se vi sono reali possibilità che il conflitto siriano si estenda al Libano? Quali sono gli strumenti che l'UE sta adoperando o ha adoperato per garantire la sicurezza del paese?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(18 giugno 2014)

L'Unione europea è consapevole del fatto che il Libano si trova di fronte a una serie problemi di eccezionale gravità riguardanti la sicurezza, nonché problemi di ordine economico, sociale e politico. È seriamente preoccupata in particolare per la spirale di violenza sviluppatasi e segue da vicino le ripercussioni del conflitto siriano nel paese. L'UE si è impegnata per l'unità, la stabilità e la sicurezza del Libano e continuerà a sostenere il rafforzamento delle sue istituzioni.

L'Unione è il principale fornitore di aiuti umanitari e assistenza allo sviluppo a favore del Libano: tenendo conto degli stanziamenti previsti, l'assistenza complessiva dell'UE a favore del Libano supera i 500 milioni di EUR, cui occorre aggiungere i cospicui contributi bilaterali degli Stati membri dell'Unione. Finora l'UE ha stanziato più di 300 milioni di EUR nel contesto della crisi siriana, in particolare sostenendo i rifugiati e le comunità che li accolgono, fornendo assistenza umanitaria ai più vulnerabili e sviluppando le capacità del governo libanese di far fronte a questa emergenza senza precedenti.

Ritenendo inoltre che l'allentamento delle tensioni sia una priorità, l'UE appoggia pienamente il ruolo delle forze armate libanesi, che danno un contributo fondamentale al mantenimento dell'ordine e della stabilità. A dicembre i ministri degli Esteri dell'UE si sono impegnati a sostenere le istituzioni e le forze di sicurezza libanesi e a vagliare le possibilità di fornire ulteriore sostegno alle forze armate libanesi. L'UE ha pertanto individuato settori specifici cui destinare questo supporto potenziato, a livello dell'Unione e degli Stati membri, ai fini di un seguito concreto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004094/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Terrorist attack in Lebanon

A suicide bomber has blown himself up in his own car in Lebanon at a checkpoint on the Syrian border near the town of Arsal, killing three soldiers and injuring four others. The town has taken in several thousand Syrian refugees as well as a number of anti-Assad rebels, but it is in an area known to be dominated by Hezbollah, which supports the Syrian Government. A few hours before the attack, Hezbollah had announced that it was committed to defending Lebanon from attacks by Sunni militants.

With regard to this situation, can the Commission say whether there is any real likelihood that the Syrian conflict will spread to Lebanon? What instruments is the European Union using — or has used — to ensure the country's safety?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

The EU is well aware that Lebanon is facing a set of extraordinary security, economic, social and political challenges. In particular, the EU is deeply concerned regarding the spiral of violence in Lebanon and closely follows the repercussions of the Syrian conflict in the country. The EU is committed to the unity, stability and security of Lebanon and will continue to support the strengthening of its institutions.

The EU is the major provider of humanitarian and development assistance to Lebanon: counting with the planned allocations, the overall EU assistance to Lebanon exceeds EUR 500 million, to which one should add the substantial bilateral contributions from EU Member States. To date, the EU allocated more than EUR 300 million in the context of the syrian crisis, notably by assisting the refugees and their host communities, delivering humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable as well as building the capacities of the Lebanese Government to deal with this unprecedented emergency.

The EU also believes that de-escalating tensions is a priority and thus fully supports the role of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), a key actor in maintaining order and stability. In December, EU foreign ministers expressed their commitment to support Lebanon's institutions and security forces, and to explore possibilities for increased support to the LAF. The EU has thus identified specific areas for such enhanced support, at both EU and Member States' level, with a view to concrete follow-up.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004095/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Agropirateria in Europa

I nuclei anti-frode dei Carabinieri nel 2013 hanno sequestrato migliaia di prodotti agricoli contraffatti, quali vino adulterato, olio extravergine d'oliva risultato contraffatto, falso aceto biologico, latte vaccino e bufalino privo di tracciabilità. Il fenomeno dell'agropirateria è un processo particolarmente dannoso per le aziende agricole italiane ed europee, poiché danneggia direttamente le casse degli agricoltori e, indirettamente, l'immagine di qualità del mercato italiano di settore. Secondo le forze dell'ordine, le nuove forme di illegalità riguardano la falsa evocazione di marchi Dop/Igp/Stg e biologico, e le violazioni alle norme su etichettatura, tracciabilità, e sul made in Italy.

L'aumento delle violazioni è preoccupante, dal momento che tra il 2012 e il 2013 vi è stato un incremento del 431 % (da 634 000 a 3 367 846 unità), con un aumento dei sequestri del 34 %. Ad esempio, nel 2013 sono state sequestrate 9 308 tonnellate di vino non conforme ai disciplinari di produzione, non tracciato e, in alcuni casi, addirittura risultato adulterato con varie sostanze non consentite, acqua ed etanolo. Si tratta di numeri enormi che, sommati a quelli relativi agli altri ventisette Stati membri, assumono proporzioni spaventose che rischiano di danneggiare in maniera irreparabile centinaia di migliaia di agricoltori europei.

In merito all'agropirateria, può la Commissione indicare:

1. Se dispone di dati analoghi relativi ai sequestri avvenuti negli altri Stati membri?

2. Se dispone di una stima dei danni economici provocati dall'agropirateria all'economia europea?

3. Come intende rafforzare le misure di tutela dei consumatori e di controllo della tracciabilità dei prodotti agricoli?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

La Commissione non dispone di dati consolidati in merito alle pratiche fraudolente menzionate dagli Onorevoli deputati. In tutti i casi, i dati relativi alla rilevazione di attività illecite, per la loro stessa natura, andrebbero interpretati con cautela.

La Commissione condivide la considerazione che la lotta contro le frodi alimentari è essenziale per mantenere un livello elevato di protezione e di fiducia dei consumatori. In seguito allo scandalo delle carni equine scoppiato nel 2013 è stato posto in atto un insieme di azioni volte a far opera di sensibilizzazione sulle frodi alimentari e a rafforzare la capacità dell'insieme dei sistemi unionali di controllo di contrastare le frodi alimentari ([1]).

In tale ambito si è data priorità al miglioramento delle capacità di *enforcement* degli Stati membri poiché sono essi ad avere la responsabilità di stabilire un sistema di controlli ufficiali atto a verificare il rispetto delle disposizioni pertinenti. In ciò rientra anche l'agevolazione dell'assistenza amministrativa e della cooperazione tra le autorità nazionali nel caso di violazioni transfrontaliere in modo da affrontare in modo più efficiente le fattispecie aventi rilevanza per l'intera UE.

([1]) MEMO/14/113 — Carni equine: un anno dopo: azioni preannunciate e realizzate! — 14 gennaio 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004095/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Agropiracy in Europe

In 2013 the Carabinieri police fraud squads seized thousands of counterfeit agricultural products, including adulterated wine, extra-virgin olive oil that proved counterfeit, fake organic vinegar and untraceable cow and buffalo milk. Agropiracy is particularly damaging to Italian and European farmers because it hits them directly in the pocket and indirectly tarnishes the Italian farming sector's image of quality. According to the police, the new kinds of illegal activity involve faking protected designations of origin, protected geographical indications, traditional specialities guaranteed and organic produce, as well as breaching the regulations on labelling, traceability and the 'Made in Italy' brand.

The sharp rise in the number of infringements is giving cause for concern. Between 2012 and 2013 there was an increase of 431% (from 634 000 to 3 367 846 items), with a 34% rise in seizures. In 2013, for instance, the authorities seized 9 308 tonnes of wine that did not comply with production standards, was untraceable or, in some cases, was even adulterated with various non-permitted substances, water and ethanol. These are huge numbers and, when added to the figures for the other 27 Member States, reach alarming proportions that are likely to cause irreparable harm to hundreds of thousands of European farmers.

1. Does the Commission have similar data on seizures of pirated agricultural products in other Member States?

2. Does it have estimates of the economic damage that agropiracy causes to the European economy?

3. How does it plan to strengthen measures to protect consumers and monitor the traceability of agricultural products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

The Commission has no consolidated data concerning the fraudulent practices mentioned by the Honourable Member. In any case figures related to the detection of illegal activities should by their very nature be interpreted with caution.

The Commission shares the view that combating food fraud is essential to maintain a high level of protection and confidence for the consumers. Following the horsemeat scandal in 2013 a set of actions intended to increase the awareness of food fraud and to strengthen the ability of the EU control system as a whole to counter food fraud ([1]) has been initiated.

It implies as a priority to improve the enforcement capabilities of the Member States as they are responsible for establishing a system of official controls to verify that the relevant requirements are complied with. It also includes the facilitation of administrative assistance and cooperation among national authorities in the case of cross border violations, so that cases of EU relevance can be tackled more efficiently.

([1]) MEMO/14/113 — Horsemeat: one year after: actions announced and delivered — 14 January 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004097/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Caccia alle balene

La Corte internazionale di giustizia dell'Aja ha condannato il Giappone per aver perpetrato la pratica della caccia alle balene adducendo «fini scientifici» che però in realtà non sussistono. La Corte ha quindi disposto la sospensione della pesca dei cetacei, che il governo di Tokyo porta avanti dal 1988, anno in cui la caccia alle balene è stata dichiarata illegale.

Il Giappone da tempo sostiene che accetterà qualsiasi decisione della Corte, ma in realtà la caccia alle balene sta provocando anche altri problemi in patria nipponica, dal momento che la carne di balena è ritenuta uno dei prodotti ittici a più alto contenuto di mercurio e anche perché il cambiamento delle abitudini alimentari giapponesi ha portato a una riduzione del consumo di questa carne.

In merito alla caccia di balene e al consumo dei prodotti alimentari da essa derivante, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. Se esistono Stati membri che praticano questa attività di pesca?

2. Se esistono Stati partner dell'UE o candidati all'adesione che praticano questa attività?

3. Quale sia la posizione dell'UE in merito alla caccia delle balene?

4. Se nel mercato europeo questo tipo di prodotto viene normalmente commercializzato?

5. Se dispone di dati scientifici in merito ai danni alla salute umana provocati da questo tipo di prodotto?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

Nell'Unione europea la cattura e l'uccisione di cetacei sono proibite a norma della direttiva 92/43/CEE del Consiglio ([1]) relativa alla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche. Di conseguenza, la caccia alle balene non è praticata in nessuno Stato membro.

Oltre ad attività baleniere limitate svolte da popolazioni indigene negli USA, in Russia, in Groenlandia e a Saint Vincent e Grenadine sotto l'egida della Commissione baleniera internazionale (IWC), la caccia alle balene per fini commerciali è praticata dalla Norvegia e dall'Islanda in deroga alla moratoria concordata dall'IWC. Il Giappone svolge attività baleniere a norma del regime speciale di autorizzazione dell'IWC per scopi scientifici. Cacce alle balene di entità limitata si svolgono anche in comunità indigene e locali in Stati che non sono Parti dell'IWC, quali Canada e Indonesia.

L'obiettivo generale dell'Unione europea con riferimento all'attività baleniera è garantire un efficace quadro normativo internazionale per la conservazione e la gestione delle balene, assicurando un miglioramento significativo dello stato di conservazione delle balene a lungo termine e ponendo tutte le operazioni di caccia sotto il controllo dell'IWC.

La carne di balena e/o i prodotti che ne contengono non possono essere commercializzati nell'UE perché la loro introduzione nella Comunità a fini prevalentemente commerciali è vietata a norma del regolamento (CE) n. 338/97 del Consiglio relativo alla protezione di specie della flora e della fauna selvatiche mediante il controllo del loro commercio ([2]).

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni sui potenziali rischi per la salute associati al consumo di carne di balena.

([1]) GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.
([2]) GU L 61 del 3 marzo 1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004097/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Whaling

The International Court of Justice in The Hague has recently ordered Japan to halt its whaling programme after finding that the 'scientific research purposes' that the country cited in justification of its actions did not actually exist. The Court has thus suspended all hunting of cetaceans, an activity that Japan has relentlessly pursued since 1988, the year in which whaling was declared illegal.

Japan has long said that it would abide by any decision reached by the Court, but in truth whaling is currently at the root of other problems in the country. Whale meat is now regarded as a fish product with a very high mercury content, and the changing eating habits of the Japanese population are further reducing the amount of whale meat consumed.

Could the Commission please answer the following questions relating to whaling and the consumption of food products containing whale meat:

1. Do any Member States still carry out whaling activities?

2. Do any of the EU's Partner States or would-be Member States still carry out these activities?

3. What is the EU's position on whaling?

4. Are food products containing whale meat normally sold in the European market?

5. Does the Commission have access to any scientific data concerning the potential health risks caused by consuming these types of food products?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

Within the EU, the capture or killing of cetaceans is prohibited under Council Directive 92/43/EEC ([1]) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Hence, no EU Member State carries out whaling activities.

Besides the limited aboriginal subsistence whaling activities carried out, under the framework of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), by indigenous people in the USA, Russia, Greenland and St. Vincent and Grenadines, commercial whaling is being undertaken by Norway and Iceland under reservation to the moratorium agreed at the IWC. Japan has been carrying out whaling activities under the IWC special permit regime for scientific purpose. Indigenous and local communities in non-IWC parties such as Canada and Indonesia also carry out limited traditional whale hunts.

The overarching objective of the EU with regard to whaling is to ensure an effective international regulatory framework for the conservation and management of whales guaranteeing a significant improvement in the conservation status of whales in the long term and bringing all whaling operations under the IWC control.

Whale meat and/or products containing whale meat cannot be commercialised in the EU as their introduction into the Community for primarily commercial purpose is banned, pursuant to Council Regulation 338/97/EC on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein ([2]).

The Commission has no information about potential health risk as a consequence of the consumption of whale meat.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) OJ L 61, 3.3.1997.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004098/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Islandesi in piazza contro la decisione del governo di ritirare la propria candidatura all'adesione all'UE

I cittadini islandesi hanno accolto malvolentieri la decisione unilaterale presa dai partiti al governo di ritirare la richiesta di adesione all'Unione europea, presentata sin dal 2010. I negoziati sono in effetti bloccati da circa un anno a causa di alcune divergenze sorte in relazione alle quote pesca, ma hanno subito un ulteriore arresto con la vittoria alle ultime elezioni politiche del Partito progressista e dei conservatori del Partito dell'Indipendenza, senza che fossero prima consultati i cittadini. E così questi ultimi sono scesi in migliaia nelle piazze, rivendicando il diritto di poter scegliere il proprio futuro politico. Gli islandesi si sono infuriati in seguito alla promessa non mantenuta di un referendum sulla prosecuzione o interruzione del processo di adesione, tramite cui la decisione sarebbe stata affidata al voto popolare.

Dalle proteste è nata una petizione in cui si chiede l'indizione di una consultazione popolare sul tema, già firmata da 32 000 persone.

In merito a questi eventi, può la Commissione chiarire i seguenti punti:

1. è a conoscenza della situazione?

2. intende l'Unione sostenere la petizione?

3. ha avuto contatti con le autorità governative islandesi, al fine di discutere la decisione di ritirare il referendum e la domanda di adesione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(14 maggio 2014)

Il governo islandese ha deciso di sospendere i negoziati di adesione il 22 maggio 2013, dichiarando che non riprenderanno fintanto che non saranno stati approvati tramite referendum. La decisione di sospendere i negoziati di adesione è stata comunicata al commissario Füle e ai presidenti Barroso e Van Rompuy in occasione delle visite a Bruxelles del ministro degli esteri e del primo ministro islandese, svoltesi nei mesi di giugno e luglio 2013.

Il 21 febbraio 2014 il governo ha presentato una risoluzione parlamentare relativa al ritiro della domanda di adesione su cui il parlamento islandese sta discutendo.

Spetta all'Islanda decidere se e in che modo portare avanti la propria candidatura. Dal canto suo, la Commissione segue con attenzione il dibattito e, se l'Islanda lo desidera, è disposta a — e in grado di — portare a termine il processo di adesione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004098/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Icelanders protest in the streets against the government's decision to withdraw the application for membership of the EU

Icelanders have reacted badly to the unilateral decision taken by the parties in government to withdraw the application for membership of the European Union, which was presented as long ago as 2010. Negotiations have in fact been blocked for about a year because of differences over fishing quotas, but were halted indefinitely, without prior consultation of the population, when the Progressive Party and the conservative Independence Party won the latest political elections. In response, the people have come out on the streets in their thousands, demanding the right to be able to choose their own political future. Icelanders are furious about the broken promise of a referendum on whether to pursue or suspend the accession process, which would have entrusted the decision to a popular vote.

The protests have given rise to a petition calling for popular consultation on the matter, which has already been signed by 32 000 people.

In connection with these events, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation?

2. Is the European Union planning to support the petition?

3. Has the Commission had any contact with the Icelandic Government to discuss the decision to cancel the referendum and withdraw the application for membership?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2014)

The Icelandic government took the decision to put the accession negotiations on hold on 22 May 2013 and the government platform states that these will not be continued unless so approved in a referendum. The Icelandic Foreign Minister and Prime Minister came to Brussels in June and July 2013, respectively, where the decision to put the accession negotiations on hold was communicated to Commissioner Füle and Presidents Barroso and Van Rompuy.

On 21 February 2014, the government introduced a parliamentary resolution to withdraw the accession application, which is currently being debated in the Icelandic parliament.

The question of whether and how to take forward its membership application is an issue for Iceland to address. The Commission, for its part, is following discussions closely and is willing and able to complete the accession process, if Iceland so wishes.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004099/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Norme di sicurezza sulle navi passeggeri

Una tragedia è avvenuta nella notte tra il 31 marzo e il 1º aprile a Barcellona, dove un ragazzo italiano di 15 anni, durante un viaggio d'istruzione, ha perso la vita precipitando in mare dal ponte di una nave ormeggiata nel porto della città catalana. Il ragazzo sarebbe precipitato dal decimo piano della nave, dopo aver eluso la sorveglianza della nave. Dopo che è caduto nello spazio tra la nave e il molo, i sommozzatori sono intervenuti immediatamente, recuperando il corpo in breve tempo, ma già privo di vita.

In attesa che le autorità competenti facciano luce sulle dinamiche dell'incidente, può la Commissione chiarire se, a livello europeo, esistano norme minime di sicurezza a garanzia dell'incolumità delle persone sulle navi adibite al trasporto di passeggeri?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

La Commissione desidera anzitutto esprimere profondo cordoglio per la disgrazia in cui ha perso la vita il ragazzo italiano in gita scolastica.

La vigente normativa dell'UE sulle navi da passeggeri disciplina diversi aspetti della sicurezza, imponendo obblighi sia tecnici sia di esercizio: la direttiva 2009/45/CE ([1]) stabilisce disposizioni e norme di sicurezza armonizzate per le navi da passeggeri adibite a viaggi nazionali; la direttiva 2003/25/CE ([2]) impone requisiti specifici di stabilità per le navi ro/ro da passeggeri; la direttiva 1999/35/CE ([3]) prevede norme per l'esercizio in condizioni di sicurezza di traghetti roll-on/roll-off e di unità veloci adibiti a servizi di linea; la direttiva 1998/41/CE ([4]) stabilisce le regole applicabili alla conta e alla registrazione dei passeggeri e dei membri dell'equipaggio a bordo delle navi da passeggeri.

La direttiva 2009/18/CE ([5]) stabilisce i principi fondamentali in materia di inchieste sugli incidenti nel settore del trasporto marittimo; in base alle sue disposizioni, ciascuno Stato membro deve provvedere affinché sia svolta un'inchiesta di sicurezza «quando un sinistro marittimo molto grave: a) si verifica con il coinvolgimento di una nave battente la bandiera nazionale, indipendentemente dal luogo del sinistro; o b) si verifica nel suo mare territoriale e nelle sue acque interne». Gli Stati membri devono inoltre assicurare che le inchieste di sicurezza siano svolte sotto la responsabilità di un organo inquirente permanente e imparziale. In base alla normativa applicabile, l'inchiesta di sicurezza sull'incidente dovrebbe essere condotta dalle autorità italiane ([6])([7]).

Il sistema di cooperazione permanente istituito dalla direttiva 2009/18/CE offre un forum di collaborazione agli esperti degli organi inquirenti indipendenti degli Stati membri responsabili delle inchieste sugli incidenti. I servizi della Commissione suggeriscono che nel quadro di tale sistema di cooperazione permanente si discutano le possibili misure di prevenzione delle cadute fuori bordo in base ai dati disponibili sugli incidenti, tra cui l'inchiesta di sicurezza relativa al decesso oggetto dell'interrogazione.

([1]) Direttiva 2009/45/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 maggio 2009, relativa alle disposizioni e norme di sicurezza per le navi da passeggeri.
([2]) Direttiva 2003/25/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 14 aprile 2003, concernente requisiti specifici di stabilità per le navi ro/ro da passeggeri.
([3]) Direttiva 1999/35/CE del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 1999, relativa a un sistema di visite obbligatorie per l'esercizio in condizioni di sicurezza di traghetti roll-on/roll-off e di unità veloci da passeggeri adibiti a servizi di linea.
([4]) Direttiva 1998/41/CE del Consiglio, del 18 giugno 1998, relativa alla registrazione delle persone a bordo delle navi da passeggeri che effettuano viaggi da e verso i porti degli Stati membri della Comunità.
([5]) Direttiva 2009/18/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2009, che stabilisce i principi fondamentali in materia di inchieste sugli incidenti nel settore del trasporto marittimo e che modifica la direttiva 1999/35/CE del Consiglio e la direttiva 2002/59/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio — GU L 131 del 28.5.2009.
([6]) Eventualmente in collaborazione con le autorità spagnole competenti.
([7]) Si rilevi che l'inchiesta di sicurezza resterà distinta dalle indagini della polizia o della magistratura sul decesso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004099/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Safety regulations on passenger ships

Tragedy struck in Barcelona on the night of 31 March, when a 15-year-old Italian boy on a school trip died after falling into the sea from the deck of a ship that was berthed in the port of the Catalan city. The boy is believed to have fallen from the tenth floor of the ship, after having managed to evade the ship's security staff. A team of divers responded immediately, and even though they were able to quickly recover the boy from the water between the ship and the jetty, he was already dead.

The tragic incident is currently being investigated by the competent authorities, who are expected to publish their findings shortly. In the meantime, could the Commission please indicate whether any minimum safety standards exist on a European level to protect people on board passenger ships?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Commission would like to express its deepest regret for the unfortunate death of the Italian boy which occurred during a school trip.

The current EU legislation on passenger ships covers different aspects of safety from technical to operational requirements: Directive 2009/45/EC ([1]) lays down harmonised safety rules and standards for passenger ships in domestic traffic; Directive 2003/25/EC ([2]) lays down specific stability requirements for ro-ro passenger ships; Directive 1999/35/EC ([3]) sets rules for the safe operation of ro-ro ferries and high speed craft services; Directive 1998/41/EC ([4]) sets rules on counting and registration of passengers and crew on board of passenger ships.

Directive 2009/18/EC ([5]) establishes the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector; Member States shall ensure that a safety investigation is carried out 'after very serious marine casualties, (a) involving a ship flying its flag, irrespective of the location of the casualty; (b) occurring within its territorial sea and internal waters'. Furthermore, Member States shall ensure that safety investigations are conducted under the responsibility of an impartial permanent investigative body. According to applicable law, the Italian authorities ([6]) should carry out a safety investigation of this incident ([7]).

The permanent cooperation framework (PCF) set up under Directive 2009/18/EC provides for a forum of experts from Member States' independent accident investigation bodies; the Commission services will suggest that the PCF discusses possible preventive measures for cases of persons going over board on the basis of existing accident data, including the safety investigation into this death.

([1]) Directive 2009/45/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 May 2009 on safety rules and standards for passenger ships.
([2]) Directive 2003/25/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 April 2003 on specific stability requirements for ro-ro passenger ships.
([3]) Council Directive 1999/35/EC of 29 April 1999 on a system of mandatory surveys for the safe operation of regular ro-ro ferry and high-speed passenger craft services.
([4]) Council Directive 98/41/EC of 18 June 1998 on the registration of persons sailing on board passenger ships operating to or from ports of the Member States of the Community.
([5]) Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector and amending Council Directive 1999/35/EC and Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 131, 28.5.2009.
([6]) Possibly in conjunction with the competent Spanish authorities.
([7]) It should be noted that this safety investigation will be separate from any police or judicial inquiry into the death.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004100/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Nuove condanne in seguito alle manifestazioni di massa in Bahrein

Tredici cittadini del Bahrein sono stati condannati all'ergastolo per aver cercato di uccidere due poliziotti durante alcune proteste non autorizzate. Sempre per motivi legati a queste proteste, altri ventisette uomini sono stati condannati a dieci anni di prigione nelle ultime due settimane. Le manifestazioni continuano sulla scia delle proteste di piazza del 2011, in cui musulmani sciiti hanno cominciato a chiedere maggiore rappresentanza in un paese a guida perlopiù sunnita.

In merito a questa situazione, può la Commissione chiarire quale sia l'impegno dell'UE per la stabilizzazione del Bahrein, nell'ottica della stabilizzazione dell'intera regione, anche alla luce del fatto che il governo del Bahrein ha accusato l'Iran di continuare a fomentare le proteste?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente segue da vicino la situazione in Bahrein, e continuerà a farlo.

L'AR/VP ha costantemente sottolineato che solo adottando significative e concrete misure di rafforzamento della fiducia — quali il rilascio delle persone arrestate nel contesto di attività politiche pacifiche, il rispetto della libertà di riunione e di espressione e l'impegno di tutte le parti per le riforme politiche e il dialogo nazionale — sarà possibile ripristinare la fiducia, conseguire una vera riconciliazione nazionale, la pace e la stabilità nel paese. L'UE ritiene che tali sforzi debbano essere guidati e realizzati dai cittadini del Bahrain e che le ingerenze straniere abbiano il solo effetto di aggregare gli integralisti di tutte le tendenze.

