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 324/01)

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(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002373/14
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(3 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Necesidad de reapertura de la investigación sobre el aeropuerto de Castellón

La Comisión conoce bien el caso del aeropuerto construido en la provincia de Castellón, en la Comunidad Valenciana, pues se le ha instado diversas veces a monitorizar las obras en virtud de la legislación comunitaria sobre impacto ambiental y en referencia a una posible afección a las aves de la zona de instalación, algunas de las cuales, como es el caso del aguilucho cenizo, están catalogadas como especies prioritarias dentro de la Directiva 2009/147/CE.

Tanto el anterior Comisario, Sr. Dimas, como el actual Comisario de Medio Ambiente, Sr. Potočnik, desestimaron (el 26 de enero de 2007 y el 19 de enero de 2011 respectivamente) posibles afecciones medioambientales en dicho proyecto. Hoy, las instalaciones ya han sido construidas, aunque se encuentran en desuso, y las protestas vecinales y ciudadanas no cesan ante las afecciones que para esta zona sensible y su entorno presentan el conjunto de construcciones a las que no se les da servicio por falta de demanda.

La misma institución del Defensor del Pueblo española, dirigida por la Sra. Soledad Becerril, ha advertido recientemente de los daños ambientales irreversibles que puede provocar el aeropuerto de Castellón y ha recordado que la legislación revisada de la UE sobre evaluación de impacto, en base a los criterios adoptados por la Unión sobre desarrollo sostenible, requería también tener en cuenta los impactos sociales y económicos de un proyecto como el que se ha llevado a cabo con esta infraestructura en desuso ([1]).

A pesar de que la Comisión afirmó en 2007 que el aeropuerto no había contado con financiación comunitaria, ¿podría la Comisión confirmar que dichas infraestructuras no han recibido fondos de la UE en ejercicios posteriores?

Una vez construido el proyecto y a la luz de las dudas que le plantea el aeropuerto de Castellón a la misma Defensora del Pueblo, ¿no considera la Comisión necesario reabrir la investigación sobre los posibles incumplimientos de dichas infraestructuras respecto a la legislación comunitaria?

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

El proyecto de aeropuerto de Castellón fue objeto de una evaluación de impacto ambiental que, según la legislación de la Unión Europea aplicable ([2]), debía tener en cuenta los aspectos socioeconómicos del proyecto. Por consiguiente, la Comisión no considera necesario abrir una nueva investigación.

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta E-007868/2012 ([3]) sobre el mismo tema. La Comisión confirma que no se han concedido fondos del FEDER ni del Fondo de Cohesión a proyectos relacionados con el aeropuerto.

([1]) Informe del Defensor del Pueblo: http://www.defensordelpueblo.es/es/Documentacion/Publicaciones/anual/Documentos/Informe_2013.pdf (páginas 410-411).
([2]) Directiva 85/337/CEE del Consejo, de 27 de junio de 1985, relativa a la evaluación de las repercusiones de determinados proyectos públicos y privados sobre el medio ambiente (DO L 175 de 5.7.1985).
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002373/14
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Need to reopen the investigation concerning Castellón airport

The Commission is well aware of the situation regarding the airport constructed in the province of Castellón, in the Valencian Community, as it has been called upon on several occasions to monitor the work in the context of Community legislation on environmental impact and with reference to the possible effects on the birds in the installation area, some of which are classified as priority species under Directive 2009/147/EC, as is the case for the Montagu's harrier.

Both the former Commissioner for the Environment, Mr Dimas, and the current Commissioner for the Environment, Mr Potočnik, dismissed (on 26 January 2007 and 19 January 2011, respectively) any possible environmental effects of this project. Today, the facilities have already been built but are in a state of disuse. There continue to be protests from local citizens and neighbouring landowners regarding the effects that the group of buildings, which are not even being used due to lack of demand, is having on this sensitive area and its surroundings.

Even the institution of the Defender of the Spanish People, led by Mrs Soledad Becerril, recently warned of the irreversible environmental damage that Castellón airport could cause and recalled that revised EU legislation on impact assessment, based on criteria adopted by the Union on sustainable development, requires that the social and economic impacts of a project, such as that which has been carried out with this disused infrastructure, also be taken into account ([1]).

Despite the fact that, in 2007, the Commission stated that the airport had not benefitted from Community funding, could the Commission confirm that this infrastructure did not receive EU funds in subsequent financial years?

Once the project has been built and in view of the doubts that Castellón airport is causing even for the Defender of the People, does the Commission not think it necessary to reopen the investigation into the possible non-compliance of this infrastructure with respect to Community legislation?

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

The Castellón airport project was subjected to an environmental impact assessment (EIA) which, in accordance with the applicable EU legislation ([2]) must take into account the socioeconomic aspects of a project. Consequently, the Commission does not deem it necessary to open a new investigation.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-007868/2012 ([3]) on the same subject. The Commission can confirm that no assistance from the ERDF or the Cohesion Fund was provided for projects related to the airport.

([1]) Report of the Defender of the People:.http://www.defensordelpueblo.es/es/Documentacion/Publicaciones/anual/Documentos /Informe_2013.pdf (pages 410-411).
([2]) Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment — OJ L 175, 5.7.1985.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002374/14
an die Kommission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(3. März 2014)

Betrifft: REACH-Zulassungs- und Beschränkungsverfahren

Trotz massiver rechtlicher und wettbewerbsrelevanter Einwände von Wissenschaftlern und Anwendern sollen „Aluminosilicate Refractory Ceramic Fibre" der Bezeichnungen (Al-RCF) und Zirconia (Zr-RCF) in das REACH-Zulassungs- und Beschränkungsverfahren aufgenommen werden.

Vor diesem Hintergrund wird die Kommission um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen ersucht:

1. Warum werden Erzeugnisse wie die beiden genannten für ein REACH- Zulassungsverfahren priorisiert, obwohl sie als Faser deklariert sind und damit formell nicht der Registrierung und der Zulassung unterliegen?

2. Gibt es eine eindeutige und einheitliche Definition von „Faser" in Bezug auf die Definitionen von „Stoff" bzw. „Erzeugnis"? Wenn ja, welche?

3. Beruht die Einstufung von Al-RCF auf den neuesten verfügbaren Erkenntnissen der Jahre 2001-2011?

4. Wieso weicht die europäische Einstufung als einzige von der weltweit geltenden IARC-Einstufung für diesen Stoff ab?

5. Warum wird keine von der ECHA empfohlene RMO-Analyse für die beiden Stoffe im Rahmen des REACH Prozesses durchgeführt, da es doch wissenschaftlich basierte Kritik an der Einstufung gibt?

6. Wie gedenkt die Kommission, durch den Import von Al-RCF-Erzeugnissen bedingte Marktverschiebungen bzw. Wettbewerbsverzerrungen zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(13. Mai 2014)

Die prioritäre Aufnahme der feuerfesten Fasern Al-RCF und Zr-RCF in die Liste der zulassungspflichtigen Stoffe (Anhang XIV der REACH-Verordnung) ist auf das Verfahren ([1]) zurückzuführen, auf das sich der Ausschuss der Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Chemikalienagentur (ECHA) im Mai 2010 auf der Grundlage von Artikel 58 Absatz 3 der REACH-Verordnung ([2]) geeinigt hat.

1997 ([3]) wurden feuerfeste Keramikfasern als Stoffe in Anhang 1 der Richtlinie 67/548/EWG (inzwischen ersetzt durch Anhang VI der Verordnung über die Einstufung, Kennzeichnung und Verpackung von Stoffen (CLP) ([4])) aufgenommen, was zu ihrer harmonisierten Einstufung als karzinogene Stoffe der Kategorie 1B führte. Diese Einstufung kann anhand neuer Daten und Testergebnisse überprüft werden. Dazu müsste die Behörde eines Mitgliedstaats der ECHA einen neuen Vorschlag vorlegen, der gemäß Artikel 37 Absatz 6 der CLP-Verordnung von der Industrie erarbeitet werden könnte.

Der Kommission bekannt, dass diese Fasern meist in Erzeugnissen verarbeitet werden und dass die Zulassungspflicht weder für die Verarbeitung der Stoffe (Fasern) in Erzeugnissen außerhalb der EU noch für die Einfuhr solcher Artikel gilt. Wenn jedoch diese Stoffe in Erzeugnissen (auch in Einfuhren) ein Risiko für die menschliche Gesundheit oder die Umwelt mit sich bringen, kann gemäß Artikel 69 Absatz 2 der REACH-Verordnung eine Beschränkung eingeführt werden, die innerhalb und außerhalb der EU hergestellte Erzeugnisse gleichermaßen betreffen würde.

Im Hinblick auf eine Änderung des Anhangs XIV der REACH-Verordnung wird die Kommission nun die ECHA-Empfehlung ([5]) und die begleitende und ergänzende Dokumentation der Mitgliedstaaten und Interessengruppen prüfen. Zudem wird sie unter anderem beurteilen. ob eine Ausnahme von der Zulassungspflicht nach Artikel 58 Absatz 2 der REACH-Verordnung für bestimmte Verwendungen gewährt werden kann.

([1]) „General Approach for Prioritisation of Substances of Very High Concern" (Allgemeines Konzept für die prioritäre Behandlung besonders besorgniserregender Stoffe), abrufbar unter: http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13640/axiv_prioritysetting_general_approach_20100701_en.pdf

([2]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1907/2006 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Dezember 2006 zur Registrierung, Bewertung, Zulassung und Beschränkung chemischer Stoffe.

([3]) Richtlinie 97/69/EG der Kommission vom 5. Dezember 1997 OJEC L343 vom 13.12.1997, S. 19.

([4]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1272/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 16. Dezember 2008 über die Einstufung, Kennzeichnung und Verpackung von Stoffen und Gemischen, zur Änderung und Aufhebung der Richtlinien 67/548/EWG und 1999/45/EG, und zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1907/2006.

([5]) http://echa.europa.eu/addressing-chemicals-of-concern/authorisation/recommendation-for-inclusion-in-the-authorisation-list/previous-recommendations/5th-recommendation

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002374/14
to the Commission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: REACH authorisation and restriction process

Despite serious legal and competition-related objections by scientists and users, Aluminosilicate Refractory Ceramic Fibres (Al-RCF) and Zirconia Aluminosilicate Refractory Ceramic Fibres (Zr-RCF) are to be included in the REACH authorisation and restriction process.

Against this background, the Commission is requested to answer the following questions:

1. Why are products such as the two mentioned above prioritised for a REACH authorisation process even though they are declared to be fibres and are therefore not formally subject to registration and authorisation?

2. Is there a clear and uniform definition of 'fibre' in relation to the definitions of 'substance' and 'product'? If so, what is it?

3. Is the Al-RCF classification based on the latest available knowledge from the years 2001-2011?

4. Why is the European classification the only classification that departs from the globally applicable IARC classification for this substance?

5. As there is scientifically based criticism of the classification, why are none of the RMO analyses recommended by the ECHA carried out for the two substances as part of the REACH process?

6. How does the Commission intend to prevent market shifts and/or distortions of competition caused by the import of Al-RCF products?

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

The prioritisation for inclusion of the refractory fibres Al-RCF and Zr-RCF in the list of substances subject to the authorisation procedure (Annex XIV of REACH) resulted from the process ([1]) agreed by the Member State Committee of ECHA in May 2010 on the basis of Article 58(3) of REACH ([2]).

In 1997 ([3]), refractory ceramic fibres were included as substances in Annex 1 to Directive 67/548/EEC (now replaced by Annex VI of the CLP Regulation ([4])), which made them subject to harmonised classification as carcinogens 1B. This classification can be revisited in the light of new data and test results. A Member State authority would have to submit to ECHA a new proposal, which could be prepared by industry, in accordance with Article 37(6) of the CLP Regulation.

The Commission is aware that these fibres are mostly used for incorporation into articles and that the authorisation requirement does not apply to the incorporation of substances (fibres) into articles outside the EU, neither to the import of such articles. However, in cases when these substances in articles (including imports) pose a risk to human health or the environment, a restriction can be introduced in line with Article 69(2) of REACH which would equally affect articles produced inside and outside of the EU.

The Commission, with a view to amend Annex XIV of REACH, will now consider the recommendation of ECHA ([5]) and its accompanying and additional documentation provided by Member States and stakeholders. The Commission will, *inter alia*, also assess the possibility of granting an exemption from authorisation for certain uses in line with Article 58(2) of REACH.

([1]) 'General Approach for Prioritisation of SVHCs', available at: http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13640/axiv_prioritysetting_general_approach_20100701_en.pdf
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals.
([3]) Commission Directive 97/69/EC of 5 December 1997. OJ L 343. 13.12.1997. p 19.
([4]) Regulation (EC) 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, amending and repealing Directives 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC, and amending Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006.
([5]) http://echa.europa.eu/addressing-chemicals-of-concern/authorisation/recommendation-for-inclusion-in-the-authorisation-list/previous-recommendations/5th-recommendation

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002375/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποίηση του Αερολιμένος των Χανίων

Η Ελλάδα στο πλαίσιο των μνημονίων, μεταξύ άλλων, ανέλαβε συγκεκριμένες υποχρεώσεις για την αξιοποίηση της δημόσιας περιουσίας της προκειμένου να καταφέρει να επιτύχει, αφενός, το πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα και, αφετέρου, την μακροπρόθεσμη αποκατάσταση των δημοσίων οικονομικών στη βάση της ανάπτυξης με θέσεις απασχόλησης και της επένδυσης στην καινοτομία με πλήρη σεβασμό στο θεσμικό πλαίσιο ανταγωνισμού, τα δικαιώματα των καταναλωτών και στους υγιείς όρους εργασίας. Σε αυτό το πλαίσιο έχει τεθεί το ζήτημα ιδιωτικοποίησης ενός ιδιαίτερα κερδοφόρου αερολιμένος, αυτού των Χανίων, που αποτελεί κεντρικό πυλώνα της τοπικής οικονομίας. Το εν λόγω αεροδρόμιο σημειώνει πάνω από 10 εκατομμύρια ευρώ ετήσια κέρδη — συμβάλλοντας καθοριστικά στην προσπάθεια αποκατάστασης της δημοσιονομικής ισορροπίας στην Ελλάδα, ενώ επιλέγεται ως κέντρο δραστηριότητας σημαντικών αεροπορικών εταιρειών και έχει βαρύνουσα θέση στην εθνική άμυνα και ασφάλεια. Είναι σαφές ότι η ιδιωτικοποίηση μιας κερδοφόρας δημόσιας επιχείρησης, η οποία αποτελεί μοχλό ανάπτυξης για την τοπική κοινωνία και έχει λάβει χρηματοδότηση από ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια προκειμένου να επεκταθεί — το έργο βρίσκεται σε εξέλιξη — εγείρει ερωτηματικά αναφορικά με τις σκοπιμότητες αλλά και την απόδοσή της.

Σε αυτή την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Δεδομένου ότι το αεροδρόμιο Χανίων έχει λάβει χρηματοδότηση για την επέκτασή του από ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια και δεν έχει παρέλθει η περίοδος των πέντε ετών, επιτρέπεται να δρομολογηθεί ιδιωτικοποίηση-παραχώρηση; Αν ναι, πρόκειται να επιστραφούν χρήματα;

2. Πώς κρίνει η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος της Τρόικα, μια τέτοια ενέργεια ιδιωτικοποίησης σε σχέση με την απόδοσή της στην εθνική και τοπική οικονομία; Δεδομένου ότι οι τοπικοί φορείς και οι κοινωνικοί εταίροι — εκπρόσωποι εργαζομένων και επιχειρήσεων — προδικάζουν ότι μια ιδιωτικοποίηση μπορεί να αποβεί καταστροφική για τον τουρισμό, ως βασική τοπική δραστηριότητα, ποια η άποψη της Επιτροπής σχετικά με την έλλειψη κοινωνικού διαλόγου κατά το σχεδιασμό των μεταρρυθμίσεων;

3. Θα υπάρξει ζήτημα εύρυθμης λειτουργίας της αγοράς, δεδομένου ότι κοντινοί αερολιμένες θα παραμείνουν δημόσιοι;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002505/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(4 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Η ιδιωτικοποίηση του αεροδρομίου Χανίων παραβιάζει τον Κανονισμό (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006

Πρόσφατα δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό Τύπο αναφέρουν ότι το Ταμείο Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) θα ολοκληρώσει εντός του 2014 την ιδιωτικοποίηση των περιφερειακών αεροδρομίων της Ελλάδας, μεταξύ των οποίων και αυτό των Χανίων. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, το αεροδρόμιο των Χανίων, «Ιωάννης Δασκαλογιάννης» έχει ετήσια κέρδη που υπερβαίνουν τα 10 εκατ. ευρώ. Επιπλέον, την περίοδο αυτή εκτελείται στο αεροδρόμιο έργο επέκτασης και κατασκευής νέου πύργου ελέγχου, το οποίο χρηματοδοτείται από το ΕΣΠΑ, ύψους 110 εκ. ευρώ. Σε προηγούμενη ερώτησή μου (P-000163/2014) σχετικά με την ιδιωτικοποίηση της εταιρείας ύδρευσης της Θεσσαλονίκης (ΕΥΑΘ), η Επιτροπή είχε τονίσει ότι «οι εθνικές αρχές οφείλουν να διασφαλίσουν ότι συμμορφώνονται με τις απαιτήσεις του άρθρου 57 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006, ιδίως για να μην παρέχουν αδικαιολόγητο πλεονέκτημα στον πωλητή ή τον αγοραστή». Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος της Τρόικας:

Δεν εναντιώνεται στους στόχους του προγράμματος σταθεροποίησης η ιδιωτικοποίηση του αεροδρομίου με ετήσια κέρδη που υπερβαίνουν τα 10 εκ. ευρώ;

Έχει προβλεφθεί με ποιους τρόπους θα αντικατασταθεί η συνεισφορά του κερδοφόρου αυτού αεροδρομίου στον προϋπολογισμό και το πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα άμεσα και μακροχρόνια;

Δεδομένης της χρηματοδότησης του έργου επέκτασης και κατασκευής νέου πύργου ελέγχου από ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους, και καθώς το συγκεκριμένο αεροδρόμιο είναι σε άμεσο ανταγωνισμό με το αεροδρόμιο του Ηρακλείου και με άλλα μεγάλα αεροδρόμια, όπως π.χ. της Αθήνας και της Θεσσαλονίκης, δεν παραβιάζεται από τη διαδικασία ιδιωτικοποίησης το άρθρο 57 παρ. 1 του Κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής

(22 Απριλίου 2014)

Το ποιες εταιρίες και ποια δημόσια περιουσιακά στοιχεία θα ιδιωτικοποιηθούν στην Ελλάδα είναι εξ ολοκλήρου θέμα απόφασης των ελληνικών αρχών, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των ποικίλων προβλημάτων που αντιμετωπίζουν και των στόχων που έχουν θέσει, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των ζητημάτων που θίγει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου.

Όσον αφορά τις υποδομές που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το ΕΤΠΑ ή το Ταμείο Συνοχής, κανένας κανόνας δεν απαγορεύει ενωσιακή χρηματοδότηση σε υπό ιδιωτικοποίηση υποδομή. Ωστόσο, οι εθνικές αρχές οφείλουν να διασφαλίζουν τη συμμόρφωση με τις διατάξεις του άρθρου 57 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006, ιδίως για να μην παρέχεται αδικαιολόγητο πλεονέκτημα στον πωλητή ή τον αγοραστή.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002375/14
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Privatisation of Chania airport

Under the Memoranda, Greece has, *inter alia*, assumed specific obligations regarding the use of its public assets in order to be able to achieve, firstly, a primary surplus and, secondly, the long-term rehabilitation of public finances on the basis of growth with jobs and investment in innovation, while fully respecting the institutional framework of competition, consumer rights and sound terms of employment. In this context, the issue has been raised of privatising a highly profitable airport, that of Chania, which is a central pillar of the local economy. This airport posts annual profits in excess of EUR 10 million — thereby making a decisive contribution to efforts to restore the fiscal balance in Greece, and has been selected as a centre of activities by major airlines. It also plays an important role in national defence and security. It is clear that the privatisation of a profitable public company, which is a driver of growth for the local community and has received EU funding to expand — the project is still in progress — raises questions regarding the expediency and effectiveness of such a move.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Given that Chania airport has received EU funding for its expansion and the five-year period is not yet over, is it permissible to initiate a process of privatisation? If so, will the funds have to be repaid?

2. How does it, as a member of the Troika, view such a privatisation process, given the airport's contribution to the national and local economy? Since the local bodies and the social partners — representatives of workers and enterprises — have already come to the conclusion that privatisation may be disastrous for tourism as a key local activity, what is the Commission's view on the lack of social dialogue in planning the reforms?

3. Will the smooth functioning of the market be an issue, since nearby airports will remain in public hands?

Question for written answer E-002505/14
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Infringement of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 in connection with the privatisation of Chania airport

According to recent Greek press reports, the Asset Development Fund (TAIPED) is planning to complete the privatisation of Greek airports by the end of 2014, including the Ioannis Daskalogiannis airport serving Chania, which is posting an annual profit of over EUR 10 million, as well as receiving NSRF funding of EUR 110 million for extension works currently under way, including the construction of a new control tower. In reply to my previous question (P-000163/2014) concerning privatisation of the Thessaloniki water company (EYATH), the Commission indicated that 'national authorities must ensure compliance with the requirements of Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 in order to avoid giving undue advantage to the seller or the buyer'.

In view of this:

Does the Commission, as a member of the Troika, not consider that privatisation of an airport posting annual profits in excess of EUR 10 million runs counter to the objectives of the stabilisation programme?

What immediate and long-term measures will be taken to offset the loss to the budget and the primary surplus of revenue from this profitable airport?

Given that the extension works and the construction of the new control tower currently under way are receiving EU funding, while the airport concerned is in direct competition with Iraklion and other major airports, for example Athens and Thessaloniki, is privatisation thereof not an infringement of Article 53(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006?

Joint answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The choice of what, how far and in which sequence public assets or companies should be privatised in Greece is the exclusive result of the Greek authorities' decision, taking into account the various constraints they face and objectives they set for themselves, including the issues raised by the Honourable Member.

For infrastructure co-financed by the ERDF or the Cohesion Fund there is no rule prohibiting EU funding to an infrastructure under privatisation. However, the national authorities must ensure compliance with the requirements of Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 in order in particular to avoid giving an undue advantage to the seller or the buyer.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002376/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(3 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην ερώτησή μου αριθ. E-012977/2013

Σε απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην ερώτησή μου αριθ. E-012977/2013 αναφέρεται ότι «*η Επιτροπή έχει δεσμευτεί να σέβεται τα κοινωνικά και εργασιακά δικαιώματα, όπως ορίζονται στον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ*».

Στην Κύπρο, η Τρόικα επιβάλλει σκληρές πολιτικές λιτότητας, οι οποίες παραβιάζουν βάναυσα πλείστα κοινωνικά και εργασιακά δικαιώματα, με συνοπτικές διαδικασίες και χωρίς κοινωνικό διάλογο με τους άμεσα επηρεαζόμενους.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος της Τρόικας:

1. Πιστεύει ότι τα όσα συμβαίνουν στην Κύπρο συνάδουν με τη δέσμευση που έχει αναλάβει για σεβασμό των κοινωνικών και εργασιακών δικαιωμάτων;

2. Ενόψει της συνεχούς επιδείνωσης της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής κατάστασης στην Κύπρο, προτίθεται να λάβει οποιαδήποτε πρόσθετα μέτρα ώστε να υλοποιηθεί η πιο πάνω δέσμευσή της, καθώς και οι σχετικές πρόνοιες του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαΐου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή δεν συμμερίζεται την άποψη του κ. βουλευτή ότι παραβιάζονται τα κοινωνικά και εργασιακά δικαιώματα, όπως ορίζονται στον Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής της Κύπρου, είτε μέσω της απόφασης του Συμβουλίου 2013/463/ΕΕ είτε μέσω του Μνημονίου Συνεννόησης (ΜΣ) του ΕΜΣ.

Το κυπριακό πρόγραμμα, όπως εγκρίθηκε από την απόφαση του Συμβουλίου 2013/463/ΕΕ, συνάδει με τις απαιτήσεις του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 472/2013. Ειδικότερα, το άρθρο 7 αναφέρει ρητά ότι το πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής σέβεται απόλυτα το άρθρο 152 ΣΛΕΕ και το άρθρο 28 του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων, ενώ το άρθρο 8 διευκρινίζει ότι, όταν το ενδιαφερόμενο κράτος μέλος ετοιμάζει σχέδιο προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής, καλεί τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους και τις οργανώσεις της κοινωνίας των πολιτών να καταθέσουν τις απόψεις τους.

Όσον αφορά το ΜΣ που συνάφθηκε μεταξύ του ΕΜΣ και των κυπριακών αρχών, οι διατάξεις του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων απευθύνονται στα κράτη μέλη μόνον όταν εφαρμόζουν το δίκαιο της Ένωσης. Κατά τη θέσπιση των συμφωνηθέντων στο ΜΣ μέτρων, η Κύπρος δεν ενήργησε στο πλαίσιο της εφαρμογής του δικαίου της Ένωσης. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει ενδείξεις ότι η Κύπρος αγνόησε οποιαδήποτε από τις διεθνείς της υποχρεώσεις σχετικά με την προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, θεσπίζοντας τα εν λόγω μέτρα.

Η Επιτροπή προβαίνει σε τακτική αξιολόγηση του οικονομικού αντικτύπου του προγράμματος και διατυπώνει συστάσεις για τις αναγκαίες διορθώσεις με στόχο την ενίσχυση της ανάπτυξης και της δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας, την εξασφάλιση της αναγκαίας δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, καθώς και την προστασία των πλέον ευάλωτων κοινωνικών ομάδων. Επίσης, ενθαρρύνει τις κυπριακές αρχές να ζητούν τη γνώμη των κοινωνικών εταίρων και των οργανώσεων της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, σύμφωνα με τους εθνικούς κανόνες και πρακτικές.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002376/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Commission answer to my question No E-012977/2013

In its answer to my question No E-012977/2013, the Commission stated that: 'The Commission is committed to uphold social and labour rights as laid down in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.'

In Cyprus, the Troika is imposing harsh austerity policies that brutally violate a large number of social and labour rights, summarily and without any social dialogue with those directly affected.

Will the Commission, as a member of the Troika, state:

1. Does it believe that what is happening in Cyprus is compatible with its commitment to respect social and labour rights?

2. In view of the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in Cyprus, will it take any additional steps to implement the above commitment and the relevant provisions of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights?

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

The Commission does not share the Honourable Member's view that social and labour rights as laid down in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union are being violated in the context of the economic adjustment programme for Cyprus, be it through Council Decision 2013/463/EU or the ESM Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The Cypriot programme, as approved by Council Decision 2013/463/EU, is consistent with the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 472/2013. In particular, Article 7 explicitly states that the macroeconomic adjustment programme shall fully observe Article 152 TFEU and Article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, while Article 8 specifies that the concerned Member State shall seek the views of social partners as well as relevant civil society organisations when preparing its draft macroeconomic adjustment programme.

With respect to the MoU agreed between the ESM and the Cypriot authorities, the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. When adopting measures agreed in the MoU Cyprus did not act in the course of implementation of EC law. The Commission has no indication that Cyprus might have disregarded any of its international obligations regarding the protection of fundamental rights by adopting the measures at issue.

The Commission regularly assesses the economic impact of the programme and recommends necessary corrections with a view to enhancing growth and job creation, securing the necessary fiscal consolidation, while protecting the most vulnerable groups. In addition, it encourages the Cypriot authorities to consult social partners and civil society organisations in accordance with national rules and practices.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002378/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Pjan ta' azzjoni Ewropew dwar l-alkoħol

Fil-11 ta' Frar 2014, il-Grupp ta' Interess tal-Parlament dwar is-Saħħa Mentali ngħata data esperta dwar il-ħsara kaġun tal-alkoħol, l-isfidi tal-komorbożitajiet u dwar ir-rabta bejn ix-xorb eċċessiv u l-mard kroniku. Fit-12 ta' Frar 2014, tul il-laqgħa tal-Kumitat ENVI, il-Kummissjoni ssuġġeriet li teskludi l-miżuri ta' ġlieda kontra x-xorb eċċessiv mill-pjan ta' azzjoni dwar l-alkoħol, suġġeriment li jmur kontra dak li kien intlaħaq ftehim dwaru fit-22 ta' Ottubru 2013 tul it-12-il laqgħa tal-Kumitat dwar il-Politika u l-Azzjoni Nazzjonali dwar l-Alkoħol.

1. B'kont meħud li x-xorb eċċessiv jirrappreżenta l-ogħla perċentwal ta' mortalità b'rabta mal-alkoħol u l-ogħla sors ta' nfiq relatat mal-alkoħol, x'inhuma r-raġunijiet li wasslu lill-Kummissjoni biex teskludi miżuri speċifiċi kontra x-xorb eċċessiv mill-pjan ta' azzjoni dwar l-alkoħol?

2. B'kont meħud tal-konklużjonijiet tal-evalwazzjoni tal-istrateġija tal-UE dwar l-alkoħol, x'inhuma r-raġunijiet li wasslu lill-Kummissjoni biex ma iġġeddidx din l-istrateġija, u b'hekk tonqos lil dawk il-miljuni ta' familji ta' persuni li jsofru minn mard relatat mal-konsum tal-alkoħol?

3. B'kont meħud li l-alkoħol u x-xorb eċċessiv huma fatturi ta' riskju gravi għal aktar minn 60 tip ta' mard kroniku, x'inhuma r-raġunijiet li wasslu lill-Kummissjoni biex teskludi l-kwistjoni tal-alkoħol mis-Summit tal-UE dwar il-Mard Kroniku previst għat-3 u l-4 ta' April, 2014?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(11 ta' April 2014)

Abbażi tal-opinjoni li l-għanijiet u t-temi ta' prijorità tal-istrateġija tal-UE li tappoġġa lill-Istati Membri fit-tnaqqis tal-ħsara relatata mal-alkoħol għadhom validi, il-Kummissjoni qed tissokta bl-implimentazzjoni ta' inizjattivi komprensivi b'mod partikolari mal-Kumitat dwar il-Politika u l-Azzjoni Nazzjonali dwar l-Alkoħol u l-Forum Ewropew dwar l-Alkoħol u s-Saħħa.

Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għal Sentejn li qed jitħejja bħalissa mill-Kumitat dwar il-Politika u l-Azzjoni Nazzjonali dwar l-Alkoħol u li jiffoka fuq iż-żgħażagħ u x-xorb f'ammonti kbar f'episodji qosra (binge drinking) huwa inizjattiva bħal din, u prinċipalment huwa bbażat fuq tema waħda ta' prijorità tal-istrateġija. Dan il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni se jipprovdi referenza għall-Istati Membri u l-partijiet interessati l-oħra biex jimplimentaw azzjonijiet fuq bażi volontarja. Il-Kummissjoni għandha l-ħsieb li tkompli taħdem fuq temi oħra ta' prijorità tal-istrateġija, inklużi dawk relatati ma' xorb f'ammonti kbar.

Sadanittant, il-Kummissjoni se tappoġġa lill-Istati Membri biex tiġbor l-opinjonijiet u l-ideat tagħhom sabiex tistabbilixxi l-bażi għall-iżviluppi fil-politika futura fil-qasam għat-tnaqqis tal-ħsara relatata mal-alkoħol.

Fis-Summit tal-UE dwar il-Mard Kroniku ġew diskussi l-benefiċċji mediċi, soċjali u ekonomiċi ta' investimenti sostenibbli fis-saħħa, modi kif jista' jitnaqqas il-piż tal-mard kroniku, u kif il-prevenzjoni u l-ġestjoni tal-mard kroniku jistgħu jittejbu. L-alkoħol, billi huwa wieħed mill-ogħla fatturi ta' riskju, kien parti minn dawn id-diskussjonijiet u kien indirizzat speċifikament f'interventi dwar il-fatturi ta' riskju fis-sessjonijiet ta' ħidma 1 u 5 ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/docs/ev_20140403_ag_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002378/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: European action plan on alcohol

On 11 February 2014, Parliament's Mental Health Interest Group was presented with expert data on alcohol harm, the challenges of co-morbidities and the link between heavy drinking and chronic diseases. On 12 February 2014, during the ENVI Committee meeting, the Commission suggested that, contrary to what it had agreed on 22 October 2013 at the 12th meeting of the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action, the action plan on alcohol would exclude measures to tackle heavy drinking.

1. Bearing in mind that heavy drinking represents the biggest share of the burden arising from alcohol-related mortality and costs, what is the Commission's rationale for excluding specific measures against heavy drinking from the action plan on alcohol?

2. Bearing in mind the conclusions of the evaluation of the EU alcohol strategy, what is the Commission's rationale for not renewing the strategy, thereby failing the millions of families of people suffering from alcohol-use disorders?

3. Bearing in mind that alcohol and heavy drinking are important risk factors for more than 60 chronic diseases, what is the rationale for excluding alcohol from the EU Chronic Diseases Summit scheduled for 3 and 4 April 2014?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2014)

Based on the view that the objectives and priority themes of the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm are still valid, the Commission continues to implement comprehensive initiatives in particular with the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action and the European Alcohol and Health Forum.

One such initiative is a 2-year Action Plan which is currently being prepared by the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action and focuses on youth and heavy episodic drinking (binge drinking) based mainly on one priority theme of the strategy. This Action Plan will provide a reference for Member States and other stakeholders to implement actions on a voluntary basis. The Commission intends to continue work on the other priority themes of the strategy, including those relating to heavy drinking.

In the meantime, the Commission will support Member States in gathering their views and ideas to set the basis for future policy developments in the field of alcohol related harm reduction.

The EU Summit on Chronic Diseases discussed medical, social and economic benefits of sustainable investments in health, ways of reducing the burden of chronic diseases, and how to strengthen the prevention and management of chronic diseases. Alcohol — being one of the major risk factors — was part of these discussions and was specifically addressed in interventions on risk factors in Workshops 1 and 5 ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/docs/ev_20140403_ag_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002379/14
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Leasing of agricultural land for the installation of solar panels

I am aware that within my own constituency the number of planning applications for the construction of solar parks on agricultural land is increasing.

In light of this, a constituent contacted me recently to express his concern that, in some cases, the owners of agricultural land which has been leased to solar park developers for the purpose of installing solar panels may also be able to receive single farm payments for the land in question.

Can the Commission confirm whether, under the rules of the common agricultural policy, land which has been leased for the installation of solar panels could be eligible for a single farm payment?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2014)

'Eligible hectare' for the SPS means any agricultural area of the holding […] that is used for an agricultural activity or, where the area is used as well for non-agricultural activities, predominantly used for agricultural activities as provided for under Article 34(2) of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1]) on direct support.

According to Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 1120/2009 ([2]), an agricultural area of a holding is considered as being used predominantly for agricultural activities, if the agricultural activity can be exercised without being significantly hampered by the intensity, nature, duration and timing of the non-agricultural activity. For the implementation of this provision on their territory, Member States have to establish criteria.

It falls therefore within the Member State's responsibility to assess, based on the criteria it has fixed, whether a non-agricultural activity present on an agricultural area, prevents or significantly hampers an applicant from exercising his agricultural activity as defined in Article 2(c) of Regulation (EC) No 73/2009.

([1]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.
([2]) OJ L 316, 2.12.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002380/14
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Greek cruising tax

It has recently been brought to my attention by a constituent that the Greek Government intends to introduce a tax which will be levied on leisure craft over 7m LOA (length overall) which sail, moor or anchor in Greek waters.

Is the Commission aware of the Greek Government's intention to levy such a tax?

Does the Commission consider such a tax to be in accordance with all relevant aspects of EC law, in particular with regard to maintaining the fundamental principles of free movement of goods or persons?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The Commission is not aware of this project by the Greek Government and cannot, therefore, comment on any draft bill without having been able to assess the details. Generally speaking, there are no harmonised EU provisions for taxes levied on leisure craft. Member States may, therefore, apply domestic taxes on such crafts, provided that such legislation is compatible with EC law. In particular, such taxes must not give rise to formalities connected with the crossing of frontiers between Member States or discriminate against similar crafts from other Member States.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002381/14
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 mars 2014)

Objet: Situation des agriculteurs urbains et périurbains face à l'urbanisation galopante

Les agriculteurs urbains et périurbains font face à de nombreuses difficultés, parmi lesquelles se trouvent le coût du foncier disponible, la pression de l'urbanisation galopante, les contraintes liées aux infrastructures comme les routes et les équipements collectifs, les pollutions qui affectent souvent les sols urbains et périurbains encore disponibles pour l'agriculture urbaine, l'accès à l'eau, les risques sanitaires induits par l'usage de boues d'épuration ou d'urines et d'excréments mal compostés ou non sécurisés du point de vue sanitaire et certains risques liés aux élevages semi-industriels.

L'urbanisation se manifeste par l'expansion des régions urbaines qui intègrent dans leur périmètre un nombre toujours plus grand d'espaces ruraux et marginalisent les activités rurales au seul bénéfice des activités économiques de la région urbaine, et au détriment de son cadre de vie, de son environnement, de son équilibre social et de son patrimoine culturel.

Les exploitations agricoles, généralement de petites structures, ont du mal à affronter ce nouveau défi et finissent par disparaître.

1. Les agriculteurs urbains et périurbains sont-ils couverts par les Fonds destinés à l'agriculture, sous quelle mention?

2. Existe-t-il une étude indiquant la proportion de l'agriculture urbaine et périurbaine dans l'ensemble de l'agriculture européenne? Si oui, quelles en sont les conclusions?

3. Existe-il une aide spécifique liée aux activités agricoles des zones urbaines et périurbaines en dehors de celle octroyée aux zones à contraintes géographiques?

4. Quelles sont les mesures déjà en vigueur afin d'aider les agriculteurs des zones urbaines et périurbaines?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(12 mai 2014)

1. Les mesures relevant de la politique agricole commune (FEAGA ([1]) et Feader ([2])) sont applicables à tous les agriculteurs, y compris à ceux qui sont installés dans des zones urbaines et périurbaines, qui répondent aux critères d'éligibilité. Le financement est alloué au titre de la rubrique 2 du cadre financier pluriannuel pour les années 2014-2020.

2. La Commission n'a pas connaissance d'une étude sur l'agriculture urbaine et périurbaine. D'après les données statistiques publiées dans le rapport statistique 2013 sur le développement rural ([3]), le secteur primaire (agriculture, sylviculture et pêche) représente 0.5 % de la valeur ajoutée dans les régions principalement urbaines. La Commission a supervisé une étude réalisée par l'OCDE sur les partenariats entre zones urbaines et rurales ([4]). Cette étude évoque les effets négatifs de l'expansion urbaine et recommande de coordonner les décisions et d'intégrer la planification afin d'aider les régions à s'étendre, avec des systèmes d'évaluation des terrains efficaces, tout en garantissant l'efficacité de la prestation de services, la qualité de l'environnement et de bonnes infrastructures.

3. Dans le cadre du Feader, il n'existe pas de distinctions basées sur la localisation territoriale, sauf dans les cas spécifiques où l'aide est exclusivement accordée aux agriculteurs implantés dans les zones rurales ([5]).

4. Toutes les mesures du Feader (à l'exception de celles spécifiquement conçues pour les zones rurales comme indiqué au point 3 de la présente réponse) et les différents régimes de soutien direct peuvent être accessibles également aux agriculteurs des zones urbaines et périurbaines qui répondent aux critères d'éligibilité. Il convient de noter que, en application de la gestion partagée, l'autorité de gestion compétente a la faculté de prévoir certaines possibilités de soutien au titre de son programme de développement rural, et de déterminer la façon de mettre en œuvre les régimes de soutien direct ([6]), dans le cadre juridique de l'Union.

([1]) Fonds européen agricole de garantie, règlement (UE) n° 1307/2013, JO L 347/608-670, 20.12.2013. Les règles de financement, de gestion et de suivi de la politique agricole commune sont définies par le règlement (UE) n°°1306/2013, JO L 347 du 20.12.2013.
([2]) Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural, règlement (UE) n° 1305/2013. JO L 347 du 20.12.2013, p. 1.
([3]) Voir la sous-section 3.2.4, pp. 71-74: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/statistics/rural-development/2013/index_en.htm
([4]) OCDE, 2013, p. 23, Partenariats villes/campagnes: Une approche intégrée du développement économique, (Rural-Urban Partnerships: An integrated Approach to Economic Development), Publication OCDE.
([5]) Par exemple, l'aide au démarrage pour la diversification vers des activités non agricoles dans les zones rurales prévue à l'article 19, paragraphe 1, point a)ii du règlement (UE) n° 1305/2013.
([6]) Règlement (UE) n° 1307/2013. JO L 347 du 20.12.2013, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002381/14
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Situation of urban and suburban farmers in the face of rampant urbanisation

Urban and suburban farmers face many challenges, including the cost of available land, the pressure of rampant urbanisation, constraints relating to infrastructure such as roads and community facilities, the pollution which often affects the urban and suburban soil that is still available for urban farming, access to water, health risks caused by the use of sludge, urine and excrement which is poorly composted or has not been made safe, and certain risks related to semi-industrial livestock farming.

Urbanisation manifests itself in the expansion of urban regions which encompass an ever-increasing number of rural spaces and marginalise rural activities to the sole benefit of the economic activities of the urban region and to the detriment of its lifestyle, environment, social balance and cultural heritage.

Farming businesses, mostly small-scale, have difficulty in rising to this new challenge and end up disappearing.

1. Are urban and suburban farmers covered by the Funds allocated to agriculture, and under what heading?

2. Is there a study which shows the urban and suburban share of European agriculture as a whole? If so, what are its conclusions?

3. Is there specific aid for agricultural activities in urban and suburban areas other than that granted to areas with geographical constraints?

4. What measures are already in place to assist farmers in urban and suburban areas?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

1. Measures under the common agricultural policy (EAGF ([1]) and EAFRD ([2])) are applicable to all farmers, including those located in urban and sub-urban areas, who fulfil the eligibility criteria. Funding is provided under Heading 2 of the Multi-annual Financial Framework for years 2014-2020.

2. The Commission is not aware of a study on urban and sub-urban farming. According to the statistical data published in the 2013 'Rural development statistical report' ([3]) the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fishery) represents 0.5% of the Value Added in predominantly urban regions. The Commission did supervise a study executed by the OECD on rural-urban partnerships ([4]). This study evokes the negative effects of urban sprawl and recommends coordinating decisions and integrating planning to help regions grow with effective land evaluation systems, while maintaining efficiency in service provision, environmental quality and infrastructure supply.

3. Under the EAFRD there are no distinctions based on territorial location except in the specific cases when support is exclusively provided to farmers located in rural areas ([5]).

4. All EAFRD measures (with exception of those specifically developed for rural areas as mentioned in p.3 of this reply) and the various direct payment support schemes may be accessible equally to urban and sub-urban farmers who fulfil the eligibility criteria. It has to be noted that under shared management the respective Managing Authority has the discretion to foresee certain support possibilities under its rural development programme and to decide how to implement direct support schemes ([6]) within the Union legal framework.

([1]) European Agricultural Guarantee Fund, Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013, OJ L 347/608-670, 20.12.2013. The rules for financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy are defined in Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.
([2]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.
([3]) See Sub-Section 3.2.4, p. 71-74: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/statistics/rural-development/2013/index_en.htm
([4]) OECD (2013), p.33, Rural-Urban Partnerships: An integrated Approach to Economic Development, OECD Publishing.
([5]) For example, start-up aid for diversification into non-agricultural activities in rural areas under Article 19(1)(a)ii of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013.
([6]) Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013. OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002391/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Ampliamento a possibile rischio sanitario/ambientale della stazione radio di Fontanafredda di Cinto Euganeo (Padova)

A Fontanafredda di Cinto Euganeo, in provincia di Padova, è stata approvata nel marzo del 2013 l'installazione di nuove antenne nella stazione radio base per telefonia mobile ivi presente, installata circa cinque anni fa ([1]); l'impianto è ubicato a pochi metri dalle scuole medie e dell'infanzia, a ridosso del centro abitato. Tale ampliamento incontra la ferma opposizione dei residenti, preoccupati per i rischi legati all'inquinamento elettromagnetico, i quali hanno firmato due petizioni per chiedere che le antenne venissero installate in altro sito, più distante dal centro. I residenti, inoltre, lamentano il loro mancato coinvolgimento nelle decisioni adottate. L'Organizzazione Mondiale della Sanità, si ricorda, considera l'elettrosmog una delle grandi emergenze contemporanee, classificando le radiofrequenze come «possibilmente cancerogene» (classe 2B). L'Assemblea parlamentare del Consiglio d'Europa, inoltre, ha emanato nel 2011 una risoluzione per invitare gli Stati membri ad applicare il principio di precauzione e politiche cautelative per quanto riguarda l'esposizione della popolazione alle radiofrequenze, con particolare attenzione nei confronti dei bambini, dei giovani e delle persone sensibili ([2]). Numerosi studi scientifici, infatti, indicano che nella popolazione residente nelle aree limitrofe alle stazioni radio base sono in aumento i disturbi riferibili a elettrosensibilità. La stazione radio base, inoltre, sorge in area tutelata all'interno del progetto «Rete Natura 2000» quale SIC (Sito di Importanza Comunitaria) e ZPS (Zona di Protezione Speciale) — codice IT3260017 «Colli Euganei» — nella quale ricade pressoché per intero il territorio del comune di Cinto Euganeo ([3]).

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione:

1. far sapere quali iniziative intende intraprendere al fine di verificare se l'ampliamento della stazione radio base di cui sopra deciso dalle Autorità stia avvenendo nel rispetto del principio di precauzione (articolo 191 TFUE) e della normativa comunitaria ambientale?

2. chiarire quali iniziative intende intraprendere l'Unione europea in futuro al fine di far sì che l'esposizione a inquinamento elettromagnetico della popolazione comunitaria vada progressivamente a diminuire?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2014)

Sulla scorta delle informazioni di cui dispone al momento, la Commissione non è in grado di identificare motivi per presumere una violazione della normativa unionale sull'ambiente.

Per quanto attiene alla seconda domanda, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a prendere visione delle risposte all'interrogazione scritta E-000895/2014 ([4]). Inoltre, la Commissione europea sostiene attivamente progetti di ricerca in questo campo, volti a determinare se l'esposizione alle radiazioni non ionizzanti di qualsiasi origine rappresenti un pericolo per la salute ([5]). Un progetto come SEAWIND ha proposto mezzi non tecnologici per ridurre l'esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici, come quelli dei dispositivi senza fili. Il progetto LEXNET ([6]), in corso, sta sviluppando metodi tecnologici per abbassare l'esposizione delle persone ai campi magnetici di fonti diverse.

([1]) Delibera della Giunta del comune di Colle Euganeo n. 11 del 26 marzo 2013.
([2]) http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/ta11/eRES1815.htm
([3]) Cfr. Mappa del SIC/ZPS presente a pag. 105 della VAS (Valutazione ambientale Strategica) eseguita sul PAT (Piano Assetto del Territorio) di Cinto Euganeo, presente al seguente link: http://goo.gl/Hc2hI0
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([5]) Per esempio ARIMMORA — Ricerca avanzata sui meccanismi di interazione delle esposizioni elettromagnetiche con gli organismi per la valutazione dei rischi (http://arimmora-fp7.eu); MOBI-KIDS — Rischio di tumori cerebrali ed esposizione a campi a radiofrequenza nei bambini e negli adolescenti (www.mbkds.com); SEAWIND — Esposizione sonora e valutazione del rischio dei dispositivi di rete senza fili (http://seawind-fp7.eu); GERONIMO — Ricerca generalizzata sui campi elettromagnetici basata su metodi innovativi — un approccio integrato: dalla ricerca alla valutazione dei rischi e sostegno alla gestione dei rischi (sito in fieri).
([6]) LEXNET — Reti future a bassa esposizione ai campi elettromagnetici (www.lexnet-project.eu).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002391/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Possible health and environmental hazards of the enlarging of the Fontanafredda radio station in Cinto Euganeo (Padua)

In March 2013, approval was granted to erect new antennae at the Fontanafredda mobile telephone base station in Cinto Euganeo, Province of Padua, which was set up around five years ago ([1]). The station is located a few metres away from middle and infants' schools on the outskirts of the village. The enlargement is strongly opposed by the residents, who are concerned at the risks of electromagnetic pollution. They have signed two petitions calling for the aerials to be installed at another site, further away from the village. They also complain that they were not involved in the decisions taken. It is pointed out that the World Health Organisation considers electric smog one of the great contemporary emergencies and has classed radio frequencies as 'possibly carcinogenic' (class 2B). In 2011 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe also passed a resolution calling on Member States to follow the precautionary principle and adopt preventive policies on public exposure to radio frequencies, with special attention to children, young people and sensitive persons ([2]). In fact many scientific studies indicate that populations living in areas around mobile telephone base stations suffer increased electro-sensitivity disorders. This base station is also to be erected in an area protected under the 'Rete Natura 2000' project as a site of Community importance (SCI) and a Special Protection Area (SPA). Its code is IT3260017 — 'Euganean Hills.' Almost the whole municipality of Cinto Euganeo falls within the protected area ([3]).

In view of all this, can the Commission:

1. State what initiatives it intends to take to check whether the enlargement of the mobile telephone base station, decided by the authorities, complies with the precautionary principle (Article 191 TFUE) and with the Community environmental regulations?

2. Explain what initiatives the European Union intends to take in future to ensure that exposure of the Community's population to electromagnetic pollution is progressively reduced?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

Based on the information currently in its possession, the Commission cannot identify any cause to assume a breach of EU environmental law.

With regard the second question the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to parliamentary Question E-000895/2014 ([4]). Furthermore, the European Commission actively supports research projects in this area which are investigating whether exposure to non-ionising radiation from any sources poses a risk to health ([5]). Projects such as Seawind has proposed non-technological means of reducing exposure to electromagnetic fields, e.g., from Wi-Fi. The on-going Lexnet project ([6]) is developing technological approaches to lower public exposure to electromagnetic fields from various sources.

([1]) Resolution 11, of 26 March 2013, of Colle Euganeo Town Council Executive.
([2]) http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/ta11/eRES1815.htm
([3]) Cf. Map of SCI/SPA on p. 105 of the Strategic Environmental Evaluation (VAS) on the District Layout Plan (PAT) for Cinto Euganeo, via the following link: http://goo.gl/Hc2hI0
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html#sidesForm
([5]) E.g., Arimmora — Advanced research on interaction mechanisms of electromagnetic exposures with organisms for risk assessments (http://arimmora-fp7.eu); Mobi-Kids — Risk of brain cancer from exposure to radio frequency fields in childhood and adolescence (www.mbkds.com); Seawind — Sound exposure and risk assessment of wireless network devices (http://seawind-fp7.eu); Geronimo — Generalised EMF research using novel methods — an integrated approach: from research to risk assessment and support to risk management (website under development).
([6]) Lexnet — Low EMF exposure future networks (http://www.lexnet-project.eu).