Questo approccio, cui la AR/VP si è costantemente richiamata fin dal 2011 in numerose dichiarazioni pubbliche sulla situazione in Bahrein, costituisce il fondamento per l'impegno dell'UE nei confronti delle autorità del Bahrein e di tutti i settori della società del paese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004100/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: More convictions handed down following the mass demonstrations in Bahrain

Thirteen Bahraini citizens have been sentenced to life imprisonment for having attempted to murder two policemen during a series of unauthorised protests. In the last two weeks, a further twenty-seven people have each been handed ten-year prison sentences for reasons linked with these protests. The ongoing demonstrations in Bahrain stem from the street protests that took place in 2011, when Shiite Muslims began calling for more representation in a country predominantly governed by Sunnis.

In light of the situation described above, could the Commission specify how committed the EU is to bringing stability to Bahrain, which in turn would help to stabilise the entire region, especially seeing as the Bahraini Government has accused Iran of continuing to fuel the protests?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The High Representative/Vice-President follows the situation in Bahrain very closely and will continue to do so.

The HR/VP has steadily stressed that only significant and concrete confidence building steps, including the release of those arrested in the context of peaceful political activities, the respect for freedom of assembly and expression, and commitment to political reform and National Dialogue on all sides, have the potential to restore confidence leading up to genuine national reconciliation, peace and stability in the country. The EU believes that these efforts should be Bahraini-led and Bahraini-owned, and that foreign interference can only embolden hardliners on all sides.

This approach has been consistently highlighted in the numerous public statements made by the HR/VP since 2011 on the situation in Bahrain, and has constituted the basis for EU engagement with the authorities and with all sectors of Bahraini society.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004102/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Processo per alto tradimento all'ex presidente pakistano — rispetto dei diritti

Un tribunale militare pakistano ha incriminato ieri l'ex presidente pakistano Musharraf per alto tradimento, con l'accusa di violazione dell'articolo 6 della costituzione, in seguito alla decisione, presa nel 2007, di decretare lo stato di emergenza e di arrogarsi poteri per modificare la costituzione del paese, e per aver spinto diversi giudici alle dimissioni. Per queste imputazioni, per cui egli si è dichiarato non colpevole, l'ex leader rischia la pena di morte.

Per ora gli è vietato di lasciare il paese, ma non è comunque costretto agli arresti, anche se aveva chiesto di potersi recare negli Stati Uniti per motivi medici legati a problemi cardiaci insorti negli ultimi mesi.

In merito a questa questione, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire se sono intercorse in passato relazioni tra UE e Pakistan in merito al rispetto di diritti fondamentali come l'equo processo o la presunzione di innocenza?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

L'UE intrattiene un dialogo regolare con il Pakistan sui diritti umani, durante il quale viene periodicamente sollevata la questione del rispetto dei diritti fondamentali e si rammentano al Pakistan i suoi obblighi a norma del Patto internazionale relativo ai diritti civili e politici, il cui articolo 14 fa riferimento alla presunzione di innocenza e alle condizioni per un giusto processo, e degli altri strumenti sui diritti umani a cui ha aderito. Il Pakistan beneficia da gennaio 2014 dello status SPG+, la cui concessione è stata subordinata all'effettiva attuazione delle principali convenzioni internazionali.

A complemento del dialogo, l'UE sostiene progetti volti a migliorare l'accesso alla giustizia e la qualità dell'applicazione della legge in Pakistan.

Per quanto riguarda il caso sollevato dagli onorevoli deputati, va osservato che in Pakistan vige una moratoria di fatto della pena di morte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004102/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — The trial of the former President of Pakistan for high treason, and respect of his rights

A military court in Pakistan yesterday charged the country's former President, Pervez Musharraf, with high treason, accusing him of having violated Article 6 of the Pakistani Constitution when he declared a state of emergency in 2007 and subsequently gave himself powers to amend the country's constitution, and also of having forced several judges to resign during his term in office. Mr Musharraf has pleaded not guilty to these charges, and if convicted, could face the death penalty.

Even though he has not been officially placed under arrest, Mr Musharraf is currently forbidden from leaving the country. Consequently, the authorities have refused his request to travel to the United States for medical reasons, which are linked to heart problems he has experienced over the last few months.

In light of this situation, can the High Representative/Vice-President indicate whether there have been any past discussions between the EU and Pakistan concerning the respect of fundamental rights, such as the right to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The EU is engaged in regular dialogue with Pakistan on human rights. In this context, respect for fundamental rights is regularly raised and Pakistan is reminded of its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 14 of which refers to the presumption of innocence and conditions for a fair trial, and other human rights instruments to which it has acceded. From January 2014 Pakistan has been granted GSP+ status, contingent on the effective implementation of core international conventions.

To complement such dialogue, the EU is supporting projects which are intended both to improve access to justice and also to improve the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan.

With respect to the case raised by the honourable members, it should be pointed out that Pakistan has a de facto moratorium on the death penalty.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004103/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Scambio di colpi d'artiglieria tra Pyeongyang e Seoul

La tensione tra le due Coree è tornata nuovamente ai massimi livelli, ieri, con lo scambio di circa ottocento colpi di artiglieria lungo gran parte del confine marittimo occidentale tra i due paesi, nel Mar Giallo.

La Corea del Nord ha infatti comunicato alla Seconda flotta della Marina sudcoreana l'istituzione di una *no-fly* e *no-sail zone* nell'area, al fine di poter procedere a una serie di tiri di batterie in sette diverse postazioni della *Northern Limit Line*, la linea di confine marittima de facto, mai riconosciuta dal governo di Pyeongyang. Alcuni tiri sono caduti nelle acque sudcoreane, obbligando ad evacuare circa 4.000 persone residenti in cinque isole, dopodiché lo Stato maggiore congiunto di Seoul ha deciso di rispondere con alcune decine di colpi di artiglieria e facendo decollare alcuni caccia lungo il confine marittimo.

In merito a quanto descritto, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. vi è motivo di ritenere che scontri di questa gravità possano ripetersi in futuro?

2. Ritiene che da questo genere di provocazioni possa scaturire un conflitto aperto tra le due Coree?

3. Di quali strumenti diplomatici dispone l'UE attualmente come deterrente per un conflitto tra i due paesi, conflitto che potrebbe portare a una seria destabilizzazione del clima macro-regionale e internazionale?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(17 giugno 2014)

1. Finché la tensione esistente tra le due Coree e a livello regionale non diminuirà in modo permanente, il rischio di uno scontro militare resta vivo, soprattutto in una zona già teatro di numerosi contrasti.

2. Eventi analoghi potrebbero causare vittime e portare a un ulteriore aumento delle tensioni nella penisola. Non è possibile prevedere o escludere che tali eventi possano causare un conflitto aperto. Entrambe le Coree — così come tutti gli Stati all'interno e al di fuori della regione — hanno un chiaro interesse strategico a evitare che la vicenda degeneri ulteriormente.

3. L'UE intrattiene relazioni diplomatiche con la Repubblica di Corea e la Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea, ha un interesso diretto a veder diminuire le tensioni nella penisola coreana in modo permanente e continua a seguire da vicino la situazione, consultandosi con tutti i suoi principali partner.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004103/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Exchange of artillery fire between Pyongyang and Seoul

Tensions between North and South Korea flared again yesterday, with the exchange of eight hundred rounds of artillery shells along much of the western sea border between the two countries, in the Yellow Sea.

North Korea had in fact notified South Korea's Second Navy Fleet that it was establishing a no-fly, no-sail zone in the area, so that it could proceed with a series of live-fire exercises in seven areas along the Northern Limit Line, the de facto sea border that has never been recognised by the government in Pyongyang. Some shells fell in South Korean waters, leading to the evacuation of around 4 000 residents from five islands, after which Seoul's Joint Chief of Staff decided to respond by firing a few dozen rounds of artillery shells and scrambling fighter jets along the sea border.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following questions in connection with these events:

1. Is there any reason to believe that clashes as serious as this might occur again in the future?

2. Does she think this kind of provocation could trigger open conflict between North and South Korea?

3. What diplomatic means are currently available to the EU to prevent a conflict between the two countries — a conflict that could lead to serious destabilisation of the macro-regional and international climate?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. As long as inter-Korean and regional tensions do not decrease on a permanent basis, the risk of military confrontation remains, especially in an area that has already been a hotspot for confrontation.

2. Similar events could result in casualties and further increase tensions in the Peninsula. Predicting or excluding that an open conflict could result from such events is not possible. Both parties as well as all States in the region and beyond have a clear strategic interest in preventing any such development.

3. The EU has diplomatic relations with both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It has a direct interest in a lasting diminution of tensions on the Peninsula and continues to follow the situation closely, consulting with all its key partners.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004104/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rinvio dell'udienza sul caso dei «marò»

Il tribunale speciale indiano che si sta occupando dell'incidente in cui sono coinvolti i due fucilieri di marina italiani ha deciso di rinviare ancora una volta l'udienza, posticipandola questa volta al 31 luglio 2014, dopo aver preso atto della sospensione del procedimento penale decisa tre giorni fa dalla Corte suprema. Si tratta dell'ennesimo rinvio del processo e, sebbene alcuni progressi siano stati registrati con la decisione di non applicare ai due militari italiani la legge antiterrorismo, questo nuovo posticipo aggrava la situazione dei due imputati, che da oltre due anni sono tenuti lontani dalle proprie famiglie, in balia di una giustizia che, nel suo modo di operare, dimostra una grottesca e preoccupante incapacità operativa, di fronte alla quale è giunto il momento che l'UE agisca a sostegno del governo italiano per una felice risoluzione della questione.

A tal proposito, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere se intende intercedere in prima persona presso le autorità indiane e se intende discutere misure restrittive economiche o finanziarie per spingere le autorità indiane a prendere sul serio il procedimento che vede vittime i due fucilieri di marina?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

L'AR/VP segue con estrema attenzione sin dall'inizio il caso dei due marò italiani, tenendosi in contatto sia con le autorità italiane che con quelle indiane. La questione riguarda altresì la lotta mondiale contro la pirateria, oggetto di un fermo impegno dell'UE.

Secondo le ultime informazioni disponibili, benché dall'incidente siano trascorsi quasi due anni, non sono ancora stati depositati i capi d'imputazione contro i marò italiani, che restano in carcere a New Delhi.

Negli ultimi tempi l'AR/VP e alti esponenti dell'Unione europea hanno colto tutte le occasioni possibili per sollevare la questione con il governo indiano a diversi livelli, ivi compreso durante le consultazioni UE-India sulla politica estera svoltesi il 24 gennaio 2014 a Nuova Delhi, e continueranno ad esercitare pressioni sempre più forti al riguardo.

In particolare, l'AR/VP ha esortato l'India a trovare rapidamente una soluzione soddisfacente a questa situazione che si protrae da tempo, nel pieno rispetto della convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sul diritto del mare e del diritto internazionale. L'AR/VP ha inoltre ribadito in più occasioni che i ritardi nel processo dei marò sono del tutto inaccettabili.

Le decisioni dell'India su questo caso saranno oggetto di un attento esame.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004104/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Hearing of Italian marines' case delayed

The special Indian court dealing with the incident involving two Italian marines has decided to delay the hearing yet again, this time postponing it until 31 July 2014, after being informed that the Supreme Court had decided to suspend criminal proceedings three days ago. This is the umpteenth time the trial has been delayed and, although some progress has been made with the decision not to try the two Italian marines under antiterrorism law, this new postponement comes as a blow to the accused, who have spent more than two years far away from their families, at the mercy of a justice system whose inefficiency is both worrying and grotesque. The time has come for the EU to take action to help the Italian Government to achieve a positive solution.

In this regard, can the Vice-President/High Representative say whether she is planning to intercede personally with the Indian authorities, and whether she is planning to discuss any restrictive economic or financial measures to persuade the Indian authorities that the case, in which the two marines are now becoming the victims, needs to be taken seriously?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The HR/VP has been following very closely the case of the two Italian marines since its beginning, in contact with both the Italian and Indian authorities. This issue has also a bearing on the global fight against piracy, to which the EU is strongly committed.

According to the latest available information, the Italian marines are still being held in New Delhi, with no charge sheet having been issued despite almost two years have passed since the incident.

The HR/VP and top-ranking representatives from the European Union have raised this issue with the Indian government at various levels whenever possible in the recent past, including at the EU-India Foreign Policy Consultations of 24 January 2014 in New Delhi, and will continue to do so with increasing emphasys.

In particular, the HR/VP has encouraged India to find, as a matter of urgency, a satisfactory outcome to this long-standing case as soon as possible, based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and international law. The HR/VP has also stressed several times that the delays in the trial against the two marines are totally unacceptable.

Any decision by India on this case will be carefully assessed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004105/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Timori finlandesi in merito a operazioni russe nei pressi del confine orientale

L'esercito finlandese ha cominciato a tenere sotto stretta osservazione le operazioni di trivellazione svolte dall'aeronautica militare russa a circa 150 miglia dal confine tra i due paesi. La preoccupazione della Finlandia è scaturita principalmente dalle dichiarazioni rilasciate alla stampa da un ex consigliere del presidente russo ed ex agente del KGB, che ha sostenuto l'idea che il leader russo voglia «proteggere ciò che è suo e dei suoi predecessori», riferendosi alla Georgia, all'Ucraina, alla Bielorussia, ma anche alle repubbliche baltiche e alla Finlandia. La Finlandia è un paese molto diverso rispetto all'Ucraina, ma condivide una lunga storia comune con la Russia, motivo per cui nel paese si registra un certo nervosismo.

In merito a questi timori della Finlandia, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. ritiene possibile un intervento russo nel paese nordico?

2. quali strumenti avrebbe a disposizione l'UE per proteggere lo Stato membro, alla luce del fatto che la Finlandia non è un paese membro della NATO?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

La frase alla quale fanno riferimento gli onorevoli parlamentari è attribuita al membro di un think tank che avrebbe espresso ipotesi sulle motivazioni delle azioni del presidente Putin. La Commissione preferisce non esprimersi in merito a tali supposizioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004105/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Finnish fears concerning Russian operations close to the eastern border

The Finnish army is keeping a close eye on the drills being conducted by the Russian air force about 150 miles from the border between the two countries. Finland's concern has been triggered mainly by the statement made to the press by a former adviser to the Russian President and former KGB agent, which suggested that the Russian leader wants to 'protect what belongs to him and his predecessors', referring to Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus, but also to the Baltic republics and Finland. Finland is very different from Ukraine, but shares a long history with Russia, which is why there is a degree of nervousness in the country.

In connection with Finland's fears, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it think there is a possibility of Russian intervention in Finland?

2. What measures would be available to the EU to protect the Member State, given that Finland is not a member of NATO?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The quote to which the Honourable Members refers is ascribed to a member of a think tank voicing assumptions about President Putin's motives. The Commission prefers not to comment on these speculations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004106/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Serbia contraria all'imposizione di sanzioni alla Russia

Il vice primo ministro serbo ha annunciato che la Serbia è contraria alle sanzioni contro la Russia in relazione alla crisi ucraina. L'annuncio è stato fatto in seguito allo svolgimento a Bruxelles del 23esimo round negoziale con il Kosovo. Anche la comunità serba in Bosnia-Erzegovina condivide la stessa posizione e il presidente della Republika Srpska ha chiaramente detto che non permetterà che il paese si unisca al gruppo che ha deciso di colpire Putin tramite sanzioni. Questo perché la Serbia non vuole rovinare un rapporto consolidato da anni con Mosca, pur mantenendo buone relazioni con l'Unione.

Come accoglie la Commissione questa presa di posizione da parte del governo serbo? Ritiene che questa situazione possa influire negativamente sulle relazioni UE-Serbia?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(7 luglio 2014)

L'Unione europea ha invitato i paesi candidati (tra cui la Serbia) e una serie di paesi terzi ad allinearsi con sei decisioni del Consiglio e ad attuare le decisioni del Consiglio relative all'Ucraina concernenti misure restrittive nei confronti di determinate persone, entità e organismi in considerazione della situazione in Ucraina, nonché misure restrittive relative ad azioni che compromettono o minacciano l'integrità territoriale, la sovranità e l'indipendenza dell'Ucraina ([1]). La Serbia è uno dei paesi terzi che non si è allineato con le decisioni del Consiglio.

L'Alta Rappresentante/vice presidente della Commissione Catherine Ashton ha discusso la questione con i ministri degli Esteri dei paesi candidati durante la parte informale della riunione di Gymnich ad Atene il 5 aprile 2014 e successivamente con il nuovo governo serbo durante la sua visita ufficiale a Belgrado il 28 aprile 2014. Nel frattempo il capo della delegazione dell'UE a Belgrado ha cercato in più occasioni di sensibilizzare alla questione il ministro degli Affari esteri della Serbia.

L'Unione europea ricorda che ci si aspetta che la Serbia, così come qualsiasi paese candidato all'adesione, si allinei progressivamente con l'*acquis* dell'UE durante il periodo precedente all'adesione. Tale *acquis* comprende la politica estera e di sicurezza comune dell'UE, che rientrano nell'ambito del capitolo di adesione 31 «politica estera, di sicurezza e di difesa» e le relative dichiarazioni, decisioni e dichiarazioni, nonché le misure restrittive adottate a livello dell'UE.

([1]) Decisione 2014/119/PESC del Consiglio, del 5 marzo 2014, Gazzetta ufficiale L 66 del 6.3.2014;
decisione 2014/145/PESC del Consiglio, del 17 marzo 2014, GU L 78 del 17.3.2014;
decisione di esecuzione 2014/151/PESC del Consiglio, del 17 marzo 2014, GU L 86 del 21.3.2014;
decisione di esecuzione 2014/216/PESC del Consiglio, del 14 aprile 2014, GU L 111 del 15.4.2014;
decisione di esecuzione 2014/238/PESC del Consiglio, del 28 aprile 2014, GU L 126 del 29.4.2014 e
decisione 2014/265/PESC del Consiglio, del 12 maggio 2014, GU L 137 del 12.5.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004106/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Serbia against the imposition of sanctions on Russia

The Serbian Deputy Prime Minister has said that Serbia is against the imposition of sanctions on Russia in connection with the crisis in Ukraine. The statement was made following the twenty-third round of talks with Kosovo in Brussels. The Serb community in Bosnia and Herzegovina shares this view, and the President of Republika Srpska has clearly stated that he will not allow the country to join a group that has decided to hit Putin with sanctions. This is because Serbia does not want to damage a relationship built up over many years with Moscow, while maintaining good relations with the European Union.

What is the Commission's reaction to the position taken by the Serbian Government? Does it think this situation might have a negative impact on relations between the EU and Serbia?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 2014)

The European Union invited candidate countries (including Serbia) and a number of EU third countries to align with six Council Decisions and Implementing Council Decisions related to Ukraine on restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine, and concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine ([1]). Serbia was among the EU third countries, which did not align with these Council Decisions.

High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission Ashton discussed this issue with the Foreign Ministers of the candidate countries at the informal part of the Gymnich meeting in Athens on 5 April 2014. She reiterated the same message to the new Serbian Government during her official visit to Belgrade on 28 April 2014. At the same time, the Head of the EU Delegation in Belgrade carried out several outreach demarches with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

The European Union recalls that it expects from Serbia, as from any candidate country, to progressively align with the EU *acquis* in the period up to accession. Such *acquis* includes the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, dealt with under the accession Chapter 31 'Foreign, Security and Defence policy' and the related declarations, decisions and statements as well as restrictive measures adopted at the EU level.

([1]) Council Decision 2014/119/CFSP of 5.3.2014, Official Journal L 66 of 6.3.2014; Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17.3.2014, OJ L 78 of 17.3.2014; Council Implementing Decision 2014/151/CFSP, OJ L 86 of 21.3.2014; Council Implementing Decision 2014/216/CFSP of 14.4.2014, OJ L 111 of 15.4.2014; Council Implementing Decision 2014/238/CFSP of 28.4.2014, OJ L 126 of 29.4.2014; and Council Decision 2014/265/CFSP of 12.5.2014, OJ L 137 of 12.5.2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004108/14
alla Commissione
Franco Frigo (S&D)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Danni strutturali al Ponte di Bassano in seguito alle alluvioni 2010-2013: possibile utilizzo del Fondo di solidarietà

Il Ponte degli Alpini di Bassano del Grappa riveste un ruolo fondamentale da diversi punti di vista. In primo luogo, la struttura attuale è ispirata alla ricostruzione realizzata alla fine del XVI secolo su progetto del celebre architetto Andrea Palladio. In secondo luogo, rappresenta un luogo simbolico decisivo della Prima Guerra Mondiale e della Resistenza italiana nella Seconda Guerra Mondiale.

Il valore storico-artistico e culturale del ponte, quindi, è enorme per la storia e la cultura europea e la tutela di un'opera di così grande importanza si può trovare tra gli obiettivi dell'UE dell'articolo 3 del TUE, in cui si specifica come l'UE debba «vigila(re) sulla salvaguardia e sullo sviluppo del patrimonio culturale europeo».

Recenti studi ed analisi compiute sul Ponte degli Alpini di Bassano hanno dimostrato le problematiche strutturali dello stesso, a cui hanno contribuito in maniera determinante le piene del fiume Brenta tra gli anni 2010 e 2013.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È possibile chiedere l'utilizzo del Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea (FSUE) per il restauro del ponte, posto che tale fondo è finalizzato anche alla realizzazione di misure e infrastrutture di prevenzione per proteggere il patrimonio culturale?

2. In altre parole, è possibile una deroga alla regola per cui le richieste per il fondo devono essere realizzate entro 10 settimane dall'inondazione dato che i danni strutturali sul ponte sono stati individuati successivamente ma sono da imputare in maniera principale alle inondazioni degli ultimi 3 anni?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

1. Il Fondo di solidarietà dell'UE può, in linea di principio, essere utilizzato per il ripristino immediato delle infrastrutture (compresi i ponti) e per la protezione del patrimonio culturale. Nel gennaio 2011 l'Italia ha chiesto l'assistenza finanziaria del Fondo per le operazioni di recupero resesi necessarie in seguito alle inondazioni del 2010 in Veneto. All'Italia è stato versato un contributo di 16,9 milioni di EUR. Affinché fossero soddisfatte le condizioni per l'intervento del Fondo, la domanda era limitata alla zona colpita più duramente sul fiume Bacchiglione. L'intervento del Fondo non ha riguardato l'area di Bassano del Grappa sul Brenta.

2. Le domande di intervento del Fondo devono essere presentate dal paese colpito entro il termine stabilito nel regolamento, ossia dieci settimane dalla data in cui si è verificato il primo danno dovuto alla catastrofe. Non possono essere concesse deroghe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004108/14
to the Commission
Franco Frigo (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Structural damage to the Ponte degli Alpini resulting from flooding between 2010 and 2013: possible use of the EU Solidarity Fund

The Ponte degli Alpini in the northern Italian city of Bassano del Grappa is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, the latest reconstruction of the bridge drew on a late 16th century design by the renowned architect Andrea Palladio. The bridge also stands as a symbol of decisive battles fought during the First World War and of the Italian resistance during World War Two.

The bridge is thus of major historical, artistic and cultural value to Europe as a whole. Efforts to protect something of such importance are therefore in keeping with the objectives of Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, which requires the EU to 'ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

Recent studies and tests have identified flooding of the River Brenta between 2010 and 2013 as a major cause of the bridge's current structural problems.

1. Can the Commission say whether EU Solidarity Fund (EUSF) monies could be used to restore the bridge, given that one of the EUSF's purposes is to fund measures and infrastructure that will help to protect Europe's cultural heritage?

2. Can an exception be made to the rule that funding requests must be submitted within 10 weeks of a flood, given that, although it was discovered only recently, the structural damage to the bridge was caused primarily by the flooding that occurred between 2010 and 2013?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

1. The EU Solidarity Fund may, in principle, be used for the immediate restoration to working order of infrastructure (including bridges) and for the protection of the cultural heritiage. In January 2011, Italy requested financial assistance from the Fund for recovery operations following the 2010 floods in Veneto. An amount of EUR 16.9 million was paid to Italy. In order to meet the conditions of the Fund, the application was limited to the most hard-hit zone on the Bacchilione river. The area of Bassano del Grappa on the Brenta river was not covered by the intervention of the Fund.

2. Requests for Fund assistance have to be made by the affected country within the deadline as set out in the regulation, i.e. 10 weeks after the first damage caused by the disaster. Extensions may not be granted.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004109/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Japan FTA versus Switzerland-Japan FTA

The EU is negotiating an FTA with Japan. What clauses of the Japan-Switzerland FTA does the Commission seek to improve on in the EU's FTA with Japan?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2014)

The Commission aims to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement with Japan which will cater for the interests of the EU. Japan and Switzerland concluded their bilateral FTA based on the pattern of trade between those two countries and the respective weight of their economies and interests. It is therefore of very limited value for the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004110/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-China FTA vs Iceland-China FTA

The EU is negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA) with China. What clauses in the Iceland-China FTA does the Commission seek to improve in its own FTA with China?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The EU is not negotiating a Free Trade Agreement with China. At the November 2013 Summit the EU and China launched negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004111/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU-China FTA vs New Zealand-China FTA

The EU is negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA) with China. What clauses in the New Zealand-China FTA does the Commission seek to improve in its own FTA with China?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The EU is not negotiating a FTA with China. At the November 2013 Summit, the EU and China launched negotiations for a bilateral investment agreement.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-005194/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(17 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Απαγόρευση πρόσβασης στο Twitter και Youtube στην Τουρκία

Η Τουρκική Αρχή Τηλεπικοινωνιών, μετά την απαγόρευση του κοινωνικού δικτύου Twitter, μπλόκαρε και την πρόσβαση στο YouTube για τους τούρκους χρήστες μετά από διοικητική απόφαση, παραβιάζοντας την ελευθερία της έκφρασης και τα ατομικά δικαιώματα των τούρκων πολιτών.