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002423/14
til Kommissionen
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(3. marts 2014)

Om: Økonomiske konsekvenser af forhandlinger med Norge om fiskekvoter

De igangværende forhandlinger om fiskekvoter i Nordsøen og Skagerrak mellem EU og Norge har store økonomiske konsekvenser for fiskere i visse EU-lande, der på denne årstid eksempelvis fanger op til 60 % af torsk i norske farvande. Samtidig viser tal, at 2013 var det bedste år nogensinde for norske lakseproducenter på grund af høje priser på de norske laksebørser og forventninger til nedgang i produktion og fangst.

1. Mener Kommissionen, at den norske fiskeindustri skal have bedre forudsætninger for konkurrencedygtighed end fiskeindustrien i EU?

2. Hvad er begrundelsen for, at den tidligere aftale ikke får lov til at køre videre, indtil der er opnået enighed?

3. Har Kommissionen planer om at yde kompensation til fiskere og virksomheder i EU, der er berørt af manglen på en aftale og adgang til norske farvande?

4. Ser Kommissionen en sammenhæng mellem Norges tilgang til forhandlingerne om fiskekvoter og forhøjelsen af norsk told på hydrangea macrophylla (hortensia), ost og kød?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Ms Damanaki
(19. maj 2014)

Kommissionen mener, at EU's fiskeindustri bør have de bedst mulige forudsætninger for at bevare konkurrenceevnen, og sikrer derfor at de fiskerimuligheder, der er til rådighed i Nordatlanten og Nordsøen, overordnet set giver EU's fiskeindustri de bedst opnåelige resultater.

Ordningen for 2013 gjaldt kun i perioden fra d. 1. januar til d. 31. december 2013. I den periode, hvor EU og Norge ikke kunne nå til enighed om en aftale for 2014 og der derfor ikke var grundlag for nogen fiskeriordninger, var EU-fartøjer udelukket fra at fiske i norske farvande og ligeledes var norske fartøjer udelukket fra at fiske i EU-farvande. Denne situation er nu blevet korrigeret.

I de første uger af 2014 var Unionen klar til at indgå bilaterale ordninger med Norge. Vores modpart, Norge, var ikke indforstået med dette uden at have en ordning for makrelfiskeri på plads. Derfor mener Kommissionen ikke, at der er grundlag for at yde kompensation.

Kommissionen er bekendt med forhøjelsen af norsk told på visse landbrugsprodukter fra den Europæiske Union. Kommissionen benytter enhver lejlighed til at gøre indsigelse mod den uretfærdige behandling, Norge giver disse produkter.

Samrådene om fiskekvoter foregår indenfor rammerne af den bilaterale fiskeriaftale fra 1980 mellem Unionen og Norge. Disse samråd foregår separat fra samrådene angående handelsspørgsmål.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002423/14
to the Commission
Bendt Bendtsen (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Economic consequences of negotiations with Norway on fishing quotas

The current negotiations between the EU and Norway on fishing quotas in the North Sea and the Skagerrak are having major economic repercussions for fishermen in certain EU countries, who at this time of year catch up to 60% of their cod (for example) in Norwegian waters. At the same time the figures show that 2013 was the best year ever for Norwegian salmon producers by reason of the high prices on the Norwegian salmon exchanges and the expectations of a drop in production and catches.

1. Does the Commission consider that the Norwegian fishing industry should have better conditions for competitiveness than the EU fishing industry?

2. Why is the earlier agreement not being allowed to continue running until agreement has been reached?

3. Does the Commission have any plans to pay compensation to fishermen in the EU who are affected by the lack of an agreement and of access to Norwegian waters?

4. Does the Commission see a connection between admitting Norway to negotiations on fishing quotas and the increase in Norwegian customs duties on *Hydrangea macrophylla*, cheese and meat?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The Commission considers that the EU fishing industry should have the best possible conditions to be competitive and is ensuring that the fishing opportunities available in the North Atlantic and the North Sea on the whole represent the best achievable outcome for the EU fishing industry.

The arrangement for 2013 applied uniquely for the period 1 January to 31 December 2013. In the circumstances of no agreement having been reached between the EU and Norway for 2014, and therefore no basis for any fishing arrangements, EU vessels were excluded from fishing in Norwegian waters and, similarly, Norwegian vessels were excluded from Union waters. This situation has now been rectified.

The Union was ready to conclude bilateral arrangements with Norway in the early weeks of 2014. Our counterpart, Norway, was not agreeable to this without having a mackerel arrangement in place. Therefore in the view of the Commission, the issue of compensation does not arise.

The Commission is aware of increases in Norwegian customs duties on certain agricultural products from the European Union. The Commission is using any opportunity to object to the unfair treatment granted to these products by Norway.

Consultations on fishing quotas take place in the framework of the 1980 bilateral fisheries agreement between the Union and Norway. These consultations are conducted separately from those related to trade issues.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002424/14
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(3. März 2014)

Betrifft: Freier Zugang für Geheimdienste durch Apps für Mobiltelefone

Häufig werden im Zuge von Smartphone-Apps Anwendungen zum Zugriff auf sensible Daten berechtigt, die für die Funktion der App ohne jede Bedeutung sind. Snowden zufolge arbeiten der amerikanische und der britische Geheimdienst seit Jahren daran, sich Daten aus „undichten" mobilen Anwendungen zunutze zu machen. Beispielsweise wurden über die weltweit mehr als 1,7 Milliarden Mal heruntergeladene populäre Spieleanwendung „Angry Birds" Informationen zu Aufenthaltsort, Alter oder Geschlecht der Nutzer abgegriffen. Diese Informationen sollen den Geheimdiensten zur Ausforschung und Verfolgung von Zielpersonen oder zur Aufdeckung von Schwachstellen dienen. Experten zufolge ist es für den Durchschnittsnutzer sehr aufwendig bis unmöglich, sich gegen den Zugriff der Geheimdienste auf ihre Mobiltelefondaten zu schützen. Derzeit werden zudem nur bei gut der Hälfte der angebotenen Apps die an Gewerbetreibende weitergegeben Daten verschlüsselt ([1]).

1. Ist im Sinne der Datenschutz-Strategie der EU geplant, hier aktiv zu werden, so dass weniger leichtfertig sensible Daten, die für die Funktion der App ohne jede Bedeutung sind, automatisch abgefragt werden?

2. Inwieweit sind zur Erhöhung der Datensicherheit auf EU-Ebene Vorschriften geplant, aufgrund deren die Weitergabe von Daten aus Apps an Gewerbetreibende verschlüsselt zu erfolgen hat?

Antwort von Viviane Reding im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juni 2014)

Im Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ([2]) werden der Grundsatz der Datenminimierung und der Grundsatz des Datenschutzes durch Technik und datenschutzfreundliche Voreinstellungen, zu dessen Umsetzung die für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen verpflichtet sind, explizit festgelegt. Wird die Datenerfassung auf das notwendige Minimum beschränkt, verringert sich die Gefahr von Missbrauch personenbezogener Daten und von Verstößen gegen deren Schutz.

Was die Sicherheit der Datenverarbeitung betrifft, verpflichtet Artikel 30 der Datenschutz-Grundverordnung den für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen und den Verarbeiter, geeignete Maßnahmen zur Gewährleistung der Sicherheit der Datenverarbeitung gemäß Artikel 17 Absatz 1 der Richtlinie 95/46/EG zu ergreifen. Diese Pflicht wird ungeachtet des Vertragsverhältnisses des Auftragsverarbeiters mit dem für die Verarbeitung Verantwortlichen auf alle Verarbeiter ausgedehnt. Die Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ermächtigt die Kommission zudem, im Wege von delegierten Rechtsakten situationsabhängige Schutzanforderungen festzulegen.

([1]) http://kurier.at/politik/ausland/geheimdienste-spielen-bei-angry-birds-mit/48.580.050?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=daily_kurier&utm_campaign=daily%20kurier%202014-01-29
([2]) KOM(2012)11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002424/14
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Free access for secret services through apps for mobile telephones

In the scope of smartphone apps, applications are often entitled to access sensitive data which is of no importance for the function of the app. According to Snowden, the American and British secret services have for years been working on making use of data from 'non-secure' mobile applications. For example, information on the location, age or gender of the users has been captured via the popular games application 'Angry Birds' which has been downloaded more than 1.7 billion times worldwide. This information is supposed to help the secret services to investigate and track target persons or expose weak points. According to experts, it is very difficult if not impossible for average users to protect themselves against the secret services accessing their mobile telephone data. In addition, the data forwarded to traders is currently only encrypted with around half of the apps offered ([1]).

1. Is it planned, in the sense of the EU data protection strategy, to take active steps here to make it less easy for sensitive data which is of no importance for the function of the app to be automatically retrieved?

2. To what extent are there plans at EU level for increasing data security through regulations on the basis of which the forwarding of data from apps to traders has to take place with encryption?

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

The Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([2]) (GDPR) explicitly spells out the principle of data minimisation, and an obligation for controllers to implement the principle of data protection by design and by default. Indeed, minimising the collected data to what is strictly necessary reduces the risks of personal data breaches, and of misuse of the personal data.

As regards security of the processing, Article 30 of the GDPR obliges the controller and the processor to implement appropriate measures for the security of processing, based on Article 17(1) of Directive 95/46/EC. The obligation will be extended to processors, irrespective of the content of the contract with the controller. In addition, according to the GDPR, the Commission can specify security requirements to various situations through implementing acts.

([1]) http://kurier.at/politik/ausland/geheimdienste-spielen-bei-angry-birds-mit/48.580.050?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=daily_kurier&utm_campaign=daily%20kurier%202014-01-29
([2]) COM(2012) 11.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002426/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Garanția pentru tineret

În aprilie 2013, Consiliul UE a adoptat recomandarea privind instituirea Garanției pentru tineret ca parte a eforturilor Uniunii și statelor membre de a combate șomajul foarte ridicat în rândul tinerilor. Ca urmare și a adoptării Inițiativei pentru ocuparea tinerilor, statelor membre li s-a cerut să elaboreze planuri de implementare a Garanției pentru tineret, pe care să le transmită ulterior Comisiei. În data de 15 ianuarie, Comisia informa că 17 state au transmis planurile de implementare, celelalte fiind în faza de finalizare a acestora. A realizat Comisia o evaluare a acestor planuri?

În cazul României, unul dintre statele în care există mai multe regiuni cu o rată a șomajului în rândul tinerilor de peste 25%, poate evalua Comisia planul de implementare a Garanției pentru tineret? Sunt măsurile propuse în linie cu recomandările Comisiei? Sunt identificate în mod precis sursele de finanțare pentru acțiunile propuse?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(2 mai 2014)

Până la 21 martie, Comisia a primit 22 de planuri de implementare a garanțiilor pentru tineret. 20 dintre aceste planuri au fost evaluate, restul acestora fiind în prezent în curs de evaluare.

Comisia a evaluat planul României și a furnizat, pe baza acestuia, precizări tehnice autorităților române, care actualizează în prezent planul. Pentru toate tipurile de oferte din cadrul garanției pentru tineret este prezentată o serie amplă de măsuri strategice planificate: crearea unei baze de date integrate pentru înregistrarea tinerilor, continuarea programelor pentru oferirea unei a doua șanse, programele de asistență socială pentru menținerea tinerilor în sistemul educațional, ucenicia la locul de muncă, stagiile, măsurile educaționale privind spiritul antreprenorial, sprijinirea întreprinderilor nou-înființate (*start-up*) și măsurile de promovare a mobilității forței de muncă.

Măsurile planificate vor beneficia într-o mare măsură de sprijinul financiar al UE, în special prin Fondul social european (FSE) și prin Inițiativa privind ocuparea forței de muncă în rândul tinerilor (IOFMT). În timp ce resursele IOFMT ar urma să sprijine numai măsurile care vizează persoanele fizice, cum ar fi stagiile și subvențiile pentru salarii și angajări, FSE va sprijini, de asemenea, alte măsuri, ca de exemplu modernizarea sistemelor educaționale. Sprijinul financiar din partea UE ar trebui să fie întotdeauna completat de resurse naționale pentru a asigura un efect de pârghie cât mai mare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002426/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Youth Guarantee

The Council adopted the recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee in April 2013, as part of the efforts being made by the Union and Member States to combat the extremely high level of youth unemployment. Following the adoption of the Youth Employment Initiative, the Member States were called on to draw up implementation plans for the Youth Guarantee and forward them to the Commission. On 15 January 2014, the Commission reported that 17 countries had submitted implementation plans and the remaining countries were finalising their plans. Has the Commission now assessed these plans?

Has the Commission been able to assess the Youth Guarantee implementation plan for Romania, which is among the countries where the youth unemployment rate is more than 25% in several regions? Are the proposed measures in line with the Commission's recommendations? Have exact sources of funding for the proposed measures been identified?

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

As of 21 March the Commission received 22 Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans. 20 of those plans have been assessed, with the remaining ones currently under assessment.

The Commission has assessed the Romanian Plan and provided technical feedback to the Romanian authorities that are currently updating the Plan. A wide number of planned policy measures are listed for all types of offers under the Youth Guarantee: creation of an integrated database to register the young, continuing the second-chance programmes, social support programmes to keep young people in education, apprenticeships, traineeships, entrepreneurships education measures, wage and recruitment subsidies, start-up support and labour mobility promotion measures.

Planned measures will greatly benefit from EU funding support, in particular from the European Social Fund (ESF) and from the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). Whilst the YEI resources should only support measures that target individuals, such as traineeships and wage and recruitment subsidies, the ESF would also support other measures, like the modernisation of education systems. EU financial support should always be complemented by national resources to ensure as much leverage-effect as possible.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002427/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale UE-Indonezia

Negocierile comerciale între UE și statele din ASEAN au început în 2007. Însă la finalul anului 2009, s-a decis continuarea acestora în format bilateral cu unii dintre membri ASEAN pentru eventuala semnare a unui acord de liber-schimb.

Aceste negocieri au loc și în prezent, dar nu și cu Indonezia, cel mai mare stat din regiune. Mai mult, comerțul cu această țară este la un nivel foarte scăzut. Dat fiind potențialul pe care îl are, volumul schimburilor comerciale cu UE plasează Indonezia pe locul 4 între partenerii Uniunii din regiunea ASEAN.

Care sunt măsurile avute în vedere pentru impulsionarea comerțului cu această țară? Se intenționează deschiderea negocierilor pentru un eventual acord de liber-schimb între UE și Indonezia în perioada următoare?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(15 aprilie 2014)

UE s-a angajat într-un exercițiu menit să definească aria relațiilor cu Indonezia încă din 2012. Este vorba despre discuții de tatonare, în urma cărora părțile să convină asupra anvergurii și complexității unui eventual viitor acord, înainte de lansarea unor negocieri oficiale pentru un acord de liber schimb (ALS). UE își menține angajamentul de a negocia un acord de parteneriat economic global cu una dintre economiile cu cea mai rapidă creștere din Asia de Sud-Est. Negocierile oficiale privind un acord de liber schimb între UE și Indonezia pot începe numai după finalizarea exercițiului de definire a ariei de cooperare cu această țară.

Între timp, Indonezia beneficiază de sistemul generalizat de preferințe (SGP) al UE, care continuă să ofere un avantaj competitiv pentru exporturile indoneziene către UE.

În plus, UE desfășoară un dialog periodic cu Indonezia în domeniul comerțului și al investițiilor, în cadrul căruia se discută măsurile de natură să afecteze investițiile și schimburile comerciale dintre UE și Indonezia. Totodată, UE oferă asistență bilaterală ad hoc, de exemplu prin mecanismul de cooperare comercială, care vizează, printre altele, îmbunătățirea climatului pentru comerț și investiții în această țară.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002427/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade relations between the EU and Indonesia

Trade negotiations between the EU and ASEAN countries commenced in 2007. However, at the end of 2009, it was decided to continue them on an bilateral basis with a number of ASEAN members with a view to the possible signing of a free trade agreement.

These talks are now under way, but not with Indonesia, the largest country in the region. Trade levels with this country are very low and, despite its potential, it ranks only fourth among the EU's ASEAN partners in terms of trade volume.

What measures are being envisaged to stimulate trade with Indonesia? Are negotiations for a possible free trade agreement between the EU and Indonesia being contemplated?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

The EU has been engaged in a so-called 'scoping exercise' with Indonesia since 2012. These are exploratory talks that aim at reaching an agreement on the scope and level of ambition of a possible future deal, before entering into formal negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The EU remains committed to negotiating a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with one of the fastest growing economies in South East Asia. Formal FTA negotiations between the EU and Indonesia can only start once the scoping exercise has been finalised.

In the meantime, Indonesia benefits from the EU Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP), which continues to provide a competitive advantage for Indonesian exports to the EU.

In addition, the EU holds a regular dialogue on trade and investment issues with Indonesia, which provides an opportunity to discuss measures that impede trade and investments between the EU and Indonesia. The EU also provides ad hoc bilateral assistance, such as the Trade cooperation facility, aimed at improving, *inter alia,* the climate for trade and investment in the country.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002428/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale UE-Japonia

Negocierile comerciale UE-Japonia au început în martie 2013, până în prezent având loc trei runde de negocieri. Următoarea astfel de rundă ar trebui să aibă loc în această primăvară.

Care sunt obiectivele UE în cadrul negocierilor? Există anumite sectoare ale economiei Uniunii (spre exemplu, producția de automobile) care ar putea beneficia de protecție în cazul unui eventual acord de liber schimb? Există un termen stabilit de Comisie sau chiar agreat cu partea niponă privind finalizarea negocierilor?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(2 mai 2014)

Cea de-a cincea rundă a negocierilor privind acordul de liber schimb dintre UE și Japonia (ALS) a avut loc la Tokyo, în perioada 31 martie-4 aprilie 2014. Obiectivul Comisiei pentru negocierile privind ALS UE-Japonia rămâne neschimbat: încheierea rapidă a unui acord ambițios, cuprinzător și echilibrat.

Principalul obiectiv al acordului va fi eliminarea taxelor vamale și a barierelor netarifare pentru stimularea comerțului și a investițiilor de ambele părți, și în special pentru a permite accesul pe piața japoneză de servicii și de achiziții publice al operatorilor europeni. Tarifele pentru majoritatea liniilor ar trebui să fie eliminate de la data intrării în vigoare a acordului, precum și majoritatea barierelor netarifare deja identificate. În plus, anumite sectoare sensibile pot beneficia de perioade de tranziție. Viitorul acord poate, de asemenea, să conțină o clauză de salvgardare bilaterală, ca în acordurile anterioare încheiate de UE.

Comisia nu a luat o decizie privind o dată-țintă pentru finalizarea negocierilor și nu a stabilit o astfel de dată cu omologii japonezi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002428/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade relations between the EU and Japan

Negotiations for a free trade agreement between the EU and Japan commenced in March 2013 and three rounds of talks have already been held, the next one being scheduled for the spring.

What are the EU's objectives in this regard?

Could any EU economic sectors (for example the automobile sector) be afforded protection if a free trade agreement were to be concluded?

Has the Commission decided on a target date for the finalisation of negotiations or agreed on such a date with its Japanese partners?

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

The fifth round of EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations was held in Tokyo from 31 March to 4 April 2014. The Commission's objective for the EU-Japan FTA negotiations remains unchanged: the rapid conclusion of an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced agreement.

The main aim of the agreement will be to eliminate customs duties and non- tariff barriers to enhance trade and investment on both sides, and in particular to open the Japanese services and procurement markets to European operators. Tariffs on most lines should be eliminated upon entry into force of the Agreement as well as most of the non-tariff barriers already identified. In addition, certain sensitive sectors may benefit from transitional periods. The future agreement is also likely to contain a bilateral safeguard clause as in previous agreements concluded by the EU.

The Commission has not decided on a target date for the finalisation of negotiations, nor has the Commission agreed on such a date with its Japanese counterparts.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002429/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Negocierile privind acordul de liber schimb UE-Malaysia

Negocierile comerciale UE-Malaysia au fost lansate în octombrie 2010 și mai multe runde au avut loc până în prezent. Care sunt obiectivele UE în negocieri? Există anumite sectoare ale economiei Uniunii care ar putea beneficia de protecție în cazul unui eventual acord de liber schimb? Există un termen stabilit de Comisie sau chiar agreat cu Malaysia privind finalizarea negocierilor?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(7 mai 2014)

La fel ca în cazul oricărei negocieri de acord de liber schimb (ALS), obiectivul UE în ceea ce privește Malaysia este de a încheia un ALS ambițios și cuprinzător care acoperă o gamă largă de domenii, cum ar fi: comerțul cu mărfuri, serviciile și investițiile, achizițiile publice, protecția drepturilor de proprietate intelectuală (inclusiv a indicațiilor geografice), facilitarea schimburilor comerciale, barierele tehnice în calea comerțului, normele sanitare și fitosanitare, comerțul și dezvoltarea durabilă. Acest acord de liber schimb cu Malaysia ar trebui, desigur, să fie în avantajul reciproc al ambelor părți.

Nu a fost stabilit niciun termen limită pentru încheierea negocierilor ALS cu Malaysia. În ceea ce privește ultima rundă în aprilie 2012, negocierile cu Malaysia au fost suspendate în așteptarea alegerilor naționale și având în vedere revizuirea continuă a politicilor interne. Comisia examinează în prezent cu Malaysia baza pentru reluarea negocierilor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002429/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Negotiations for free trade agreement between the EU and Malaysia

A number of rounds of negotiations between the EU and Malaysia, which were launched in 2010, have taken place to date.

What are the EU objectives in this regard?

Could any EU economic sectors be accorded protection if a free trade agreement were concluded?

Has the Commission established a deadline for finalisation of the negotiations or agreed on such a deadline with Malaysia?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2014)

As with any free trade agreement (FTA) negotiation, the objective of the EU with regard to Malaysia is to conclude an ambitious and comprehensive FTA covering a wide range of areas such as: trade in goods, services and investment, government procurement, protection of intellectual property rights (including geographical indications), trade facilitation, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary rules, trade and sustainable development. The resulting FTA with Malaysia should of course be of mutual benefit to both parties.

No deadline for the completion of FTA negotiations has been set with Malaysia. In connection to the last round in April 2012, negotiations with Malaysia where put on hold pending national elections and in view of on-going domestic policy reviews. The Commission is now exploring with Malaysia the basis for resuming negotiations.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002430/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale ale Uniunii Europene cu Thailanda

În februarie 2013, Consiliul Uniunii Europene a aprobat deschiderea negocierilor privind un acord de liber schimb între Uniunea Europeană și Thailanda. Ultima rundă de negocieri a avut loc în decembrie 2013.

Poate informa Comisia cu privire la evoluțiile din discuțiile cu partenerii din Thailanda? Care sunt cele mai sensibile elemente ale negocierilor? Există un termen stabilit de Comisie sau chiar agreat cu partea thailandeză privind finalizarea negocierilor?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(30 aprilie 2014)

De la lansarea negocierilor privind un acord de liber schimb cu Thailanda, în martie 2013, UE a organizat trei runde de negocieri, în lunile mai, septembrie și decembrie.

Comisia se află încă în faza incipientă a negocierilor, dar a trecut la etapa discuțiilor pe text în majoritatea domeniilor. Printre posibilele provocări se numără interese ofensive ale UE cum ar fi achizițiile publice, liberalizarea serviciilor/investițiilor, proprietatea intelectuală și dezvoltarea durabilă. În plus, Thailanda este un exportator important de produse agricole și piscicole, inclusiv de produse sensibile la nivelul UE.

Este prea devreme pentru a putea estima data finalizării negocierilor, actuala situație politică din Thailanda putând avea și ea un impact asupra acestei chestiuni. În general, însă, UE intenționează să încheie negocierile în termen de doi ani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002430/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade relations between the EU and Thailand

In February 2013, the Council of the European Union agreed to the opening of negotiations for a free trade agreement between the EU and Thailand, the latest round of which was held in December 2013.

What progess has been made by talks between the Commission and its Thai partners and what are the most sensitive issues?

Has the Commision decided on a target date for the finalisation of negotiations or agreed on such a date with its Thai partners?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2014)

Since the launch of negotiations on a free trade agreement (FTA) with Thailand in March 2013, the EU has held three negotiation rounds in May, September and December.

The Commission is still at the beginning of the negotiations, but has moved to text-based discussions in most areas. Possible challenges include EU offensive interests such as government procurement, services/investment liberalisation, intellectual property and sustainable development. Moreover, Thailand is an important exporter of agricultural and fisheries products, including for products of EU sensitivity.

It is too early to predict the date for finalisation of negotiations. The current political situation in Thailand may also have a bearing on this question. However, the EU generally aims to conclude negotiations within two years.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002431/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Negocierile dintre Uniunea Europeană și Vietnam pe marginea unui acord comercial

Negocierile dintre Uniune și Vietnam pe marginea unui acord de liber schimb au fost lansate în iunie 2012. Până în prezent au avut loc șase runde de negocieri, a șaptea fiind programată pentru 17 martie 2014. Care sunt prioritățile Uniunii în aceste negocieri? Există un termen stabilit de Comisie sau chiar agreat cu partea vietnameză privind finalizarea negocierilor?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(30 aprilie 2014)

Comisia vizează încheierea cu Vietnam a unui acord de liber schimb ambițios și cuprinzător, care să asigure un acces la piață sporit pentru mărfuri, servicii, investiții și achizițiile publice. Instituirea unui cadru de reglementare solid în domeniile concurenței, drepturilor de proprietate intelectuală, comerțului și dezvoltării durabile va consolida relațiile comerciale bilaterale.

Comisia și Vietnam depun toate eforturile pentru încheierea rapidă a negocierilor. Vietnam și-a exprimat dorința de a încheia aceste negocieri în luna octombrie. Cu toate acestea, esența prevalează asupra calendarului, astfel încât Comisia nu va încheia acordul decât în momentul în care rezultatul negocierilor corespunde obiectivelor UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002431/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Negotiations for trade agreement between the EU and Vietnam

Negotiations for a free trade agreement between the EU and Vietnam were commenced in 2012. Six rounds of talks have already been held, the seventh being scheduled for 17 March 2014.

What are the priorities of the EU in this connection?

Has the Commision decided on a target date for the finalisation of negotiations or agreed on such a date with its Vietnamese partners?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2014)

The Commission is aiming for an ambitious and comprehensive free trade agreement with Vietnam providing for better market access for goods, services and investment, and government procurement. A solid regulatory framework for competition, intellectual property rights, and trade and sustainable development will enhance bilateral trade relations.

The Commission and Vietnam endeavour to conclude the negotiations swiftly. Vietnam expressed the wish to conclude the negotiations in October. However, substance prevails over timing, so the Commission will not conclude the agreement unless the outcome meets the EU objectives.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002432/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale dintre India și Uniunea Europeană

Negocierile comerciale dintre India și Uniunea Europeană au debutat în 2007, desfășurându-se până în prezent 11 runde. Care sunt în prezent obiectivele negocierilor și care sunt punctele asupra cărora s-ar putea afirma că s-a ajuns la un acord?

Există un termen stabilit de Comisie sau chiar agreat cu partea indiană privind finalizarea negocierilor?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(7 aprilie 2014)

1. Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul oferit anterior de Comisie la întrebarea scrisă E-011270/2013 cu privire la stadiul actual al negocierilor privind Acordul de liber schimb UE-India.

2. Nu există un termen specific stabilit pentru finalizarea negocierilor cu India; Comisia continuă să lucreze la rezolvarea chestiunilor rămase nesoluționate, pentru a ajunge la un acord favorabil, cât mai repede posibil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002432/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade relations between India and the EU

Eleven rounds of trade negotiations beween India and the EU have been held since their commencement in 2007. What are the current objectives of the negotiations and on what points would it be fair to say that agreement has been reached?

Has the Commision decided on a target date for finalisation of the negotiations or agreed on such a date with its Indian partners?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(7 April 2014)

1. The Commission would refer the honourable Member to its previous answer to Written Question E-011270/2013 regarding the state of the EU-India Free Trade Agreement negotiations.

2. There is no specific target date for finalisation of the negotiations agreed with India; the Commission continues to work to resolve remaining issues to reach a beneficial agreement at the earliest.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002433/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Comerțul între Uniunea Europeană și Comunitatea Andină

Acordul dintre Columbia și Peru, pe de o parte și Uniunea Europeană pe de altă parte, ale cărui prevederi comerciale se aplică din 2013, are în vedere stimularea comerțului dintre părți. În prezent au loc discuții în vederea unei posibile alăturări a Ecuadorului la acest acord. Care este stadiul acestor negocieri? Are în vedere Comisia să intre în negocieri și cu Bolivia?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(15 aprilie 2014)

Discuțiile dintre UE și Ecuador au dus anul trecut la un acord privind reluarea procesului de negociere în vederea aderării Ecuadorului la acordul comercial multilateral dintre UE, Columbia și Peru. Ca urmare, la Bruxelles a avut loc o rundă de negocieri în perioada 13-17 ianuarie 2014. Datorită unei bune pregătiri și angajamentului activ din partea ambelor părți, a avut loc un schimb constructiv de opinii. Mai precis, în urma primei runde au fost clarificate anumite aspecte care urmează a fi abordate, precum și pozițiile părților. Discuțiile s-au referit la accesul pe piață al produselor și serviciilor, la dreptul de stabilire, la achizițiile publice, precum și la anumite părți din textul acordului. A doua rundă de negocieri a avut loc în Ecuador în perioada 24-28 martie 2014. Lucrările s-au bazat pe rezultatele primei runde, fiind rediscutate aceleași aspecte.

În ceea ce privește posibilitatea ca Bolivia să se asocieze acordului cu Peru și Columbia, Comisia menține o strânsă legătură cu autoritățile boliviene în privința tuturor chestiunilor relevante.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002433/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade between EU and Andean Community

The agreement between Columbia and Peru, of the one part, and the European Union, of the other part, of which the trade provisions have been in force since 2013, is intended to stimulate trade between them.

The possibility of extending the agreement to include Ecuador is currently under discussion. What progress has been made by the talks?

Does the Commision intend to enter into negotiations with Bolivia also?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

Discussions between the EU and Ecuador resulted in an agreement last year to resume the negotiation process for Ecuador joining the Multi-Party Trade Agreement between the EU and Colombia and Peru. As a result, a negotiating round took place in Brussels on 13-17 January 2014. Good preparation and active engagement from both sides provided for a constructive exchange of views. More precisely, the first round resulted in the clarification of issues to be dealt with and of respective positions. Discussions covered market access for goods, services and establishment, government procurement, as well as parts of the text of the Agreement. The second round of negotiations took place in Ecuador between 24-28 March 2014. The work built on the outcomes of the first round by engaging on the same set of issues.

As regards the possibility of Bolivia joining the Agreement with Colombia and Peru, the Commission remains in close contact with the Bolivian authorities on all relevant issues.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002434/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale dintre Iordania și Uniunea Europeană

Acordul de asociere dintre Iordania și Uniunea Europeană a fost semnat în 1997, intrând în vigoare în mai 2002. Totuși, în prezent, au loc discuții în vederea unei posibile lansări de negocieri pentru un Acord privind Zona de Liber Schimb Aprofundat și Cuprinzător. Când estimează Comisia că vor începe aceste negocieri?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(15 aprilie 2014)

Directivele de negociere pentru un acord de liber schimb aprofundat și cuprinzător între UE și Iordania au fost adoptate de Consiliu în data de 14 decembrie 2011.

Procesul de pregătire a negocierilor este foarte avansat, iar lansarea oficială a negocierilor pentru acord ar putea avea loc imediat ce ambele părți vor fi pregătite.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002434/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade relations between Jordan and the EU

Following the association agreement between Jordan and the EU that was signed in 1997 and entered into force in 2002, negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement on a deep and comprehensive free trade area are now being envisaged. When does the Commission expect these negotiations to commence?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

Negotiating directives for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) between the EU and Jordan were adopted by the Council on 14th December 2011.

The preparatory process for negotiations is well advanced and the formal launch of DCFTA negotiations can be expected to take place as soon as both sides are ready.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002435/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Relațiile comerciale dintre Tunisia și Uniunea Europeană

Acordul de Asociere dintre Tunisia și Uniunea Europeană a fost semnat în 1995, intrând în vigoare în martie 1998. Totuși, în prezent au loc discuții în vederea unei posibile lansări de negocieri pentru un Acord privind Zona de Liber Schimb Aprofundat și Cuprinzător. Când estimează Comisia că vor începe aceste negocieri?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(16 aprilie 2014)

Procesul de pregătire pentru negocierile dintre UE și Tunisia privind zona de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător este destul de avansat, însă nu a fost încă finalizat. Perspectivele și modalitățile de realizare a unei zone de liber schimb complex și cuprinzător au fost discutate pe larg în cadrul a două reuniuni pregătitoare care au avut loc în martie și octombrie 2012 la Tunis.

O a treia și posibil ultimă reuniune pentru finalizarea procesului de pregătire trebuie încă să fie organizată. Comisia a prezentat mai multe propuneri de date, fără însă să fi primit vreun răspuns pozitiv din partea Tunisiei.

Comisia este pregătită să lanseze negocieri de îndată ce procesul de pregătire este finalizat în mod satisfăcător, oferind garanții rezonabile de succes. Acest lucru va fi realizat în consultare cu Comitetul pentru politică comercială pe baza unui raport scris din partea Comisiei. În prezent, este în continuare dificil să se evalueze cu exactitate atunci când acest lucru s-ar putea întâmpla în cazul Tunisiei, deoarece depinde de poziția adoptată de țara parteneră.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002435/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade relations between Tunisia and the EU

Following the association agreement between Tunisia and the EU that was signed in 1995 and entered into force in 1998, negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement on a deep and comprehensive free trade area are now being envisaged. When does the Commission expect these negotiations to commence?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

The preparatory process for the EU-Tunisia Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) negotiations is well advanced but has not been completed yet. Prospects and modalities of a DCFTA were discussed at length during two preparatory meetings held in March and October 2012 in Tunis.

A third and possibly last meeting to finalise the preparatory process still needs to be organised. Several proposals for dates were presented by the Commission without positive reply from Tunisia.

The Commission is ready to launch negotiations as soon as the preparatory process has been completed in a satisfactory manner, giving reasonable assurances of a successful outcome. This will be done in consultation with the Trade Policy Committee on the basis of a written report from the Commission. At present, it is still difficult to assess precisely when this could happen in the case of Tunisia as this depends also on the position taken by the partner country.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002436/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 martie 2014)

Subiect: Negocierile comerciale dintre Libia și Uniunea Europeană

În 2008 au fost lansate negocierile privind un acord-cadru între Uniunea Europeană și Libia, care să cuprindă și o componentă de liber schimb. Totuși, negocierile au fost sistate în 2011, iar de atunci nu au fost reluate. Când se are în vedere reînceperea negocierilor?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(15 aprilie 2014)

Sunt în desfășurare discuții de tatonare cu autoritățile libiene cu privire la o posibilă relansare a negocierilor pentru un acord-cadru între UE și Libia. În acest proces nu s-a ajuns încă la o concluzie și nu este posibil la ora actuală să se prevadă un calendar pentru relansarea negocierilor. În ceea ce privește capitolul referitor la schimburile comerciale dintr-un viitor acord, este necesară continuarea discuțiilor cu privire la conținutul și la complexitatea acestuia, ținându-se cont și de schimbările intervenite de la suspendarea negocierilor, în 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002436/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Trade negotiations between Libya and the EU

Negotiations commenced between the EU and Libya in 2008 with a view to concluding an agreement containing free trade and other provisions were suspended in 2011 and have not yet been resumed. When is it expected that this will be done?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

Exploratory discussions are taking place with the Libyan authorities on a possible re-launch of negotiations for an EU/Libya Framework Agreement. This process has not yet reached a conclusion and it is not feasible at the present time to predict any time frame within which negotiations might be re-launched. In respect of the trade chapter of a future agreement, further discussion is needed on its substantive content and level of ambition, also in light of developments since negotiations were suspended in 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002437/14
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Enforcement of EU legislation for homeopathic medicinal products

Article 9(2) of Directive 92/73/EEC gives Member States the possibility of introducing or retaining specific rules for the preclinical tests and clinical trials of homeopathic medicinal products in their territory other than those referred to in Article 7(1) in accordance with the principles and characteristics of homeopathy as practiced in that Member State. This provision was confirmed in Article 16(2) of Directive 2001/83/EC for homeopathic medicinal products other than those referred to in Article 14(1).

The second paragraph of Article 16(2) of Directive 2001/83/EC specifies (as had Article 9(2) of Directive 92/73/EEC) that 'in this case, the Member State concerned shall notify the Commission of the specific rules in force'.

This being the case:

1. can the Commission provide a list of the Member States that have implemented specific rules since this provision came into force in December 1993?

2. can the Commission provide (or publish) the content of these rules for those Members States that have retained existing rules or have introduced new ones?

3. can the Commission also provide details of rules which have been changed, deleted or updated in the Member States to date?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2014)

As for all national measures implementing EU legislation, the national implementing measures for Directive 92/73/EEC ([1]) and for Directive 2001/83/EC ([2]), as communicated to the Commission, are listed on the EUR-Lex website ([3]) ([4]). Further information on the implementation of Directive 92/73/EEC can be found in the report 'Homeopathic medicinal products — Commission report to the European Parliament and Council on the application of Directives 92/73 and 92/74' ([5]).

The national rules are publicly available in the Member States concerned.

([1]) Council Directive 92/73/EEC of 22 September 1992 widening the scope of Directives 65/65/EEC and 75/319/EEC on the approximation of provisions laid down by Law, Regulation or Administrative Action relating to medicinal products and laying down additional provisions on homeopathic medicinal products, OJ L 297, 13.10.1992, pp. 8-11.

([2]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 67.

([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/search.html?instInvStatus=ALL&or0=DN%3D71992L0073*,DN-old%3D71992L0073*&qid=1395745702572&DTS_DOM=NATIONAL_LAW&type=advanced&lang=en&SUBDOM_INIT=MNE&DTS_SUBDOM=MNE

([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/search.html?instInvStatus=ALL&or0=DN%3D72001L0083*,DN-old%3D72001L0083*&qid=1396522051026&DTC=false&DTS_DOM=ALL&type=advanced&lang=en&SUBDOM_INIT=ALL_ALL&DTS_SUBDOM=ALL_ALL

([5]) COM(97) 362 final.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002438/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Il-pornografija tat-tfal

L-abbuż sesswali u l-isfruttament sesswali tat-tfal, inkluż il-pornografija tat-tfal u l-prostituzzjoni tat-tfal, jirrappreżentaw ksur serju tad-drittijiet fundamentali. Il-firxa tal-internet u l-iffaċilitar tal-ivvjaġġar internazzjonali komplew aggravaw dan il-fenomenu. Filwaqt li l-vittmi tal-abbuż u tal-isfruttament għandhom jirċievu protezzjoni u kura speċjali, it-trasgressuri għandhom ukoll jinżammu responsabbli u għandhom jiġu pproċessati.

L-istudji jindikaw li fl-Ewropa minoranza sinifikati tat-tfal kienu vittmi ta' abbuż sesswali. Hemm żieda fl-inċidenza ta' ċerti forom ta' vjolenza sesswali, bħall-pornografija tat-tfal. Sfortunatament, it-tfal li jidhru fil-pornografija qegħdin kull ma jmur ikunu iżgħar u l-immaġni qed isiru aktar grafiċi u vjolenti.

Fit-13 ta' Diċembru 2011, il-Parlament u l-Kunsill adottaw direttiva ġdida dwar il-ġlieda kontra l-abbuż sesswali u l-isfruttament sesswali tat-tfal u l-pornografija tat-tfal.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tirraporta lura dwar l-istatus ta' implimentazzjoni tad-Direttiva 2011/93/UE fl-Istati Membri?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika kemm il-trasgressur ġie rrappurtat, investigat u pproċessat f'dawn l-aħħar snin, f'kull Stat Membru?

3. Liema miżuri qegħdin jiġu adottati biex ikun żgurat li l-vittmi tal-pornografija tat-tfal u tal-abbuż sesswali ma jkollhomx għalfejn jesperjenzaw trawma meta t-trasgressur jitressaq il-qorti?

4. Liema provvedimenti qegħdin jiġu adottati biex jiżguraw li dawk li t-trasgressuri ma jirrepetux dan it-tip ta' abbuż wara li jkunu ġew ipproċessati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' April 2014)

Id-Direttiva dwar l-Esplojtazzjoni Sesswali tat-Tfal [1] tiffaċilita l-prosekuzzjoni ta' dawk li jwettqu offiżi ta' natura sesswali fuq it-tfal u dawk li jesplojtawhom, ittejjeb il-kwalità tal-protezzjoni tal-vittmi u tipprovdi għal miżuri preventivi. B'mod partikolari, il-vittmi tfal għandhom igawdu minn protezzjoni speċjali matul proċedimenti kriminali sabiex ma jkunx hemm vittimizzazzjoni sekondarja. Dan jinkludi li l-intervisti mat-tfal għandhom isiru mingħajr dewmien mhux ġustifikat, f'post li jkun imfassal għal dan il-għan, minn professjonisti mħarrġa għal dan l-iskop, bl-intervisti kollha, jekk ikun possibbli, isiru mill-istess persuni; l-għadd ta' intervisti jkun kemm jista' jkun limitat, u l-vittmi tfal għandhom ikunu akkumpanjati minn adult tal-għażla tagħhom. L-intervisti jistgħu jiġu rrekordjati b'mod awdjoviżiv u jintużaw bħala prova, u l-qorti tista' tiddeċiedi li jkun jistgħu jsiru s-seduti mingħajr il-presenza tal-pubbliku u li t-tfal jinstemgħu fl-awla tal-qorti permezz ta' teknoloġiji tal-kommunikazzjoni. Biex jiġi evitat ir-reċidiviżmu, dawk li jikkommettu l-offiżi jridu jiġu soġġetti għal evalwazzjonijiet ta' riskju, u jkollhom aċċess għal programmi ta' intervent speċjali. L-informazzjoni dwar is-sentenzi ta' ħtija u d-diskwalifiki għandha tiċċirkola b'mod aktar ħafif u l-verifiki bażiċi minn dawk li jħaddmu jkunu aktar ta' min joqgħod fuqhom.

L-iskadenza għall-Istati Membri biex jittrasponu d-direttiva fil-liġi nazzjonali għalqet fit-18 ta' Diċembru 2013. Il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qed tanalizza l-implimentazzjoni tad-Direttiva mill-Istati Membri. Sal-1 ta' April 2014, 22 Stat Membru nnotifikaw miżuri nazzjonali ta' implimentazzjoni.

Id-Direttiva ma tobbligax lill-Istati Membri jippreżentaw statistika, u għalhekk il-Kummissjoni ma tistax tipprovdi l-għadd ta' rapporti u tas-sentenzi ta' ħtija fl-Istati Membri.

[1] Id-Direttiva 2011/93/UE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tat-13 ta' Diċembru 2011 dwar il-ġlieda kontra l-abbuż sesswali u l-isfruttament sesswali tat-tfal u l-pedopornografija, u li tissostitwixxi d-Deċiżjoni Kwadru tal-Kunsill 2004/68/ĠAI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002438/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Child pornography

Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, including child pornography and child prostitution, constitute serious violations of fundamental rights. The spread of the Internet and the facilitation of international travel have further aggravated these phenomena. Whilst victims of abuse and exploitation must receive special protection and care, offenders must also be held responsible and prosecuted.

Studies show that a significant minority of children in Europe have been sexually assaulted. Certain forms of sexual violence, such as child pornography, are on the increase. Unfortunately, children portrayed in pornography are getting younger and the images are becoming increasingly graphic and violent.

On 13 December 2011, Parliament and the Council adopted a new directive on combating the sexual abuse and the sexual exploitation of children and child pornography.

1. Can the Commission report on the status of implementation of Directive 2011/93/EU in the Member States?

2. Can the Commission indicate how many offenders have been reported, investigated and prosecuted in recent years in each Member State?

3. What measures are being adopted to ensure that victims of child pornography and sexual abuse will not have to experience further trauma when their offender is brought to justice?

4. What provisions are being adopted to make sure that offenders will not repeat this kind of abuse after they have been prosecuted?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2014)

The Child Sexual Exploitation Directive [1] facilitates the prosecution of child sex offenders and of exploitation offenders, enhances the protection of victims and provides for preventative measures. In particular, child victims should enjoy special protection during criminal proceedings in order to prevent secondary victimisation. This includes that interviews with the child should take place without unjustified delay, in premises designed for this purpose, by professionals trained for that purpose, with the same persons if possible carrying out all interviews; the number of interviews being as limited as possible, and child victims should be accompanied by an adult of their choice. The interviews may be audiovisually recorded and be used as evidence, and the court may decide that hearings take place without the presence of the public and that the child be heard in courtroom through communication technologies. To prevent recidivism, offenders must be subject to risk assessments, and have access to special intervention programmes. Information on convictions and disqualifications should circulate more easily and background checks by employers will be more reliable.

The deadline for Member States to transpose the directive in national law was 18 December 2013. The Commission is currently monitoring the implementation of the directive by Member States. By 1 April 2014, 22 Member States had notified national implementation measures.

The directive does not oblige Member States to produce statistics, so the Commission cannot provide the number of reports and convictions in Member States.

[1] Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002440/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Aċċess għal binjiet pubbliċi għal persuni b'diżabbiltà

Filwaqt li tul dawn l-aħħar snin żdied l-għarfien fir-rigward tal-bżonn ta' aċċessibbiltà għal persuni b'diżabbiltà, il-persuni b'diżabbiltà fiżika għadhom jiffaċċjaw bosta ostakoli meta jfittxu li jaċċedu għal binjiet pubbliċi bħal skejjel, uffiċċji governattivi, qrati eċċ. Peress li kulħadd tul il-ħajja jista' jkollu jiffaċċja l-isfidi ta' diżabbiltà fiżika, hu importanti li l-ambjent mibni jkun ħieles mill-ostakoli u adattat biex jilqa' l-bżonnijiet tal-persuni kollha bl-istess mod.

1. Il-Kummissjoni liema strateġiji qed tadotta biex tara li kull Stat Membru jkun impenjat biex jiżgura li l-persuni b'diżabbiltà jkollhom aċċess totali għal binjiet pubbliċi?

Il-Kummissoni pproponiet l-adozzjoni ta' Att Ewropew dwar l-Aċċessibbiltà li hu ambizzjuż u legalment vinkolanti.

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' taġġornana dwar il-progress imwettaq dwar dan il-att?

3. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tispjega l-livell ta' parteċipazzjoni ta' persuni b'diżabbiltà fl-abbozzar ta' dan il-att?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Mejju 2014)

It-titjib tal-aċċessibilità tal-ambjent fiżiku fost affarijiet oħra huwa wieħed mill-għanijiet ewlenin tal-Istrateġija Ewropea tad-Diżabilità 2010-2020 ([1]) u fost l-azzjonijiet ([2]) ippjanati għall-ewwel ħames snin tagħha.

Il-Kummissjoni qiegħda tkompli taħdem fuq it-tħejjija tal-Att Ewropew dwar l-Aċċessibilità. L-Att għandu l-għan li jittratta l-ostakli eżistenti għall-kummerċ intra-UE u li jipprevjeni l-ħolqien ta' ostakli oħrajn ġodda, b'hekk jiffaċilita l-provvista ta' prodotti u servizzi ewlenin aċċessibbli sabiex tkun iffaċilitata l-parteċipazzjoni u l-integrazzjoni tal-persuni b'diżabilità u l-persuni anzjani fis-soċjetà.

Il-partijiet interessati, fosthom persuni b'diżabilità u l-għaqdiet tagħhom, ġew ikkonsultati b'bosta modi tul it-tħejjija ta' din l-inizjattiva: permezz ta' konsultazzjoni pubblika, Ewrobarometru u laqgħa ta' djalogu ta' livell għoli dwar "l-Aċċessibilità u t-Tkabbir" fejn kienu preżenti għaqdiet Ewropej li jirrappreżentaw persuni b'diżabilità u persuni anzjani.

([1]) "Impenn mill-Ġdid għal Ewropa Mingħajr Ostakoli", COM(2010) 0636 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT
([2]) Lista ta' azzjonijiet għall-2010-2015, SEC(2010)1324 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002440/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Access to public buildings for persons with disability

While awareness has increased in recent times of the need for accessibility for disabled persons, physically disabled people still face many barriers when seeking access to public buildings such as schools, government offices, law courts, etc. As anyone may in the course of a lifetime have to face the challenges of a physical disability, it is important that the built-up environment be barrier-free and adapted to meet the needs of all people equally.

1. What strategies is the Commission adopting to ensure that every Member State is committed to ensuring that disabled persons have total access to public buildings?

The Commission has proposed that an ambitious and legally binding European Accessibility Act be adopted.

2. Can it give an update on the progress being made on this act?

3. To what extent are persons with disabilities involved in the drafting of this act?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

Improving accessibility of *inter alia* the physical environment is one of the key objectives of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) and is among the actions ([2]) planned for its first five years.

The Commission continues working on the preparation of the European Accessibility Act.· The Act aims to tackle existing barriers to intra-EU trade and to prevent the creation of new ones, thus facilitating the provision of accessible mainstream goods and services in order to facilitate the participation and integration of persons with disabilities and elderly persons in society.

Stakeholders, including persons with disabilities and their organisations, have been consulted in various ways during the preparation of this initiative: through a public consultation, a Eurobarometer and a high-level dialogue meeting on 'Accessibility and Growth' where European organisations representing persons with disabilities and elderly persons were present.

([1]) 'A renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe', COM(2010) 0636 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:en:NOT
([2]) List of actions for 2010-2015, SEC(2010)1324 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010SC1324:EN:NOT

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002441/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Rapport tal-istħarriġ dwar il-Leżbjani, gay, bisesswali u transġeneru (LGBT)

L-istħarriġ dwar l-LGBT ippubblikat mill-Aġenzija tal-UE għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali (FRA) fl-2013 jindika li 47% tal-persuni LGBT ħassew li ġew diskriminati kontra jew ingħataw fastidju tul l-aħħar sena bin-nisa (55%), iż-żgħażagħ (57%) u l-persuni LGBT foqra (52%) meqjusa bħala dawk l-aktar probabbli li jsofru minn diskriminazzjoni. L-istħarriġ wera ukoll li 26% tal-parteċipanti ġew attakkati jew mhedda bi vjolenza minħabba l-orjentazzjoni sesswali tagħhom jew minħabba l-identità tal-ġeneru tagħhom (35% fost il-persuni transġeneru). 10% biss ta' dawk li wieġbu għas-survey qalu li ħassew li kienu kunfidenti biżżejjed li jirrapportaw diskriminazzjoni lill-pulizija. Barra minn hekk, 32% qalu li sofrew diskriminazzjoni fit-tfittxija tagħhom għal post biex joqgħodu u/jew fl-edukazzjoni, u/jew meta jiġu biex ikollhom aċċess għall-kura tas-saħħa, għal beni jew servizzi u 20% qalu li sofrew diskriminazzjoni fl-impjieg jew fil-post tax-xogħol (29% fost il-persuni transġeneru).