Πώς σχολιάζει η Επιτροπή τη φίμωση του διαδικτύου και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στη χώρα;

Πόσο συνάδει η ανωτέρω συμπεριφορά με υποψήφια προς ένταξη χώρα;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην κοινή απάντησή της στις ερωτήσεις E-001101/2014, E-001308/2014, E-001326/2014, E-001338/2014, E-001502/2014, P-001688/2014, E-001692/2014, E-001723/2014, E-001749/2014, E-001817/2014, E-002036/2014 και E-002174/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004153/14
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Fermeture de Twitter en Turquie

Depuis le 20 mars, les citoyens turcs n'ont plus accès à Twitter et YouTube. C'est une grave atteinte à la liberté pour un pays candidat à l'UE.

Notre voisin, la Turquie, n'a jamais eu autant besoin de nous, nous devons l'aider à surmonter cette crise et à stopper cette répression.

1. Quelle sera votre position quant à la fermeture de ce réseau social?

2. Comptez-vous durcir le ton avec M. Erdogan?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2014)

La Commission renvoie les Honorables Parlementaires à sa réponse commune aux questions E-001101/2014, E-001308/2014, E-001326/2014, E-001338/2014, E-001502/2014, P-001688/2014, E-001692/2014, E-001723/2014, E-001749/2014, E-001817/2014, E-002036/2014 et E-002174/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004153/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Chiusura di Twitter in Turchia

Dal 20 marzo i cittadini turchi non hanno più accesso a Twitter e YouTube. Si tratta di una grave minaccia alla libertà, per un paese candidato all'adesione all'UE.

Il nostro vicino, la Turchia, non ha mai avuto tanto bisogno di noi come adesso, dobbiamo aiutarlo a superare questa crisi e a fermare la repressione.

1. Qual è la posizione del VP/HR per quanto riguarda la chiusura della rete sociale?

2. Intende inasprire i toni con il primo ministro Erdogan?

Risposta congiunta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

La Commissione rinvia gli onorevoli deputati alla sua risposta unica alle interrogazioni E-001101/2014, E-001308/2014, E-001326/2014, E-001338/2014, E-001502/2014, P-001688/2014, E-001692/2014, E-001723/2014, E-001749/2014, E-001817/2014, E-002036/2014 e E-002174/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004203/14
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(3 april 2014)

Betreft: Erdoğan negeert uitspraak van constitutioneel hof; Twitter blijft geblokkeerd

Het constitutionele hof in Turkije stelt dat de blokkade van Twitter een inbreuk op het recht van vrije meningsuiting is. Ondanks de uitspraak van het hof dat Twitter weer dient te worden vrijgegeven, houden de Turkse autoriteiten het sociale medium geblokkeerd.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de uitspraak van het constitutionele hof dat de blokkade van Twitter dient te worden opgeheven ([1])?

2. Wat vindt de Commissie ervan dat de Turkse autoriteiten de uitspraak van het hof negeren en de blokkade van Twitter in stand houden?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat hieruit blijkt dat de Turkse autoriteiten niet alleen lak hebben aan de vrijheid van meningsuiting, maar aldus ook aan de rechtsstaat resp. de scheiding der machten? Zo ja, welke gevolgen heeft dit voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen tussen de EU en Turkije? Zo neen, hoe interpreteert de Commissie deze ontwikkelingen dan wél?

4. Is de Commissie bereid haar gebruikelijke „bezorgd zijn" en haar naïeve „dialogen" met Turkije achterwege te laten en de Turkse autoriteiten luid en duidelijk mede te delen dat Turkije nooit tot de EU dient toe te treden en dat de onderhandelingen aldus definitief worden beëindigd?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(28 mei 2014)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar het gezamenlijke antwoord op de vragen E-001101/2014, E-001308/2014, E-001326/2014, E-001338/2014, E-001502/2014, P-001688/2014, E-001692/2014, E-001723/2014, E-001749/2014, E-001817/2014, E-002036/2014 en E-002174/2014 ([2]).

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/buitenland/22465872/__Twitter_blijft_geblokkeerd__.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004112/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Censorship in Turkey part of a democratic agenda?

1. Given the recent revelation that the Turkish Government is censoring the website YouTube after a video of officials discussing potential military action in Syria was leaked on the site, is it the view of the Commission that Turkey respects and adheres to the democratic values and institutions sponsored by the EU?

2. If the Commission does not believe that Turkey is currently demonstrating proper respect for democratic institutions and values, will the Commission reconsider Turkey's candidacy to the EU?

3. If the Commission does not believe that Turkey is currently demonstrating proper respect for democratic institutions and values, will the Commission reconsider Turkey's pre-accession funding allowance?

Question for written answer E-004153/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Twitter ban in Turkey

Since 20 March, Turkish citizens have been deprived of access to Twitter and YouTube. This is a very serious infringement of individual freedoms in a country seeking EU membership.

Indeed, our neighbour Turkey has never had such great need of us before and we must therefore help it to overcome the current crisis and end the clampdown.

1. What view does the High Representative take of the ban on this social network?

2. Does she intend to adopt a firmer line with Mr Erdogan?

Question for written answer E-004203/14
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Erdoğan's decision to ignore a Constitutional Court judgment; continued blocking of Twitter

The Constitutional Court in Turkey has ruled that the blocking of Twitter breaches freedom of expression. Despite the Court's ruling that the blocking of the social medium should cease, the Turkish authorities are continuing it.

1. Is the Commission aware of the judgment given by the Constitutional Court, ordering that the blocking of Twitter must cease ([1])?

2. What view does the Commission take of the fact that the Turkish authorities are ignoring the Court's judgment and continuing to block Twitter?

3. Does the Commission agree that this shows that the Turkish authorities are indifferent not only to freedom of expression but also to the rule of law and the separation of powers? If so, what consequences will this have for the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey? If not, how then does the Commission interpret these developments?

4. Will the Commission refrain from its customary expressions of 'concern' and its naïve 'dialogues' with Turkey and inform the Turkish authorities loudly and clearly that Turkey should never accede to the EU and that the negotiations are therefore to be permanently terminated?

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/buitenland/22465872/__Twitter_blijft_geblokkeerd__.html

Question for written answer P-005194/14
to the Commission
Sophocles Sophocleous (S&D)
(17 April 2014)

Subject: Banning access to Twitter and YouTube in Turkey

In the wake of the ban on the social network Twitter, the Turkish Telecommunications Authority has also blocked Turkish users' access to YouTube following an administrative decision: such a move represents a violation of the freedom of expression and individual rights of Turkish citizens.

How does the Commission view the gagging of the Internet and social media in Turkey?

How is such behaviour consistent with that expected of a candidate country?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission refers Honourable Members to its joint reply provided to the questions E-001101/2014, E-001308/2014, E-001326/2014, E-001338/2014, E-001502/2014, P-001688/2014, E-001692/2014, E-001723/2014, E-001749/2014, E-001817/2014, E-002036/2014 and E-002174/2014 ([2]).

([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004113/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Lesione della libertà di intervento in assemblea di società quotata

Un grave caso di lesione della libertà di parola a danno di un piccolo azionista, a sua volta portatore delegato di altri piccoli azionisti di una grande società quotata in borsa, la Fiat S.p.A., avvenuto il 31 marzo u.s. ha destato ampia risonanza nell'opinione pubblica italiana ed europea.

In effetti, al piccolo azionista è stato impedito di proseguire il suo intervento allorché stava articolando domande e considerazioni in ordine alle dichiarazioni, dallo stesso ritenute fuorvianti ed ingannevoli verso gli azionisti, rilasciate durante l'assemblea stessa dall'amministratore delegato.

Può la Commissione dire se intende predisporre una direttiva indirizzata all'effettiva tutela della libertà di informazione e di espressione della libera opinione dei piccoli azionisti nel corso delle assemblee delle società quotate europee?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(26 giugno 2014)

La Commissione richiama l'attenzione dell'onorevole parlamentare sulla direttiva 2007/36/CE relativa all'esercizio di alcuni diritti degli azionisti di società quotate, che già garantisce il diritto degli azionisti di ricevere informazioni prima dell'assemblea (art. 5), di iscrivere punti all'ordine del giorno e di presentare proposte di delibera (art. 6) nonché di porre domande (art. 9).

Ai sensi di tale direttiva, ogni azionista ha il diritto di porre domande connesse con i punti all'ordine del giorno dell'assemblea. La società è tenuta a rispondere alle domande poste dagli azionisti. L'articolo 9 specifica che «il diritto di porre domande e l'obbligo di rispondere sono soggetti alle misure che gli Stati membri possono adottare, o consentire alle società di adottare, per garantire l'identificazione degli azionisti, il corretto svolgimento dell'assemblea, la sua preparazione e la tutela della riservatezza e degli interessi delle società. Gli Stati membri possono consentire alle società di fornire una risposta unitaria alle domande dello stesso contenuto.» Lo stesso articolo stabilisce che «gli Stati membri possono prevedere che si consideri fornita una risposta se le informazioni pertinenti sono disponibili sul sito Internet della società in un formato "domanda e risposta".»

Il 9 aprile 2014 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di revisione della direttiva 2007/36/CE intesa ad accrescere in generale la quantità e la qualità delle informazioni fornite agli azionisti e dei diritti loro riconosciuti. Tuttavia la Commissione non ha proposto di rivedere specificamente l'articolo 9 relativo al diritto di porre domande, poiché non vi è alcuna indicazione che il quadro normativo in proposito sia insufficiente.

Spetta in primo luogo alle autorità nazionali e ai giudici nazionali assicurare l'applicazione nei singoli casi delle norme nazionali che recepiscono la direttiva 2007/36/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004113/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Infringement of the freedom to speak in meetings of a listed company

A serious case of infringement of the freedom of speech, which occurred on 31 March 2014, has caused much public comment in Italy and Europe. The injured party was a small shareholder who was also acting as the delegated spokesperson for other small shareholders of Fiat SpA, a major concern listed on the stock exchange.

This small shareholder was prevented from continuing to put questions and points concerning statements made during the meeting by the managing director, and which the former considered deceitful and misleading to shareholders.

Will the Commission draw up a directive to safeguard freedom of information and the freedom of small shareholders to express their opinion during meetings of EU listed companies?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2014)

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to Directive 2007/36/EC on 'the exercise of certain rights of shareholders in listed companies' as it already ensures the right for shareholders to receive information prior to the general meeting (Art. 5), to put items on its agenda and to table draft resolutions (Art. 6) as well as to ask questions (Art. 9).

Under this directive every shareholder has the right to ask questions related to items on the agenda of the general meeting. The company is required to answer the questions put to it by shareholders. Art. 9 specifies that 'the right to ask questions and the obligation to answer are subject to the measures which Member States may take, or allow companies to take, to ensure the identification of shareholders, the good order of general meetings and their preparation and the protection of confidentiality and business interests of companies. Member States may allow companies to provide one overall answer to questions having the same content'. The same article states that 'Member States may provide that an answer shall be deemed to be given if the relevant information is available on the company's Internet site in a question and answer format'.

The Commission adopted on 9 April 2014 a proposal to revise the directive 2007/36/EC, aiming at increasing quantity and quality of information and rights provided to shareholders in general. However, the Commission did not propose to revise Art. 9 on the right to ask questions in particular, since there are no indications that the regulatory framework is insufficient.

It is in the first place for national authorities and national courts to ensure the application of the national law transposing Directive 2007/36/EC in individual cases.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-004114/14
Komisijai
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2014 m. balandžio 2 d.)

Tema: ES finansinė parama Europos atminties ir sąžinės platformai

Savo 2009 m. balandžio 2 d. rezoliucijoje dėl Europos sąžinės ir totalitarizmo Parlamentas ragino sukurti Europos atminties ir sąžinės platformą. Kitos ES institucijos taip pat pareiškė remiančios platformą ir jos veiklą: tai padaryta Bendrųjų reikalų ir išorės santykių tarybos 2009 m. birželio 16 d. išvadose, Komisijos 2010 m. gruodžio 22 d. ataskaitoje Tarybai ir Teisingumo ir vidaus reikalų tarybos 2011 m. birželio 8 d. išvadose.

Atsižvelgiant į Parlamento raginimą, 2011 m. imtasi veiksmų. Šiandien platforma telkia 42 viešas ir nevyriausybines institucijas ir organizacijas iš 13 valstybių narių, taip pat iš Moldovos, Ukrainos, Islandijos, Kanados ir JAV. Ji dažnai organizuoja renginius ir konferencijas, taip pat keliaujančias parodas (kurios buvo eksponuojamos daugybėje valstybių narių sostinių, Europos Parlamente ir Vilniuje 2013 m. rugpjūčio 23 d. minint Europos dieną totalitarinių ir autoritarinių režimų aukoms atminti). Platforma taip pat išleido ir visoje Europoje populiarina mokykloms skirtus skaitinius *Lest We Forget: Memory of Totalitarianism in Europe*.

Ar Komisija galėtų nurodyti, kokią finansinę ES paramą platforma gavo iki šiol ir pagal kokias programas? Kokias kitas ES finansavimo galimybes platforma galėtų naudoti norėdama kreiptis dėl finansinės paramos savo projektams, taip pat savo organizaciniams pajėgumams ir struktūrai stiprinti?

V. Reding atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 11 d.)

2011 m. Europos atminties ir sąžinės platformai pagal programą „Europa piliečiams“ skirta 55 000 EUR (52 proc. tinkamų finansuoti išlaidų) parodai „Totalitarizmas Europoje“ ir mokykloms skirtiems skaitiniams „Lest We Forget: Memory of Totalitarianism in Europe“ – šiuo metu vienam iš esminių platformos projektų.

Kaip ir kitų organizacijų, platformos atstovai gali kreiptis dėl finansavimo pagal antrosios kartos 2014-2020 m. programą „Europa piliečiams“ ([1]). Ieškant kitų finansavimo galimybių, Europos atminties ir sąžinės platformos atstovams galbūt būtų naudinga apsilankyti šioje interneto svetainėje: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en.php.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/future-programme-2014-2020/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004114/14
to the Commission
Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: EU financial support for the Platform of European Memory and Conscience

In its resolution of 2 April 2009 on European conscience and totalitarianism, Parliament called for the establishment of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience. The other EU institutions also expressed support for the platform and its activities, most notably in the conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 16 June 2009, the Commission report to the Council of 22 December 2010 and the conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 8 June 2011.

Parliament's call was acted on in 2011. Today the platform brings together 42 public and non-governmental institutions and organisations from 13 Member States and from Moldova, Ukraine, Iceland, Canada and the USA. It organises numerous events and conferences, along with travelling exhibitions (which were shown in many capitals of the Member States, in the European Parliament, and in Vilnius during the commemoration of the European day of remembrance for the victims of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes on 23 August 2013). The platform has also issued, and promotes across Europe, a reader for schools entitled *Lest We Forget: Memory of Totalitarianism in Europe*.

Can the Commission specify what financial EU support the platform has received so far, and through which programmes? What other EU funding opportunities can the platform use to apply for financial support for its projects and for strengthening its organisational capacity and structure?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Platform of European Memory and Conscience received EUR 55 000 (52% of eligible costs) from the Europe for Citizens programme in 2011 for an exhibition entitled 'Totalitarianism in Europe' and a reader for schools Lest We Forget: Memory of Totalitarianism in Europe — one of the core projects of the Platform to date.

Like other organisations the Platform can apply for funding from the second generation of the Europe or Citizens programme 2014-2020 ([1]). The Platform of European Memory and Conscience may consider useful to visit the following link for other funding opportunities: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en.php

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/future-programme-2014-2020/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004115/14
al Consejo
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Indicadores del Estado español en materia de justicia

En referencia a la pregunta E-011867/2013, la Sra. Reding respondió, en nombre de la Comisión: «El cuadro de indicadores de la UE en materia de justicia ([1]), publicado por la Comisión en marzo de 2013, indicó en qué aspectos podría mejorar la eficacia de la justicia española, teniendo en cuenta la duración relativamente larga de los procesos civiles y mercantiles. No obstante, el cuadro de indicadores de Justicia de la UE no contiene datos sobre la duración de los procedimientos judiciales en materia penal.

En el marco de la información incluida en el cuadro de indicadores de la UE en materia de justicia, el Consejo de la Unión Europea formuló una recomendación específica a España en junio de 2013 a fin de que adoptara y aplicara las reformas en curso para mejorar la eficacia del sistema judicial. Las autoridades españolas están preparando algunas de estas reformas judiciales. En especial, el proyecto de legislación sobre la reorganización de los tribunales y el sistema judicial estaba previsto para finales de 2013. La Comisión está muy atenta a la aplicación de esa recomendación.»

Transcurridos nueve meses desde las recomendaciones del Consejo, ¿qué plazo de tiempo tiene el Estado español para aplicar estas reformas para mejorar la eficacia del sistema judicial?

Respuesta
(16 de junio de 2014)

En julio de 2013, el Consejo formuló a España las siguientes recomendaciones:

«Aprobar, con arreglo al calendario presentado, la reforma de la administración local y elaborar en octubre de 2013 a más tardar un plan de aumento de la eficiencia de toda la administración pública; adoptar y aplicar las reformas en curso para aumentar la eficiencia del sistema judicial ([2]).»

La citada recomendación formaba parte de una serie de nueve recomendaciones formuladas a España durante el Semestre Europeo de 2013, basada en la información presentada en el Programa nacional de reformas de España de 2013.

Dicha recomendación no incluía ningún calendario de ejecución, pero sí se refería a un plan de ejecución presentado en el Programa nacional de reformas de España de 2013.

El seguimiento de las recomendaciones forma parte del proceso regular del Semestre Europeo y, antes de emitir nuevas recomendaciones específicas por país en el marco del Semestre Europeo de 2014, se analizará en detalle la información que presente España en su Programa nacional de reformas de 2014, así como la ejecución de las recomendaciones del Semestre Europeo anterior.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/effective-justice/files/justice_scoreboard_communication_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ES/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0359

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004115/14
to the Council
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Justice Scoreboard for Spain

In her answer to Question E-011867/2013, Mrs Reding stated on behalf of the Commission: 'The EU Justice Scoreboard ([1]) published by the Commission in March 2013 showed areas of possible improvement in the efficiency of the Spanish judiciary in view of relatively lengthy proceedings in civil and commercial cases. Nevertheless, the EU Justice Scoreboard does not contain data on the length of judicial proceedings related to criminal cases.

Within the framework of the data covered by the EU Justice Scoreboard, a country-specific recommendation was addressed by the Council of the European Union to Spain in June 2013 to adopt and implement the ongoing reforms to enhance the efficiency of the judicial system. Some of these judicial reforms are currently under preparation by the Spanish authorities. Notably, draft legislation on court and judiciary reorganisation is scheduled for the end of 2013. The Commission is following closely the implementation of this country-specific recommendation.'

Bearing in mind that nine months have now passed since the Council issued its recommendations, how much time does Spain have to implement these reforms to enhance the efficiency of the judicial system?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

The Council issued the following recommendations for Spain in July 2013:

'Adopt in line with the presented timetable the reform of the local administration and define by October 2013 a plan to enhance the efficiency of the overall public administration. Adopt and implement the on-going reforms to enhance the efficiency of the judicial system ([2]).'

The above recommendation was one of nine recommendations given to Spain under the European semester 2013, based on the information provided under Spain's national reform programme 2013.

The recommendation in question did not specify any timeline for implementation, however it refers to an implementation schedule set out in Spain's national reform programme 2013.

The follow-up of recommendations forms part of the regular European semester process and, prior to issuing new country-specific recommendations under the 2014 European semester, the information provided in Spain's national reform programme 2014 and implementation of earlier European semester recommendations will be analysed in detail.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/effective-justice/files/justice_scoreboard_communication_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0359

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004116/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Indicadores del Estado español en materia de justicia

En referencia a la pregunta E-011867/2013, la Sra. Reding respondió, en nombre de la Comisión: «El cuadro de indicadores de la UE en materia de justicia ([1]), publicado por la Comisión en marzo de 2013, indicó en qué aspectos podría mejorar la eficacia de la justicia española, teniendo en cuenta la duración relativamente larga de los procesos civiles y mercantiles. No obstante, el cuadro de indicadores de Justicia de la UE no contiene datos sobre la duración de los procedimientos judiciales en materia penal.

En el marco de la información incluida en el cuadro de indicadores de la UE en materia de justicia, el Consejo de la Unión Europea formuló una recomendación específica a España en junio de 2013 a fin de que adoptara y aplicara las reformas en curso para mejorar la eficacia del sistema judicial. Las autoridades españolas están preparando algunas de estas reformas judiciales. En especial, el proyecto de legislación sobre la reorganización de los tribunales y el sistema judicial estaba previsto para finales de 2013. La Comisión está muy atenta a la aplicación de esa recomendación.»

Transcurrido un año desde la publicación de la Comisión, ¿qué plazo de tiempo tiene el Estado español para aplicar estas reformas para mejorar la eficacia del sistema judicial?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2014)

De conformidad con el calendario del Semestre Europeo ([2]), los Estados miembros presentan sus reformas y medidas en el mes de abril de cada año (los llamados programas nacionales de reformas). Entre mayo y junio, la Comisión evalúa esos programas y presenta recomendaciones específicas por país, si procede. Las propuestas deben tener en cuenta los progresos, totales o parciales, realizados por los Estados miembros en la aplicación de las recomendaciones específicas por país del año anterior. Posteriormente, el Consejo debate y el Consejo Europeo aprueba las recomendaciones. Por último, el Consejo adopta formalmente las recomendaciones específicas por cada país, a más tardar a principios de julio.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/effective-justice/files/justice_scoreboard_communication_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004116/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Justice Scoreboard for Spain

In her answer to Question E-011867/2013, Mrs Reding stated on behalf of the Commission: 'The EU Justice Scoreboard ([1]) published by the Commission in March 2013 showed areas of possible improvement in the efficiency of the Spanish judiciary in view of relatively lengthy proceedings in civil and commercial cases. Nevertheless, the EU Justice Scoreboard does not contain data on the length of judicial proceedings related to criminal cases.

Within the framework of the data covered by the EU Justice Scoreboard, a country-specific recommendation was addressed by the Council of the European Union to Spain in June 2013 to adopt and implement the ongoing reforms to enhance the efficiency of the judicial system. Some of these judicial reforms are currently under preparation by the Spanish authorities. Notably, draft legislation on court and judiciary reorganisation is scheduled for the end of 2013. The Commission is following closely the implementation of this country-specific recommendation.'

Bearing in mind that a year has now passed since the Commission published this scoreboard, how much time does Spain have to implement these reforms to enhance the efficiency of the judicial system?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

In accordance with the European Semester calendar ([2]), Member States submit their reforms and measures in April of each year (the so-called National Reform Programmes). In May/June, the Commission will assesses these programmes and provide country-specific recommendations as appropriate. Proposals shall take account of total or partial progress made by Member States in complying with country-specific recommendations for the year before. The Council then discusses and the European Council endorse the recommendations. Finally, the Council formally adopt country-specific recommendations in early July by the latest.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/effective-justice/files/justice_scoreboard_communication_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004117/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Cumplimiento de la sentencia del Tribunal Europeo contra España por incumplir la Directiva marco sobre el agua

El 24 de octubre de 2013, el Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea condenó a España por no haber adoptado medidas legislativas para transponer, en lo que respecta a las cuencas hidrográficas intracomunitarias, el artículo 4, apartado 8; el artículo 7, apartado 2; y el artículo 10, apartados 1 y 2, así como las secciones 1.3 y 1.4 del anexo V ([1]) de la Directiva marco sobre el agua. La Comisión ha pedido a España que informe sobre las medidas de aplicación de esas disposiciones.

Con referencia a la pregunta E-013131/2013, el señor Potočnik respondió, en nombre de la Comisión: «En cuanto a la aplicación de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la Unión Europea de 4 de octubre de 2012 (asunto C-403/11), siguen pendientes hasta la fecha once planes hidrológicos de cuenca (…) La Comisión adoptará todas las medidas necesarias para incitar a España a cumplir lo antes posible sus obligaciones a este respecto.»

Dos meses después de la respuesta del comisario, ¿podría indicar la Comisión qué medidas tiene previsto tomar, y en qué plazo de tiempo, para que España cumpla con la sentencia del Tribunal Europeo y por lo tanto con la Directiva marco sobre el agua?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de junio de 2014)

Por lo que se refiere a la aplicación de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia en el asunto C-151/12, la Comisión está examinando en la actualidad la información facilitada por España.

En cuanto a la aplicación de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia en el asunto C-403/11, desde la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-13131/2013 ([2]), España ha adoptado y comunicado los Planes Hidrológicos del Ebro y del Tajo. Por consiguiente, quedan pendientes nueve planes hidrológicos de cuenca: dos en la península (Júcar y Segura) y siete en las Islas Canarias (La Palma, El Hierro, La Gomera, Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura y Lanzarote). En relación con todos los planes se ha iniciado ya la fase de consulta e información del público.

([1]) Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de 24 de octubre de 2013, en el asunto C-151/12 (DO C 367 de 14.12.2013).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004117/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Compliance with the Court of Justice's ruling against Spain for failure to comply with the Water Framework Directive

On 24 October 2013, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled against Spain on the grounds that it had failed to adopt legislative measures to transpose Articles 4(8), 7(2) and 10(1) and (2) of the Water Framework Directive ([1]) and sections 1.3 and 1.4 of Annex V thereto, in respect of intracommunal river basins. The Commission asked Spain to report on the action taken to implement this ruling.

In his answer to Question E-013131/2013, Mr Potočnik stated on behalf of the Commission: 'As regards the implementation of the European Union Court of Justice judgment of 4 October 2012 (Case C-403/11), to date, eleven River Basin Management Plans are still outstanding (…). The Commission will take all necessary steps to encourage Spain to comply within the shortest delay possible.'

Since two months have passed since the Commissioner's answer, can the Commission now say what steps it will take, and in what timeframe, to ensure that Spain complies with the Court's ruling and hence with the Water Framework Directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

As regards the implementation of the judgment of the Court of Justice in Case C-151/12, the Commission is currently assessing the information provided by Spain.

In relation to the implementation of the judgment of the Court of Justice in Case C-403/11, since the reply to the Written Question E-13131/2013 ([2]) Spain has further adopted and communicated the Ebro and Tagus River Basin Management Plans. Therefore, to date, nine River Basin Management Plans are still outstanding: two in mainland (Júcar and Segura) and seven more corresponding to the Canary Islands (La Palma, El Hierro, La Gomera, Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura and Lanzarote). The public information and consultation stage has been initiated for all plans.

([1]) Judgment of the Court of Justice of 24 October 2013 in Case C-151/12 (OJ C 367, 14.12.2013).
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004118/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Cumplimiento del «two pack» por parte del Estado español (II)

Con referencia a la pregunta E-012574/2013, el señor Rehn respondió, en nombre de la Comisión: «El Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 define en su artículo 2, apartado 1, letra a), los criterios que acreditan la independencia o la autonomía funcional de los organismos correspondientes, entre los que se cuentan "iv) procedimientos de nombramiento de sus miembros sobre la base de su experiencia y competencia". En función de parámetros administrativos y políticos nacionales y dentro de las limitaciones del Reglamento, los Estados miembros disponen de cierto margen para adoptar medidas conformes al efecto de crear esos organismos con las suficientes garantías de independencia. En el caso de España, la Comisión todavía no ha evaluado la compatibilidad con el Reglamento de las medidas adoptadas.»

Dos meses después de la respuesta del comisario, ¿podría indicar la Comisión si ya ha evaluado dicha compatibilidad?

En caso afirmativo, ¿está satisfecha la Comisión con el resultado?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2014)

Según la última información presentada a la Comisión por las autoridades españolas, el marco institucional relativo al establecimiento de un organismo independiente (o funcionalmente autónomo) se ha complementado mediante la adopción, a finales de marzo de 2014, del estatuto orgánico de la Autoridad Independiente de Responsabilidad Fiscal, cuya configuración efectiva está en curso.

Por ello, la Comisión está estudiando estos nuevos elementos y evaluando su papel a efectos del cumplimiento por España no solo de las disposiciones del Reglamento (UE) n° 473/2013 y de la Directiva 2011/85/UE sobre los requisitos aplicables a los marcos presupuestarios, así como de los compromisos contraídos por España en el marco del Pacto Presupuestario como parte del Tratado de Estabilidad, Coordinación y Gobernanza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004118/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Spain's compliance with the Two Pack (II)

In his answer to Question E-012574/2013, Mr Rehn stated on behalf of the Commission: 'Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 in its Article 2.1.(a) defines the set of criteria underpinning the independence or functional autonomy of the bodies in question, including "(iv) procedures for nominating members on the basis of their experience and competence". Depending on national political and administrative settings and within the constraints of the regulation, Member States have some leeway to adopt compliant measures to establish such bodies with sufficient guarantees of independence. In the case of Spain, the Commission has not yet assessed the compatibility with the regulation of the measures adopted.'

Since two months have passed since the Commissioner's answer, has the Commission now assessed this compatibility?

If so, is the Commission satisfied with the result?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

According to the latest information made available to the Commission by the Spanish authorities, the institutional setup supporting the establishment of an independent (or functionally autonomous) body has been complemented through the adoption of statutes for an independent fiscal authority at the end of March 2014 and the effective setup of this institution is ongoing.

The Commission is therefore considering these new elements and assessing their role in the compliance of Spain, not only with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 473/2013 but also with Directive 2011/85/EU on requirements for budgetary frameworks and Spain's commitments under the Fiscal Compact as part of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004119/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Cumplimiento de la Directiva 2009/28/CE sobre energía procedente de fuentes renovables

Con referencia a la pregunta E-013346/2013, el señor Oettinger respondió, en nombre de la Comisión: «Tanto Italia como España han respondido a la carta de la Comisión comunicando medidas legislativas adicionales por las que se incorpora a sus respectivos ordenamientos nacionales la Directiva 2009/28/CE, relativa al fomento del uso de energía procedente de fuentes renovables. La Comisión está evaluando las respuestas de ambos Estados miembros y la legislación notificada.»

Dos meses después de la respuesta del comisario, ¿podría indicar la Comisión si la respuesta de ambos Estados miembros es aceptable para cumplir con la Directiva 2009/28/CE?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de mayo de 2014)

Tras evaluar la respuesta al dictamen motivado y las medidas comunicadas por Italia, la Comisión consideró que Italia había cumplido sus obligaciones de transposición y archivó el caso de infracción el 28 de marzo de 2014.

La respuesta y las medidas comunicadas por España aún están siendo evaluadas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004119/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Compliance with Directive 2009/28/EC on energy from renewable sources

In his answer to Question E-013346/2013, Mr Oettinger stated on behalf of the Commission: 'Both Italy and Spain have replied to the Commission's letters by notifying additional legal measures transposing Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of renewable energy sources into national legislation. The Commission is currently assessing the Member States' replies and the notified legislation.'

Two months after the Commissioner's answer, can the Commission now say whether the replies from these two Member States were acceptable in terms of complying with Directive 2009/28/EC?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

After assessing the reply to the reasoned opinion and measures communicated by Italy, the Commission considered that Italy complied with its transposition obligations and closed the infringement case on 28 March 2014.

The reply and measures communicated by Spain are still under assessment.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004120/14
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(2 april 2014)

Betreft: VP/HR — Gebruik van Europese technologie door de Ethiopische regering om bevolking en diaspora te bespioneren

Op 1 april 2014 publiceerde Human Rights Watch een rapport over de manier waarop de regering van Ethiopië de burgers van het land en de Ethiopische diaspora in Europa bespioneert ([1]). Het rapport beschrijft hoe de Ethiopische regering Europese technologie gebruikt om op de computers van Ethiopiërs in Ethiopië zelf en in andere landen binnen te dringen. De ongecontroleerde uitvoer van bewakingstechnologieën en technologieën die een inbreuk kunnen vormen op de persoonlijke levenssfeer is al lang een gapende lacune in de EU-wetgeving, en noch de laatste bijwerking van de verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik, noch de recente bijwerking van de regeling van Wassenaar waren toereikend om deze lacune te dichten.

1. Wat is het standpunt van de VP/HR ten aanzien van dit verslag van Human Rights Watch?

2. Is de VP/HR het ermee eens dat bepaalde uit de EU uitgevoerde bewakingstechnologieën en technologieën die een inbreuk kunnen vormen op de persoonlijke levenssfeer kunnen worden gebruikt voor ernstige schendingen van de mensenrechten en dat deze technologieën ook zouden kunnen worden ingezet tegen de strategische belangen van de EU? Zo niet, waarom niet?

3. Is de VP/HR het ermee eens dat het extreem dringend is om de EU-verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik aan te passen of andere specifieke maatregelen te nemen om dit probleem aan te pakken? Zo niet, waarom niet?

4. Is de VP/HR het ermee eens dat als tijdelijke, zij het onbevredigende oplossing gebruik zou kunnen worden gemaakt van de vangnetbepaling in de verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik? Zo niet, waarom niet?

5. Welke maatregelen denkt de VP/HR te nemen om de uitvoer van de genoemde technologieën naar Ethiopië te voorkomen en Ethiopische burgers in en buiten Ethiopië te beschermen?

6. Wanneer denkt de VP/HR een nieuw voorstel tot wijziging van de verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik in te dienen?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004121/14
aan de Commissie
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(2 april 2014)

Betreft: Gebruik van Europese technologie door de Ethiopische regering om bevolking en diaspora te bespioneren

Op 1 april 2014 publiceerde Human Rights Watch een rapport over de manier waarop de regering van Ethiopië de burgers van het land en de Ethiopische diaspora in Europa bespioneert ([2]). Het rapport beschrijft hoe de Ethiopische regering Europese technologie gebruikt om op de computers van Ethiopiërs in Ethiopië zelf en in andere landen binnen te dringen. De ongecontroleerde uitvoer van bewakingstechnologieën en technologieën die een inbreuk kunnen vormen op de persoonlijke levenssfeer is al lang een gapende lacune in de EU-wetgeving, en noch de laatste bijwerking van de verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik, noch de recente bijwerking van de regeling van Wassenaar waren toereikend om deze lacune te dichten.

1. Wat is het standpunt van de Commissie ten aanzien van dit verslag van Human Rights Watch?

2. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat bepaalde uit de EU uitgevoerde bewakingstechnologieën en technologieën die een inbreuk kunnen vormen op de persoonlijke levenssfeer kunnen worden gebruikt voor ernstige schendingen van de mensenrechten en dat deze technologieën ook zouden kunnen worden ingezet tegen de strategische belangen van de EU? Zo niet, waarom niet?

3. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat het extreem dringend is om de EU-verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik aan te passen of andere specifieke maatregelen te nemen om dit probleem aan te pakken? Zo niet, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat als tijdelijke, zij het onbevredigende oplossing gebruik zou kunnen worden gemaakt van de vangnetbepaling in de verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik? Zo niet, waarom niet?

([1]) http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ethiopia0314_ForUpload_0.pdf
([2]) http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ethiopia0314_ForUpload_0.pdf

5. Welke maatregelen denkt de Commissie te nemen om de uitvoer van de genoemde technologieën naar Ethiopië te voorkomen en Ethiopische burgers in en buiten Ethiopië te beschermen?

6. Wanneer denkt de Commissie een nieuw voorstel tot wijziging van de verordening betreffende producten voor tweeërlei gebruik in te dienen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(13 juni 2014)

De EU volgt de situatie inzake de mensenrechten in Ethiopië op de voet. De EU was niet op de hoogte van de details van het HRW-rapport voordat het werd gepubliceerd, hoewel enkele punten van zorg die hiermee verband houden reeds met de Ethiopische autoriteiten werden besproken.

Wij zijn ervan overtuigd dat een dialoog met de regering en gerichte ontwikkelingshulp de beste manieren zijn om de mensenrechten in Ethiopië te verbeteren. In het rapport is sprake van ernstige schendingen van de mensenrechten door de regering. Wij zullen deze schendingen blijven aanhalen tijdens bijeenkomsten in het kader van de politieke dialoog overeenkomstig artikel 8. Daarnaast ondersteunt de EU ook organisaties en instellingen die in Ethiopië actief zijn op het gebied van mensenrechten.

De bevoegdheid om te beslissen over specifieke uitvoervergunningen ligt bij de nationale autoriteiten die zich hiervoor baseren op een beoordeling per geval van het mogelijke eindgebruik in het land van bestemming. De HV/VV heeft geen bevoegdheid om de uitvoer van deze technologieën naar derde landen stop te zetten. Niettemin erkent de EU de noodzaak om de richtlijn inzake producten voor tweeërlei gebruik aan te passen.

De EU houdt momenteel een evaluatie van het uitvoercontrolebeleid om Verordening 428/2009 bij te werken. Onlangs nog, op 24 april 2014, heeft zij een mededeling goedgekeurd betreffende het inschatten van controlemogelijkheden bij de uitvoer van producten voor tweeërlei gebruik. Hieronder valt ook de uitvoer van technologieën voor grootschalige bewaking naar landen waar deze bij mensenrechtenschendingen kunnen worden ingezet. Deze controlemogelijkheden zullen via een effectbeoordeling worden onderzocht met het oog op een voorstel tot herziening van de verordening in 2015. Intussen hebben de Commissie en de lidstaten de mogelijkheid onderzocht om de uitvoer van bepaalde specifieke producten onder de huidige regeling te beperken. Vanwege de dringende aard van deze kwestie bereidt de Commissie een bijwerking voor van de EU-controlelijst overeenkomstig de recente beslissingen van het Wassenaar Arrangement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004120/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Ethiopian Government using European technology to spy on population and diaspora

On 1 April 2014, Human Rights Watch released a report about how the Government of Ethiopia spies on its citizens and the Ethiopian diaspora in Europe ([1]). The report documents how the Ethiopian Government uses European technologies to infiltrate the computers of Ethiopians in Ethiopia and also in other countries. The uncontrolled export of surveillance and intrusive technologies has been a gaping hole in EU legislation for a long time, and neither the last update to the dual-use regulation nor the recent update to the Wassenaar Arrangement have been sufficient to close that hole.

1. How does the VP/HR asses the report by Human Rights Watch?

2. Does the VP/HR agree that the export of certain surveillance and intrusive technologies from the EU can be used for serious human rights violations and that these technologies could also be used against the EU's strategic interests? If not, why not?

3. Does the VP/HR agree that updating the EU's dual-use regulation or taking specific measures to tackle this problem should be a matter of extreme urgency? If not, why not?

4. Does the VP/HR agree that in the meantime, using the 'catch-all' clause in the dual-use regulation could be a temporary, if unsatisfactory, solution? If not, why not?

5. What action does the VP/HR aim to take to stop the export of these technologies to Ethiopia and to protect Ethiopians at home and abroad?

6. On what timeline does the VP/HR envision coming up with a new proposal to update the dual-use regulation?

Question for written answer E-004121/14
to the Commission
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Ethiopian Government using European technology to spy on population and diaspora

On 1 April 2014, Human Rights Watch released a report about how the Government of Ethiopia spies on its citizens and the Ethiopian diaspora in Europe ([2]). The report documents how the Ethiopian Government uses European technologies to infiltrate the computers of Ethiopians in Ethiopia and also in other countries. The uncontrolled export of surveillance and intrusive technologies has been a gaping hole in EU legislation for a long time, and neither the last update to the dual-use regulation nor the recent update to the Wassenaar Arrangement have been sufficient to close that hole.

1. How does the Commission asses the report by Human Rights Watch?

2. Does the Commission agree that the export of certain surveillance and intrusive technologies from the EU can be used for serious human rights violations and that these technologies could also be used against the EU's strategic interests? If not, why not?

3. Does the Commission agree that updating the EU's dual-use regulation or taking specific measures to tackle this problem should be a matter of extreme urgency? If not, why not?

4. Does the Commission agree that in the meantime, using the 'catch-all' clause in the dual-use regulation could be a temporary, if unsatisfactory, solution? If not, why not?

5. What action does the Commission aim to take to stop the export of these technologies to Ethiopia and to protect Ethiopians at home and abroad?

6. On what timeline does the Commission envision coming up with a new proposal to update the dual-use regulation?

([1]) http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ethiopia0314_ForUpload_0.pdf
([2]) http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ethiopia0314_ForUpload_0.pdf

Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The EU is following closely the human rights situation in Ethiopia. The EU was not aware of the details of the HRW report before its publication, although some related concerns had already been raised with the Ethiopian authorities.

We believe the best way to improve the human rights situation in the country is through dialogue with the Government and targeted development assistance. The report mentions serious allegations of human rights violations by the Government, issues which we will continue to raise during Article 8 political dialogue meetings. The EU also funds organisations and institutions working on human rights in Ethiopia.

The responsibility for deciding on specific export authorisations lies with national authorities, based on a case-by-case assessment of the possible end-use in the country of destination. The HR/VP has no authority to stop exports of these technologies to third countries. Nevertheless, the EU recognises the need to upgrade the dual use regulation.

The EU has initiated an export control policy review to update Regulation 428/2009, and has just adopted, on 24 April 2014, a Communication to assess options for controls on the export of dual-use items, including mass surveillance technologies, to countries where they could be used to violate human rights. These options will be subject to an impact assessment with a view to presenting a proposal for a revised regulation in 2015. In the meantime, the Commission and Member States have examined options for controlling certain specific items under the current provisions. Due to the urgency of the issue, the Commission is preparing an update of the EU control list to bring it in line with recent decisions in the Wassenaar Arrangement.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004125/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Impact of wind turbines on human health and well-being

A number of my constituents have raised concerns regarding the negative impact of wind turbine technology on human health and well-being, in terms of light and noise pollution. I would therefore be interested to know:

1. what research the Commission has commissioned or reviewed to assess the impact of wind turbine technology on all aspects of human health and well-being, in particular in relation to the impact of noise and shadow flicker;

2. the conclusions and recommendations of this research; and

3. what research the Commission is currently undertaking, or planning to undertake in the future, to assess the impact of wind turbine technology on all aspects of human health and well-being, in particular in relation to the impact of noise and shadow flicker.

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission keeps a continuous watch on the possible impacts of wind turbines on health and well-being, taking into account the results from on-going projects and other sources. So far there has been no scientific evidence of lasting impacts ([1]), but there is recognition, also in industry, of public perception of impacts and nuisance.

1. The Commission has funded a large coordination action ([2]) in FP7 ([3]) which reviewed scientific evidence available on potential human health effects of noise in general. In addition, several studies have been performed at national level on the impact of wind turbines on human health.

2. The coordination action concluded, *inter alia*, that 'studies are needed to quantify the impact of emerging noise sources such as [..] wind turbine noise, as well as the effectiveness of intervention measures to reduce noise'.

3. Noise as a determinant of health is addressed in the first work programme of the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge of Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]).

Noise pollution is recognised by the wind power industry, and it is taken into account in the design of new and advanced wind turbines and in on-going and future research and innovation projects. Light pollution (shadow flicker) is taken into account in the planning of new wind farms by project developers.

The Commission is part of a WHO ([5]) committee reviewing the evidence on the influence of wind turbines noise. Stakeholders are involved in this review. Based thereon, the Commission will consider if further action is necessary at EU level, considering that this is subject to subsidiarity.

([1]) A study of the Massachusetts departments of Environmental Protection and Public Health concluded that there is insufficient evidence for a set of health effects from exposure to wind turbines http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/energy/wind/turbine-impact-study.pdf Studies in Australia have come to similar conclusions.
([2]) European Network on Noise and Health — http://www.ennah.eu/assets/files/ENNAH-Final_report_online_19_3_2013.pdf
([3]) The Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([4]) Topic for call for proposals: PHC 31 — 2014 — Foresight for health policy development and regulation (http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/health-demographic-change-and-wellbeing) — evaluations of submitted proposals are on-going.
([5]) World Health Organisation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004126/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Impact of wind turbines on the natural environment

A number of my constituents have conveyed concerns relating to the potential negative impact of wind turbines — both on and offshore — on all aspects of the natural environment and biodiversity, including water quality, flora and fauna, and the marine environment.

I am sure these concerns are not unique to Northern Ireland, particularly regarding the materials used in the construction of turbines and the disturbance caused when constructing foundations. In light of this, I would be interested to know:

1. what research the Commission has requested or reviewed to assess the negative impact of wind turbine technology on all aspects of the natural environment and biodiversity;

2. the conclusions and recommendations of such research; and

3. what research the Commission is planning to conduct in the future relating to the negative impact of wind turbine technology on all aspects of the natural environment and biodiversity?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission attaches great importance to both the protection of the environment and the production of clean renewable energy and believes that these can go hand in hand. In accordance with the EU Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive, potential environmental impacts of wind energy installations are analysed and appropriate mitigation measures are identified in the permitting phase.

1. Several studies have been commissioned in the past and the litterature has been reviewed. One recent study drew attention to issues like concerns for local flora and fauna, noise, and landscape pollution. The potential impacts and related mitigation actions are well known for onshore installations, but less for offshore. Recently, a study has been commissioned on the environmental impacts of marine offshore wind turbines. This study will also include a proposal on further research and innovation actions and will be finalised in spring 2015.

2. The Commission is aware that there are environmental risks resulting from the inappropriate location of wind farms; the Commission nevertheless considers that existing EU environmental legislation provides a sound basis to properly assess the possible impacts of the wind farm projects on the natural and cultural environment. In this context the Commission has already issued guidelines on wind energy and Natura 2000 areas ([1]).

3. A topic on innovative substructure concepts has been included in the first calls for proposals of Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). Within the scope of all projects, especially of demo projects, life-cycle environmental impact is expected to be reduced.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/Wind_farms.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004127/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Marine Strategy Framework Directive

On 20 February 2014, the Commission published a report on 'The first phase of implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive'. As part of the Marine Directive, Member States are tasked with achieving Good Environmental Status for EU marine waters by 2020. This report outlines progress towards that goal, and the findings are stark — Member States have been accused of adopting a 'pick and choose' approach to certain EU standards, whilst in some Member States environmental targets are deemed to be insufficient to qualify for Good Environmental Status.

In essence, the report says that Member States 'must do better'. Taking into account the 'Healthy Oceans — Productive Ecosystems' conference in Brussels of 3 and 4 March 2014, what strategies does the Commission have in place to ensure that Member States meet the Good Environmental Status target by 2020? Is the Commission considering revising these targets in light of the findings of this progress report?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

Anticipating the results of the European Commission's report ([1]) on the first phase of implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) ([2]), a number of concrete initiatives have already been put into place:

— The Common Implementation Strategy for the MSFD has been adapted to new challenges and a new work programme has been developed for 2014-2018.

— Additional support for implementation has been made available to Member States, under the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy.

— Steps have been taken to simplify the reporting obligations of Member States.

The Commission also made a number of recommendations addressed to Member States in the report on the first phase of implementation of the MSFD. They provide a framework for gradually improving MSFD implementation. If implemented fully and rapidly by all, through increased regional cooperation, the recommendations will help achieve the required urgent policy step-change and will improve the way we jointly address the protection of our oceans and seas in the little time left before 2020. The Commission currently has no intention to make a proposal to postpone the 2020 target, which is laid down in Directive 2008/56/EC.

([1]) COM/2014/097.
([2]) Directive 2008/56/EC, OJ L 164/19, 25.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004128/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Socioeconomic costs of renewable energy

Due to entry barriers associated with renewable energy technology, financial incentives are often given to encourage the use of such technology.

A number of my constituents have raised concerns that the costs of making and distributing renewable energy technology are subsequently passed on to the consumer. Moreover, many people in Northern Ireland claim that these costs to the consumer have perversely contributed to, rather than alleviated, instances of fuel poverty. I would therefore be interested to know:

1. what research has been commissioned or reviewed by the Commission regarding the wider socioeconomic consequences of renewable energy and more specifically the imposition of mandatory renewable targets, in particular in relation to wind turbines; and

2. the conclusions and recommendations of said research.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

A large number of studies has been undertaken to measure the socioeconomic impacts of the development of renewable energy sources. However, mostly the effect of renewable energy is not assessed in isolation but together with other options allowing achievement of the EU objectives of Climate and Energy policy. In particular, these reports usually do not contain disaggregated figures relating to individual energy sources such as wind.

In 2008 the Commission published an impact assessment for the implementation measures of the 2020 energy and climate package, including the Renewable Energy Directive where the mandatory national targets for the share of renewable energy are enshrined ([1]). This analysis, which also includes an assessment of socioeconomic impacts of different policy options, concluded on the overall cost-effectiveness of the approach chosen in the climate and energy package including the mandatory renewable energy targets.

The Commission also invites the Honourable Member to consult its recent impact assessment accompanying the Commission Communication 'A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 up to 2030' ([2]), which provides extensive comparisons of various targets.

As far as the costs of supporting renewable energy are concerned, an overview can be found in the Commission's recent energy prices and costs report ([3]). However, in order to fully assess the impact of renewable energy promotion schemes on consumer expenditure, it has to be taken into account that renewable energy tends to lower wholesale market prices for electricity which will to a certain extent offset direct support costs.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/package/docs/climate_package_ia_annex_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/2030/docs/swd_2014_xxx_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/2030/docs/swd_2014_xxx_en.pdf cf. p. 42.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004129/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Foreign language learning

Eurostat figures on foreign languages learned per pupil in upper secondary education between 2005 and 2010 show a marked decrease across the then EU-27 in the rates of pupils learning French and German. Nowhere is this more stark than in the UK, where the percentage of pupils learning French between 2005 and 2010 fell from 40% to 27%, and the percentage of pupils learning German fell from just 15% to 10%. English-speaking regions are fortunate, given that in Member States where English is a second language there is an extraordinarily high level of proficiency in English (93% in 2010).

As French and German are two of the main working languages of the EU, does the Commission have any plans or targets to encourage an increase in the number of pupils learning these languages at upper secondary education level?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

Although the study of French and German has declined across the EU, both are still among the most frequently taught foreign languages. In the UK, the negative trend in foreign language learning seems to be broken, with an increase in 2013 of 16% in the number of pupils taking a foreign language in their basic exams at lower secondary level. According to official UK sources, 48% of all students took a GCSE ([1]) qualification in a language and 85% of these were in French, German or Spanish.

The role of the Commission is to support and complement national educational policies with a view to achieving the EU-wide objective of enabling every European citizen to learn two foreign languages. This objective was defined by the European Council in 2002 and does not single out any particular languages.

In this framework, the Commission has produced communications and reports focusing on the role of languages and has emphasised the importance of good foreign language skills. The most recent was the Staff Working Document on language competences for employability, mobility and growth in 2012 ([2]).

The Commission will continue to promote multilingualism and the teaching of foreign languages through the Erasmus+ programme. The programme provides funding for a number of different activities related to foreign language learning, such as creative language teaching projects, and linguistic support for mobility of students.

([1]) General Certificate of Secondary Education.
([2]) Launched with the Rethinking Education strategy: http://ec.europa.eu/languages/policy/strategic-framework/rethinking-education_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004130/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: European arrest warrant

On 26 February 2014, Parliament debated the Commission's proposed review of the European arrest warrant. In my own constituency of Northern Ireland, the European arrest warrant has been extremely effective in apprehending criminals, organised gangs and terrorists who either fled from or fled to the Republic of Ireland. The cooperation between the two Member States engendered by the European arrest warrant, particularly between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and An Garda Síochána, has been remarkable given the recent history of the border regions.