1. Il-Kummissjoni x'taħseb dwar ir-riżultati tal-istħarriġ tal-FRA?

2. Il-Kummissjoni b'liema mod qed tassissti lill-Istati Membri biex jidentifikaw l-isfidi tad-drittijiet fundamentali ffaċċjati mill-persuni LGBT?

3. Il-Kummissjoni b'liema mod qed tappoġġa l-iżvilupp ta' risponsi legali u politiki fil-livell tal-UE u nazzjonali li jkunu effikaċi u immirati biex jindirizzaw il-bżonnijiet tal-persuni LGBT u biex tiżgura l-protezzjoni tad-drittijiet fundamentali tagħhom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' April 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja mir-riżultati li ħarġu mill-istħarriġ ippubblikat mill-Aġenzija tal-UE għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali (FRA) dwar l-omofobija u t-transfobija.

Il-Kummisjsoni tappoġġja lill-Istati Membri fil-ġlieda kontra d-diskriminazzjoni li tolqot lil persuni leżbjani, gay, bisesswali u transgender (LGBT) permezz tal-allokazzjoni ta' assistenza finanzjarja mill-UE, ta' pubblikazzjonijiet informattivi u tal-organizzazzjoni ta' seminars regolari ta' skambju ta' prassi tajba fejn jidħlu politiki pubbliċi li jikkumbattu d-diskriminazzjoni abbżi tal-orjentazzjoni sesswali u l-identità tal-ġeneru. L-aktar seminar riċenti minn dawn iffoka fuq dawk l-oqsma li fl-istħarriġ tal-FRA ġew identifikati bħala l-aktar problematiċi ([1]).

Il-leġiżlatur tal-UE kontinwament itejjeb il-protezzjoni tal-persuni LGBT fi ħdan il-kompetenzi tal-Unjoni ([2]). Il-Kummissjoni żżomm għajnejha fuq l-applikazzjoni korretta tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE mill-Istati Membri. Il-Kummissjoni se tagħmel użu mill-poteri kollha disponibbli, inkluż permezz ta' proċeduri ta' ksur biex tara li l-Istati Membri jimplimentaw il-liġi tal-UE skont il-Karta.

([1]) Id-dettalji tal-azzjoni tal-KE f'dan il-qasam jistgħu jiġu kkonsultati hawn http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/orientation/eu-action/index_en.htm

([2]) Pereżempju, id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 2000/78/KE tas-27 ta' Novembru 2000 li tistabbilixxi qafas ġenerali għall-ugwaljanza fit-trattament fl-impjieg u fix-xogħol (ĠU L 303,02.12.2000, p. 16-22), id-Direttiva 2012/29/UE tal-25 ta' Ottubru 2012 li tistabbilixxi standards minimi fir-rigward tad-drittijiet, l-appoġġ u l-protezzjoni tal-vittmi tal-kriminalità, jew id-Direttiva tal-Kwalifikazzjoni (ĠU L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 57-73).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002441/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) survey report

The LGBT survey published by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in 2013 indicates that 47% of LGBT people felt discriminated against or harassed in the last year, with lesbian women (55%), young people (57%) and poorer LGBT people (52%) the most likely to suffer discrimination. It also showed that 26% of the participants had been attacked or threatened with violence because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (35% among transgender people). Only 10% of the respondents said that they felt confident enough to report discrimination to the police. Also, 32% said that they had been discriminated against when seeking housing and/or education, and/or when accessing healthcare, goods or services, and 20% said that they had been discriminated against in their employment or occupation (29% among transgender people).

1. What are the Commission's reactions to the results of the FRA survey?

2. In what ways is the Commission assisting Member States in identifying the fundamental rights challenges that LGBT people face?

3. In what ways is the Commission supporting the development of effective and targeted EU and national legal and policy responses to address the needs of LGBT persons and to ensure the protection of their fundamental rights?

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

The Commission is aware of the findings shown in the survey published by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on homophobia and transphobia.

The Commission supports Member States to fight discrimination of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people through allocation of EU financial assistance, informative publications and the organisation of regular good practice exchange seminars on public policies combatting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. The latest of these seminars focused on those areas identified in FRA survey as most problematic ([1]).

The EU legislator continuously improves the protection of LGBT people within the areas of the Union competences ([2]). The Commission monitors the correct application of EU legislation by Member. The Commission will make use of all available powers, including by means of infringements to make sure that Member States implement EC law in accordance with the Charter.

([1]) Details of EC action in this area can be found http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/orientation/eu-action/index_en.htm
([2]) For example Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16-22), Directive 2012/29/EU of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, or the Qualification Directive (OJ L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 57-73).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002442/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(3 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Emergenza idrico-sanitaria a Roma Nord

In data 21 febbraio, a seguito delle analisi condotte dalla ASL C e notificate all'amministrazione di Roma Capitale secondo cui l'acqua in alcune zone dei Municipi XIV e XV risultava inadatta all'uso umano a causa della presenza di batteri e arsenico oltre le soglie consentite, il sindaco di Roma firmava un'ordinanza in cui si vieta fino al 31 dicembre 2014 di consumare acqua per uso alimentare, igiene personale e ogni altro utilizzo nei municipi XIV e XV di Roma, nel quadrante nord-ovest della capitale.

Tale provvedimento veniva pubblicato sul sito del Campidoglio il 28 febbraio, dopo ben 7 giorni, e senza procedere ad una opportuna informazione, tempestiva e capillare, nei confronti della popolazione.

Tale mancanza di adeguata e tempestiva pubblicità sta creando sconcerto e preoccupazione nei cittadini dei territori interessati.

Alla luce di quanto premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza della situazione;

2. se il comportamento dell'amministrazione non costituisca una violazione della direttiva 98/83/CE, che disciplina la qualità delle acque destinate al consumo umano;

3. se non ravvisi una violazione dell'articolo 8, paragrafo 3, della direttiva 98/83/CE che prevede che, in caso di pericolo per la salute umana, «i consumatori vengano tempestivamente informati e vengano loro forniti i necessari consigli»;

4. se non sia stata violata la direttiva 2000/60/CE (direttiva quadro sulle acque), che prevede misure per il miglioramento dello stato delle acque e la partecipazione dei cittadini alle scelte adottate in materia?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della contaminazione da arsenico dell'acqua potabile nella regione Lazio. L'uso di acqua potabile con livelli di arsenico superiori al limite fissato dalla direttiva 98/83/CE è stato accordato in base a due deroghe ([1]) concesse dall'Italia, cui ha fatto seguito una terza deroga concessa dalla Commissione, giunte a scadenza alla fine del 2012.

2. Dopo la scadenza, la Commissione è stata informata dalle autorità italiane che in alcuni comuni della regione Lazio era ancora superato il limite per l'arsenico stabilito dalla direttiva. Di conseguenza, nel dicembre 2013 la Commissione ha avviato un'indagine formale nel quadro dell'EU PILOT 5909/13/ENVI, che comprende anche aspetti relativi all'informazione al pubblico.

3. La risposta all'EU PILOT, inviata dalle autorità italiane nel febbraio 2014, è attualmente oggetto di valutazione.

4. La direttiva quadro sulle acque ([2]) prevede che gli Stati membri intraprendano azioni adeguate volte a raggiungere un buono stato per tutti i corpi idrici entro il 2015. Secondo l'ultima relazione presentata dalle autorità italiane ai sensi della direttiva, la Commissione non dispone di elementi indicanti l'inosservanza di detta direttiva nel caso sollevato dall'onorevole deputato.

([1]) Decisione C(2010) 7605 della Commissione del 28.10.2010, per alcune zone di fornitura di acqua in Lazio, Lombardia, Toscana, Campania relativa a arsenico, fluoruro, e borio e decisione C(2011) 2014 della Commissione del 22.3.2011 per alcune zone di fornitura di acqua in Lazio, Lombardia, Toscana, Campania e Trentino Alto Adige relativa a arsenico e fluoruro.

([2]) Direttiva 2000/60/CE (GU L 327 del 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002442/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(3 March 2014)

Subject: Water and health emergency in Northern Rome

On 21 February, following analysis carried out by the Local Health Authority Rome C and notified to the authorities of the City of Rome, according to which the water in some areas of Municipal Districts XIV and XV was unsuitable for human consumption due to the presence of bacteria and arsenic above the permitted levels, the Mayor of Rome signed an order prohibiting until 31 December 2014 the consumption of water for cooking, personal hygiene and any other purpose in Municipal Districts XIV and XV of Rome in the north-western sector of the city.

This order was published on the Campidoglio website on 28 February, after at least seven days, and not preceded by any appropriate, timely and widespread information to the population.

This lack of adequate and timely publicity is creating confusion and concern among the general public in the districts concerned.

In view of the above, can the Commission advise:

1. whether it is aware of the situation;

2. whether the conduct of the authorities constitutes an infringement of Directive 98/83/EC, which governs the quality of water intended for human consumption;

3. whether it observes an infringement of Article 8(3) of Directive 98/83/EC which provides that in the case of a danger to human health, 'consumers shall be informed promptly thereof and given the necessary advice';

4. whether an infringement has occurred of Directive 2000/60/EC (water framework directive), which provides measures for improvement of the quality of water and the involvement of the general public in any decisions adopted in this respect?

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

1. The Commission is aware of drinking water contamination by arsenic in the Lazio Region. The use of drinking water with levels of arsenic exceeding the limit set by Directive 98/83/EC has been allowed on the basis of two derogations ([1]) granted by Italy, followed by a third derogation granted by the Commission, which expired end 2012.

2. After the expiry, the Commission was informed by the Italian authorities that the limit established by the directive for arsenic was still exceeded in some Municipalities in the Lazio Region. Consequently, in December 2013 the Commission launched a formal investigation under EU PILOT 5909/13/ENVI, which also covers aspects related to the information to the public.

3. The reply to the EU PILOT, sent by the Authorities in February 2014, is currently being assessed.

4. The Water Framework Directive ([2]) provides that Member States should undertake appropriate action aiming to achieve good status for water bodies by 2015. According to the latest reporting under this directive by the Italian Authorities, the Commission has no evidence that would point out non-compliance with this directive in the case raised by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Commission decision C(2010)7605 of 28/10/2010 for some water supply zones in Lazio, Lombardia, Toscana, Campania for arsenic, fluoride and boron and Commission decision C(2011)2014 of 22/03/2011 for some water supply zones in Lazio, Lombardia, Toscana, Campania and Trentino Alto Adige for arsenic and fluoride.

([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-002443/14
à la Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(4 mars 2014)

Objet: Utilisation du budget de l'Union européenne par l'Agence nationale roumaine pour les ressources minérales (NAMR)

En 2012, la DG Énergie a publié un appel à propositions (DG ENER/C2/SUB/492-2012) à destination des autorités publiques dans les États membres en vue d'obtenir des subventions pour l'organisation de dialogues avec les citoyens et le lancement de campagnes d'information sur le gaz de schiste. Les bénéficiaires de ces subventions ont été priés, sans ambigüité, d'avoir recours aux études de l'Union sur le gaz de schiste mentionnées dans l'appel pour développer des arguments mettant en regard les avantages potentiels et les risques associés à cette industrie. La note cite expressément comme référence l'étude de la DG Environnement intitulée «Appui à l'identification des risques potentiels pour l'environnement et la santé humaine résultant d'opérations impliquant des hydrocarbures issus de la fracturation hydraulique en Europe», qui met en lumière plusieurs risques cumulatifs.

Récemment, des citoyens roumains ont alerté les autorités de l'Union concernant une série de matériaux produite par l'Agence nationale roumaine pour les ressources minérales (NAMR) avec le soutien financier de l'Union européenne. Les documents présentés par la NAMR ([1]) ne satisfont pas aux exigences, aux objectifs et à l'approche requises dans la note de l'appel à propositions élaboré par la DG Énergie. Ils ne se concentrent au contraire que sur les avantages allégués du gaz de schiste et ferment les yeux sur les résultats des études menées par l'Union sur les répercussions potentielles de cette industrie sur le climat et l'environnement.

Dans ce contexte:

1. La Commission peut-elle confirmer que ces matériaux développés par la NAMR sont financés par une subvention accordée en vertu de l'appel à propositions DG/ENER/C2/SUB/492-2012?

2. Si tel n'est pas le cas, la Commission peut-elle fournir des informations au sujet de la subvention finançant la production de ces matériaux?

3. Si tel est le cas, la Commission peut-elle faire savoir si elle était au courant de la teneur des documents présentés par la NAMR et si elle estime que les matériaux en question correspondent aux objectifs et aux exigences figurant dans l'appel à propositions?

4. La Commission peut-elle faire état des actions qu'elle envisage de mener pour assurer le suivi de ce dossier?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(27 mars 2014)

1. L'action mise en œuvre par l'Agence nationale roumaine pour les ressources minérales (NAMR) a bénéficié d'une subvention de 61 155 euros (soit 50 % de la totalité des coûts de l'action) octroyée par l'Union européenne dans le cadre de l'appel à propositions DG ENER/C2/SUB/492-2012. Elle devrait être mise en œuvre dans le strict respect de la description de l'action (annexe I de la convention de subvention), qui a été convenue et évaluée par les services de la Commission et qui répond aux objectifs de l'appel à propositions. Dans le cadre de cette action, l'annexe I prévoit la mise en place d'une plateforme en ligne/d'un site web et de matériaux sur le gaz de schiste.

2. Le site web et les matériaux sont développés dans le cadre de l'action cofinancée par l'Union.

3. Les contenus du site web et des matériaux publiés relèvent de la seule responsabilité de la NAMR et ne peuvent en aucun cas être considérés comme reflétant la position de l'Union européenne. Cette information figure clairement sur la page d'accueil du site web. Conformément à la convention de subvention, la Commission évaluera le rapport final d'exécution technique et les éléments livrables de l'action que le bénéficiaire doit présenter d'ici à la fin du mois de mai 2014. Sur la base du rapport final et de la qualité des éléments livrables, la Commission décidera si l'action répond aux objectifs définis et déterminera le montant total à rembourser au bénéficiaire.

4. La Commission examinera les matériaux publiés sur le site web et conseillera le bénéficiaire, le cas échéant. Seuls les coûts supportés conformément à l'objet de la convention de subvention ou nécessaires à la mise en œuvre de l'action pourront être admis au cofinancement de l'UE.

([1]) Y compris une fiche d'information de quatre pages, une synthèse de huit pages et un site web complet: http//www.infogazedesist.eu/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002443/14
to the Commission
Corinne Lepage (ALDE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Use of the EU budget by the Romanian National Agency for Mineral Resources (NAMR)

In 2012 DG Energy published Call for Proposals DG ENER/C2/SUB/492-2012, for the attention of public authorities in the Member States, with a view to obtaining grants for organising dialogues with citizens and launching information campaigns on shale gas. Beneficiaries of grants were clearly asked to use the EU studies on shale gas mentioned in the call to develop arguments balancing the potential benefits and risks associated with this industry. The notice expressly mentions as a reference DG Environment's study 'Support to the identification of potential risks for the environment and human health arising from hydrocarbons operations involving hydraulic fracturing in Europe', which highlights a number of cumulative risks.

Romanian citizens recently alerted the EU authorities over a series of materials produced by the Romanian National Agency for Mineral Resources (NAMR) with EU financial support. The documents produced by the NAMR ([1]) do not correspond to the requirements, objectives and approach requested in the call for proposals drawn up by DG Energy. Instead, they focus only on the alleged benefits of shale gas and deny the findings of the EU studies on the potential climate and environmental impacts of this industry.

Given the above:

1. Can the Commission confirm that the materials developed by the NAMR are financed by a grant awarded under Call for Proposals DG ENER/C2/SUB/492-2012?

2. If this is not the case, can the Commission provide information concerning the grant financing the production of these materials?

3. If it is the case, can the Commission state whether it knew about the contents of the documents produced by the NAMR, and whether it considers the materials in question to be in line with the objectives and requirements of the call for proposals?

4. Can the Commission state what action it intends to take to follow up on this case?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2014)

1. The action, which is being implemented by The National Agency for Mineral Resources of Romania (NAMR), was awarded a EUR 61,155 grant (50% of the total costs of the action) from the European Union under the Call for Proposals DG ENER/C2/SUB/492-2012. It should be implemented strictly in accordance with the agreed Description of the Action (Annex I to the Grant Agreement), which was evaluated by the Commission services and meets the objectives of the Call for Proposals. Annex I foresees the development of an online platform/website and materials on shale gas as part of the action.

2. The website and materials are being developed within the action co-financed by the EU.

3. The content of the website and the materials published fall under the sole responsibility of the NAMR and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union. This is clearly indicated on the front page of the website. According to the Grant Agreement, the Commission will assess the final technical implementation report and deliverables of the Action which the beneficiary has to submit by the end of May 2014. On the basis of the Final report and quality of the deliverables the Commission will decide whether the Action met the defined objectives and will determine the total amount to be reimbursed to the beneficiary.

4. The Commission will examine the materials published on the website and will provide advice to the beneficiary, if needed. Only the costs incurred in line with the subject of the Grant Agreement or necessary for the implementation of the action will be eligible for the EU co-financing.

([1]) Including a four-page fact sheet, an eight-page briefing and an entire website: http//www.infogazedesist.eu/index.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-002444/14
do Komisji
Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE)
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Pomoc producentom wieprzowiny – Afrykański Pomór Świń (ASF)

W związku z wykryciem na terenie Unii Europejskiej przypadków wirusa Afrykańskiego Pomoru Świń (ASF) państwa trzecie wprowadziły ograniczenia importu mięsa wieprzowego pochodzącego ze Wspólnoty. W wyniku tego sytuacja na rynku wieprzowiny z dnia na dzień staje się coraz bardziej dramatyczna: drastyczny spadek cen żywca oraz problemy z eksportem powodują ogromne straty finansowe producentów, już dziś doprowadzając wielu z nich na skraj bankructwa. Kolejne negatywne aspekty zaistniałej sytuacji to gwałtowna redukcja etatów w tym sektorze i spadek zaufania konsumentów do produktów zawierających wieprzowinę. Należy jednak podkreślić, iż wirus ASF nie stanowi zagrożenia dla zdrowia ludzkiego.

W przypadku Polski wykrycie przypadków ASF u dzików poskutkowało nałożeniem embarga na polską wieprzowinę m.in przez największych partnerów handlowych naszego kraju: Rosję, Chiny czy Japonię.

Dlatego konieczne jest podjęcie działań mających na celu poprawę sytuacji na rynku wieprzowiny zarówno w Polsce, jak i w całej UE. Istnieją przecież instrumenty pomocy, takie jak choćby dopłaty do prywatnego magazynowania czy środki zarządzania kryzysowego, o których mowa w rozporządzeniu Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady nr 1308/2013, ustanawiającym wspólną organizację rynków produktów rolnych.

Czy Komisja zamierza wystosować pomoc finansową dla producentów wieprzowiny w Polsce i pozostałych państwach dotkniętych kryzysem w związku z wykryciem przypadków ASF na terenie Unii?

Czy poczyniono jakieś postępy w negocjacjach z Federacja Rosyjską, dotyczących zniesienia zakazu importu mięsa wieprzowego pochodzącego z UE?

Czy w przypadku otrzymania wniosków o odszkodowanie w wyniku strat poniesionych przez chorobę Afrykańskiego Pomoru Świń Komisja zamierza wypłacić rekompensatę producentom, tak jak miało to miejsce w 2011 r. w przypadku epidemii zatruć pokarmowych wywołanych szczepem pałeczki okrężnicy EHEC i odszkodowań przyznanych producentom warzyw i owoców?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloșa w imieniu Komisji
(4 kwietnia 2014 r.)

W związki z wykryciem przypadków afrykańskiego pomoru świń u dzików na Litwie i w Polsce Rosja wprowadziła ograniczenia dotyczące przywozu unijnej wieprzowiny, zaś inne państwa trzecie także przyjęły środki skierowane przeciwko dotkniętym państwom członkowskim, co spowodowało presję na rynku mięsa wieprzowego. Ceny spadły w ciągu roku, podczas gdy normalnie występuje sezonowy wzrost. W niektórych regionach w Polsce i na Litwie wprowadzono środki ochronne.

Na wniosek Polski, i po ocenie sytuacji rynkowej powstałej na obszarach objętych ograniczeniami handlowymi, Komisja przyjęła na mocy rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1308/2013 ([1]) nadzwyczajne środki wspierania rynku, które zostaną wdrożone w celu pomocy objętym ograniczeniami producentom wieprzowiny. Litwa wystosowała podobny wniosek, który jest obecnie analizowany przez Komisję.

Komisja utrzymuje stałe kontakty z władzami rosyjskimi i jest gotowa wykorzystać wszelkie odpowiednie narzędzia w celu zapewnienia, by wymiana handlowa została jak najszybciej wznowiona.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1308/2013 z dnia 17 grudnia 2013 r. ustanawiające wspólną organizację rynków produktów rolnych oraz uchylające rozporządzenia Rady (EWG) nr 922/72, (EWG) nr 234/79, (WE) nr 1037/2001 i (WE) nr 1234/2007. Dz.U. L 347 z 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002444/14
to the Commission
Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Help for pork producers — African Swine Fever

In response to the discovery of outbreaks of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the European Union, third countries have introduced restrictions on pork imports from the EU. As a result, the situation on the pork market is growing more alarming by the day. The drastic fall in the price of pigmeat and problems with exports are causing huge financial losses for producers; many have already been pushed to the brink of bankruptcy. Other negative aspects of this situation are massive job cuts in the sector and a fall in consumer confidence with regard to products containing pork. It should be stressed, however, that ASF poses no danger to human health.

In the case of Poland the discovery of ASF cases in wild boar has led to an embargo on Polish pork being introduced by, among others, our country's largest trading partners: Russia, China and Japan.

Action therefore needs to be taken to improve the situation in the pork market, both in Poland and the whole of the EU. Aid instruments do exist, such as the aid for private storage and crisis management measures referred to in Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament of the Council establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products.

Does the Commission intend to provide financial assistance to pork producers in Poland and other countries affected by the crisis linked to the discovery of cases of ASF in the EU?

Has any progress been made in negotiations with Russia concerning the lifting of the ban on imports of pigmeat from the EU?

If it receives compensation claims for losses incurred as a result of African Swine Fever, will the Commission pay compensation to producers, as happened in 2011 following the food poisoning outbreak caused by the EHEC strain of *E. coli* and the compensation paid to fruit and vegetable growers at the time?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2014)

Following the occurrence of several cases of African Swine Fever in wild boars in Lithuania and Poland, the Russian import restrictions against EU pigmeat, together with measures taken by other third countries against the affected Members states, have put the pigmeat market under pressure. Prices declined during a period of the year where normally there is a seasonal increase. Protective measures have been taken in certain regions, in Poland and Lithuania.

The Commission at the request of Poland, and after assessment of the market situation created in the territories concerned by marketing restrictions, has adopted exceptional market measures under Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 ([1]) that will be implemented with the view to relief the situation of affected pig producers. Lithuania has adress a similar request that is being analysed by the Commission.

Commission maintains permanent contacts with Russian authorities while it is prepared to use all appropriate tools to ensure that trade resumes as soon as possible.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007. OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002445/14
a la Comisión
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México: Primer Diálogo Político

El pasado 3 de diciembre de 2013 realicé una pregunta a la Comisión en la que planteaba la importancia que ésta concedía al contenido de las conclusiones de la XVI Reunión de la Comisión Parlamentaria Mixta México-UE.

En su respuesta E-014057/2013 del 13 de febrero de 2014, el Sr. De Gucht, en nombre de la Comisión, me remitía a la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-014058/2013. En esta respuesta de la Alta Representante se aseguraba que ambas partes del Acuerdo estaban haciendo un esfuerzo por intensificar las relaciones a partir del Acuerdo vigente y la Asociación Estratégica. De la misma manera, se anunciaba que el Primer Diálogo Político de alto nivel tendría lugar el 27 de enero de 2014 en Bruselas y que éste sería una ocasión para impulsar los intercambios sobre los asuntos regionales e internacionales de interés común.

En este contexto, pregunto a la Comisión:

¿Cuál es la valoración de la Comisión sobre el estado de las negociaciones para la modernización del Acuerdo a raíz de este Primer Diálogo Político? ¿Ha cumplido el mismo las expectativas que de él se tenían?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de abril de 2014)

La Comisión ruega a Su Señoría que consulte la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-2446/2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002445/14
to the Commission
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: EU-Mexico Association Agreement: first political dialogue

On 3 December 2013 I put a question to the Commission asking what importance it assigned to the content of the conclusions of the 16th meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee.

In his answer of 13 February 2014 to Written Question E-014057/2013 Mr De Gucht, on behalf of the Commission, referred me to the answer to Written Question E-014058/2013. In this answer the High Representative stated that both parties to the agreement were striving to deepen their relations on the basis of the existing agreement and strategic partnership. She also announced that the first high-level political dialogue would take place in Brussels on 27 January 2014 and that this would represent an opportunity to enhance the exchanges on international and regional issues of common interest.

In this context:

What is the Commission's assessment of the state of the negotiations to modernise the agreement as a result of this first political dialogue? Has it lived up to expectations?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answer to Written Question E-2446/2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002446/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México: Primer Diálogo Político

El pasado 3 de diciembre de 2013 realicé una pregunta a la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta de la Comisión Catherine Ashton en la que planteaba la importancia que el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior concedía al contenido de las conclusiones de la XVI Reunión de la Comisión Parlamentaria Mixta México-UE.

En su respuesta E-014058/2013 del 11 de febrero de 2014, la Alta Representante aseguraba que ambas partes del Acuerdo estaban haciendo un esfuerzo por intensificar las relaciones a partir del Acuerdo vigente y la Asociación Estratégica. De la misma manera, publicitaba que el Primer Diálogo Político de alto nivel tendría lugar el 27 de enero de 2014 en Bruselas y que éste sería una ocasión para impulsar los intercambios sobre los asuntos regionales e internacionales de interés común.