In light of the proposed review of the European arrest warrant, could the Commission provide more information on how non-EU countries could participate in this system? How would the procedures change in relationships between a non-EU country and a Member State? Furthermore, would a separate agreement on the surrender procedure, similar to that with Norway and Iceland, need to be negotiated?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's comments about the success of the European arrest warrant (EAW) system and welcomes the close cooperation between the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom in operating the EAW in Northern Ireland. The EAW is an EU 'surrender' agreement 'based on a high level of confidence between Member States' ([1]) all of whom are bound by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and are signatories to the European Convention of Human Rights. The importance of such common minimum standards is reflected in the agreed ([2]) and pending ([3]) EU legislation on procedural rights in criminal proceedings, which include some EAW-specific provisions. In this context it is possible to have closer cooperation than in traditional 'extradition' agreements.

For non-EU countries to be associated with the EAW, a legal mechanism such as the agreement between the EU and Iceland and Norway ([4]) would be required. In addition to this legal mechanism, a pre-requisite for such close cooperation would be a similar level of confidence between participating states that underpins the EAW in particular in relation to respect for fundamental rights.

([1]) Recital 10 of Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA of 13 June 2002 on the European arrest warrant. OJ L190 18.7.2002.
([2]) Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation, Directive 2012/13/EU on the right to information, Directive 2013/48/EU on the right of access to a lawyer.
([3]) Proposals for Directives on procedural rights for children in criminal proceedings (COM(2013)822/2), on the presumption of innocence (COM(2013)821/2) and on legal aid (COM(2013)824).
([4]) Agreement of 28 June 2006 between the European Union and the Republic of Iceland and the Kingdom of Norway on the surrender procedure between the Member States of the European Union and Iceland and Norway. OJ L 292, 21.10.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004131/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Adolescent self-harm

New research in my own constituency has found that one in ten adolescents self-harms. The findings indicate that this is due to a variety of factors such as bullying, sexual and physical abuse and alcohol and drug abuse. According to the study, there are also new associated risk factors, namely the emergence of social media and past exposure to the Northern Ireland conflict.

The one in ten figure was both lower than in neighbouring Member States, and unexpected given that Northern Ireland has high rates of hospital-treated self-harm and some of the highest rates of mental disorders in Europe. Indeed, researchers believe the discrepancy is due to the fact that as a result of the conflict, young people in Northern Ireland are more reluctant to disclose personal information, thus masking the true extent of the problem.

This unwillingness to discuss mental health among adolescents will not be unique to my constituency, even if the determinants of its prevalence may be. Does the Commission have any strategies in place to tackle the problem of adolescent self-harm across Europe? While I am aware of the programme called 'The European Network for Traumatic Stress — Training and Practice', does the Commission have any educational mental health programmes directed specifically at adolescents?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

It falls under the responsibility of Member States to consider putting in place strategies against self-harm among adolescents.

To support Member States ' action, the Commission is co-financing a Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being ([1]) (2013-2016), through the EU-Health Programme. This joint action includes a work package dedicated to 'Mental Health and Schools'.

In addition, the Commission is supporting a preparatory action (2013-2015) to create an EU network of expertise to promote and sustain adapted and innovative care structures for adolescents with mental health problems ([2]).

The Commission has supported a number of projects in this area through the EU Heath Programme. These have resulted, for example, in producing a 'Handbook for Mental Health Promotion in the Educational Setting' ([3]) and the website 'Supremebook.org' ([4]) which disseminates information and awareness about mental health to young people.

Under the 7th Research Framework Programme, the SEYLE-project ([5]) further created a website about ways to promote the health of adolescents through the prevention of risk-taking and self-destructive behaviours. Furthermore, Safer Internet Centres provide support through national networks of helplines; they raise awareness and offer advice to minors, parents and teachers of how to manage different risks online.

Finally, the recent Commission Recommendation 'Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage' calls on Member States to improve the responsiveness of their health systems to the needs of disadvantaged children and to devote special attention to children with disabilities or mental health problems, undocumented or non-registered children, pregnant teenagers and children from families with a history of substance abuse ([6]).

([1]) http://www.mentalhealthandwellbeing.eu/
([2]) http://www.actionforteens.eu/projects/adocare
([3]) http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net/?i=handbook
([4]) http://www.supremebook.org/
([5]) http://www.seyle.eu/
([6]) http://europa.eu/epic/about/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004132/14
alla Commissione
Antonio Cancian (PPE)
(2 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali

Da segnalazioni provenienti dai cittadini emerge che i titoli di studio riguardanti un'istruzione superiore non universitaria costituiscono tuttora una materia controversa, specialmente per quanto ne riguarda l'equiparazione e il mutuo riconoscimento.

Nel caso specifico, ci risulta che in Germania è possibile frequentare scuole specializzate in infermeria geriatrica; al termine di tale formazione viene riconosciuto il titolo professionale di infermiere geriatrico (Altenpfleger) che, pur essendo inferiore a un diploma di laurea, è comunque una specializzazione ulteriore rispetto al semplice diploma di scuola media superiore.

In Italia una simile specializzazione non esiste; a quanti hanno conseguito il titolo in oggetto in Germania viene riconosciuta la qualifica di operatore socio-sanitario, la quale è però, di fatto, inferiore a quella di Altenplefeger, poiché si ottiene con il diploma di scuola media superiore.

Questo mancato riconoscimento e l'equiparazione con un titolo sostanzialmente inferiore, che non tiene conto del percorso di studi e delle competenze acquisite, rappresenta senza dubbio un ostacolo alla libertà per i cittadini europei di stabilirsi in un qualsiasi Stato membro senza vedersi penalizzati.

Si chiede pertanto alla Commissione quale procedura i cittadini in questione debbano seguire per vedersi riconosciuta la professionalità acquisita o, nel caso in cui ciò non fosse possibile, se non ritiene essa che questa rappresenti una violazione dei diritti dei cittadini comunitari?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2014)

Nei casi in cui un cittadino dell'UE intende esercitare una professione regolamentata in uno Stato membro diverso da quello in cui ha ottenuto la qualifica, si applica la direttiva 2005/36/CE ([1]). Tale direttiva contiene requisiti minimi di formazione armonizzati per sette professioni settoriali (fra cui infermiere responsabile dell'assistenza generale), che consentono il riconoscimento automatico di tali qualifiche.

Benché la direttiva non preveda il riconoscimento automatico per gli infermieri geriatrici (*Altenpfleger*), questi professionisti godono del cosiddetto sistema generale di riconoscimento. L'autorità competente dello Stato membro ospitante raffronta la formazione del professionista ai requisiti di formazione nazionali per un dato lavoro. In caso di differenze sostanziali, può imporre misure di compensazione prima di accordare il riconoscimento. Il riconoscimento di una particolare qualifica può essere negato solo in caso di considerevoli differenze nella formazione ([2]).

Per il riconoscimento delle qualifiche il professionista deve contattare le autorità dello Stato membro ospitante. Per informazioni può anche rivolgersi ai punti di contatto nazionali, elencati sul nostro sito web ([3]).

Gli effetti del riconoscimento delle qualifiche da parte dello Stato membro ospitante dipendono in larga misura dal modo in cui è organizzato il sistema sanitario nazionale sul territorio. Fatte salve alcune eccezioni per le sette professioni settoriali, ogni Stato membro ha competenza esclusiva a decidere com'è organizzata ogni professione, qual è il livello di qualifiche richiesto e quali attività può comprendere ciascuna professione sul suo territorio.

La direttiva, quale recentemente riveduta, prevede anche che, a certe condizioni, gli Stati membri concedano accesso parziale alle attività professionali sul loro territorio ([4]).

([1]) Direttiva 2005/36/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 7 settembre 2005, relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali (GU L 255 del 30.9.2005, pag. 22).
([2]) Ad es. quando il livello di qualifica è inferiore al livello immediatamente anteriore a quello richiesto nello Stato membro ospitante (cfr. l'articolo 13 della direttiva).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/contact/national_contact_points_en.htm
([4]) La direttiva è stata riveduta dalla direttiva 2013/55/UE, entrata in vigore il 17 gennaio 2014, che deve essere attuata dagli Stati membri entro il 18 gennaio 2016.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004132/14
to the Commission
Antonio Cancian (PPE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Recognition of professional qualifications

It is clear from reports from private individuals that the situation as regards the equivalence and mutual recognition of non-university higher education qualifications remains far from satisfactory.

The case in point concerns people in Germany who have trained in specialised geriatric nursing schools after leaving secondary school. On completion of the course, they are awarded the professional qualification of geriatric nurse (Altenpfleger), which, although not on the same level as a university degree, is a specialised post-secondary qualification.

There is no such qualification in Italy, where the German geriatric nurse qualification is recognised as equivalent to that of healthcare worker, for which all that is required is an upper secondary school leaving certificate, and which is therefore of a lower level.

This failure to recognise the proper value of educational qualifications gained in another Member State and to take proper account of the training undergone and the skills acquired in obtaining them is clearly a barrier to EU citizens' freedom to settle and work in any Member State without being penalised.

Can the Commission say what procedure the people concerned should follow in order to secure proper recognition of their professional skills and, if no such procedure exists, whether it would not agree that its absence constitutes a breach of EU citizens' rights?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2014)

Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) applies to cases where a national of an EU Member State (MS) wishes to pursue a regulated profession in another MS than the one where s/he obtained the qualification. This directive contains harmonised minimum training requirements for 7 sectoral professions (including nurses for general care), which allows for automatic recognition of these qualifications.

Although the directive does not provide automatic recognition for nurses specialised in elderly care (Altenpfleger), these professionals benefit from the so-called general system of recognition. The competent authority of the host country shall compare the training of a professional with its national training requirements for a given profession. In case of substantial differences, the authority in the host country may impose compensation measures before granting recognition. Only in cases where the differences in training are considerable, ([2]) recognition of a particular qualification can be refused.

The professional should contact the authorities in the host country for the recognition of his/her professional qualifications. Information can also be provided by the national contact points, listed on our website. ([3])

The effects of any recognition of qualifications by the host country largely depend on how the national health system is organised in its territory. With some exceptions for 7 sectoral professions, it is in the sole competence of each MS to decide how each profession is organised, what the required level of qualifications is and what activities each profession can assume in its territory.

The directive as recently revised also provides that under certain conditions, MS shall grant partial access to professional activities in their territory. ([4])

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255/22, 30.9.2005.
([2]) E.g. the level of qualifications is lower than the level which is immediate prior to what is required in the host country (see Article 13 of the directive).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/contact/national_contact_points_en.htm
([4]) The directive has been revised by Directive 2013/55/EC, which entered into force on 17 January 2014 and should be implemented by the Member States by 18 January 2016.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004133/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2. April 2014)

Betrifft: Regelung des Umgangs mit Nanopartikeln in Lebensmitteln

Bereits seit mehreren Jahren steht das Thema von Nanopartikeln bei Nahrungsmitteln im Fokus von Presse und Öffentlichkeit. Sorge bereitet hier insbesondere die Frage der Langzeitfolgen des Konsums derartiger Produkte. Auf europäischer Ebene wird das Thema „Nano-Food" im Rahmen der Überarbeitung der Novel- Food- Verordnung von 1997 (Nr. 258/ 97) behandelt.

1. Wurden von der Kommission Anstrengungen unternommen, zu eigenen und unabhängigen Untersuchungsergebnissen hinsichtlich der gesundheitlichen Langzeitfolgen von Nanobeigaben zu Lebensmitteln, insbesondere Titandioxid und Siliziumdioxid, zu gelangen? Wenn nein, worauf gründet sich der Informationsstand zu den Konsequenzen des Konsums?

2. Wie reagiert die Kommission auf die Vorwürfe seitens der Presse (zuletzt abgerufen am 2. April 2014), wonach sich die Expertengruppe, welche sich im Mai 2013 zur Frage der Definition des Begriffs „Nano" im Zusammenhang mit Lebensmitteln aussprach, ausschließlich aus Vertretern der Lebensmittelindustrie rekrutierte? Falls die Darstellung der Presse nicht den Tatsachen entspricht, nach welchen Kriterien erfolgte die Auswahl der Gruppenteilnehmer?

3. Falls die Kommission weiterhin Handlungsbedarf bei der Regelung des Umgangs mit Nanopartikeln sieht, welche weiteren Schritte sind für eine legislative Regelung des Inverkehrbringens und Konsums derartiger Stoffe geplant? Falls nicht, was spricht für die Unbedenklichkeit derartiger Produkte?

4. Welche gesundheitlichen Auswirkungen sind der Kommission bislang bekannt, die auf eine potentielle Gefährlichkeit des Konsums von mit Nanopartikeln behandelten Lebensmitteln durch Schwangere schließen lassen?

5. Wie gedenkt die Kommission den Umgang mit Nanopartikeln, welche der Beschichtung von Geräten und Gegenständen, die der Herstellung bzw. Aufbewahrung von Lebensmitteln dienen, zu regeln?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juni 2014)

1. Die Kommission hat über ihr 7. Forschungsrahmenprogramm mehr als 175 Mio. EUR für unabhängige Projekte zur Erforschung der ökologischen und gesundheitlichen Auswirkungen von Nanomaterialien bereitgestellt. In mehreren Projekten wurden die gesundheitlichen Auswirkungen von Titandioxid und Siliciumdioxid untersucht. Über die Ergebnisse können Sie sich auf folgender Website informieren:

http://www.nanosafetycluster.eu/home/european-nanosafety-cluster-compendium.html

2. Die Kommission hat im Mai 2013 eine Arbeitsgruppe der Beratenden Gruppe für die Lebensmittelkette sowie für Tier- und Pflanzengesundheit konsultiert, um sowohl Interessenträger aus Verbraucherkreisen als auch der Lebensmittelindustrie zu hören. Darüber hinaus hat sie vier Treffen mit von den Mitgliedstaaten benannten Sachverständigen organisiert, zu denen auch das Europäische Parlament geladen war.

3. Die Kommission hat bei ihrer zweiten Überprüfung zum Thema Nanomaterialien ([1]) bewertet, inwieweit die EU-Rechtsvorschriften für Nanomaterialien angemessen sind und wie sie umgesetzt werden, und entsprechende Folgemaßnahmen dargelegt. Sie setzt sich für eine effektive Umsetzung der Rechtsvorschriften ein, indem sie beispielsweise die Validierung von Analyseverfahren für Nanopartikel in Lebensmittelmatrizen unterstützt.

4. Die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) hat 2011 in einer Stellungnahme ([2]) bestätigt, dass die zur Bewertung chemischer Stoffe in Lebensmitteln durchgeführte Risikobewertung auch für Nanomaterialien geeignet ist, deren Behandlung im Einzelfall festzulegen ist. Mit einer solchen Bewertung müsste festgestellt werden, ob eine spezifische Gefahr für Schwangere besteht.

5. Die sichere Verwendung von Materialien und Gegenständen, die dazu bestimmt sind, mit Lebensmitteln in Berührung zu kommen, ist durch die allgemeinen Bestimmungen gewährleistet, die in der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1935/2004 ([3]) festgelegt sind. Spezifische Regelungen für Materialien aus Kunststoff sowie aktive und intelligente Materialien sehen darüber hinaus vor, dass Stoffe mit Nanostruktur vor ihrer Zulassung einer Sicherheitsbewertung unterzogen werden.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission über die zweite Überprüfung der Rechtsvorschriften zu Nanomaterialien, KOM(2012)572 endg.
([2]) Wissenschaftliche Stellungnahme „Guidance on the risk assessment of the application of nanoscience and nanotechnologies in the food and feed chain" („Leitfaden für die Risikobewertung bei der Anwendung der Nanowissenschaft und Nanotechnologien in der Futter- und Nahrungsmittelkette"), EFSA Journal 2011;9(5):2140.
([3]) ABl. L 338 vom 13.11.2004, S. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004133/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Regulating the use of nanoparticles in food

Over the past few years nanoparticles in food have been a subject that has attracted a great deal of press coverage and public attention. One matter of particular concern is the long-term effects of consuming products made using technology applications of this kind. At European level 'nanofood' is being dealt with in the revision of the 1997 Novel Food Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 258/97).

1. Has the Commission attempted to obtain its own and independent research findings on the long-term health effects of nanomaterials added to food, in particular titanium dioxide and silicon dioxide? If the answer is no, what is the basis of the information now available on the effects of consuming the foods in question?

2. How does the Commission respond to press allegations (last accessed on 2 April 2014) that the panel of experts which in May 2013 discussed how to define the term 'nano' for food purposes was staffed solely by food industry representatives? Assuming that the press reports are inaccurate, what criteria were used to select the experts involved?

3. If the Commission considers that more needs to be done to regulate the use of nanoparticles, what other steps will be taken to bring legal regulation to bear on the marketing and consumption of such substances? If it does not see a need for further action, what evidence does it have that the products concerned are harmless?

4. In the light of the Commission's present knowledge of individual health effects, is there any reason to suppose that the consumption of foods treated with nanoparticles might be dangerous for pregnant women?

5. How does the Commission intend to regulate the use of nanoparticles used to coat food manufacturing or storage equipment and articles?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

1. Through its 7th Research Framework Programme, the Commission has funded independent research projects on the environmental and health effects of nanomaterials with more than EUR 175 million. Several projects have addressed the health effects of titanium dioxide and of silicon dioxide. Information on the results are available in the website: http://www.nanosafetycluster.eu/home/european-nanosafety-cluster-compendium.html

2. In May 2013 the Commission consulted a Working Group of the Advisory Group of the Food Chain and Animal and Plant Health in order to consult stakeholders representing consumers and the food industry. Moreover, the Commission held four Expert Groups with experts appointed by the Member States to which the European Parliament was also invited.

3. In its 2nd Regulatory Review on Nanomaterials ([1]), the Commission assessed the adequacy and implementation of EU legislation for nanomaterials indicating follow-up actions. The Commission is committed to effective implementation of the legislation,such as supporting validation of analytical methods for nanoparticles in food matrices.

4. EFSA in its 2011 opinion ([2]) confirmed that the risk assessment paradigm used for the evaluation of chemicals in food is also appropriate for nanomaterials, which need a case-by-case approach. Such an evaluation would be needed to determine whether a specific danger exist for preganant women.

5. The safe use of materials and articles in contact with food is ensured by general provisions in Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 ([3]). Also specific measures on plastic and active and intelligent materials require the safety assessment of substances in nanoform prior to authorisation.

([1]) The Commission Communication on the Second Regulatory Review on Nanomaterials, COM(2012) 572 final.
([2]) Scientific opinion on 'Guidance on the risk assessment of the application of nanoscience and nanotechnologies in the food and feed chain' (2011), 9(5):2140.
([3]) OJ L 338, 13.11.2004, p. 4.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004134/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(2 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Trabajo forzado en Corea del Norte

El 17 de febrero de 2013, la comisión de investigación de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos humanos en la República Popular Democrática de Corea emitió su informe final, en el que se describía el trabajo forzado de presos políticos en minas:

«Todos los reclusos están sometidos a trabajo forzado. Por lo general trabajan doce horas o más todos los días de la semana, incluso aunque estén muy enfermos. […] Las tareas que más temen los reclusos son las realizadas en minas y zonas de tala situadas en las instalaciones de algunos de los campos. Allí los reclusos tienen que trabajar sin descanso tan solo con herramientas básicas y en condiciones especialmente peligrosas. Con frecuencia se producen accidentes mortales como resultado de la combinación del pésimo estado físico de los presos y de la ausencia de medidas de seguridad.»

La conclusión del informe fue la siguiente: «Basándose en los testimonios y la información recibidos, la Comisión declara que las autoridades de la RPDC han cometido y cometen crímenes contra la humanidad en los campos de presos políticos, incluidos el exterminio, el asesinato, la esclavización, la tortura, el encarcelamiento, la violación y otros tipos de violencia sexual grave, y la persecución por motivos políticos, religiosos y de sexo.»

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión la intención de prohibir las importaciones de recursos minerales norcoreanos que son en gran medida el producto de crímenes contra la humanidad?

2. ¿Tiene la Comisión la intención de prohibir las inversiones en el sector minero norcoreano, en el que está extendido el trabajo forzado?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de mayo de 2014)

La UE está perfectamente al tanto del informe de la Comisión de investigación de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos humanos en la República Popular Democrática de Corea (RPDC). De hecho, coinició la Resolución del Consejo de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas que estableció en marzo de 2013 la citada Comisión.

La UE aplica actualmente un régimen de medidas restrictivas con respecto a la República Popular Democrática de Corea que contiene las sanciones impuestas por las Naciones Unidas en respuesta a los programas de armas de destrucción masiva y de misiles balísticos de dicho país, e incluye medidas restrictivas adicionales que refuerzan las medidas de las Naciones Unidas. En febrero de 2013, la UE impuso una prohibición del comercio de oro, metales preciosos y diamantes con el Gobierno de la República Popular Democrática de Corea, sus organismos públicos y el Banco Central de la República Popular Democrática de Corea, o las personas y entidades que actúen en su nombre o bajo su dirección.

En sus recomendaciones, la Comisión de investigación de las Naciones Unidas no apoyó las sanciones dirigidas contra la población o la economía de la República Popular Democrática de Corea en su conjunto. Actualmente no hay en estudio nuevas medidas restrictivas de la UE. La UE trabajará con todos sus socios y, en especial, las Naciones Unidas, para garantizar un seguimiento adecuado de las conclusiones y recomendaciones de la Comisión de Investigación.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004134/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Forced labour in North Korea

On 17 February 2014, the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea released its final report describing forced labour of political prisoners in mines.

The report stated: 'All inmates are subjected to forced labour. They generally work 12 hours or more every day of the week, even if they are very sick. … The assignments most feared by inmates are in the mines and logging sites that are located on the premises of some of the camps. There, inmates have to toil with only basic tools in particularly dangerous conditions. Deadly work accidents frequently occur as a result of the combination of the prisoners' dire physical condition and the lack of safety measures'.

It concluded: 'Based on the body of testimony and information received, the Commission finds that DPRK authorities have committed and are committing crimes against humanity in the political prison camps, including extermination, murder, enslavement, torture, imprisonment, rape and other grave sexual violence and persecution on political, religious and gender grounds'.

1. Does the Commission intend to prohibit the importing of North Korean mineral resources that are largely products of crimes against humanity?

2. Does the Commission intend to prohibit investment in the North Korean mining sector where forced labour is prevalent?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The EU is well aware of the report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In fact, it co-initiated the UN Human Rights Council resolution that, in March 2013, established the said Commission.

The EU has currently in place a regime of restrictive measures with respect to the DPRK that implements the sanctions imposed by the United Nations in response to the DPRK's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes and includes additional restrictive measures reinforcing the UN measures. In February 2013, the EU imposed a ban on trade in gold, precious metals and diamonds with the Government of the DPRK, its public bodies and the Central Bank of the DPRK, or persons and entities acting on their behalf or at their direction.

In its recommendations the UN Commission of Inquiry did not support sanctions targeted against the population or the economy of the DPRK as a whole. New EU restrictive measures are currently not under consideration. The EU will work with all its partners, and especially the UN, to ensure an appropriate follow-up to the Commission of Inquiry's findings and recommendations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004135/14
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Students studying in other EU Member States

Under the principle of freedom of movement, EU university students have the right to study in another Member State and to pay the same course fees as domestic students from that country. However, they are not entitled to the same support or maintenance grants or loans as domestic students. Each Member State appears to set its own standards, and this even varies between universities in the same Member State.

1. What is the Commission doing to help students who are denied funding both in their home country and in their country of study?

2. Is the Commission planning any measures to address these differences in entitlements between Member States in the future?

3. Are exemptions from local community taxes for domestic students but not other EU students legal under EC law?

4. To what extent are EU universities allowed to provide student benefits (e.g. free transport passes, special subsidies for activities, etc.) to domestic students but not to EU students?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

To respond to the need of students who are unable to fund their master studies abroad, the Commission has developed a loan scheme within the framework of Erasmus+: Master Loans will be offered to mobile students on favourable conditions.

According to Article 24 ([1]) of Directive 2004/38/EC ([2]) the country of study is not obliged to provide maintenance aid for studies, even if the student's country of origin does not provide such aid. The Commission cannot intervene to address the differences in entitlements between Member States, because — apart from the abovementioned trans-border provision — the national systems of maintenance aid for the purpose of studies are a matter of national competence.

In accordance with the case-law of the European Court of Justice ([3]), the meaning of 'maintenance aid for studies' must be interpreted narrowly: any public ([4]) maintenance aid for studies other than 'student grants or student loans' is not covered by the exception of the abovementioned Article 24.2 and must be granted following the principle of equal treatment between national and other EU students. In particular, the Court decided that reduced transport fares must be granted following this principle. If non-public universities provide student benefits to domestic students only, Member States cannot be held responsible for a practice of organisations functioning under the principle of independence.

Under the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, Member States are not allowed to design their tax systems discriminating against the nationals of other Member States who are the same situation as domestic citizens. Therefore, exemptions from local community taxes for domestic students should also be applied to EU students, if they fulfil all the relevant conditions other than the nationality.

([1]) Article 24 reads as follows:
'1. Subject to such specific provisions as are expressly provided for in the Treaty and secondary law, all Union citizens residing on the basis of this directive in the territory of the host Member State shall enjoy equal treatment with the nationals of that Member State within the scope of the Treaty. The benefit of this right shall be extended to family members who are not nationals of a Member State and who have the right of residence or permanent residence.
2. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, the host Member State shall not be obliged to confer entitlement to social assistance during the first three months of residence or, where appropriate, the longer period provided for in Article 14(4)(b), nor shall it be obliged, prior to acquisition of the right of permanent residence, to grant maintenance aid for studies, including vocational training, consisting in student grants or student loans to persons other than workers, self-employed persons, persons who retain such status and members of their families'.

([2]) Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29.4.2004 on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

([3]) Judgment of the Court of 4.10.2012, Commission v Austria.

([4]) I.e., either given by the State itself or by public entities, including local authorities, directly or even indirectly — e.g. tax exemptions.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004136/14
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Export of EU farm animals to third countries

Many EU cattle and sheep are exported to the Middle East and Turkey. Film evidence shows that in many of the importing countries animals are slaughtered in ways that cause extreme suffering and that are in breach of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) international standards on welfare at slaughter.

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) provides that in formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture policy, the Union and the Member States 'shall … pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals'. Other countries have procedures to ensure that the export of livestock is in conformity with international welfare standards. For example, Australia's Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System (ESCAS) requires livestock exporters to ensure that when Australian animals reach the importing country they are handled and slaughtered in conformity with the OIE standards on animal welfare.

1. Does the export of EU agricultural livestock fall under Article 13 TFEU?

2. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that EU animals are treated in accordance with the OIE standards on welfare during transport and slaughter in third countries?

3. Would the Commission consider a system similar to ESCAS in Australia?

4. What steps has the Commission taken to 'examine how animal welfare could be better integrated in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy', as set out in the EU animal welfare strategy?

5. Will the Commission offer assistance under the European Neighbourhood Policy to help importing countries meet the OIE standards on welfare at slaughter?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The Commission has no competence to stop the export of live animals to third countries under current EC law. The decision to export is taken by private operators.

The Commission works closely with the OIE. Current work includes the establishment of an OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe with financial contributions from the Commission. A three year action plan 2014-2016 for the Regional Platform has been agreed and includes training on the topics of animal welfare during transport and slaughter.

In the framework of DG Enlargement's TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) instrument, it is possible to develop programmes of assistance for third countries that are either candidate countries (like Turkey), or part of the European Neighbourhood policy. In principle, such programmes could include country visits and measures for training and exchange of information. However, TAIEX assistance is usually given in response to requests sent by officials working for the administrations of beneficiary countries.

The Commission has regular contact with Australia via the Animal Welfare Cooperation Forum. This forum is due to hold its sixth meeting later this year and standing agenda items include information exchange and opportunities for cooperation, which could include a discussion into Australia's assurance system, of which the Commission is already aware.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004137/14
an die Kommission
Ulrike Rodust (S&D)
(2. April 2014)

Betrifft: Gleichbehandlung in der Gemeinsamen Fischereipolitik/Umsetzung von Artikel 29 der Verordnung 850/98

In der Verordnung 850/98 wird vorgeschrieben, dass die Leistung von Antriebsmotoren für Fischereifahrzeuge in der sogenannten „Schollenbox“ auf 221 kW begrenzt sein muss und diese Motoren nur ausgetauscht werden dürfen, „sofern die Austauschmaschine nicht leistungsreduziert ist“. Der Verfasserin dieser Frage liegen Informationen vor, dass der niederländische Staat trotzdem den Ersatz von bestehenden Maschinen durch leistungsreduzierte 300 kW-Maschinen genehmigt hat.

1. Sind der Kommission diese Genehmigungen bekannt?

2. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Rechtmäßigkeit dieser Maßnahmen?

3. Welche Maßnahmen ergreift die Kommission, um eine Umsetzung dieser Regelung durch alle Mitgliedstaaten zu gewährleisten?

Antwort von Frau Damanaki im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2014)

Der Kommission sind keine Hinweise bekannt, wonach die Niederlande den Austausch vorhandener Motoren durch leistungsreduzierte Maschinen gestattet hätten.

Sie wird diesen Hinweisen zusammen mit den niederländischen Behörden nachgehen und anschließend beurteilen können, ob Artikel 29 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 850/1998 eingehalten wurde.

Die Kommission führt in regelmäßigen Abständen risikobasierte Prüfungen und Kontrollbesuche in den Mitgliedstaaten durch. Bei Nichteinhaltung geltender Vorschriften erlässt die Kommission gemeinsam vereinbarte Aktionspläne. Dauern die Versäumnisse an, wird ein Vorverfahren eingeleitet, das letztlich in ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen den betreffenden Mitgliedstaat münden kann.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004137/14
to the Commission
Ulrike Rodust (S&D)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Equal treatment in the common fisheries policy/implementation of Article 29 of Regulation 850/98

Regulation 850/98 stipulates that the engine power of fishing vessels in the 'plaice box' must be restricted to 221 kW and these engines may be replaced only if 'the replacement engine is not derated'. According to my information, the Netherlands has nevertheless authorised the replacement of existing engines with derated 300 kW engines.

1. Is the Commission aware of these authorisations?

2. Does the Commission consider these measures to be in compliance with the law?

3. What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that this regulation is implemented by allthe Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

The Commission is not aware of allegations that the Netherlands has authorised the replacement of existing engines with derated engines.

The Commission will investigate these allegations with the Dutch authorities and following this will be in a position to determine whether Article 29 of Regulation 850/1998 has been complied with.

The Commission regularly carries out risk based verification and audit missions to Member States. In case of failure to comply with applicable legislation, agreed Action Plans under the Control Regulation are adopted by the Commission and in the event of on-going compliance failures pre contentious procedure is initiated which may ultimately lead to infringement proceedings against the Member State concerned.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004138/14
to the Commission
James Nicholson (ECR)
(2 April 2014)

Subject: Special labelling provision for rapeseed protein as a novel food

I welcome the forthcoming authorisation of rapeseed protein as a novel food; however, the draft Commission implementing decision contains an unprecedented labelling provision according to which 'any foodstuff containing rapeseed protein shall bear an easily visible and legible statement that the product containing "rapeseed protein" as a food ingredient may cause allergic reaction to consumers who are allergic to mustard and products thereof'.

If rapeseed protein is considered an allergen, then it should be listed in Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers. If rapeseed protein is not an allergen, it should not be subject to a special labelling requirement.

Will the Commission explain why it has proposed a labelling requirement for allergic cross-reaction as opposed to the traditional professional information channels to inform consumers?

Can the Commission confirm that such a labelling requirement has a legal basis in the current novel foods regulation?

Will the Commission take into consideration the European Food Safety Authority's anticipated report on the occurrence of food allergies in the EU before imposing unprecedented labelling requirements?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2014)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) considered in its 'Scientific Opinion on the safety of "rapeseed protein isolate" as a Novel Food ingredient' ([1]), adopted on 10 October 2013, that the risk of sensitisation to rapeseed cannot be excluded and that it is likely that rapeseed can trigger allergic reactions in mustard allergic subjects.

Mustard allergens can cause serious and potentially life-threatening reactions in affected individuals. Potentially exposure to the rapeseed protein is much higher than to mustard as it may replace other protein-rich ingredients in a wide range of foods. This change of protein source will not be immediately evident to the consumer. Rapeseed protein, due to its 'novel nature', cannot be considered today as a 'common allergen'. People with mustard allergies have no reason to avoid the wide range of foods that could contain this novel food ingredient, and they will not be checking the detailed ingredient lists. Therefore, the Commission considers that the most appropriate risk management tool is to provide for a specific labelling requirement instead of using the traditional information channels or the labelling regime applicable to common allergens. The legal basis of such labelling is Article 7(2) in conjunction with Article 8(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 258/97 ([2]).

EFSA is currently reviewing and assessing scientific data on allergenicity in Europe, including the evaluation of the Union list of 'common allergens'. Once available, the Commission will assess the outcome as well the need for updating the Union legislation accordingly. In this regard, the appropriateness of the inclusion of rapeseed protein in Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 could be considered. ([3])

([1]) EFSA Journal 2013;11(10):3420.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 258/97 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 January 1997 concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients (OJ L 43, 14.2.1997, p. 1).

([3]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.18.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004139/14
a la Comisión
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(3 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Atún rojo

Durante la reunión de ICCAT celebrada el pasado mes de noviembre, la CE rechazó toda iniciativa de la UE de modificación de la Recomendación 12-03, que regula la pesquería de atún rojo del Atlántico Este y Mediterráneo.

La Comisión sabe perfectamente que la temporada de pesca fijada en el Plan de Recuperación del Atún Rojo en 2006 imposibilitaba la pesca de la flota artesanal canaria, que la practica desde hace décadas, y no se corresponde con la época de presencia del atún rojo en esas aguas. Sin embargo, la delegación de la CE se negó a proponer la modificación solicitada por los Estados miembros, como sí hizo Noruega, que, por los mismos motivos, consiguió una modificación similar para su flota. De no haber sido por la insistencia de la delegación española, los pescadores canarios no habrían podido realizar esta pesca dirigida en 2014.

A pesar de que los informes científicos avalaban un incremento de las cuotas, la CE, en nombre de la UE, se negó a cualquier incremento de cuotas, incluso uno de 500 tm expresamente admitido por el Comité Científico y por los EEMM de la UE. La realidad es que tras abrirse la pesquería en aguas canarias (la primera pesquería de atún rojo oriental cada año) el pasado día 24 de marzo, la misma hubo de cerrarse apenas transcurridas 24 horas al haberse descargado la totalidad de la cuota asignada, y con pesos medios de los ejemplares que oscilaban entre los 200 y los 300 kg. A la luz de esos datos, es evidente que la situación de la pesquería permitía perfectamente el aumento de las cuotas para el año 2014 y que la situación producida en Canarias se va a repetir sin ningún género de dudas en otras regiones en las que se pesca el atún rojo.

A la vista del desarrollo de la pesquería en Canarias,

— ¿Se siente satisfecha la CE de haber impedido el aumento de las cuotas de BFT?

— ¿Mantiene la CE que los datos de la pesquería aconsejan no incrementar las cuotas?

— ¿Cómo explicará la CE a los pescadores de la UE que, a pesar de haber comprobado el excelente estado de la pesquería, la CE defiende unas cuotas ínfimas, que no guardan relación en absoluto con la biomasa existente?

— ¿Va a adoptar la CE alguna medida que permita a los pescadores paliar los daños ocasionados ante la escasez de cuota?

— ¿Va a reconocer en 2014 por fin la CE que no puede mantenerse por más tiempo esta ficción según la cual el atún rojo es una especie en peligro de sobreexplotación y que es necesario defender un aumento sustancial del TAC, en coherencia con la abundancia del stock?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de mayo de 2014)

La cuestión del impacto de las campañas de pesca en la pesquería del atún rojo de las Islas Canarias ha sido reconocida por la Comisión Europea y abordada en la Recomendación 13-08 de la Comisión Internacional para la Conservación del Atún Atlántico (CICAA), recomendación que modifica esas campañas de pesca. Debe destacarse que es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros asignar a los diversos sectores las cuotas del total admisible de capturas (TAC) de esa pesquería.

Por lo que se refiere al TAC global establecido en 2013 para la pesquería del atún rojo, la posición de la UE de mantenerlo en 13 400 toneladas se basó en el dictamen científico emitido por el Comité Permanente de Investigación y Estadísticas (SCRS) de la CICAA. Esa posición fue respaldada por el Consejo antes de la reunión anual de la CICAA. En sintonía con las disposiciones del Reglamento (UE) n° 1380/2013 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, sobre la política pesquera común ([1]), la Comisión seguirá ateniéndose a los dictámenes científicos que faciliten la CICAA y todas las organizaciones regionales de ordenación pesquera.

La interpretación de los datos pesqueros es competencia del SCRS, que este año actualizará la evaluación de la población de la pesquería del atún rojo del Atlántico Este. Se prevé que los resultados de esa evaluación estén disponibles a finales del mes de septiembre. Por el momento, resulta prematuro adelantar cualquier posición futura sobre el TAC de dicha pesquería.

([1]) DO L 354 de 28.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004139/14
to the Commission
Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Bluefin tuna

At the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) meeting in November 2013, the Commission rejected any possible EU initiative to amend Recommendation 12-03, which regulates bluefin tuna fishing in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The Commission is well aware that the season laid down in the Recovery plan for bluefish tuna is preventing the small-scale Canary Island fleet from fishing for the species, as it has done for decades, since this season does not tie in with the period when bluefin tuna can be found in the region's waters. However, the Commission delegation refused to propose the amendment requested by the Member States. In contrast, Norway obtained a similar amendment for its own fleet on the same grounds. Were it not for the intervention of the Spanish delegation, Canary Island fishers would not have been able to carry out any bluefin tuna fishing in 2014.

Despite the fact that scientific reports supported an increase in the quotas, the Commission, acting on behalf of the EU, rejected any such increase, including the 500-tonne rise explicitly agreed by the Scientific Committee and the Member States. As a result, when the Canary Island fishery (the first in the year for the eastern stock) opened on 24 March 2014, it was forced to close again barely 24 hours later as it had already met its allocated quota, with individual fish weighing in at an average of 200-300 kg. This data clearly suggests that the bluefin tuna population could easily withstand an increase in 2014 quotas and that the situation faced in the Canary Islands will inevitably recur in other regions.

In view of the fishery developments in the Canary Islands:

— Is the Commission satisfied at having prevented an increase in bluefin tuna quotas?

— Does the Commission still believe that the fishery data does not support an increase in thequotas?

— How is the Commission going to explain to EU fishers that, despite confirmation of the excellent state of the bluefin tuna stock, it is giving its backing to tiny quotas that in no way reflect current biomass levels?

— Is the Commission planning to adopt any measures to enable fishers to offset the damage caused by the meagre quotas?

— Will 2014 be the year when the Commission finally accepts that it can no longer keeppeddling the myth that the bluefin tuna is a species at risk from overfishing, and thatgiven the abundance of stocks the total allowable catches (TAC) should be substantiallyincreased?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The issue of the impact of the fishing seasons on the Canary Island bluefin tuna (BFT) Fishery has been acknowledged by the European Commission and accommodated via the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Recommendation 13-08 modifying these fishing seasons. It should be underlined that the allocation of shares of the BFT total allowable catches (TAC) to various sectors is a responsibility of the Member States.

Regarding the overall BFT TAC set in 2013, the EU position to maintain the TAC at 13400 t was based on the scientific advice provided by ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS). Such a position was endorsed by the Council prior to the ICCAT annual meeting. The Commission will continue to follow the scientific advice in ICCAT and in all Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, consistently with the provisions laid down by Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 ([1]) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy.

The interpretation of the fishery data is the responsibility of the SCRS which will this year conduct an update of the Eastern BFT stock assessment. The results of this stock assessment are expected at the end of September. At this stage it is premature to pre-empt any future position on the BFT TAC.

([1]) OJ L 354, 28.12.2013.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-004140/14
Komisi
Evžen Tošenovský (ECR)
(3. dubna 2014)

Předmět: Diskriminace výrobců alkoholových testů na francouzském trhu

Evropští a zejména pak čeští výrobci jednorázových alkoholových testů byli konfrontováni s překážkami na vnitřním trhu při vývozu svých výrobků do Francie. Ta přijala 28. února 2012 právní předpis 2012–284, jež nedovoloval na francouzském trhu používání testů na alkohol certifikovaných v jiných zemích EU a nectil tak zásadu vzájemného uznávání výrobků zákonně vyrobených a uvedených na trh v jiném členském státě EU. Francouzské právní předpisy řidičům ukládaly, aby ve vozidle měli testovací zařízení schválená výhradně podle francouzských norem. Rovněž francouzská policie byla povinna při dechových zkouškách řidičů používat zařízení schválená tímto způsobem.

Evropská komise ve svém odůvodněném stanovisku ze dne 23. ledna 2014 (věc 2012/4188) došla k závěru, že takovéto opatření brání volnému pohybu zboží v rámci EU, a vyzvala Francii k přijetí nápravných opatření. V případě, že by Francie Komisi do dvou měsíců nesdělila, jaké přijala nápravné opatření, mohla by Komise rozhodnout o postoupení věci Soudnímu dvoru EU.

V této souvislosti si dovoluji Komisi požádat o odpověď na následující otázky:

Jaká opatření byla Francií přijata a případně, kdy tomu tak bylo učiněno?

Jaké další kroky budou Komisí v této věci učiněny?

Odpověď pana Barniera jménem Komise
(13. května 2014)

Komise by váženého pana poslance ráda informovala, že francouzské orgány ve své odpovědi na odůvodněné stanovisko, které Komise zaslala dne 27. ledna 2014, oznámily záměr změnit svou vnitrostátní legislativu tak, aby byl zajištěn plný soulad daného francouzského předpisu s právem EU, a zejména se zásadou vzájemného uznávání výrobků zákonně uváděných na trh v jiných členských státech.

Francouzské orgány Komisi dále sdělily, že v současné době připravují plánované změny, které pak budou oznámeny Komisi a členským státům podle směrnice 98/34/ES ze dne 22. června 1998 o postupu při poskytování informací v oblasti norem a technických předpisů.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004140/14
to the Commission
Evžen Tošenovský (ECR)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Discrimination against producers of alcohol tests on the French market

European producers of single use alcohol testing kits, especially those based in the Czech Republic, have encountered problems on the internal market when attempting to export their goods to France. On 28 February 2012, France adopted a law (2012 284) prohibiting the use of alcohol tests certified in other Member States. It has thus failed to observe the principle of mutual recognition of products lawfully manufactured and marketed in other Member States. The law stipulated that drivers should keep only testing kits that had been approved in accordance with French standards in their vehicles. Similarly, when carrying out breath tests on drivers, the French police were obliged to use only equipment which had been approved in the same way.

In its reasoned opinion of 23 January 2014 (case 2012/4188), the Commission came to the conclusion that these measures hindered the free movement of goods within the EU and called on France to adopt remedial measures. The Commission stated that if France failed to inform it that it had taken remedial measures within two months, it would consider referring the case to the Court of Justice.

Can the Commission say what measures France has taken and when it took them?

What further steps does the Commission intend to take in this matter?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

The Commission is pleased to inform the Honourable Member that in their reply to the reasoned opinion sent by the Commission on 27 January 2014 the French authorities announced their intention to amend their national legislation in order to ensure full compliance of the French regulation with EC law and specifically with the principle of mutual recognition of products legally marketed in other Member States.

The French authorities further informed the Commission that they are currently drafting the planned amendments which will then be notified to the Commission and to Member States according to Directive 98/34 of 22 June 1998 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004141/14
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: The Biocidal Products Regulation and microbial resistance

It has been noted by leading experts in the field of human healthcare infection control that the Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR) will result in a major loss of effective biocidal active ingredients (disinfectants) across Europe. This, worryingly, is likely to stifle innovation, leading to only a handful of disinfectant chemicals and formulations being on the market in Europe in the coming years.

Of even greater concern is the fact that this will lead to microbial resistance (this has already been shown to be happening now) to those few commercially available disinfectants that make it to the market. This will result in the appearance of new superbugs, resistant to cleaning and disinfecting chemicals, leading to thousands of lives being at risk across Europe.

Would the Commission agree that this situation is to a large extent the result of the excessive burden of cost on biocidal active producers and on disinfectant formulators in the infection control industry, who will either drop non-profit making lines, or if they are an SME be forced to leave the market?

Further to this, does the Commission recognise that Europe will effectively have no commercially available antibiotics or disinfectants to combat superbugs, and that a catastrophic European pandemic will be waiting to happen unless the BPR is rescinded, or at the very least extensively amended?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2014)

The Commission does not agree that the alleged excessive burden of cost would be the cause of a loss of effective biocidal active ingredients across Europe leading to microbial resistance.

On the contrary, regarding antimicrobial resistance and biocidal products, the Commission is aware of studies, notably the o pinion on Antibiotic Resistance Effects of Biocides ([1]) produced in 2009 by the Scenihr (Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks) of the European Commission.

This opinion suggests that there is scientific evidence indicating that the use or misuse of certain active substances in biocidal products may contribute to the increased occurrence of antibiotic resistant bacteria, both in humans and the environment.

There is no evidence to suggest that Europe will have no commercially available disinfectants unless Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 on the making available on the market and use of biocidal products ([2]) is rescinded. Regarding the issue of compliance costs, the Commission has already taken steps to cut costs for SMEs, and is working together with Member States and stakeholders to address any remaining concerns.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_021.pdf
([2]) OJ L 2012:167:0001:0123.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004142/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Inversión del FEDER en la construcción de un centro de experimentación animal en Lugo

La Xunta de Galicia ha informado recientemente de la inversión de 4 500 000 euros que va a realizar en la construcción y creación de un centro de experimentación en Lugo bajo el nombre de «Centro de Investigación en Biomedicina y Veterinaria» (Cebiovet). Esta inversión, por lo que ha avanzado el Gobierno gallego, se realizará contando con que el 70 % de la misma corresponde a fondos provenientes del FEDER.

En un momento en que la opinión ciudadana es mayoritariamente favorable a la paulatina sustitución de los ensayos que impliquen el uso de animales, y de la misma forma se ha pronunciado la Comisión Europea con el desarrollo, en los últimos años, de diferentes directivas para refinar y acabar con experimentos con seres vivos, resulta significativa la apuesta que en Galicia se pretende hacer con fondos comunitarios.

En la práctica, y como han denunciado colectivos en defensa de los animales como la Asociación Animalista Libera!, este espacio servirá de centro de experimentación con grandes animales, como bóvidos, y también perros. Conscientes de la identificación moral y emocional de las personas con especies concretas, también supone un grave error seguir probando y en cierto modo maltratando seres vivos para cuestiones que ni siquiera han trascendido a la opinión pública, lo que genera una mayor oposición a la intención vivisectora.

Es obvio que el bienestar animal en un centro de estas características no puede quedar en manos de los propios responsables. Es preciso avanzar hacia la creación de comités independientes donde expertos y organizaciones animalistas puedan valorar la idoneidad de los ensayos y la obligatoriedad de emplear seres vivos.

¿Tiene constancia la Comisión del uso de fondos europeos para la construcción de un centro de experimentación animal en Lugo? En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo ha justificado la Xunta esta inversión? En caso negativo, ¿por qué el Gobierno gallego realiza tal anuncio?

¿Piensa la Comisión desarrollar alguna iniciativa para garantizar que sus fondos se emplean correctamente y se garantiza el bienestar animal y la necesidad de tales ensayos sobre seres vivos?

¿Hay previsto algún desarrollo normativo para reducir y refinar el uso de seres vivos en toda clase de ensayos, así como promover métodos alternativos?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de junio de 2014)

Con arreglo a la información de que dispone la Comisión, el Gobierno de la Xunta de Galicia tiene previsto cofinanciar el proyecto en cuestión en el marco de la prioridad «desarrollo de la economía basada en el conocimiento» del programa del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) para Galicia. Hasta ahora, el proyecto no ha recibido fondos del FEDER.

Dicha inversión forma parte del proyecto «Campus Vida», cuyo objetivo es crear una red de centros de investigación de modo que Galicia pueda convertirse en un punto de referencia para los centros académicos y científicos. El Centro de Investigación en Biomedicina y Veterinaria estará vinculado a la Facultad de Veterinaria y al Hospital Veterinario de Lugo con el fin de llegar a ser un ejemplo de excelencia en el noroeste de España.

Los principios generales que rigen el Consejo Internacional de Ciencia de los Animales de Laboratorio serán de obligado cumplimiento en el Centro. El número y las especies de animales utilizados en los experimentos deberán justificarse científicamente, evitándose o minimizándose en la medida de lo posible cualquier dolor o malestar para los animales.

El cuidado de los animales sujetos a ensayos de laboratorio se garantiza en la Directiva 2010/63/UE relativa a la protección de los animales utilizados para fines científicos ([1]), cuyas disposiciones deben aplicar los Estados miembros desde el 1 de enero de 2013.

Desde el 11 de marzo de 2013, se prohíbe la comercialización en la EU de productos cosméticos experimentados en animales, a fin de cumplir los requisitos jurídicos del Reglamento (CE) n° 1223/2009 ([2]).

La búsqueda de métodos alternativos seguirá adelante, ya que a día de hoy no es posible sustituir completamente la experimentación en animales. Entre 2007 y 2011, la Comisión destinó 238 millones EUR a dicha investigación y, entre 2014 y 2020, se pondrán a disposición nuevos fondos por un valor de casi 80 000 millones EUR en el marco del programa Horizonte 2020.

([1]) DO L 276 de 20.10.2010, p. 33.
([2]) Reglamento (CE) n° 1223/2009 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, sobre los productos cosméticos, DO L 342 de 22.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004142/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: ERDF funding for the building of an animal testing centre in Lugo

Galicia's regional government has recently announced that it will be investing EUR 4.5 million in building and setting up a testing centre — the Centre for Biomedical and Veterinary Research (Cebiovet) — in Lugo. Some 70% of the Galician government's investment will come from ERDF funding.

A majority of the general public is now in favour of animal testing being phased out, and in recent years the Commission has also come forward with a number of directives designed to curb and end testing on live animals. With this in mind, the decision taken in Galicia on the use of EU funding is particularly striking.

Animal welfare groups such as Asociación Animalista Libera have condemned the fact that, in practice, large animals such as cattle and dogs will be used for testing at the new centre. People identify morally and emotionally with certain species of animal. It is also totally wrong to carry on testing and in effect mistreating live animals for reasons of which the general public are unaware. This only stirs up more opposition to vivisection.

Clearly, it cannot be left to those who are in charge of a centre like this to guarantee the welfare of the animals there. Independent committees need to be set up in which experts and animal welfare organisations can assess whether testing is required and how necessary it is that live animals be used.

Is the Commission aware that European funds are being used to build an animal testing centre in Lugo? If so, how did the Galician regional government justify this investment? If not, why did the Galician regional government make such an announcement?

Is the Commission intending to bring forward any kind of initiative to ensure that the funding it provides is used correctly, to guarantee animal welfare and to ascertain the need to conduct such testing on live animals?

Are there plans to bring forward legislation with a view to reducing and refining the use of live animals in all types of testing, and to promote alternative methods?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

According to the information available to the Commission, Galicia's regional government plans to co-finance the project referred to in the framework of the 'development of the knowledge-based economy' priority of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme for Galicia. Up to now, the project has not received ERDF funds.

This investment is part of the 'Campus Vida' project that aims to create a network of research centres. This will allow Galicia to become a reference point among academic and scientific centres. The Centre of Biomedical and Veterinary Research will be linked to the Veterinary University and the Veterinary Hospital in Lugo, in order to become a prime example in north-west Spain.

The general principles governing the International Council for Laboratory Animal Science will be mandatory in the Centre. The species and number of animals involved in experiments should be scientifically justified. Pain or discomfort that animals may experience should be avoided or minimised as far as possible.