En este contexto, pregunto a la Alta Representante:

¿Cuál es la valoración de la Alta Representante sobre el estado de las negociaciones para la modernización del Acuerdo a raíz de este Primer Diálogo Político? ¿Ha cumplido éste las expectativas que de él se tenían?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

El primer diálogo político entre la UE y México a nivel de Directores políticos se celebró en Bruselas el 27 de enero de 2014, entre la Secretaria General Adjunta del SEAE, Helga Schmid, y el Viceministro de Asuntos Exteriores mexicano Carlos de Icaza, acompañado por altos funcionarios. Fue un amplio y muy sustancial intercambio de puntos de vista sobre cuestiones bilaterales, internacionales y regionales como Irán, Siria (Ginebra II), la situación en Oriente Medio, las relaciones con los socios estratégicos y los contextos regionales de la UE y de México.

La reunión reforzó el diálogo político entre la UE y México, así como la cooperación en una serie de cuestiones regionales y globales críticas. Proporcionó también una oportunidad para que la UE y México revisaran el proceso en curso con el fin de reforzar la relación bilateral estratégica y reafirmar su compromiso de examinar todas las opciones para una actualización del Acuerdo global de 2000.

A este respecto, la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta remite a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-2448/14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002446/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Mexico Association Agreement: first political dialogue

On 3 December 2013 I put a question to the Vice-President/High Representative asking what importance the European External Action Service assigned to the content of the conclusions of the 16th Meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee.

In her answer of 11 February 2014 to Written Question E-014058/2013 the High Representative stated that both parties to the agreement were striving to deepen their relations on the basis of the existing agreement and strategic partnership. She also announced that the first high-level political dialogue would take place in Brussels on 27 January 2014 and that this would represent an opportunity to enhance the exchanges on international and regional issues of common interest.

In this context:

What is the High Representative's assessment of the state of the negotiations to modernise the agreement as a result of this first political dialogue? Has it lived up to expectations?

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

The first EU-Mexico Political Dialogue at the level of Political Directors was held in Brussels on 27 January 2014, between EEAS Deputy Secretary-General Helga Schmid and the Mexican Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Carlos de Icaza, accompanied by Senior Officials. It was a broad and very substantive exchange of views on bilateral, international and regional issues including Iran, Syria (Geneva II), the situation in the Middle East, relations with strategic partners, and the EU's and Mexico's regional contexts.

The meeting thus strengthened the EU and Mexico's political dialogue and cooperation on a number of critical global and regional issues. It further provided an opportunity for the EU and Mexico to review the ongoing process aiming to enhance the strategic bilateral relation and to reaffirm their commitment to explore the options for a modernisation of the 2000 Global Agreement.

In this respect, the HRVP would like to refer to its answer to Written Question E-2448/14.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002447/14
a la Comisión
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México: Reunión paralela de los tres subgrupos

De acuerdo con la respuesta de 13 de febrero de 2014 de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton, en nombre de la Comisión, a la pregunta E-14051/2013, de 3 de diciembre de 2013, sobre los grupos de trabajo creados con motivo de las negociaciones para modernizar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México, a mediados del mes de febrero de 2014 habría de celebrarse en México una reunión paralela de los tres subgrupos de diálogo político, de cooperación y de comercio con el fin de avanzar en dichas negociaciones.

En este contexto, me gustaría preguntar a la Comisión:

¿Cuáles son los resultados y avances que se han producido en el curso de la misma?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta dada a la pregunta escrita E-2448/2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002447/14
to the Commission
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: EU-Mexico Association Agreement: Parallel meeting of the three subgroups

According to the answer from the High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on 13 February 2014 on behalf of the Commission to Question E-14051/2013 of 3 December 2013 regarding the working groups set up as a result of the negotiations to modernise the EU-Mexico Association Agreement, a parallel meeting of the three subgroups, on political dialogue, cooperation and trade, was due to be held in mid-February 2014 in Mexico with the aim of making progress with these negotiations.

In this context, I should like to ask the Commission:

What results and what progress have been achieved in the course of that meeting?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answer to Written Question E-2448/2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002448/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México: Reunión paralela de los tres subgrupos

De acuerdo con la respuesta de 13 de febrero de 2014 de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton a la pregunta E-14051/2013, de 3 de diciembre de 2013, sobre los grupos de trabajo creados con motivo de las negociaciones para modernizar el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-México, a mediados del mes de febrero de 2014 habría de celebrarse en México una reunión paralela de los tres subgrupos de diálogo político, de cooperación y de comercio con el fin de avanzar en dichas negociaciones.

En este contexto, me gustaría preguntar a la Alta Representante:

¿Cuáles son los resultados y avances que se han producido en el curso de la misma?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

Con el fin de identificar los principales ámbitos que serán objeto de una eventual modernización del Acuerdo Global celebrado en 1997, así como el nivel de ambición para cada uno de estos ámbitos, la UE y México han creado un grupo de trabajo conjunto, integrado por tres subgrupos sobre diálogo político, cooperación y comercio.

La primera reunión paralela de los tres subgrupos tuvo lugar en la Ciudad de México entre el 11 y el 13 de febrero.

Los subgrupos de diálogo político y cooperación pasaron revista a los logros de la relación UE-México, en el marco del actual Acuerdo, debatieron sus respectivas visiones estratégicas de la asociación en el futuro, evaluaron el actual marco jurídico, así como los mecanismos institucionales, y abordaron posibles asuntos futuros.

El subgrupo sobre comercio e inversión celebró dos reuniones en octubre de 2013 (Bruselas) y en febrero de 2014 (Ciudad de México). Los debates sobre asuntos comerciales e inversión abarcaron todos los ámbitos y permitieron que México y la UE apreciaran claramente el nivel de ambición que cada parte pretende alcanzar en el contexto de una posible modernización.

Como resultado de las recientes reuniones, la alta representante y la Comisión están estudiando, con México, la puesta en marcha de un ejercicio prospectivo. Además, elaborarán recomendaciones para una visión estratégica de la relación, sobre la base del ámbito de aplicación y los objetivos de una posible actualización, así como en un futuro marco institucional y los ámbitos prioritarios con vistas a un posible nuevo acuerdo.

Como este proceso es esencial para las próximas etapas, se pretende llevar a cabo una evaluación detallada del mismo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002448/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Mexico Association Agreement: parallel meeting of the three subgroups

According to the Vice-President/High Representative's answer of 13 February 2014 to Written Question E-14051/2013 of 3 December 2013 on the working groups set up as a result of the negotiations to modernise the EU-Mexico Association Agreement, a parallel meeting of the three subgroups, on political dialogue, cooperation and trade, was due to be held in Mexico in mid-February 2014 with the aim of making progress with these negotiations.

In this context, I should like to ask the High Representative:

What was the outcome of the meeting, and what progress was made in the course of it?

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

In order to identify the main areas to be the object of a possible modernisation of the Global Agreement concluded in 1997 as well as the level of ambition for each of these areas, the EU and Mexico established a joint working group, constituted of three subgroups on political dialogue, cooperation and trade.

The first parallel meeting of all three subgroups took place in Mexico City from 11-13 February.

The subgroups on political dialogue and cooperation reviewed the achievements of the EU-Mexico relationship under the current Agreement, discussed their respective strategic vision for the partnership in the future, assessed the existing legal framework and institutional mechanisms, and considered possible future subjects.

The subgroup on trade and investment held two meetings in October 2013 (Brussels) and in February 2014 (Mexico City). The discussions on trade and investment issues were comprehensive on all areas and allowed Mexico and the EU to get a good sense of the level of ambition which each side would seek in the context of a possible modernisation.

As a result of the recent meetings, the HRVP and the Commission are considering, with Mexico, the launching of a scoping exercise. They will also develop recommendations for a strategic vision of the relationship, on the scope and the objectives of a possible update, as well as on a future institutional framework and priority areas for a possible new Agreement.

As this process is essential for the next steps, it is intended to carry out a very detailed assessment.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002449/14
a la Comisión
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Cumbre UE-Brasil: cable submarino

Con motivo de la reciente Cumbre UE-Brasil que se celebró en Bruselas la pasada semana, ¿cómo valora la Comisión la iniciativa tendente a fomentar la construcción de un cable submarino directo entre América Latina y Europa?

¿Podría contar con apoyos y recursos presupuestarios y financieros por ambas partes?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002450/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Cumbre UE-Brasil: cable submarino

Con motivo de la reciente Cumbre UE-Brasil que se celebró en Bruselas la pasada semana, ¿cómo valora el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior la iniciativa tendente a fomentar la construcción de un cable submarino directo entre América Latina y Europa?

Respuesta conjunta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

La Comisión considera que se trata de una iniciativa positiva, potencialmente capaz de mejorar de forma significativa las comunicaciones y la interconectividad entre América Latina y Europa. Además, está prevista una participación de los fondos europeos en la inversión para dar apoyo a la cooperación científica y educativa entre los dos continentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002449/14
to the Commission
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: EU-Brazil summit: Submarine cable

With respect to the recent EU-Brazil summit held in Brussels last week, what is the Commission's assessment of the proposal to promote the construction of a direct submarine cable between Latin America and Europe?

Would there be financial and budgetary resources and aid available from both sides?

Question for written answer E-002450/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Brazil summit: submarine cable

With respect to the recent EU-Brazil summit held in Brussels last week, what is the European External Action Service's assessment of the proposal to promote the construction of a direct submarine cable between Latin America and Europe?

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

The Commission sees this as a positive initiative that has the potential to significantly improve the communications and interconnectivity between Latin America and Europe. Moreover, it is foreseen that European funds will take part in the investment to support scientific and educational cooperation between the two continents.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002451/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(4 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Κρατικές ενισχύσεις στις εκποιήσεις δημόσιων εκτάσεων στη Βουλγαρία

Το 2012 εκσκαφείς εισήλθαν σε μια έκταση που περιλαμβάνει προστατευόμενους οικοτόπους αμμόλοφων και προστατευόμενα δάση κοντά στην πόλη Nesebar της Βουλγαρίας και τα ισοπέδωσαν για να προετοιμάσουν την ανέγερση ενός νέου τουριστικού συγκροτήματος ([1]). Όπως αποκάλυψε δημοσίευμα εφημερίδας ([2]), η έκταση, με αριθμό 51500.204.152 στο κτηματολόγιο, είχε εκποιηθεί το 2012 χωρίς ανοικτή διαδικασία υποβολής προσφορών από το υπουργείο Γεωργίας και Τροφίμων σε ιδιώτη αντί 581 212 βουλγαρικών λεβ (290 000 ευρώ). Την επόμενη ημέρα ο τελευταίος πώλησε την έκταση σε ιδιωτική εταιρία αντί 4 009 451 βουλγαρικών λεβ (2 000 000 ευρώ), τιμή ενδεικτική της αγοραίας αξίας της έκτασης.

Κατόπιν του έντονου ενδιαφέροντος εκ μέρους της κοινής γνώμης, η επιτροπή καταπολέμησης της διαφθοράς και σύγκρουσης συμφερόντων του βουλγαρικού κοινοβουλίου δημοσίευσε μητρώο με όλες τις περιπτώσεις δημόσιων εκτάσεων που είχαν στο παρελθόν διαγραφεί από το Δημόσιο Ταμείο Δασών και στη συνέχεια εκποιήθηκαν ως αστικά ακίνητα χωρίς διαδικασίες υποβολής προσφορών σε ιδιώτες επενδυτές ([3]). Η διαφορά μεταξύ τιμής πώλησης και αγοραίας αξίας αυτών των εκτάσεων κυμαίνεται συχνά από μερικές χιλιάδες ευρώ έως εκατομμύρια ευρώ ([4]). Όπως περιγράφεται στη διαδικασία της Επιτροπής «Κρατική ενίσχυση SA.26212 — Εικαζόμενη ενίσχυση υπό μορφή ανταλλαγής κυριότητας ιδιωτικών δασικών εκτάσεων με δημόσιες», το βουλγαρικό δίκαιο επιτρέπει την εκτίμηση των εκποιήσεων δημόσιας γης από ανεξάρτητους εμπειρογνώμονες σε τιμές μακράν χαμηλότερες των τιμών της αγοράς ([5]).

Σχετικά με τα ανωτέρω, είναι η Επιτροπή σε θέση να αναφέρει αν η Βουλγαρία της κοινοποίησε τους νομικούς μηχανισμούς που επιτρέπουν την εκποίηση δημόσιων γαιών χωρίς διαδικασία υποβολής προσφορών και σε τιμές μακράν χαμηλότερες των τιμών της αγοράς;

Αν όχι, θα διερευνήσει η Επιτροπή την πιθανολογούμενη κρατική ενίσχυση που χορηγήθηκε με την εκποίηση δημόσιων γαιών που είχαν στο παρελθόν διαγραφεί από το Δημόσιο Ταμείο Δασών;

Απάντηση του κ. Almunia εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει λάβει καμία κοινοποίηση από τη Βουλγαρία σχετικά με τους νομικούς μηχανισμούς που επιτρέπουν την εκποίηση δημόσιων γαιών χωρίς διαδικασίες υποβολής προσφορών και σε τιμές που θα μπορούσε να υποστηριχθεί ότι είναι χαμηλότερες από τις τιμές της αγοράς. Ωστόσο, οι πληροφορίες σχετικά με την πιθανώς χορηγηθείσα, στο πλαίσιο αυτό, κρατική ενίσχυση καταχωρίστηκαν από την Επιτροπή ως πληροφορίες για την αγορά κατά την έννοια του σημείου 14 των αιτιολογικών σκέψεων του κανονισμού (ΕΕ) αριθ. 734/2013 του Συμβουλίου, της 22ας Ιουλίου 2013, για την τροποποίηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 659/1999 για τη θέσπιση λεπτομερών κανόνων εφαρμογής του άρθρου 93 της Συνθήκης ΕΚ.

Όσον αφορά το δεύτερο ερώτημα, η Επιτροπή επισημαίνει ότι, ενεργώντας προς το γενικό ευρωπαϊκό δημόσιο συμφέρον, δικαιούται να καθορίζει διαφορετικούς βαθμούς προτεραιότητας στις επίσημες καταγγελίες ή/και τις πληροφορίες για την αγορά που διαβιβάζονται σε αυτήν ([6]). Επί του παρόντος, η Επιτροπή δεν διερευνά διεξοδικά την εικαζόμενη κρατική ενίσχυση που χορηγήθηκε με την εκποίηση δημόσιων γαιών οι οποίες είχαν στο παρελθόν διαγραφεί από το Δημόσιο Ταμείο Δασών, θα μπορούσε ωστόσο να αποφασίσει να το πράξει σε μεταγενέστερο στάδιο.

([1]) http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=146505
([2]) https://bivol.bg/gerb-razgrabvane-duni.html
([3]) http://www.parliament.bg/bg/parliamentarycommittees/members/1479/documents
([4]) http://www.24chasa.bg/Article.asp?ArticleId=1700128
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:273:0013:0025:EL:PDF
([6]) Υπόθεση T-475/04, Bouygues SA κατά Επιτροπής Συλλογή [2007], σ. II-02097, σκέψη 158 και υπόθεση C-119/97 , P Ufex και λοιποί κατά Επιτροπής Συλλογή [1999], σ. I-1341, σκέψη 88.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002451/14
to the Commission
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: State aid in sales of public lands in Bulgaria

In 2012 excavators entered a plot with protected dune habitats and forests near the town of Nesebar, Bulgaria, and levelled them in preparation for the construction of a new tourist complex ([1]). A newspaper report ([2]) revealed that that the plot, No 51500.204.152 in the land registry, was in 2012 sold without a bidding procedure by the Ministry of Agriculture and Foods to a private person for BGN 581 212 (EUR 290 000). The following day the latter sold the plot to a private company for BGN 4 009 451 (EUR 2 000 000), a price indicative of the real market value of the plot.

In response to strong public interest, the Anti-Corruption and Conflict of Interests Committee of the Bulgarian Parliament has published a register listing all instances of public plots previously excluded from the State Forest Fund and later sold as urban plots without bidding procedures to private investors ([3]). The difference between sale price and market rate of these plots often ranges between some thousands of EUR to millions of EUR ([4]). As described in the Commission's procedure 'State aid SA.26212 — Alleged aid in the form of swap of ownership of privately owned forest estates for governmental ones' ([5]), Bulgarian law allows for independent expert evaluation of sales of public land at prices far below market rates.

With regard to the above, can the Commission state whether it has received notification from Bulgaria on the legal mechanisms allowing the sale of public lands without bidding procedures and at prices far below market rates?

If not, will the Commission investigate the alleged state aid granted in the sale of public lands which were previously excluded from the State Forest Fund?

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

The Commission has not received any notification from Bulgaria on the legal mechanisms allowing the sale of public lands without bidding procedures and at prices that would allegedly be below market rates. However, information on potential state aid being granted in this context was recorded by the Commission as market information in the meaning of paragraph 14 of the Preamble to Council Regulation (EU) No 734/2013 of 22 July 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 659/1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Article 93 of the EC Treaty.

In relation to the second question, the Commission points out that, acting in the overall European public interest, it is entitled to give differing degrees of priority to formal complaints and/or market information submitted to it ([6]). The Commission currently is not actively investigating the alleged state aid granted in the sale of public lands that were previously excluded from the Bulgarian State Forest Fund, but might decide to do so at a later stage.

([1]) http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=146505
([2]) https://bivol.bg/gerb-razgrabvane-duni.html
([3]) http://www.parliament.bg/bg/parliamentarycommittees/members/1479/documents
([4]) http://www.24chasa.bg/Article.asp?ArticleId=1700128
([5]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:273:0013:0025:EN:PDF
([6]) Case T-475/04, Bouygues SA v Commission [2007] ECR II-02097, paragraph 158 and case C-119/97 P Ufex and Others v Commission [1999] ECR I-1341, paragraph 88.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002452/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Basaira Elderly Centre

I have been contacted by a constituent who has brought the Basaira Elderly Centre to my attention. My constituent tells me that this charity has been operating as a day centre since 2007 and that it offers exercise classes and visits to places of cultural and historic interest.

He says that it also organises regular luncheons for around 50 people.

My constituent tells me that the centre has more than 250 members who are predominantly from the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent and African countries. He says that the majority of the members are frail and elderly with age-related medical conditions which include depression, memory loss and heart problems. He also says that some members are widows/widowers or live alone with a very limited social life.

My constituent tells me that the centre offers activities to its members to help them to regain their sense of dignity and self-confidence and to give them the opportunity to socialise ([1]).

1. Could the Commission confirm whether such a group is eligible for any EU funding?

2. If so, how can my constituent apply for funding?

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

The Commission confirms that active social inclusion by promoting participation in the labour market is one of the areas of focus of the 2007-13 European Social Fund (ESF) operational programmes in the UK.

As one of its main objectives, the England and Gibraltar ESF programme aims to improve the employability of unemployed and inactive people who face barriers to work with a specific focus on the most disadvantaged. Ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and learning difficulties and those aged 50 and over are included in the main target groups of the current operational programme in England. Furthermore, the focus on those disadvantaged groups will likely remain a priority in the 2014-2020 programming period for the ESF in England.

Management of ESF programmes lies with the National Authorities. The Commission would therefore suggest that the Honourable Member contacts the relevant Authorities directly to obtain information on specific initiatives or projects that go towards enhancing the prospects of disadvantaged and vulnerable people in London.

For England, the Managing Authority for the ESF 2007-13 programme is the ESF Division of the Department for Work and Pensions in Sheffield ([2]).

For London, ESF management competencies are delegated to the European Programmes Management Unit at the Greater London Authority working under the responsibility of the Mayor as Intermediate Body in partnership with DWP ([3]).

([1]) Further information about the charity can be found at: http://www.basaira.org.uk/
([2]) ESF.feedback@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
([3]) alex.conway@london.gov.uk

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002453/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: European Accessibility Act

I have been contacted by a constituent regarding Written Question E-010967/2013.

In its reply, the Commission stated that a high-level meeting was planned for December 2013.

1. Could the Commission confirm whether this meeting took place in December 2013?

2. If so, what objectives were achieved by the meeting?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

1. The meeting took place on 3 December 2013 in Brussels.

2. The objective of the meeting was to discuss with representatives of relevant industry sectors how products and services can be made more accessible in Europe. The conclusions of the meeting are used in the preparation of the European Accessibility Act ([1]), a directive to improve the market of goods and services that are accessible for persons with disabilities and elderly persons, based on a 'design for all' approach. The meeting with the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship involved high level participants from companies representing key sectors relevant for the European Accessibility Act, namely ICT, transport, hospitality services, publishers and also representatives from European standardisation, disability and 'ageing' organisations.

A list of participant organisations is included in the related press release ([2]).

All participants supported the Commission's goal of improving accessibility of goods and services in the EU by applying an Internal Market logic and in line with the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

([1]) Commission Work Programmes 2012 item 99 and 2014 item 21.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1192_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002454/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Euthaniasia in European zoos

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the safety of animals in European zoos following the recent slaughter of Marius the giraffe in Copenhagen, Denmark.

My constituent tells me that other zoos, including Yorkshire zoo, offered to rehouse Marius, but these offers were refused. She believes that there needs to be an immediate review of the euthanasia polices of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) to ensure that healthy animals which can be relocated are not killed.

Could the Commission confirm whether it intends to take any steps to ensure that European zoos implement a policy of always relocating healthy animals rather than one of euthanasia?

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

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to consult the answer given to joint written questions E-001351/2014 and E-001471/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002455/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Mandatory fuel charging

I have been contacted by a constituent who has brought mandatory fuel charging to my attention. This is a practice whereby car rental companies unexpectedly charge customers for a full tank of fuel upon arrival at a rental location.

He tells me that this practice lacks transparency, as the extra charge is not made clear during the booking process, and is in breach of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC).

My constituent tells me that the practice of mandatory fuel charging is particularly prevalent in Spain, with a recent survey suggesting that one in five UK holidaymakers have been hit with unexpected fuel surcharges that were not made clear when they booked the rental vehicle.

Could the Commission confirm whether it will make representations to the Spanish authorities to ascertain what action they will be taking to meet their obligations under the directive and end this practice?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its response to parliamentary Question E-011289/2011 ([1]), sharing the view that it is unacceptable if consumers must pay for fuel they have not consumed.

The Commission can confirm that Spanish authorities have taken action against such practices, by issuing a notice on four practices which may violate consumers' economic interests in the car rental sector ([2]), including this full/empty fuel policy. Traders in Spain are informed of this and requested to correct their practices. If consumers still face such problems in Spain, they should complain to the relevant local authorities, or when back home to the European Consumer Centre in their country ([3]). The Commission has informed the European car rental association Leaseurope of this notice.

On 3 April 2014, the Commission, European Consumer Centres and national enforcers ([4]) met major car rental companies and Leaseurope to discuss issues affecting European consumers when renting cars. At the meeting, the industry representatives agreed to develop solutions to ensure better consumer protection.

The communication on the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (the UCPD) ([5]) and its accompanying Report, adopted on 14 March 2013, identify key areas in which enforcement of the UCPD should be strengthened. This includes travel and transport, such as car rentals. The Commission is working towards updating the Guidance on the implementation and application of the UCPD.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-011289&language=EN
([2]) http://consumo-inc.gob.es/informes/docs/CCC_CONSULTAS_2013.pdf, notice No 3.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/index_en.htm
([4]) From the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network working under Regulation 2006/2004/EC.
([5]) COM(2013) 138 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002456/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — LGBT community in Russia

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about verbal and physical hatred towards the LGBT community in Russia.

My constituent claims that vigilantes in the country are performing so-called 'safari' hunts to lure homosexuals online with the intention of trapping and beating them, in many cases resulting in life-changing injuries. He also says that these homosexuals are sometimes forced to perform humiliating acts on camera, the footage of which is then released to the general public. He adds that people who carry out such attacks are rarely prosecuted.

My constituent tells me that rewards are offered for outing LGBT teachers and that it is common for anyone who supports gay rights to be photographed and reported to the authorities, which can put them at risk of losing their jobs.

My constituent also tells me that the head of the Russian Orthodox Church has said that gay marriage is a sign of the apocalypse and that members of the homosexual community are both spiritually and morally ill.

1. Could the Vice-President/High Representative confirm whether she raises the issue of the LGBT community during its dialogues with the Russian Federation?

2. If so, has she reached any agreements which protect the rights and welfare of the LGBT community?

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

1. The overall situation of LGBTI individuals and organisations in the context of the 'foreign agents' and 'homosexual propaganda' laws are raised with the Russian Federation at various levels of our relationship. They have been discussed in detail during the last Justice, Liberty and Security Permanent Partnership Council in January 2014 as well as during the last two rounds of our Human Rights consultations with Russia, in May and November 2013.

The EU considers that these laws lead to the stigmatisation of particular groups and individuals and to discriminatory practices and discourse against them. They are in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The EU has taken all opportunities to call upon Russia to repeal them, bilaterally and in all relevant Human Rights international fora. The EU also continued to express its concerns through public diplomacy efforts, notably through many statements the HRVP issued on human rights issues of concern in Russia.

2. In spite of the EU's repeated efforts, Russia has not agreed to amend or repeal the above legislation.

The EU will however continue to monitor the impact of the new legislation on LGBTI organisations in Russia very closely, notably through the work of the EU Delegation in Moscow. The EU will furthermore continue to actively support civil society organisations in Russia, in particular through the EIDHR programme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002457/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Scottish Independence

I have been contacted by a constituent regarding the upcoming referendum on Scottish independence.