The care for animals subject to laboratory testing is ensured through Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes ([1]). The provisions of this directive must be applied by Member States since 1 January 2013.

Since 11 March 2013, no cosmetic products tested on animals in order to meet the legal requirements set out in Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([2]) are permitted on the EU market.

The quest to find alternative methods will continue as full replacement of animal testing by alternative methods is not yet possible. The Commission made EUR 238 million available between 2007 and 2011 for such research. Further funding will be available through Horizon 2020 from 2014 to 2020 with a budget of nearly EUR 80 billion.

([1]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010, p. 33 ff.
([2]) Regulation 1223/2009/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ L 342, 22.12.2009.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004143/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(3 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Reapertura de vertedero ilegal en la Vega Baja

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-000630/2014, presentada por esta diputada en enero de 2014 sobre el asunto «Delito medioambiental por vertederos ilegales en la Vega Baja», la Comisión anuncia la petición a las autoridades nacionales para que tomen las medidas necesarias para proceder con urgencia al cierre, sellado y regeneración de los vertederos ilegales, incluido el contemplado en la pregunta.

Por otra parte, el Juzgado de Instrucción número 4 de Cieza (Murcia) ha emitido un auto por el que acuerda el levantamiento de la medida cautelar de la prohibición de vertido sobre el vaso 3 de la planta de tratamiento de RSU en La Murada (Orihuela, Alicante).

Siendo este uno de los vertederos sujetos a sospechas por violación de la legislación medioambiental:

¿Va la Comisión a investigar las condiciones de esta reapertura y si debe tomar medidas al respecto?

¿Piensa la Comisión que esta reapertura podría vulnerar la normativa europea que la propia Comisión viene exigiendo a las autoridades nacionales?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión aún está analizando la información presentada por las autoridades españolas y, cuando termine de hacerlo, decidirá qué curso procede dar al expediente de los vertederos ilegales en España, incluido el que cita Su Señoría en su pregunta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004143/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Reopening of illegal landfill site in Vega Baja

In its answer to Question E-000630/2014 on the subject of 'Environmental crime due to illegal landfill sites in Vega Baja', which I asked in January 2014, the Commission said that it would ask the national authorities to take the necessary steps to urgently proceed with the closure, sealing and regeneration of illegal landfills, including the one to which the question referred.

However, the fourth examining magistrate's court in Cieza (Murcia) has issued an order approving the lifting of the landfill ban for area 3 of the solid urban waste treatment plant in La Murada (Orihuela, Alicante).

This is one of the landfills suspected of violating environmental legislation.

Will the Commission examine the conditions under which this landfill is being reopened and determine whether action should be taken?

Does the Commission believe the reopening of this landfill could be in breach of the EU rules which the Commission itself imposed on the national authorities?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Commission is still assessing the information submitted by the national authorities and will subsequently decide on the appropriate course of action as regards the illegal landfills across Spain, including the one to which the Honourable Member refers in this question.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004144/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(3 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Προσβολή της αξιοπρέπειας και της θρησκευτικής συνείδησης των Ελληνοκυπρίων στην ημικατεχόμενη Κύπρο

Σε μια πρωτοφανώς προσβλητική ενέργεια και πρόκληση της θρησκευτικής συνείδησης και της αξιοπρέπειας των Ελληνοκυπρίων κατοίκων της Κύπρου, ημίγυμνα μοντέλα φωτογραφήθηκαν πάνω σε συλημένους τάφους σε καταστραμμένο από τους Τούρκους εισβολείς νεκροταφείο, στα κατεχόμενα εδάφη της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας. Οι φωτογραφίες δημοσιεύτηκαν στο διαδίκτυο και διάφορα έντυπα, προκαλώντας αρνητικά σχόλια και θύελλα αντιδράσεων από τους πολίτες. Όλα αυτά συμβαίνουν σε μια περίοδο που έχουν αρχίσει διαπραγματεύσεις για εξεύρεση λύσης στο Κυπριακό. Οι κατοχικές αρχές όπως και η υποτελής στην Τουρκία διοίκηση του Τουρκοκυπριακού ψευδοκράτους δεν έχουν κάμει απολύτως τίποτα για να σταματήσουν την πρόκληση και να οδηγήσουν τους υπεύθυνους στη δικαιοσύνη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε γνώση της το συγκεκριμένο θέμα και πώς κρίνει τη στάση των «αρχών» του ψευδοκράτους;

2. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε, αφενός, να τερματίσει τις προκλήσεις αυτές και, αφετέρου, να διασφαλίσει πως δεν θα επαναληφθούν παρόμοιες προκλήσεις στο μέλλον;

3. Δεδομένου ότι η ΕΕ παρέχει προς την τουρκοκυπριακή κοινότητα σημαντική οικονομική και τεχνική βοήθεια, ποιους μοχλούς πίεσης διαθέτει η Επιτροπή έναντι του κατοχικού καθεστώτος και πώς προτίθεται να τους χρησιμοποιήσει για αποφυγή παρόμοιων περιστατικών στο μέλλον;

4. Προτίθεται να διερευνήσει περαιτέρω το θέμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το περιστατικό και αποδοκιμάζει κάθε είδους ζημία που προκλήθηκε στη θρησκευτική και πολιτιστική κληρονομιά της Κύπρου καθώς και την έλλειψη σεβασμού προς αυτή.

Η Επιτροπή έχει πληροφορηθεί ότι οι συμμετέχοντες στη φωτογράφηση έχουν έκτοτε μετανοήσει για τις πράξεις τους και ζήτησαν συγγνώμη. Περαιτέρω, τη λύπη και τη συγγνώμη τους εξέφρασαν δημόσια πρόσωπα της Τουρκοκυπριακή Κοινότητας, ζητώντας ταυτόχρονα να μη καταδικαστεί η Τουρκοκυπριακή Κοινότητα στο σύνολό της λόγω του περιστατικού.

Η Επιτροπή επιθυμεί με την ευκαιρία αυτή να επικροτήσει την αγαστή συνεργασία των θρησκευτικών ηγετών του νησιού προς τη δημιουργία κλίματος ευνοϊκού για την επίτευξη συνολικής διευθέτησης. Η Επιτροπή πιστεύει ότι η δέσμευση όλων των Κυπρίων για μια δίκαιη, συνολική και βιώσιμη διευθέτηση του κυπριακού προβλήματος στο πλαίσιο του ΟΗΕ, σύμφωνα με τις συναφείς αποφάσεις του Συμβουλίου Ασφαλείας των Ηνωμένων Εθνών και τις αρχές που διέπουν την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση, δεν θα επιτρέψει αυτή η θλιβερή ενέργεια να αποπροσανατολίσει τους ηγέτες των δύο πλευρών από την εξεύρεση συμφωνίας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004144/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Affront to the dignity and religious sensibilities of Greek Cypriots in the partially occupied Republic of Cyprus

In an unprecedented affront to the religious sensibilities and dignity of the Greek Cypriot residents of the Republic of Cyprus, half-naked models posed for photographs on pillaged tombs in a cemetery situated in the occupied territory of the Republic of Cyprus and destroyed by Turkish occupiers. The photographs were then published online and in various periodicals, provoking a storm of criticism and public protest, and this at a time when negotiations have been commenced with a view to resolving the Cyprus problem. The occupying powers and the puppet government of the Turkish Cypriot pseudo-state have failed to do anything to put a stop to this or bring those responsible to justice.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation and what view does it take of the attitude adopted by the 'authorities' of the pseudo-state?

2. What measures will it take to put an end to such acts of provocation and ensure that they do not recur in future?

3. In view of these substantial EU financial and technical assistance received by the Turkish Cypriot community, what leverage can the Commission bring to bear on the occupying authorities and how will it turn this to account with a view to avoiding any recurrence of such events in future?

4. Will it investigate the matter further?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the occurrence and deplores damage to and disrespect for religious and cultural heritage in Cyprus in any shape or form.

The Commission understands that the participants in the photo shooting have since regretted their actions and apologised. Further regret and apologies were extended by Turkish Cypriot public figures who at the same time asked not to judge the Turkish Cypriot community as a whole because of the incident.

The Commission would like to use this opportunity to appreciate the significant joint work by the island's religious leaders towards creating an atmosphere conducive to a comprehensive settlement. The Commission trusts that all Cypriots committed to a fair, comprehensive and viable settlement of the Cyprus problem within the UN framework, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles on which the European Union is founded, will not allow this deplorable action to distract the community leaders from finding an agreement.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004145/14
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 april 2014)

Betreft: VP/HR — De zaak Füsun Erdoğan in Turkije

De Turks-Nederlandse journaliste Füsun Erdoğan zit sinds 2006 vast in Turkije. In november 2013 werd ze veroordeeld tot levenslange gevangenisstraf. Zij werd ervan beschuldigd leider te zijn van een terroristische organisatie. Ze is slechts een van de vele journalisten die in Turkije gevangenzitten. Met het oog op de sfeer in Turkije, die zich kenmerkt door toenemende spanning en onderdrukking, moet de EU zich inzetten voor zowel de bevordering en bescherming van de persvrijheid en vrijheid van meningsuiting als voor de bescherming van journalisten.

1. Is de vicevoorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger van de Unie voor Buitenlandse zaken en Veiligheidsbeleid bekend met de zaak Füsün Erdoğan?

2. Welke acties heeft zij ondernomen om journalisten die in Turkije vastzitten te helpen, en in het bijzonder om Füsün Erdoğan terzijde te staan?

3. Is zij van plan om met de Turkse autoriteiten over zaken zoals deze te onderhandelen?

4. Is zij niet ook van mening dat de persvrijheid en vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije zwaar onder druk staan? Zo niet, waarom niet?

5. Welke stappen denkt zij in de toekomst te ondernemen om de persvrijheid en vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije te bevorderen?

6. Op welke manier hoopt zij in de toekomst Turkse journalisten te beschermen en diegenen terzijde te staan die in het verleden gevangengezet zijn?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(5 juni 2014)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de zaak rond journaliste Füsun Erdoğan. Via de EU-delegatie in Turkije heeft de Commissie haar geval en dat van andere journalisten met een gevangenisstraf van nabij gevolgd. De Commissie verwelkomt zowel haar vrijlating als de recente vrijlating van anderen als gevolg van de vermindering van de maximale periode van voorlopige hechtenis.

Wat betreft de eerbiediging van de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije, verwijst de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid naar de lopende toetredingsonderhandelingen met Turkije waarbij deze kwesties ook aan bod komen onder de politieke criteria van Kopenhagen. De Commissie brengt jaarlijks in detail verslag uit aan de lidstaten en het Europees Parlement over de situatie in Turkije in het licht van de toetredingscriteria, alsook over aanhoudende punten van zorg. Deze punten van zorg worden besproken met vertegenwoordigers van alle niveaus van de Turkse overheid. Dit gebeurt zowel tijdens regelmatige vergaderingen, maar ook door middel van intercollegiale toetsing en ontmoetingen met de organen van de associatieovereenkomst. De kwesties die het geachte Parlementslid aanhaalt, benadrukken hoe belangrijk het is voor de EU om haar rol ten aanzien van Turkije te versterken. Vooruitgang in de toetredingsonderhandelingen en vooruitgang in de politieke hervormingen in Turkije zijn twee kanten van dezelfde munt. Een dergelijke vooruitgang zou er in grote mate toe bijdragen dat de EU en haar normen het ijkpunt blijven voor de hervormingen in Turkije.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004145/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — The case of Füsun Erdoğan in Turkey

The Turkish-Dutch journalist Füsun Erdoğan has been in prison in Turkey since 2006. In November 2013, she was sentenced to life in prison. She has been charged with leading a terrorist organisation. She is only one of many journalists who are imprisoned in Turkey. Given the increasingly tense and repressive atmosphere in Turkey, the EU needs to invest in promoting and protecting press freedom, freedom of expression and journalists.

1. Is the VP/HR familiar with the case of Füsun Erdoğan?

2. What steps has the VP/HR taken to help imprisoned journalists in Turkey, particularly Füsun Erdoğan?

3. Does the VP/HR intend to address cases such as that of Füsun Erdoğan with the Turkish authorities?

4. Does the VP/HR agree that freedom of the press and freedom of expression are under serious pressure in Turkey? If not, why not?

5. How does the VP/HR plan to promote press freedom and freedom of expression in Turkey in the future?

6. How does the VP/HR hope to protect Turkish journalists in the future and help those who have been imprisoned in the past?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the case of journalist Füsun Erdoğan. The Commission, through the EU Delegation in Turkey, has followed her case as well as other cases of imprisoned journalists. The Commission welcomes her and other recent releases following reduction of maximum detention on remand period.

With regard to the respect of freedom of expression in Turkey, the Commission refers to the on-going accession negotiations with Turkey which also cover these issues under the Copenhagen political criteria. The Commission reports yearly in detail to the Member States and the European Parliament on the situation in Turkey under the criteria for accession and on persisting concerns. These concerns are brought up in regular meetings at all levels with the Turkish authorities, including through peer missions and meetings of the bodies of the Association Agreement. The issues highlighted by the Honourable Member underline the importance for the EU to enhance its engagement with Turkey. Progress in the accession negotiations and progress in the political reforms in Turkey are two sides of the same coin. Such progress would significantly contribute to ensuring that the EU and its standards remain the benchmark for reforms in Turkey.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004146/14
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter/Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 april 2014)

Betreft: VP/HR — De zaak Rena Netjes

Rena Netjes, een Nederlands staatsburger en de correspondent in Egypte voor meerdere Nederlandse media, moest in februari van dit jaar Egypte verlaten na te hebben ontdekt dat ze ervan werd beschuldigd deel uit te maken van een terroristische cel en dat ze het gevaar liep te worden gearresteerd en berecht. In het document waar haar naam in voorkwam, was haar naam verkeerd gespeld, was haar paspoortnummer incorrect en stond ten onrechte dat ze vluchteling was. De zaak stoelde op haar dienstverband bij Al Jazeera, waar ze echter nooit voor had gewerkt. Mevrouw Netjes kan noch altijd niet terug naar Egypte uit angst te worden gearresteerd. Het verhaal van Rena Netjes is een van de vele voorbeelden van een verdere inperking — door de Egyptische autoriteiten — van de pers- en mediavrijheid en de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Egypte, waaronder voor buitenlandse journalisten.

1. Is de VP/HR op de hoogte van de zaak Rena Netjes?

2. Wat heeft de VP/HR gedaan voor het bevorderen en beschermen van de pers- en mediavrijheid en de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Egypte?

3. Op welke wijze steunt de VP/HR buitenlandse journalisten die in Egypte werkzaam zijn of buitenlandse journalisten tegen wie een rechtzaak loopt of die in de gevangenis zitten in Egypte?

4. Heeft de VP/HR actie ondernomen om zaken zoals die van Rena Netjes bij de Egyptische autoriteiten aan te kaarten en zoja, wat precies? Zo niet, is de VP/HR bereid alsnog in actie te komen?

5. Op welke wijze gaat de VP/HR de pers- en mediavrijheid en de vrijheid van meningsuiting, en de mensenrechten in het algemeen, in Egypte in de toekomst bevorderen en beschermen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(19 juni 2014)

De HV/VV is op de hoogte van de zaak tegen de Nederlandse Rena Netjes, een correspondente voor Nederlandse media in Egypte die daar samen met andere buitenlandse journalisten bij verstek wordt berecht.

De Europese Unie volgt de mensenrechtensituatie in Egypte, waaronder de situatie van de media en journalisten, op de voet en met toenemende bezorgdheid. De HV/VV heeft haar bezorgdheid over de onrustbarende mensenrechtensituatie te kennen gegeven in verschillende verklaringen en tijdens ontmoetingen met haar Egyptische tegenhangers, laatst nog tijdens haar bezoek aan Egypte midden april.

In de conclusies van de Raad van 10 februari 2014 betreuren de ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken van de EU-lidstaten „het verslechterende klimaat voor de pers" en roepen zij „de Egyptische interimautoriteiten en staatsmedia op te zorgen voor een veilige werkomgeving voor alle journalisten en een eind te maken aan de gepolitiseerde arrestaties en de intimidatie van en ophitsing tegen binnen- en buitenlandse journalisten". In de conclusies wordt voorts benadrukt dat „de vrijheid van meningsuiting, vergadering en vreedzam protest moet worden gewaarborgd".

De EU heeft tegenover de interimautoriteiten haar verwachting uitgesproken, ook bij monde van haar speciale vertegenwoordiger voor de mensenrechten tijdens diens bezoek aan Egypte in februari, dat de komende processen eerlijk zullen verlopen. Het recht van de verweerders op een eerlijk en tijdig proces, op grond van duidelijke aanklachten en een degelijk en onafhankelijk onderzoek, moet worden gewaarborgd alsook het recht op toegang tot en contact met advocaten en familieleden, in overeenkomst met internationale normen.

De HV/VV en haar diensten, met name de EU-delegatie in Caïro, hebben zich er binnen de beperkingen van hun mandaat toe verbonden om de betrokken Europese burgers de noodzakelijke steun te geven.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004146/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — The case of Rena Netjes

In February 2014 Rena Netjes, a Dutch citizen and the Egypt correspondent for several Dutch media outlets, was forced to flee Egypt after discovering that she was accused of being part of a terrorist cell and risked arrest and trial. In the documents mentioning her, her name was spelled wrongly, her passport number was wrong and it was wrongly stated that she was a fugitive. The case was built around her being employed by Al Jazeera, for which she had never worked. Ms Netjes has not been able to return to Egypt, for fear of being arrested. The case of Ms Netjes is just one example of the Egyptian authorities further restricting press and media freedom and freedom of expression, including for foreign journalists.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of the case of Rena Netjes?

2. What steps has the VP/HR taken to promote and protect freedom of the press and media and freedom of expression in Egypt?

3. How has the VP/HR supported foreign journalists active in Egypt or foreign journalists currently on trial and/or in prison?

4. Has the VP/HR taken any action to address cases such as that of Ms Netjes with the Egyptian authorities? If so, what action has been taken? If not, is the VP/HR willing to take such action?

5. How does the VP/HR plan to promote and protect press and media freedom and freedom of expression and human rights more broadly in Egypt in the future?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

The HR/VP is well aware of the case of the Dutch citizen Rena Netjes, a correspondent for Dutch media in Egypt, being tried in absentia in Egypt alongside with other international journalists.

The European Union is following the human rights' situation in Egypt closely and with growing concern, including the situation of the media and journalists. The HR/VP expressed her concern on the worrying human rights' situation in numerous statements, as well as in meetings with Egyptian counterparts, lastly during her visit to Egypt in mid-April.

The Foreign Ministers of the EU Member States deplore in the Council Conclusions of 10 February 2014 'the deteriorating climate for the press' and call 'upon the Egyptian interim authorities and state media to ensure safe working environment for all journalists and to end politicized arrests as well as intimidation of and incitement against domestic and foreign journalists'. The conclusions state further that 'freedoms of expression, assembly and peaceful arrest must be safeguarded'.

The EU, including by its Special Representative on Human Rights during his visit to Egypt in February, expressed its expectation vis-à-vis the interim authorities that the upcoming trials will be fair and due process will be respected, ensuring the defendant's rights to a fair and timely trial based on clear charges and proper and independent investigations, as well as the right of access and contact to lawyers and family members, in line with international standards.

The HR/VP and its services in particular the EU Delegation on the ground in Cairo, are committed to provide the necessary support to European citizens involved within the limits of their mandate.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004147/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política energética en Europa

Según algunas noticias aparecidas en la prensa, Alemania confía en llegar a un acuerdo que ponga fin a la controversia surgida con la Unión por el hecho de que Berlín conceda una exención de los impuestos medioambientales complementarios ([1]) del país a algunas industrias de elevado consumo energético. El periódico alemán *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* informaba de que se había presentado una propuesta que permitiría a Berlín conceder una reducción de los impuestos a empresas de aproximadamente 65 sectores. Durante una visita a Berlín en febrero de 2013, Joaquín Almunia, Comisario de Competencia de la Unión Europea, afirmó que los sectores del aluminio y de la siderurgia serían dos de ellos. Los expertos esperan que también se incluyan los sectores del gas industrial, el cemento y los componentes electrónicos.

1. ¿Podría aclarar la Comisión Europea el alcance del acuerdo que está preparando?

2. ¿Se aplicarán en otros Estados miembros, en caso de que estos lo soliciten, las exenciones negociadas y acordadas por la Comisión Europea y Alemania? En caso afirmativo, ¿sufrirá su aplicación algún retraso?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de junio de 2014)

Las nuevas Directrices sobre ayudas estatales en materia de protección del medio ambiente y energía se adoptaron en principio el 9 de abril de 2014 (véase http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/energy/eeag_en.pdf). Estas Directrices son el resultado de un largo proceso de consulta que comenzó en 2012, durante el cual se recopilaron información y comentarios de todos los Estados miembros y las distintas partes interesadas. Por último, están vinculadas a la evolución de los mercados de la energía de los Estados miembros (aumento de los costes de las energías renovables y cuestiones relacionadas con la seguridad del suministro o la adecuación de la producción).

Las numerosas contribuciones de las partes interesadas y de varios Estados miembros, entre ellos Alemania, pusieron de manifiesto que existe una necesidad de reducir, para los usuarios grandes consumidores de energía, los recargos que se derivan de las energías renovables, en particular en vista de los objetivos en materia de energías renovables para 2020 y del objetivo de reforzar la competitividad de la industria de la UE. También pusieron de manifiesto que era importante contar con un marco común aplicable a todos los Estados miembros.

La sección 3.7.2 de las nuevas Directrices permite a los Estados miembros conceder reducciones a las empresas con una gran intensidad de uso de la electricidad pertenecientes a los 68 sectores que figuran en el anexo 3, así como a las empresas con una intensidad de uso de la electricidad del 20 % y pertenecientes a un sector que a escala de la UE tenga una intensidad comercial del 4 %. Para las empresas subvencionables, los Estados miembros podrán limitar el recargo al 15 % de la totalidad del recargo. Cuando el 15 % de la totalidad del recargo represente el 4 % del valor añadido bruto de la empresa subvencionable, los Estados miembros podrán limitar el recargo al 4 %. Para las empresas con una intensidad de uso de la electricidad del 20 %, el límite máximo podrá fijarse en el 0,5 % de su valor añadido bruto.

Los criterios de las nuevas Directrices se aplicarán en todos los Estados miembros a los regímenes en curso y futuros.

([1]) http://mobile.nytimes.com/2014/03/20/business/energy-environment/german-energy-push-runs-into-problems.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&_r=0&referrer=

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004147/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Energy policy in Europe

Following a number of reports picked up by the press, Germany hopes that a deal can be reached to end a dispute with the Union over Berlin's exemption of certain energy-intensive industries from the country's environmental surcharges ([1]). The German daily newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported that a proposal had been floated that would allow Berlin to grant surcharge reductions for companies in approximately 65 sectors. During a visit to Berlin in February 2014, Joaquín Almunia, the Commissioner for Competition, said that the aluminium and steel industries would be among those exempted. Experts say they also expect the industrial gas, cement and electronic components sectors to be included.

1. Can the Commission explain in further detail the scope of the deal that it is preparing to reach?

2. Will these exemptions negotiated and agreed between the Commission and Germany be applied to other Member States should they so request? If so, will there be any delay in their application?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The new Energy and Environmental Aid Guidelines were adopted in principle on 9 April 2014 (available at: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/energy/eeag_en.pdf). These guidelines are the result of a long consultation process starting in 2012, during which information and comments were gathered from all Member States and various stakeholders. Finally, they are linked to new developments in the energy markets of Member States (increasing renewable costs and issues linked to security of supply or generation adequacy).

The numerous contributions from stakeholders and from several Member States, including Germany, showed that there is a need for reductions for electro-intensive users from renewable surcharges, in particular in view of the 2020 renewable targets and the aim of improving the competitiveness of EU industry. They also showed that it was important to have a common framework applying to all Member States.

Section 3.7.2 of the new Energy and Environmental Aid Guidelines allows Member States to grant reductions to electro-intensive undertakings belonging to 68 sectors listed in Annex 3, as well as to undertakings having electro-intensity of 20% and belonging to a sector that at EU level has trade intensity of 4%. For those eligible undertakings, Member States can limit the surcharge to 15% of the full surcharge. When 15% of the full surcharge represents 4% of the gross added value of the eligible undertaking, Member States can limit the surcharge to that 4%. For undertakings with an electro-intensity of 20%, the cap can be set at 0.5% of their gross added value.

The criteria of the new guidelines will apply in all Member States to future and on-going schemes.

([1]) http://mobile.nytimes.com/2014/03/20/business/energy-environment/german-energy-push-runs-into-problems.html?partner=rss&emc=rss&_r=0&referrer=

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004148/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política energética en Europa II

Un estudio realizado para el Consensus Centre de Copenhague por algunos de los principales expertos mundiales en economía climática, entre los que se incluyen tres ganadores del premio Nobel, muestra que subvencionar las energías renovables existentes aumenta el valor añadido del sector ([1]) menos de lo esperado. Además, indica que cada euro que se gaste en innovación ecológica podría suponer un ahorro de once euros en daños a largo plazo derivados del calentamiento global. Algunas grandes empresas europeas ya han comentado que abandonarán las nuevas inversiones de la UE debido a la falta de competitividad de los precios de la energía en la EU.

1. ¿Tiene la CE una idea acerca de los puestos de trabajo que se podrían haber creado si los costes de la energía fueran similares a los de EE.UU. o China?

2. Con respecto a la UE, ¿puede la CE aportar cifras de los puestos de trabajo que se están destruyendo o trasladando a otros países socios de la Unión, como consecuencia de la factura energética?