It has been said that if Scotland leaves the UK, it will need to reapply for membership of the European Union.

Could the Commission confirm whether, if Scotland leaves the UK and reapplies for EU membership, the other UK countries would also need to reapply?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012, and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002458/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) e João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Despedimentos Agência Nacional Erasmus +

No Programa de Trabalho da Agência Nacional «Lifelong Learning Programme» para o ano de 2013 está escrito «The much wider range of Erasmus for All will imply more technical and human resources (…) and also an internal structure capable of responding to the new demandings» (p. 3). Ou seja, esta avaliação validada e assinada pelo Secretário de Estado do Emprego português Pedro Martins, pressupunha que se deveria realizar uma «transição suave» entre a Agência Nacional para a Gestão do Programa Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida e a Agência (ou Agências) que se viessem a constituir no quadro da criação do Programa Erasmus +, a partir de Janeiro de 2014, para além de estar explícita a necessidade de aumentar o número de meios humanos e técnicos. A Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.° 15/2014 cria duas estruturas de missão para assegurar a gestão do novo Programa Erasmus +: a Agência Erasmus + Educação e Formação e a Agência Erasmus + Juventude em Ação. Segundo as informações que temos, a Agência Nacional para a Gestão do Programa Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida, que cessou formalmente funções em dezembro de 2013, tem 46 trabalhadores com diversos vínculos, muitos dos quais estão desde janeiro de 2014 a trabalhar sem contrato. A Resolução do Conselho de Ministros já referida decide que a Nova Agência Erasmus + Educação e Formação terá 53 trabalhadores, sendo que apenas 27 terão contratos (sujeitos a concurso), e que os restantes virão dos programas de mobilidade da função pública. Tal significa que vários destes atuais 46 trabalhadores — os quais têm importante experiência de trabalho nas Agências — podem simplesmente não ser contratados. É também decidido que os ordenados serão de acordo com a primeira posição remuneratória da respetiva categoria, o que obrigaria a que vários trabalhadores com vários anos de experiência na Agência (alguns com 14 anos) tivessem que regressar à primeira posição na carreira, com os respetivos cortes salariais.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Quais as informações que tem sobre o processo em causa?

2. Considera que a criação de uma «nova» estrutura irá assegurar a gestão e competências necessárias na equipa para fazer face à abertura das candidaturas do Programa Erasmus + e sua gestão?

3. Considera importante ou não manter os trabalhadores com experiência adquirida a trabalhar na Agência e com os direitos proporcionais ao tempo de missão que têm?

Resposta dada por AndroullaVassiliou em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2014)

De acordo com o Regulamento ([1]) do programa Erasmus+, a designação das agências nacionais é da exclusiva responsabilidade dos Estados-Membros. Os Estados-Membros devem apresentar uma avaliação de conformidade *ex ante*, em que se fornecem garantias de que as agências nacionais cumprem os requisitos aplicáveis (incluindo normas de controlo interno no que diz respeito aos recursos humanos).

Neste contexto, a Comissão tomou nota da publicação da Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.° 15/2014, de 24 de fevereiro de 2014.

Os instrumentos de que a Comissão dispõe para avaliar a política de recursos humanos das agências nacionais designadas são:

1) a avaliação de conformidade *ex ante* a ser analisada à luz do Guia das Agências Nacionais e do regulamento do programa Erasmus+.

2) o programa de trabalho de 2004 da Agência Nacional para o Erasmus+, que inclui informações em matéria de pessoal.

O prazo de apresentação do programa de trabalho terminou em 31 de dezembro de 2013; o prazo de apresentação da avaliação de conformidade *ex ante* terminou em 21 de março de 2014. À data de 2 de abril de 2014, a Comissão ainda não tinha recebido das autoridades nacionais portuguesas os dois documentos em causa. A Comissão pode apenas avaliar o impacto que a Resolução n.° 15/2014 pode ter nos recursos humanos e, em última análise, na execução do programa Erasmus+, quando receber os documentos referidos.

A Comissão mantém um contacto regular com as autoridades nacionais portuguesas e com a Agência Nacional na pendência da apresentação dos documentos em causa.

([1]) JO L 347 de 20.12.2013, p. 50.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002458/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Dismissals at the national agency for Erasmus+

The 2013 work programme of the national agency for the Lifelong Learning Programme states that 'The much wider range of Erasmus for All will imply more technical and human resources (…) and also an internal structure capable of responding to the new demands' (p. 3). This assessment, which was validated and signed by the Portuguese Secretary of State for Employment, Pedro Martins, indicates the need for a 'smooth transition' between the national agency for the management of the Lifelong Learning Programme and the agency (or agencies) set up to implement the Erasmus+ programme from January 2014, as well as the need to boost the human and technical resources available. Resolution No 15/2014 of the Portuguese Council of Ministers created two structures to manage the new Erasmus+ programme: the Erasmus+ Education and Training Agency and the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Agency. According to our information, the national agency for the management of the Lifelong Learning Programme, which formally ceased operating in December 2013, has a staff of 46 in various types of employment, many of whom have been working without a contract since January 2014. The above resolution of the Portuguese Council of Ministers decided that the new Erasmus+ Education and Training Agency would have a staff of 53, of whom only 27 would have contracts (following a competition), with the remainder coming from civil service mobility programmes. This means that some of the present staff of 46 — who have significant experience of work within the agencies — may simply no longer be employed. It was also decided that wages would be in line with the first salary grade in the corresponding category, which would mean that several members of staff with many years of experience in the agency (some of them with 14 years' experience) would have to return to the first career step, with the corresponding cuts to their wages.

1. What information does the Commission have on this matter?

2. Does it believe that the creation of a 'new' structure will guarantee that the team will havethe necessary administrative and other skills to deal with the wider range of candidates inthe Erasmus+ programme and its management?

3. Does it consider it important to retain staff with experience of working in the agency,with the rights proportionate to their years of service?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

According to the Erasmus+ Regulation ([1]), the designation of the National Agencies is the exclusive responsibility of the Member States. Member States must submit an *ex-ante* Compliance Assessment, in which they provide assurance that the National Agencies comply with the applicable requirements (including internal control standards relating to human resources).

In this context, the Commission took note of the publication of the Portuguese Council Resolution 15/2014 of 24 February 2014.

The instruments available to the Commission to assess the human resources policy of the designated National Agencies are:

1. the *ex-ante* Compliance Assessment to be analysed in the light of the Guide for National Agencies and the Erasmus+ Regulation;

2. the 2014 National Agency Work Programme for Erasmus+ which includes information on staffing matters.

The deadline for submitting the Work Programme was 31/12/2013; the deadline for submitting the *ex-ante* Compliance Assessment was 21.3.2014. At the date of 2.4.2014 the Commission has not yet received the two documents in question from the Portuguese National Authorities. The Commission can only judge the impact that Resolution 15/2014 might have on human resources, and ultimately on the implementation of the Erasmus + Programme, once it receives these documents.

The Commission is in regular contact with the Portuguese National Authorities and National Agency whilst waiting for the submission of the documents in question.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 50.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-002459/14
alla Commissione
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Migliorare la fiscalità per le famiglie

Premesso che l'istituzione della famiglia tradizionale è stata oggetto negli ultimi anni di attacchi senza precedenti per svilirne importanza e valore in nome di un laicismo esasperato;

premesso altresì che la famiglia è cellula base della società ed è su di essa che si fondano le comunità sin dai tempi ancestrali;

premesso infine che la famiglia costituisce la base del ricambio generazionale attraverso la cura e la crescita dei figli che rappresentano il capitale umano della nostra società del domani;

considerato che la famiglia dovrebbe essere uno dei punti saldi attorno ai quali costituire una cultura comune che dia più valore e sostanza al processo di costituzione dell'Unione europea, in virtù del fatto che è riconosciuta in tutti gli Stati membri e dalla stragrande maggioranza della popolazione come una fondamentale istituzione funzionale all'educazione, alla crescita e all'istruzione dei nuovi cittadini;

considerato inoltre che gli effetti della crisi economica si sono fatti sentire anche a livello sociale, dissuadendo soprattutto i giovani dal costituire nuove famiglie, vista la massima incertezza sul futuro e sulle possibilità di garantire un avvenire solido alla propria prole, e gli effetti si sono fatti sentire in molti Stati membri dove la crescita demografica è assicurata solamente dall'afflusso di nuovi immigrati;

si interroga la Commissione per sapere se sia possibile redigere una raccomandazione agli Stati membri affinché si introducano delle riforme volte a migliorare la fiscalità delle famiglie, tenendo conto del contributo che essere apportano allo sviluppo sostenibile delle nostre economie, come ad esempio il riconoscimento di una titolarità fiscale unitaria.

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(31 marzo 2014)

La fiscalità diretta rientra principalmente nella sfera di competenza degli Stati membri e la Commissione può intervenire soltanto entro i limiti delle competenze attribuitele dai trattati UE. In linea generale gli Stati membri sono quindi liberi d'impostare come credono i propri regimi e procedure di imposizione diretta, anche in termini di fiscalità della famiglia, a condizione che le norme applicate non siano discriminatorie o altrimenti contrarie ai trattati.

Nel contesto della strategia Europa 2020 per una crescita economica sostenibile e inclusiva, la Commissione europea può rivolgere agli Stati membri raccomandazioni specifiche per paese indicando le riforme necessarie per stimolare la crescita e la creazione di posti di lavoro. A tal fine la Commissione ha preso posizione sulla fiscalità della famiglia nei casi in cui ha constatato l'esistenza di norme fiscali che disincentivano l'ingresso sul mercato del lavoro della persona che, nella famiglia, costituisce la seconda fonte di reddito (spesso, la donna). Nel 2013 il Consiglio ha adottato raccomandazioni specifiche per paese sulla questione dei disincentivi fiscali, tra l'altro in caso di cumulo fiscale dei redditi delle coppie sposate e di esistenza di crediti di imposta trasferibili per le coppie.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002459/14
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Improving taxation for families

In recent years the traditional family institution has been the subject of unprecedented attacks which have diminished its importance and value in the name of extreme secularism.

It should be pointed out that the family is the basic unit of society on which communities have been built since time immemorial.

The family is the cornerstone of generational change, through the care and upbringing of children who represent the human capital of tomorrow's society.

The family should be one of the anchors on which to build a common culture that gives greater value and substance to the process of building the European Union, due to the fact that it is recognised in all Member States and by the vast majority of the population as a vital institution for the upbringing, growth and education of new citizens.

It is important to note that the impact of the economic crisis has also been felt socially, deterring young people, in particular, from forming new families, given the huge uncertainty about the future and the possibilities of ensuring that their offspring can have a decent future; this impact has been felt in many Member States, in which population growth is being ensured only by the influx of new migrants.

Can the Commission say whether it might be possible to draw up a recommendation to the Member States to persuade them to implement reforms with a view to improving the taxation of families, such as taxing them as a single unit, taking into account the contribution they make to the sustainable development of our economies?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

Direct taxation mainly falls under the competence of the Member States. The Commission's role is confined to acting within the boundaries of the competences that the EU Treaties confer on it. Therefore, Member States are, in general, free to design their direct tax systems and procedures, including the taxation of families, as they choose as long as their rules are not discriminatory or otherwise contrary to the Treaties.

In the context of the Europe 2020 strategy for sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the European Commission can issue country specific policy recommendations to Member States on what reforms are needed to boost growth and job creation. To this end, the Commission has taken a position on the taxation of families when there has been evidence of fiscal disincentives for second income earners (often women) to enter the labour market. In 2013, the Council adopted country-specific recommendations to address fiscal disincentives, including in cases of the joint taxation of income for married couples and the existence of transferable tax credits for couples.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002460/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Eficiencia energética: aumento de emisiones de CO_2 y pobreza energética

La Directiva 2010/31/UE, de 19 de mayo de 2010, establece criterios y políticas para la eficiencia energética de los edificios. Entre estos objetivos, se establece que los edificios nuevos que se construyan a partir del 31 de diciembre de 2020 han de tener un consumo de energía casi nulo.

Recientemente, se han publicado los resultados de un informe de Certicalia, una red de profesionales de la certificación energética en España, en el que se afirma que cerca del 90 % de las viviendas españolas derrochan energía ([1]). En este estudio también se muestran las emisiones de CO_2 producidas por el consumo energético de los inmuebles españoles en las diferentes provincias españolas según los datos obtenidos en el certificado energético ([2]). Las emisiones de CO_2 de un inmueble son aquellas que se producen para generar la energía necesaria y satisfacer los consumos de calefacción, refrigeración y agua caliente sanitaria. España va claramente por un camino divergente a los objetivos fijados por la UE en términos de eficiencia energética en edificios y esto está haciendo aumentar las emisiones de CO_2, provocando un aumento del cambio climático y alejando a España de los objetivos de la UE 2020.

Una menor eficiencia energética en los edificios también conlleva un aumento del número de familias que se encuentran en situación de pobreza energética. En febrero de 2011, el Comité Económico y Social Europeo (CESE) aprobó un dictamen con el título «La pobreza energética en el contexto de la liberalización y de la crisis económica», en el que se proponía tener en cuenta la pobreza energética a la hora de elaborar cualquier propuesta de política energética y se afirmaba que mejorar la eficiencia energética en la construcción era un aspecto clave para abordar la pobreza energética.

1. ¿Conocía la Comisión esta divergencia?

2. ¿La tendrá en cuenta para las recomendaciones específicas al Estado español dentro del Semestre Europeo?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que España está violando la Directiva relativa a la eficiencia energética de los edificios mencionada anteriormente?

4. ¿Fomentará la Comisión la creación de un plan de choque contra la pobreza energética que se realice a partir de un plan de inversión junto al Banco Europeo de Inversiones (a través de «project bonds») para rehabilitar edificios, reducir la pobreza energética y disminuir las emisiones de CO_2?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de abril de 2014)

1. La Comisión es consciente del gran potencial de ahorro energético que existe en los hogares españoles. Para aprovechar este potencial, España debe transponer adecuadamente la Directiva 2010/31/UE ([3]) y aplicar sus requisitos a los edificios existentes y nuevos. La Directiva sobre eficiencia energética (2012/27/UE) incluye medidas de eficiencia adicionales para los edificios y tiene que estar incoporada en el Derecho español a más tardar el 5 de junio de 2014.

2. El avance de España hacia sus objetivos de eficiencia energética y el papel que pueden desempeñar los edificios será estudiado en el Semestre Europeo.

3. España notificó a la Comisión nuevas medidas de transposición de la Directiva 2010/31/UE en mayo, septiembre y noviembre de 2013. Estas notificaciones permitieron cerrar recientemente un procedimiento de infracción contra España por la no comunicación de las medidas de transposición. La Comisión está estudiando si la legislación nacional transpone correctamente todas las obligaciones derivadas de dicha Directiva.

([1]) http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/02/16/actualidad/1392581657_890223.html
([2]) http://www.ecobservatorio.com/ecograf/e/emisiones_globales_por_comunidad_provincia
([3]) Directiva 2010/31/UE relativa a la eficiencia energética de los edificios.

4. Aumentar la eficiencia energética de los edificios da lugar a importantes beneficios, como son paliar la escasez de combustible y reducir las emisiones de CO_2. Para lograr estos objetivos, la eficiencia energética es una de las prioridades de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión europeos, que han reservado más de 23 000 millones de euros a inversiones hipocarbónicas. Además, el BEI ha colocado la eficiencia energética entre sus prioridades de inversión y está desarrollando su iniciativa «*Deep Green*», cofinanciada en el marco del programa LIFE+, para proporcionar garantías de la UE a las inversiones en eficiencia energética financiadas por bancos minoristas.

Los Estados miembros deben aplicar antes del 30 de abril de 2014 las estrategias de inversión para la renovación de edificios, en consonancia con el artículo 4 de la Directiva sobre eficiencia energética. Lo ideal sería que estas estrategias estuvieran estrechamente vinculadas a la financiación que está aportando la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002460/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Energy efficiency: rise in CO_2 emissions and energy poverty

Directive 2010/31/EU, of 19 May 2010, lays down policies and objectives in relation to the energy efficiency of buildings. Among these goals, it provides that new buildings constructed after 31 December 2020 must have nearly zero-energy consumption.

The results of a report by Certicalia, a network of professional people working in the field of energy certification in Spain, have recently been published. This report states that almost 90% of Spanish homes waste energy ([1]). The survey also shows the CO_2 emissions produced by the consumption of energy in Spanish buildings in the various different provinces of Spain, according to data obtained from their energy certificates ([2]). The CO_2 emissions from a building are those that are produced in order to generate the necessary energy to meet the needs of heating, refrigeration and hot water for washing. Spain is clearly going down a road that is diverging from the goals set by the EU in terms of energy efficiency in buildings. This is causing CO_2 emissions to rise, which in turn produces greater climate change, and is turning Spain away from the EU 2020 objectives.

Lower energy efficiency in buildings also tends to produce an increase in the number of families who find themselves in situations of energy poverty. In February 2011, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) approved an opinion entitled 'Energy poverty in the context of liberalisation and the economic crisis', which proposed that energy poverty should be taken into account when any initiative of energy policy is being prepared. It also stated that improving energy efficiency in construction is a key factor in dealing with energy poverty.

1. Was the Commission aware of this divergence?

2. Will it take this divergence into account when making its specific recommendations to the Spanish Government in the course of the European Semester?

3. Does the Commission consider that Spain is in breach of the aforementioned Directive on the energy efficiency of buildings?

4. Will the Commission promote the setting up of an action plan against energy poverty, based on an investment plan together with the European Investment Bank (through its 'project bonds') for building refurbishment in order to reduce energy poverty and CO_2 emissions?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the large energy saving potential in Spanish homes. To tap this potential, Spain must adequately transpose Directive 2010/31/EU ([3]) and implement its requirements for existing and new buildings. The Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) includes additional buildings efficiency measures and must be transposed into national law by 5 June 2014.

2. The advancement of Spain towards its energy efficiency objectives and the role that buildings can play will be part of the European Semester analysis.

3. Spain notified to the Commission further measures transposing Directive 2010/31/EU in May, September and November 2013. These notifications allowed the recent closure of an infringement procedure against Spain for non-communication of transposition measures. The Commission is currently assessing whether the national legislation correctly transposes all the obligations under this directive.

4. There are important benefits from making buildings more energy efficient including fuel poverty alleviation and reduction of CO_2 emissions. To meet these ends, energy efficiency is one of the priorities of the European Structural and Investment Funds with at least EUR 23 billion ring-fenced for low-carbon investments. Further, the EIB has energy efficiency among its investment priorities and is developing its 'Deep Green' Facility, co-financed under the LIFE+ programme, to provide EU guarantees for energy efficiency investments financed by retail banks.

Member States need to establish by 30 April 2014 investment strategies for buildings renovation in line with Article 4 of the Energy Efficiency Directive. Ideally, these strategies will be closely linked to funds being made available by the EU.

([1]) http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/02/16/actualidad/1392581657_890223.html
([2]) http://www.ecobservatorio.com/ecograf/e/emisiones_globales_por_comunidad_provincia
([3]) Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002461/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Dependencia energética en España, eficiencia energética y energías renovables

En la actualidad, el grado de dependencia energética de España con respecto al exterior es superior al 80 %, frente a una media europea del 54 %, aproximadamente ([1]). La energía es uno de los motores de la economía en los países industrializados y la base de cualquier actividad económica por lo que un grado elevado de dependencia del exterior disminuye la competitividad. Algunas de las estratégicas para reducir esta dependencia energética son el aumento de la eficiencia energética y la apuesta en favor de las energías renovables.

La Directiva 2010/31/UE del 19 de mayo de 2010 establece criterios y políticas en relación con la eficiencia energética de los edificios. Entre otros objetivos, se establece que los edificios nuevos que se construyan a partir del 31 de diciembre de 2020 tendrán un consumo de energía casi nulo. En este contexto, cabe señalar que recientemente se han publicado los resultados de un informe de Certicalia (una red de profesionales en materia de certificación energética en España), en el que se afirma que cerca del 90 % de las viviendas españolas derrochan energía ([2]). Este derroche supone un consumo excesivo de energía que hace aumentar la dependencia energética de España que, en consecuencia, reduce su competitividad en el mercado.

Los Estados miembros de la UE se han fijado como objetivo que el 20 % de la producción energética provenga de energías renovables en el horizonte del año 2020 (Directiva 2009/28/CE sobre las energías renovables). España es rica en recursos renovables, ya que goza de casi el doble de horas de sol que Alemania, y es pionera en energía eólica. Aun así, la última reforma energética aprobada por el Gobierno español defiende y mantiene las energías sucias y ataca a las energías renovables. La apuesta en favor de las energías renovables permitirá a España alcanzar un mayor grado de autonomía en términos energéticos y garantizaría así una mayor estabilidad de su economía.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que España debe conceder la prioridad a una política energética que persiga una mayor autonomía energética basada en la eficiencia energética y las energías renovables y que garantice una mayor estabilidad a su economía?

2. ¿Fomentará la Comisión un plan de inversiones, junto el Banco Europeo de Inversiones (a través del Project Bond), para rehabilitar edificios y aumentar así la eficiencia energética de los edificios en España?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que España debería apostar por las energías renovables para reducir su grado de dependencia energética con respecto al exterior y cumplir con los objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020 en relación a las energías renovables?

Respuesta del S. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de abril de 2014)

1. Los objetivos en material de eficiencia energética y energías renovables constituyen una pieza angular de la política energética de la UE. Perseguir estos objetivos a nivel nacional equivale a reforzar la seguridad energética y la competitividad.

Es necesario intensificar el empeño por dar cumplimiento a las exigencias de la Directiva 2010/31/UE, a saber, la obtención de edificios con un consumo de energía casi nulo y que cubran en gran parte sus bajas necesidades de energía a través de fuentes renovables. Otro importante potencial de ahorro energético es el que se obtendría impulsando la transformación de edificios para convertirlos en consumidores casi nulos de energía

2. El marco financiero plurianual 2014-2020 brinda grandes oportunidades a la renovación de edificios. La eficiencia energética es una prioridad (objetivo temático 4) de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos; una dotación de 23 000 millones EUR está específicamente destinada a inversiones en proyectos de reducción del carbono de toda la UE. Los instrumentos financieros que se alimentan de estas dotaciones pueden estar cofinanciados por el BEI.

Por otro lado, el BEI considera la eficiencia energética una de sus prioridades de inversión; en la actualidad está desarrollando el mecanismo «Deep Green» (verde intenso), cofinanciado por el programa LIFE+ y destinado a conceder garantías para inversiones en eficiencia energética financiadas por bancos minoristas.

([1]) http://www.ecoserveis.net/es/crisis-economica-y-dependencia-energetica/#.UxR384XHsxg
([2]) http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/02/16/actualidad/1392581657_890223.html

Finalmente, para el 30 de abril de 2014 los Estados miembros deben establecer estrategias de inversión para la renovación de edificios, como establece el artículo 4 de la Directiva de eficiencia energética (2012/27/UE). Estas estrategias deben concordar estrechamente con los fondos los proporcionados por la UE.

3. La promoción de las energías renovables es una de las medidas esenciales para aumentar la seguridad de abastecimiento. De acuerdo con los datos de Eurostat, el porcentaje de energías renovables de España en 2012 era del 14,3 %, por encima del objetivo intermedio del 11 % fijado para 2011-2012 por la Directiva 2009/28/CE. España debe, por lo tanto, procurar que esta tendencia se mantenga.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002461/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Energy dependency in Spain, energy efficiency and renewable energy

At present, the level of Spain's dependency on external energy sources is over 80%, while the European average is around 54% ([1]). Energy is one of the motors that drive the economy in industrialised countries and the basis of any economic activity, and a high level of dependency on external sources therefore reduces competitiveness. Among the strategies available to lower such energy dependency are increasing energy efficiency and fomenting renewable energy sources.

Directive 2010/31/EU of 19 May 2010 lays down policies and objectives in relation to the energy efficiency of buildings. Among these goals, it provides that new buildings constructed after 31 December 2020 shall have nearly zero-energy consumption. In this context, it is worth pointing out that the results of a report by Certicalia (a network of professional people working in the field of energy certification in Spain) have recently been published. This report states that almost 90% of Spanish homes waste energy ([2]). Such a waste of energy means excessive consumption, which in turn causes greater energy dependency by Spain and thus weaker competitiveness on the market.

The Member States of the EU have set themselves a goal to achieve 20% of energy production from renewable energy sources by the year 2020 (Directive 2009/28/EC on renewable energy). Spain is rich in renewable energy resources, as it enjoys almost twice as many hours of sun as Germany and is also a pioneer in wind power. However, the latest energy reform passed by the Spanish Government maintains and defends dirty energy sources while attacking renewable ones. Favouring renewable energy would allow Spain to achieve a greater degree of autonomy in energy terms and thus guarantee greater stability in its economy.

1. Does the Commission consider that Spain ought to prioritise an energy policy that pursues greater autonomy in energy, based on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, and ensures greater economic stability?

2. Will the Commission foment an investment plan, along with the European Investment Bank (through the Project Bond), for building refurbishment to increase the energy efficiency of buildings in Spain?

3. Does the Commission consider that Spain ought to promote renewable energy production in order to reduce its level of external energy dependency and thus comply with the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy with respect to renewable energy?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2014)

1. Energy efficiency and renewable energy objectives are at the core of the EU energy policy. Pursuing these goals at national level contributes to energy security and competitiveness.

Efforts need to be stepped up to meet the requirements of Directive 2010/31/EU for nearly zero-energy buildings, largely covering their very low energy demand by renewable energy sources. Moreover, a significant energy saving potential can be tapped by stimulating the transformation of buildings that are refurbished into nearly zero-energy buildings.