3. Si, efectivamente, la CE cuenta con dichos datos, ¿puede explicar por qué no se ha realizado una valoración?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2014)

1. La creación de empleo depende de numerosos factores que determinan el entorno empresarial, entre los que figuran factores de coste, tales como los costes laborales y los de materias primas, capital y energía. La energía es un elemento más de los costes totales de producción, aunque su peso es importante en algunas industrias de gran consumo de energía. Los costes energéticos dependen en primera instancia de los precios de los combustibles fósiles. En su condición de gran importador de energía, la UE depende en una medida considerable de los precios del petróleo y del carbón, que vienen determinados por los mercados mundiales. En un estudio reciente se resaltaban las enormes divergencias entre la Unión y algunos importantes socios comerciales en lo que respecta a los precios del gas. La elevada eficiencia energética de la UE tiene un efecto mitigador, lo que pone de manifiesto la importancia de proseguir los esfuerzos por reforzarla. En el mundo hay grandes diferencias en los precios de la energía, la eficiencia energética y otros factores de producción que atenúan el impacto de los costes de la energía en el empleo.

2. La Comisión no ha realizado estudios sobre este tema porque hay *múltiples* factores que determinan la localización de las inversiones y la creación de empleo. No obstante, cabe señalar que, si bien se considera que algunos aspectos de las políticas de clima y energía de la UE para 2030 elevan el precio de la energía, se estima que otros aspectos, particularmente las políticas de eficiencia energética, reducen su coste; los efectos del empleo se consideran relativamente limitados. Al mismo tiempo, la UE y los Estados miembros están adoptando medidas de gran calado para mantener la competitividad de los precios energéticos. En el marco del Régimen de Comercio de Derechos de Emisión de la UE (RCDE UE), por ejemplo, se han tomado medidas concretas para prevenir el riesgo de fuga de carbono en una amplia gama de sectores industriales. A nivel nacional, se conceden exenciones a determinados impuestos y tasas energéticas que contribuyen a preservar el empleo, sobre todo en los sectores de gran consumo de energía.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/c0c9b448-9e2c-11e3-95fe-00144feab7de.html?siteedition=intl#axzz2x4u7LsXO

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004148/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Energy policy in Europe II

A study by some of the world's top climate economists, including three Nobel laureates, for the Copenhagen Consensus Centre, shows that subsidising existing renewables increases the added value of the industry by less than expected ([1]). In addition, the study indicates that every euro spent on green innovation could save EUR 11 in long-term damage from global warming. Big European companies have already said they will move new investment away from the EU due to the EU's uncompetitive energy prices.

1. Does the Commission have an estimate of the number of jobs that might have been created had the energy cost been similar to that of the USA or China?

2. At EU level, can the Commission provide data on the jobs being dislocated or job losses for other EU partners due to energy bills?

3. If the Commission does have such data, can it explain why the assessment has not been carried out?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. Job creation depends on numerous factors determining the business environment, among them also cost factors such as labour costs, raw material costs, capital costs as well as energy costs. Energy is only one part of total production costs, though its weight is important in certain energy-intensive industries. Energy costs firstly depend on fossil fuel prices. As a major energy importer, the EU is largely dependent on prices for oil and coal determined by global markets. A recent study highlighted important price divergences for gas between the EU and major trading partners. Higher energy efficiency in the EU has had a mitigating effect, emphasising the importance to continue efforts to increase energy efficiency. Significant differences can be found in energy prices, energy efficiency and other production factors across the world, nuancing the impact of energy costs on jobs.

2 and 3. The Commission has not conducted studies on the issue because multiple factors determine the location of investments and job creation. However, it should be noted that whilst some aspects of the EU 2030 energy and climate policies are estimated to raise the price of energy, other aspects, notably energy efficiency policies, are estimated to lower the cost of energy; employment effects were estimated to be relatively small. At the same time, the EU and the Member States are taking important measures to keep energy prices competitive. For instance, within the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), specific measures have been taken to prevent the risk of carbon leakage for a wide range of industrial sectors. At Member States level, exemptions are provided on certain energy taxes and levies which contribute to preserving jobs, especially in the energy intensive sectors.

([1]) http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/c0c9b448-9e2c-11e3-95fe-144feab7de.html?siteedition=intl#axzz2x4u7LsXO

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004149/14
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Health risks of depleted uranium

In 2009, at the request of Parliament, the Commission sought the advice of the independent Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) on the environmental and health risks posed by depleted uranium (DU), and in particular those risks that may arise from exposure to DU in contaminated areas following military activities with DU-containing weapons. After a period of public consultation, the SCHER adopted and published its report on 18 May 2010.

Can the Commission please advise me as to any further investigation or research that has been carried out with regard to the risks of depleted uranium?

Can the Commission also advise me what steps, if any, can be taken at European level to address the continuing concerns of EU citizens with regard to the health risks of this contamination?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the concerns which have been expressed in relation to the possible health effects of exposure to depleted uranium.

No further scientific reviews on depleted uranium have been carried out by the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks after 2010.

In 2001, the Commission asked for an independent scientific opinion from the Group of Experts established according to Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty on the potential health consequences after the use of depleted uranium ammunition. In this opinion, ([1]) the group of experts concluded that exposure to depleted uranium could not produce any detectable health effects. The Group of Experts also concluded that no measures should be considered other than general protective measures for easily avoidable exposures. To the Commission's knowledge, no new evidence that would change this opinion has emerged.

It is for national health services to provide information to, or to conduct health surveillance of the population.

In order to protect the population from the risks associated with exposure to ionising radiation, the Euratom Treaty and the derived EU radiation protection legislation, in particular Directive 96/29/Euratom ([2]), need to be complied with. The Commission holds the view that the use of depleted uranium in applications other than in a military conflict is subject to the requirements of the basic safety standards for the radiation protection of workers and members of the public. The use of depleted uranium in the context of a military conflict is not a matter within the competences of the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/radioprotection/doc/art31/opinion_en.pdf
([2]) Council Directive 96/29/Euratom of 13.5.1996 laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionising radiation (OJ L 159, 29.6.1996, p. 1).

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004150/14
an die Kommission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sari Essayah (PPE) und Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(3. April 2014)

Betrifft: Verlängerung der Umstellungsfrist für das SEPA-Überweisungs- und Lastschriftverfahren

Am 9. Januar 2014 nahm die Kommission einen Vorschlag (KOM(2013)0937) an, die Durchführung der Verordnung EU Nr. 260/2012, die die Umstellung auf SEPA-Überweisungs- (SCT) und -Lastschriftverfahren (SDD) betrifft, bis zum Ende einer Übergangsfrist von sechs Monaten, d. h. bis zum 1. August 2014, zu verschieben. Dieser Vorschlag wurde anschließend vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat gebilligt.

Die Kommission erklärte, dass die Übergangsfrist nach Ablauf nicht verlängert werde, und forderte die Mitgliedstaaten erneut auf, ihre Verpflichtungen in vollem Umfang zu erfüllen und die Umstellung auf das SEPA-Verfahren zu beschleunigen und zu intensivieren, damit alle Mitgliedstaaten von den Vorteilen der Umstellung profitieren können ([1]).

1. Überwacht die Kommission die Fortschritte bei der Umstellung auf SEPA-Verfahren in den Mitgliedstaaten?

2. Warum hat die Kommission das Parlament nicht über den neuesten Stand informiert, obwohl sich Kommissar Michel Barnier in der Sitzung vom 22. Januar 2014 verpflichtet hatte, dies zu tun?

3. Wie ist die aktuelle Lage in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten?

4. Verläuft die Umstellung in allen Mitgliedstaaten planmäßig, so dass die Frist zum 1. August 2014 eingehalten wird?

5. Falls nicht: Welche Maßnahmen wird die Kommission ergreifen, um sicherzustellen, dass alle Mitgliedstaaten die Umstellung fristgemäß abschließen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(12. Juni 2014)

Die Kommission überwacht gemeinsam mit der EZB die Fortschritte der Mitgliedstaaten bei der Umstellung auf SEPA-Verfahren. Die EZB veröffentlicht die Umstellungsraten monatlich auf ihrer Website. Im Februar führte die Kommission eine Umfrage unter den nationalen Behörden durch, um in Erfahrung zu bringen, inwieweit sie bereits auf SEPA-Verfahren umgestellt haben. Die Ergebnisse dieser Umfrage werden im Juni 2014 veröffentlicht.

Bei der Ad-hoc-Anhörung zum Zahlungsdienstepaket im Ausschuss für Wirtschaft und Währung (ECON) am 22. Januar 2014 erklärte sich die Kommission bereit, das Europäische Parlament über die Fortschritte bei der Umstellung auf SEPA zu informieren. In diesem Zusammenhang hat sie vor kurzem ein Schreiben der Abgeordneten Sophia in 't Veld beantwortet und ihr bei dieser Gelegenheit auch die aktuellen SEPA-Daten für März 2014 übermittelt. Aus den jüngsten Zahlen von April 2014 geht hervor, dass die Umstellung im Euroraum gut voranschreitet: 96,21 % aller Überweisungen und 85,72 % der Lastschriften werden im SEPA-Format abgewickelt (Informationen auf der Website der EZB:
http://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/sepa/about/indicators/html/index.en.html).

Kommission und EZB werden die Umstellung gemeinsam mit den nationalen Behörden weiterhin genauestens beobachten. Die Kommission hat die Mitgliedstaaten aufgefordert, sicherzustellen, dass die laufenden Informationskampagnen fortgeführt werden. Halten ein oder mehrere Mitgliedstaaten die Frist nicht ein, wird die Kommission gegebenenfalls Folgemaßnahmen treffen.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-81_en.htm?locale=en

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004150/14
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sari Essayah (PPE) en Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(3 april 2014)

Betreft: Uitstel van de migratie naar SEPA-overmakingen en SEPA-automatische afschrijvingen

Op 9 januari 2014 stelde de Commissie een voorstel vast (COM(2013)0937), later goedgekeurd door het Parlement en de Raad, houdende uitstel — met een overgangsperiode van zes maanden, d.w.z. tot 1 augustus 2014 — van de implementatie van Verordening (EU) nr. 260/2012 ten aanzien van de migratie naar SEPA-overmakingen (SCT) en SEPA-automatische afschrijvingen (SDD).

De Commissie heeft aangegeven dat de overgangsperiode na deze deadline niet opnieuw zal worden verlengd, en heeft de lidstaten nog eens opgeroepen volledig hun verantwoordelijkheid te nemen en hun inspanningen gericht op de migratie naar SEPA te versnellen en te intensiveren, zodat eenieder er de voordelen van kan plukken ([1]).

1. Monitort de Commissie de vooruitgang in de lidstaten op het gebied van de migratie naar SEPA?

2. Waarom heeft de Commissie het Parlement geen update doen toekomen, ondanks de toezegging van commissaris Barnier tijdens de vergadering op 22 januari 2014 dit te zullen doen?

3. Wat is de huidige stand van zaken in elk van de lidstaten?

4. Liggen alle lidstaten op schema voor het halen van de deadline van 1 augustus 2014?

5. Zo niet, welke maatregelen gaat de Commissie nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de lidstaten alsnog de genoemde deadline halen?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(12 juni 2014)

De Commissie volgt samen met de Europese Centrale Bank de vooruitgang van de migratie naar SEPA in de lidstaten. Op haar website publiceert de ECB de maandelijkse migratiecijfers. In februari startte de Commissie een onderzoek naar de SEPA-migratiecijfers wat betreft nationale overheidsadministraties. De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen in juni 2014 worden voorgesteld.

Tijdens de ad hoc-hoorzitting van de Commissie economische en monetaire zaken van 22 januari 2014 inzake het betalingspakket, drukte de Commissie haar bereidheid uit om het Europees Parlement te informeren over de vooruitgang van de SEPA-migratie. De Commissie heeft wat dit betreft recent geantwoord op een brief van het geachte Parlementslid Sophia in 't Veld over ditzelfde onderwerp, met inbegrip van de SEPA-migratiecijfers voor maart 2014. De meest recente SEPA-migratiecijfers voor april 2014 laten een verbetering zien van de algemene migratiecijfers voor de eurozone. 96,21 % van de overmakingen en 85,72 % van de automatische overschrijvingen bezitten nu een SEPA-formaat (zie ook de website van de ECB: http://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/sepa/ about/indicators/html/index.en.html).

De Commissie en de ECB hebben zich ertoe verbonden, samen met de nationale autoriteiten, om het migratieproces van nabij te blijven volgen. Wat dit betreft heeft de Commissie met name de vraag tot de lidstaten gericht om ervoor te zorgen dat bestaande informatiecampagnes worden verdergezet. Indien één of meerdere lidstaten de deadline niet zouden halen, zal de Commissie op gepaste wijze over mogelijke vervolgacties beslissen.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-81_en.htm?locale=en.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004150/14
komissiolle
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sari Essayah (PPE) ja Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(3. huhtikuuta 2014)

Aihe: SEPA-tilisiirtoihin ja -suoraveloituksiin siirtymisen lykkääminen

Komissio hyväksyi 9. tammikuuta 2014 Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston myöhemmin hyväksymän ehdotuksen (COM(2013)0937) lykätä SEPA-tilisiirtoihin ja -suoraveloituksiin siirtymistä koskevan asetuksen (EU) N:o 260/2012 täytäntöönpanoa kuuden kuukauden siirtymäajalla 1. elokuuta 2014 saakka.

Komissio totesi, että siirtymäaikaa ei jatkettaisi kyseistä määräaikaa pidemmälle, ja kehotti jälleen kerran jäsenvaltioita kantamaan vastuunsa täysimääräisesti sekä nopeuttamaan ja tehostamaan ponnisteluitaan SEPA-järjestelmään siirtymiseksi, jotta kaikki voivat nauttia sen eduista ([1]).

1. Valvooko komissio SEPA-järjestelmään siirtymisen edistymistä jäsenvaltioissa?

2. Miksi komissio ei ole toimittanut parlamentille uusimpia tietoja ottaen huomioon, että komissaari Barnier sitoutui 22. tammikuuta 2014 pidetyssä kokouksessa tekemään näin?

3. Mikä on tämänhetkinen tilanne kussakin jäsenvaltiossa?

4. Ovatko kaikki jäsenvaltiot aikataulussa 1. elokuuta 2014 koskevan määräajan suhteen?

5. Jos eivät ole, mihin toimenpiteisiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä varmistaakseen, että kaikki jäsenvaltiot noudattavat asetettua määräaikaa?

Michel Barnier'n komission puolesta antama vastaus
(12. kesäkuuta 2014)

Komissio valvoo yhdessä Euroopan keskuspankin EKP:n kanssa yhtenäiseen eurooppalaiseen maksualueeseen SEPAan siirtymisen edistymistä jäsenvaltioissa. EKP julkaisee kuukausittain verkkosivuillaan SEPAan siirtymisen asteen. Helmikuussa käynnistettiin komission selvitys tietojen hankkimiseksi siitä, missä määrin kansalliset viranomaiset ovat siirtyneet SEPAan. Selvityksen tulokset julkaistaan kesäkuussa 2014.

Maksupaketista 22. tammikuuta 2014 järjestetyssä talous- ja raha-asioiden valiokunnan (ECON) ad hoc -kuulemisessa komissio ilmoitti olevansa valmis tiedottamaan Euroopan parlamentille SEPAan siirtymisen edistymisestä. Tältä osin komissio vastasi hiljattain parlamentin jäsen Sophia in 't Veldin kirjeeseen ja antoi vastauksessaan muun muassa SEPAan siirtymistä koskevat luvut maaliskuulta 2014. Tuoreimpien tietojen mukaan huhtikuussa 2014 SEPAan siirtyminen oli euroalueella edistynyt huomattavasti: tilisiirroista 96,21 prosenttia ja suoraveloituksista 85,72 prosenttia tehtiin SEPAn puitteissa (ks. myös EKP:n verkkosivusto: http://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/sepa/about/indicators/html/index.en.html).

Komissio ja EKP ovat sitoutuneet valvomaan prosessia kansallisten viranomaisten kanssa tiiviisti. Komissio on erityisesti pyytänyt jäsenvaltioita varmistamaan tiedotuskampanjoiden jatkumisen. Jos yksi tai useampi jäsenvaltio jää määräajasta jälkeen, komissio päättää mahdollisista jatkotoimista tarpeen mukaan.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-81_en.htm?locale=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004150/14
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE), Sari Essayah (PPE) and Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Postponement of migration to SEPA credit transfers and direct debits

On 9 January 2014 the Commission adopted a proposal (COM(2013) 0937), subsequently approved by Parliament and the Council, to postpone the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 260/2012, which concerns migration to SEPA credit transfers (SCT) and SEPA direct debit (SDD), by a transition period of six months, i.e. until 1 August 2014.

The Commission stated that the transition period would not be extended after this deadline and called once more on the Member States to assume their responsibilities fully and to accelerate and intensify efforts to migrate to SEPA so that all can enjoy its benefits ([1]).

1. Is the Commission monitoring the progress of migration to SEPA in the Member States?

2. Why has the Commission not provided Parliament with an update, given that Commissioner Barnier committed himself to doing so at the meeting of 22 January 2014?

3. What is the current situation in each of the Member States?

4. Are all the Member States on schedule for the deadline of 1 August 2014?

5. If not, what measures will the Commission take to ensure that all the Member States meet the deadline set?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The Commission, together with the ECB, is monitoring the progress of migration to SEPA in Member States. The ECB publishes on its website the migration rates on a monthly basis. A Commission survey was launched in February to obtain information on the SEPA migration rate of national public administrations. The outcome of this survey will be published in June 2014.

At the ad hoc hearing in ECON of 22 January 2014 on the payment package, the Commission mentioned its willingness to provide the European Parliament with an update on the progress of SEPA migration. In this context, the Commission has recently responded to a letter from the Honourable Member Sophia in 't Veld about this matter, including the SEPA migration figures for March 2014. The latest figures on SEPA migration from April 2014 indicate that the global migration rates for the Eurozone have improved considerably with 96.21% of credit transfers and 85.72% of direct debits being under SEPA format (see also on the ECB website: http://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/sepa/about/indicators/html/index.en.html).

The Commission and the ECB, together with national authorities, have committed to continue monitoring the migration process closely. In particular, the Commission has invited Member States to ensure that ongoing information campaigns continue. If one or more Member States were to miss the deadline, the Commission will decide on potential follow-up actions, as appropriate.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-81_en.htm?locale=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004151/14
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Use of veterinary diclofenac for livestock farming in Spain and Italy

Vultures are essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems around the world. It is clear from the cases of India, Nepal and Pakistan that the main contributory factor causing a 99.9% decline in many vulture species is the use of diclofenac on domestic livestock. The drug has since been banned in these countries.

Following the recent licensing of veterinary diclofenac for livestock farming in Spain and Italy, has the Commission examined the potential impact of the drug on the European vulture population?

Given that the EU and its Member States have a legal obligation to conserve vultures under the EU Birds Directive and EU veterinary drugs legislation, and the fact that Europe is home to four rare vulture species, what measures are being taken to protect these species in relation to the new authorisation?

Bearing in mind that the substance has been listed by the Commission as one of the 'priority substances' in the field of water policy, can the Commission clarify whether less harmful alternative substances, such as meloxicam, have been considered for use on domestic livestock?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-003382/2014 ([1]) by the Honourable Member Nuno Melo. Furthermore the Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that veterinary medicinal products containing meloxicam have been authorised in the Union for use in livestock.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004152/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 avril 2014)

Objet: Gaz de schiste

Une militante américaine opposée à l'extraction du gaz de schiste par fracturation hydraulique a saisi un juge de Pennsylvanie pour obtenir la levée de l'interdiction d'accès à des terrains loués à la compagnie pétrolière Cabot Oil & Gas.

Cette militante a notamment filmé des vidéos qui apparaissent dans Gasland (2010), un documentaire de Josh Fox qui dénonce les risques sanitaires et environnementaux liés à la fracturation hydraulique.

En octobre, la compagnie pétrolière texane Cabot Oil & Gas a obtenu une injonction judiciaire interdisant l'accès à 40 % du territoire du comté de Susquehanna, en Pennsylvanie, où la firme exploite des réserves de gaz de schiste.

1. Quelle est la position de l'Europe sur le gaz de schiste?

2. La Commission compte-t-elle commanditer de nouvelles études sur le sujet?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2014)

La Commission invite les Honorables Parlementaires à prendre connaissance de la communication de la Commission relative à l'exploration et à la production d'hydrocarbures (tels que le gaz de schiste) par fracturation hydraulique à grands volumes dans l'Union européenne ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0023R(01)

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004152/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Gas di scisto

Un'attivista americana che si oppone all'estrazione di gas di scisto mediante fratturazione idraulica ha adito un giudice della Pennsylvania per ottenere che sia tolto il divieto di accesso a terreni dati in locazione alla compagnia petrolifera Cabot Oil & Gas.

L'attivista ha girato dei video che vengono mostrati in Gasland (2010), un documentario di Josh Fox che denuncia i rischi sanitari e ambientali connessi con la fratturazione idraulica.

In ottobre la compagnia petrolifera texana Cabot Oil & Gas ha ottenuto un'ingiunzione del tribunale che vieta l'accesso al 40 % del territorio della contea di Susquehanna, in Pennsylvania, dove l'impresa sfrutta giacimenti di gas di scisto.

1. Qual è la posizione dell'Europa sul gas di scisto?

2. Intende la Commissione finanziare nuovi studi in materia?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rimanda gli onorevoli parlamentari alla sua comunicazione sull'esplorazione e produzione di idrocarburi (come il gas di scisto) mediante la fratturazione idraulica ad elevato volume nell'UE ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0023R(01)

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004152/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: Shale gas

An American activist opposed to the extraction of shale gas by hydraulic fracturing (fracking) has applied to a judge in Pennsylvania to lift the injunction preventing access to land leased by the Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation.

The activist filmed footage that was included in *Gasland* (2010), a documentary by Josh Fox that highlights the health and environmental risks linked to fracking.

In October, Cabot Oil & Gas obtained a court injunction preventing access to 40% of Susquehanna County in Pennsylvania, where the Texan company exploits shale gas reserves.

1. Where does the EU stand on shale gas?

2. Is the Commission intending to commission any new research on the subject?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its communication on the exploration and production of hydrocarbons (such as shale gas) using high volume hydraulic fracturing in the EU ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0023R(01)

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004154/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Échange de tirs entre la Corée du Nord et la Corée du Sud

La Corée du Sud a indiqué, lundi 31 mars, avoir répliqué à des salves d'artillerie tirées par la Corée du Nord dans le cadre d'exercices militaires à la frontière maritime entre les deux pays. Cette zone est contestée par la Corée du Nord depuis des décennies. Les tirs de part et d'autre ne semblaient pas immédiatement avoir été dirigés contre des cibles précises.

1. La Commission compte-t-elle demander des explications sur ces échanges de tirs?

2. Estime-t-elle que la situation en Corée est aujourd'hui plus calme qu'elle ne l'était il y a quelques mois, où nous étions au bord d'une nouvelle guerre? Le risque n'est-il pas encore présent?

3. Que fait-elle pour prévenir un éventuel conflit?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2014)

1. Le SEAE suit de près les relations intercoréennes et dispose de canaux de communication tant avec la République de Corée qu'avec la République populaire démocratique de Corée.

2. Aussi longtemps que les tensions intercoréennes et régionales ne diminuent pas de manière permanente, le risque d'une confrontation militaire persiste. Tant les deux parties que tous les États de la région et au-delà ont clairement un intérêt stratégique à prévenir une telle évolution.

3. L'UE a un intérêt direct à ce que les tensions diminuent de manière durable sur la péninsule et continue à tenir des consultations étroites avec ses partenaires clés sur les nouveaux événements qui ont lieu dans la région.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004154/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Scambio di tiri fra la Corea del Nord e la Corea del Sud

La Corea del Sud ha fatto sapere che lunedì 31 marzo ha replicato ai tiri a salve sparati dall'artiglieria della Corea del Nord nel quadro di esercitazioni militari alla frontiera marittima fra i due paesi. Quest'area è contestata dalla Corea del Nord da decenni. I tiri di ambo le parti non sembrano essere stati immediatamente diretti contro bersagli precisi.

1. Intende la Commissione chiedere spiegazioni sugli scambi di tiri?

2. Ritiene che la situazione in Corea sia oggi più calma rispetto a qualche mese fa, quando si era sull'orlo di una nuova guerra? Il rischio non sussiste tuttora?

3. Quali misure sta adottando per prevenire un eventuale conflitto?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

1. Il SEAE segue con attenzione le relazioni intercoreane e dispone di canali di comunicazione sia con la Repubblica di Corea che con la Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea.

2. Finché le tensioni regionali e tra le due Coree non diminuiranno in modo permanente, continueranno a sussistere rischi di scontro militare. Entrambe le parti, nonché tutti gli Stati all'interno e al di fuori della regione, hanno un chiaro interesse strategico nell'impedire un'evoluzione di questo tipo.

3. L'UE ha un interesse diretto ad una riduzione duratura delle tensioni nella penisola coreana e prosegue consultazioni serrate con i principali partner in merito agli sviluppi della situazione nella regione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004154/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(3 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Exchange of fire between North and South Korea

South Korea has said that it returned fire on Monday, 31 March after North Korea had fired artillery rounds in military exercises on the sea border between the two countries. The border has been disputed for decades: North Korea has never recognised it. Apparently, neither side was aiming at any particular targets.

1. Will the Commission seek an explanation for this exchange of fire?

2. Does it believe that the situation on the Korean Peninsula is calmer now than it was a few months ago, when a new war appeared to be imminent? Does the risk of war still exist?

3. What is the Commission doing to avert possible conflict?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1. The EEAS closely monitors inter-Korean relations and has channels of communication with both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

2. As long as inter-Korean and regional tensions do not decrease on a permanent basis, the risk of military confrontation remains. Both parties as well as all States in the region and beyond have a clear strategic interest in preventing any such development.

3. The EU has a direct interest in a lasting diminution of tensions on the Peninsula and continues to closely consult with key partners on developments in the region.