2. The Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020 brings many opportunities for building renovation. Energy efficiency is a priority (Thematic Objective 4) of the European Structural and Investment Funds, with at least EUR 23 billion ring-fenced for low-carbon investments across the EU. The Financial instruments using these allocations may be co-financed by the EIB.

Further, the EIB has energy efficiency among its investment priorities and is developing the 'Deep Green' Facility, co-financed under the LIFE+ programme, to provide EU guarantees for energy efficiency investments financed by retail banks.

Lastly, Member States have to establish investment strategies for building renovation by 30 April 2014 in line with Article 4 of the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU). These strategies should connect closely with funds being made available by the EU.

3. Promoting renewable energy is one of the key measures for increasing security of supply. According to Eurostat data, Spain renewable energy share was 14.3% in 2012, above the interim target for 2011-2012 of 11% set in Directive 2009/28/EC on renewable energy. Spain should therefore ensure that this trajectory is maintained.

([1]) http://www.ecoserveis.net/es/crisis-economica-y-dependencia-energetica/#.UxR384XHsxg
([2]) http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2014/02/16/actualidad/1392581657_890223.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002462/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Cumbre UE-Brasil

El pasado 24 de febrero se celebró en Bruselas la VII Cumbre Unión Europea-Brasil.

En este contexto:

¿Qué impresiones tiene el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior, tras la celebración de esta reunión, de las relaciones entre ambas regiones?

¿Cuál es la valoración que hace el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior tras esta reunión?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

La Cumbre de este año con Brasil fue un paso importante en la consolidación de las relaciones entre la UE y Brasil antes de las elecciones en ambas partes. Hubo un buen debate sobre temas económicos y la presidenta Rousseff expresó su apoyo al euro. También expresó su opinión de que la economía brasileña atravesaba un buen momento y de que era muy interesante para los inversores europeos. Asimismo, defendió su política fiscal en la zona de libre comercio de Manaos, que la UE considera incompatible con las normas de la OMC. En política exterior, Brasil advirtió contra la intervención extranjera en las crisis africanas. La presidente brasileña elogió el proceso de integración de la CELAC y se mostró moderadamente optimista sobre el proceso de transición en Cuba y el posible el diálogo para una solución menos conflictiva de la división política en Venezuela.

Los dirigentes adoptaron una declaración conjunta de la cumbre que contempla muchos otros ámbitos de cooperación entre las dos partes. La declaración anuncia un nuevo diálogo sobre las políticas de ciberseguridad y acoge positivamente el mantenimiento del diálogo y la cooperación en materia de seguridad y no proliferación, así como de lucha contra el tráfico de drogas y la delincuencia internacional. Asimismo, aboga por la rápida celebración del acuerdo de transporte aéreo, que se negocia desde hace años, y se congratula de la fructífera cooperación en áreas tales como la ciencia y la tecnología, la educación, las energías renovables, los derechos humanos, el programa para después de 2015, el cambio climático y el desarrollo sostenible.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002462/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU-Brazil summit

On 24 February last the 7th European Union — Brazil summit was held in Brussels.

In this context:

What are the views of the European External Action Service, following this meeting, regarding the relations between the two regions?

What is the European External Action Service's assessment following this meeting?

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

This year's Summit with Brazil was an important step in further strengthening EU-Brazil relations ahead of elections on both sides. There was a good discussion on economic topics, with President Rousseff expressing support for the euro. She also believed that the Brazilian economy was in good shape and very interesting for European investors. She defended her tax policy on the Manaus free trade zone, which the EU perceives as incompatible with WTO rules. On foreign policy, Brazil expressed caution on foreign intervention on African crises. The Brazilian President praised the CELAC integration process and was modestly optimistic about the transition process in Cuba and possible dialogue for a less conflictive solution of the political divide in Venezuela.

Leaders adopted a joint summit declaration that included many further areas of cooperation between the two parties. The declaration announced the introduction of a new dialogue on cyber policies. It welcomed the continuation of the dialogues and cooperation on non-proliferation and security issues, and the fight against drug trafficking and international crime. It also called on the rapid conclusion of the aviation agreement that has been under discussion for a number of years and welcomes the fruitful cooperation in areas such as science and technology, education, renewable energy, human rights, post 2015 agenda, climate change and sustainable development.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002463/14
to the Commission
Baroness Sarah Ludford (ALDE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Laundering of money from Ukraine in European banks

There are widespread suspicions that leading political and business figures in Ukraine have transferred huge assets under their control to EU banks through corrupt and illegal activities. Ukraine's new Prime Minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, claimed on 27 February 2014 that up to USD 70 billion had been taken out of Ukraine's financial system and put into offshore accounts. Some media reports have published names, dates and documents detailing these allegations.

In its resolution of 5 February 2014 on the EU institutions and Member States, Parliament called on the Council 'to step up efforts to stop money laundering and tax evasion by Ukrainian companies and business people in European banks'. In its resolution of 27 February 2014, Parliament welcomed the imposition of an EU asset freeze (as well as a visa ban) 'directed against those responsible for human rights violations, violence and the use of excessive force' and called on the EU to assist the Ukrainian Government with its efforts to 'make the fight against corruption a top priority in its programme'.

The new directive on the freezing and confiscation of the proceeds of crime in the EU, of which the agreed text was recently approved by Parliament, also signals a renewed determination to tackle illicit enrichment.

Can the Commission outline what action it and Member States are taking to investigate alleged money laundering by Ukrainian persons in the EU and to freeze and confiscate illegally held assets?

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

In March 2014, the Council adopted sanctions against 18 Ukrainian persons identified as responsible for the misappropriation of Ukrainian State funds ([1]); on 14 April four persons were added. Member States need to ensure that all assets concerned are frozen, and made unavailable to the listed persons, while the Commission ensures that Member States implement the measures properly and in a timely manner.

Suspicious transactions pursuant to the 3rd Anti-Money Laundering Directive ([2]) and national implementing laws need to be reported to financial intelligence units (FIUs). Enhanced customer due diligence is required for third-country nationals who are or have been entrusted with prominent public functions ('Politically Exposed Persons'). The FIUs analyse these reports and transmit files to law enforcement agencies for further investigation and prosecution, thus indirectly contributing to the implementation of the sanctions. The Commission supports collaboration between EU FIUs, e.g. through regular meetings and the financing of FIU.Net, a decentralised platform for operational cooperation.

The proceeds of crime can also be frozen and confiscated after a criminal investigation or court procedure against Ukrainian nationals (initiated in Ukraine or in a Member State). The EU adopted in March a directive on the freezing and confiscation of the proceeds of crime ([3]) which intends to facilitate such procedures. The Asset Recovery Offices in the Member States ensure EU-wide cooperation in tracing criminal assets in view of confiscation. The Commission supports this cooperation through regular meetings between these Offices ('ARO Platform').

([1]) Council Decision 2014/119/CFSP of 5 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine; OJ L 66, 6.3.2014, p. 26-30.
Council Regulation (EU) No 208/2014 of 5 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Ukraine; OJ L 66, 6.3.2014, p. 1-10.

([2]) Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing; OJ L 309, 25.11.2005, p. 15-36.

([3]) Not yet published.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002464/14
à la Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(4 mars 2014)

Objet: Médiatisation du sport féminin

Considérant que l'article 3 du traité sur l'Union européenne affirme que l'Union «combat l'exclusion sociale et les discriminations, et promeut la justice et la protection sociales, l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, la solidarité entre les générations et la protection des droits de l'enfant»;

Considérant que l'article 8 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne dispose que «pour toutes ses actions, l'Union cherche à éliminer les inégalités, et à promouvoir l'égalité, entre les hommes et les femmes»;

Considérant l'article 165 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, qui donne compétence à l'Union pour «développer la dimension européenne du sport, en promouvant l'équité et l'ouverture dans les compétitions sportives»;

Considérant le nouveau chapitre sport du programme de financement européen Erasmus+;

Considérant la «feuille de route pour l'égalité des sexes dans le sport» lancée à l'initiative de Mme la commissaire Androulla Vassiliou;

Considérant la directive européenne «Télévision sans frontières»;

Considérant la sous-médiatisation et la mal-médiatisation des évènements sportifs féminins en Europe;

1. La Commission dispose-t-elle à ce jour de données chiffrées tangibles à l'échelle européenne sur le traitement médiatique des évènements sportifs féminins?

2. Quels outils la Commission a-t-elle à sa disposition afin de promouvoir la diffusion d'évènements sportifs féminins?

3. De quels moyens juridiques et politiques la Commission dispose-t-elle afin d'inciter les États membres à inscrire davantage d'évènements sportifs féminins sur les listes nationales d'évènements sportifs d'importance majeure, conformément à la directive «Télévision sans frontières»?

Réponse donnée par Mme Kroes au nom de la Commission
(23 avril 2014)

Il ressort des conclusions de plusieurs études réalisées ces 20 dernières années que moins de 10 % du temps d'antenne et des articles de presse écrite sont consacrés au sport féminin. Selon le Projet mondial de monitorage des médias 2010, seuls 13 % des reportages relevant de la catégorie «Sports, manifestations sportives, équipement» traitaient des femmes, ces dernières n'étant le sujet principal que dans 7 % des cas.

La directive SMAV ([1]) établit les conditions cadres permettant aux États membres de veiller à ce que les organismes de radiodiffusion télévisuelle relevant de leur compétence ne retransmettent pas d'une manière exclusive des événements d'importance majeure pour la société d'une façon qui prive une partie importante du public de la possibilité de suivre ces événements. Chaque État membre est en droit d'établir une liste de ces événements, qui peuvent être nationaux ou autres, comme les Jeux olympiques, la coupe du monde de football ou le championnat d'Europe de football, ou consister en un événement culturel important. Il appartient dès lors à chaque État membre qui décide d'établir une telle liste de déterminer les événements qu'il considère comme d'importance majeure pour la société et de juger si cette liste doit comprendre des événements sportifs féminins. La Commission est chargée d'évaluer la compatibilité des mesures nationales avec le droit de l'UE et de demander l'avis du comité de contact en vertu de l'article 29 de la directive SMAV.

Pour garantir une couverture médiatique plus large, les instances dirigeantes du sport doivent nouer des partenariats solides et à long terme avec les organismes de radiodiffusion télévisée afin de mettre en place des événements sportifs féminins de haute qualité qui soient attrayants pour les médias. Les initiatives prises par les instances dirigeantes du sport dans ce domaine, notamment en ce qui concerne le rôle des médias dans la promotion de l'égalité hommes-femmes dans le sport, pourraient être soutenues dans le cadre d'«Erasmus +: Sport».

([1]) Directive «Services de médias audiovisuels» (2010/13/UE), et en particulier son article 14:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32010L0013&rid=2

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002464/14
to the Commission
Sophie Auconie (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Media coverage of women's sport

Bearing in mind:

Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, which affirms that the Union 'shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child';

Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which provides that 'in all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women';

Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which gives the Union responsibility for 'developing the European dimension in sport, by promoting fairness and openness in sporting competitions';

the new chapter on sport from the European Erasmus+ financing programme;

the 'Roadmap on Gender Equality in Sport' launched on the initiative of Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou;

the European 'Television without Frontiers' Directive; and

the under-representation or misrepresentation in the media of women's sporting events in Europe;

1. Does the Commission currently have hard figures on a European scale regarding the representation in the media of women's sporting events?

2. What tools does the Commission have at its disposal for promoting the broadcasting of women's sporting events?

3. What legal and political means does the Commission have at its disposal for encouraging the Member States to include more women's sporting events on the national lists of sporting events of major importance in accordance with the 'Television without Frontiers' Directive?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2014)

Several studies from the past 20 years concluded that the proportion of airtime and space in written press referring to female sport was lower than 10%. According to the Global Media Monitoring Project 2010, women were subject of only 13% of 'Sport, events, players, facilities, training, policies, funding…' stories, and they were central to the story only in 7% of cases.

The AVMS Directive ([1]) lays down framework conditions to enable Member States to ensure that broadcasters under their jurisdiction do not broadcast on an exclusive basis events of major importance for society in such a way as to deprive a substantial proportion of the public of the possibility of following such events. Each Member State is entitled to draw up a list of such events. The events concerned may be national or other, such as for example the Olympic Games, the Football World Cup or the European Football Championship, or an important cultural event. Which events are considered as being of major importance for society and whether they include or not women's sporting events is therefore a matter to be decided by each Member State who chooses to draw up such a list. The Commission is tasked with assessing the compatibility of the national measures with EC law and with seeking the opinion of the Contact Committee pursuant to Art 29 AVMSD.

To ensure increased media coverage, sports governing bodies need to build strong and long-term partnerships with broadcasters in order to create high-quality women's sporting events attractive for the media. Through 'Erasmus+: Sport' initiatives of sport governing bodies in this field, including the role of the media to promote gender equality in sport, could be supported.

([1]) Directive 2010/13/EU 'Audiovisual Media Services Directive', in particular Article 14:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002465/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Fenomeni di dumping nel settore cunicolo italiano

L'associazione degli allevatori cunicoli italiani, Anlac, lamenta distorsioni nel mercato europeo delle carni macellate. Secondo l'associazione in Francia, Ungheria e Spagna, in questo momento, i conigli vivi valgono molto di più di quelli italiani; al contrario, e paradossalmente, quelli macellati valgono molto meno. Questa contraddizione alimenta comportamenti scorretti nel commercio internazionale di carne macellata (dumping), che i macellatori-grossisti italiani sinora non hanno contrastato, e tende ad abbassare artificialmente le quotazioni del vivo sulle piazze italiane. I dati statistici confermano che l'Italia importa dalla Francia la maggior quota di carni cunicole europee (55 %): durante il 2013 dalla Francia sono arrivati quasi 15 000 quintali di conigli macellati, con un incremento del 22 % rispetto al 2012. La restante quota di importazioni è coperta da Ungheria (26 %) e Spagna (16 %).

Dato l'elevato livello di autoapprovvigionamento del mercato italiano, l'aumento progressivo dell'import rappresenterebbe piuttosto un espediente funzionale a calmierare i prezzi del mercato italiano e non la risposta alla necessità di colmare la crisi di offerta dovuta alla chiusura degli allevamenti italiani; il tutto a fronte di consumi in flessione del -2 % nel 2013. Secondo l'associazione di tutela degli allevatori, il surplus di conigli macellati francesi verrebbe immesso in commercio in Italia ad un prezzo inferiore al valore normale del prodotto praticato all'interno della stessa Francia; tale fenomeno, che si ripete ciclicamente da aprile ad agosto di ogni anno, quest'anno è iniziato a febbraio, in concomitanza dei ribassi eccessivi sulla piazza di Verona, e delinea una discriminazione internazionale dei prezzi che non tiene conto delle perdite dei produttori italiani, tende a favorire pratiche di monopolio e altera la struttura del commercio tra Stati europei. Considerato che non ci risulta che lo Stato italiano abbia effettuato alcuna notifica volontaria, chiediamo alla Commissione europea di verificare:

— se l' immissione in commercio in Italia di carni cunicole provenienti dalla Francia ad un prezzo inferiore al valore normale del prodotto praticato all'interno della stessa Francia delinei una discriminazione internazionale dei prezzi tesa ad alterare la struttura del commercio tra Stati europei;

— se la Francia stia finanziando, attraverso aiuti di Stato incompatibili con le regole dell'UE, prezzi di dumping a favore delle proprie imprese.

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta fornita all'interrogazione scritta P-002643/14 presentata dall'on. Mazzoni ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002465/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Dumping in the Italian rabbit meat sector

The Association of Italian Rabbit Breeders, ANLAC, is complaining of distortions on the European slaughtered meat market. According to the association, live rabbits are currently worth far more in France, Hungary and Spain than Italian rabbits. However, slaughtered meat is, paradoxically, worth far less. This contradiction is fuelling improper behaviour in the international slaughtered meat trade (dumping), to which Italian wholesaler butchers have not yet objected, and artificially pushing down the price of live rabbits on the Italian market. Statistics confirm that Italy is importing the biggest quota of European rabbit meat (55%) from France: in 2013, almost 15 000 quintals of slaughtered rabbits arrived from France, an increase of 22% compared with 2012. The remaining import quota was covered by Hungary (26%) and Spain (16%).

Given the high level of self-sufficiency on the Italian market, the progressive rise in imports should be viewed as a functional expedient to control prices on the Italian market, rather than a response to the need to remedy the crisis in supply brought about by the closure of Italian breeding farms, accompanied by a drop in consumption of -2% in 2013. According to the Association of Italian Rabbit Breeders, the French slaughtered meat surplus is being introduced to the market in Italy at a price below the normal value of the product charged in France. This phenomenon, repeated cyclically from April to August each year, began in February this year, in parallel with excessive falls on the Verona market, and constitutes international price discrimination which disregards losses sustained by Italian producers, encourages monopoly practices and alters the structure of trade between European Member States. In view of the fact that Italy does not appear to have made a voluntary notification, can the European Commission clarify whether:

— the introduction of rabbit meat of French origin to the Italian market at a price below the normal value of the product charged in France constitutes international price discrimination designed to alter the structure of trade among European Member States?

— France is, through state aid incompatible with EU regulations, financing dumping prices in favour of its own companies?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-002643/14 by Ms Mazzoni ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002466/14
to the Commission
Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Keeping of wild animals

Directive 1999/22/EC, relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos, requires all licensed zoos to provide proper care for animals and to maintain a high standard of animal husbandry.

A horrifying news story emerged recently regarding a healthy giraffe which was killed in Copenhagen Zoo without any intervention by the Danish authorities.

1. Are zoos permitted to kill any animal under their care without good reason? Can zoos in all countries decide whether their animals live or die?

2. Could the Commission confirm that 'wild animals in captivity' will be included in the scope of the proposed European Animal Welfare Framework Law?

3. Could the Commission confirm that the EU Zoo Guidance Document, which I understand is soon to be completed, includes the recommendation that euthanasia of animals in zoos should only be exercised when an animal is suffering from an incurable disease or severe pain which cannot be alleviated?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint response to written questions E-001351/2014 and E-001471/2014 ([1]).

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to it its response to Written Question E-2124/2014 ([2]).

Although it falls to Member States to ensure that the breeding methods chosen for animals in zoos are consistent with the conservation of the species, the Commission is working on an 'EU Zoos Directive Guidance and Good Practice Document', which aims to provide guidelines in support of the implementation of the Zoos Directive (Directive 1999/22/EC ([3])) and promote good practices, based on experiences in different Member States.

The Commission has undertaken extensive consultation with key stakeholder groups in preparing these guidelines. The general view was that euthanasia should be a measure of last resort.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) OJ L 94, 9.4.1999.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002467/14
aan de Commissie
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(4 maart 2014)

Betreft: Vervroegde uittreding van EU-ambtenaren

Hoeveel ambtenaren van de Commissie in vaste dienst — van welke nationaliteit en op welke leeftijd — hebben gebruik gemaakt van een vervroegde pensioenregeling in verband met de toetreding van Kroatië.

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(28 maart 2014)

Er is geen regeling voor vervroegde uitdiensttreding in verband met de toetreding van Kroatië. Om die reden is er ook geen ambtenaar in vaste dienst die heeft gebruikgemaakt van een dergelijke pensioenregeling.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002467/14
to the Commission
Derk Jan Eppink (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Early retirement of EU officials

How many established Commission officials — of what nationality and what age — have taken advantage of an early retirement scheme in connection with the accession of Croatia?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

There has been no early retirement scheme in connection with accession of Croatia. Therefore, no official has taken advantage of such retirement scheme.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-002468/14
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Równy dostęp do programu „Erasmus+”

W styczniu 2014 r. programy „Uczenie się przez całe życie”, a także „Młodzież w działaniu” zostały zastąpione przez program „Erasmus+”, który będzie obowiązywać do 2020 r.

Program „Erasmus+”, z jeszcze większym budżetem niż dotychczas, daje większe możliwości mobilności oraz poszerza ofertę kształcenia dla obywateli UE. Niestety dostępność do programu nie jest zapewniona w równym stopniu obywatelom Unii. Przewodnik po programie został opublikowany przez Komisję jedynie w języku angielskim. Co równie ważne, ostateczny termin składania wniosków do „Akcji I – mobilność edukacyjna” mija 17 marca 2014 r., a większość formularzy i przewodnik po programie „Erasmus+” znajdują się tylko i wyłącznie w języku angielskim.

Niezbędne jest podkreślenie, że brak odpowiednich tłumaczeń powoduje dyskryminację studentów z krajów nieanglojęzycznych. Zgodnie z art. 21 ust. 1 Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej zakazana jest jakakolwiek forma dyskryminacji ze względu na społeczność, czy narodowość obywatela UE. W świetle braku odpowiednich dokumentów w językach narodowych stawia się w uprzywilejowanej pozycji studentów z Wielkiej Brytanii czy Irlandii, co godzi w równość obywateli UE.

Pragnę zaznaczyć, że niepełne tłumaczenie informacji odnoszących się do programu „Erasmus+” dotyczy nie tylko przewodnika, ale zarówno sytemu on-line, oraz – co tym bardziej bulwersujące – dokumentów akredytacyjnych, których złożenie jest niezbędne, by student bądź członek danej organizacji mógł skorzystać z programu, tzn. by mógł podejść do procesu rekrutacyjnego. Obawiam się, że takie niedogodności spowodują nikłe zainteresowanie programem.

W związku z powyższymi kwestiami kieruję zapytania do Komisji odnośnie do zmiany sytuacji.

Kiedy możemy spodziewać się przewodnika oraz innych brakujących dokumentów w językach narodowych? Wobec powyżej opisanej sytuacji, czy możliwe jest wydłużenie terminów składania wniosków bądź inna forma rekompensaty potencjalnym (dyskryminowanym) uczestnikom programu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Androullę Vassiliou w imieniu Komisji
(28 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią udzieloną na pytania wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie o numerach: E-000509/2014; E-000550/2014; P-000721/2014; E-000916/2014; E-0001532/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002468/14
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Equal access to the Erasmus+ programme

In January 2014 the Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action programmes were replaced by the Erasmus+ programme, which is to run until 2020.

The Erasmus+ programme, which has a larger budget than before, will broaden the range of mobility, learning and training opportunities available to EU citizens. As things stand, however, not all EU citizens have the same access to the programme, as the bulk of the documentation published by the Commission is available in English only. Despite the closeness of the deadline for applications for Key Action 1: Learning mobility for individuals (17 March 2014), most of the forms, and the guide to the Erasmus+ programme as a whole, are still available in English only.

The failure to provide other language versions places students from non-English-speaking countries at a disadvantage. Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights prohibits all discrimination between EU citizens on grounds of nationality or origin. The failure to publish other language versions of the Erasmus+ documentation therefore flies in the face of the principle that all EU citizens have the same rights, as it gives students from the UK and Ireland an advantage over students from other Member States.

What is more, the website is also in English only, as — more deplorably still — are the accreditation forms that students and organisations wishing to take part in the programme must submit in order to be able to move on to the enrolment stage. This situation could well result in there being a general lack of interest in the programme.

When will the other language versions of the above documents be made available? Until such time as they are, would it be possible to extend the deadline for applications or make other arrangements to ensure that no potential applicants are discriminated against?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-000509/2014; E-000550/2014; P-000721/2014; E-000916/2014; E-0001532/2014 ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-002469/14
do Komisji
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Afrykański pomór świń – pomoc dla poszkodowanych rolników

Jak wiemy, w ostatnim czasie wykryto kilka przypadków afrykańskiego pomoru świń (ASF) u padłych dzików na terytorium Litwy oraz Polski. Kilkanaście dni temu pierwsze ognisko ASF u padłego dzika w Polsce zidentyfikowano 900 m od granicy z Białorusią. W wyniku tych zdarzeń Rosja i niektóre kraje trzecie wprowadziły restrykcje importowe dla unijnej wieprzowiny. Działania podejmowane przez stronę rosyjską są całkowicie niezrozumiałe i nieproporcjonalne. Mam nadzieję, że prowadzone przez KE rozmowy z Moskwą doprowadzą do szybkiego odblokowania handlu.

Należy zdać sobie sprawę, że ryzyko rozprzestrzenienia się tej choroby na kolejne regiony UE jest bardzo wysokie, podobnie jak groźba przeniesienia tej choroby na świnie. Na rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce doszło do poważnych zakłóceń. Obserwujemy coraz większe spadki cen żywca wieprzowego i utratę zaufania konsumentów, mimo że ASF nie jest groźny dla zdrowia ludzi. Producenci trzody chlewnej w Polsce zaczynają się borykać z poważnymi problemami finansowymi.

W związku z zaistniałą sytuacją i bardzo niekorzystnymi perspektywami dla tego rynku chciałbym uprzejmie prosić o podjęcie przez KE natychmiastowych działań w celu poprawy sytuacji i ograniczenie strat ponoszonych przez rolników.

Czy Komisja w trybie pilnym uruchomi nadzwyczajne środki wsparcia rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce dla rolników z tzw. obszaru zapowietrzonego i zagrożonego oraz innych regionów mojego kraju dostępne w ramach przyjętego niedawno rozporządzenia PE i Rady (UE) nr 1308/2013 ustanawiającego wspólną organizację rynków produktów rolnych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(31 marca 2014 r.)

W wyniku wykrycia kilku przypadków afrykańskiego pomoru świń u dzików na Litwie i w Polsce Rosja wprowadziła ograniczenia dotyczące przywozu unijnej wieprzowiny, zaś inne państwa trzecie także podjęły środki skierowane przeciwko dotkniętym państwom członkowskim, co spowodowało presję na rynku mięsa wieprzowego. Ceny spadły w ciągu roku, podczas gdy normalnie występuje sezonowy wzrost. Polska jest szczególnie dotknięta tym problemem, zwłaszcza w regionach podlegających ograniczeniom.

Na podstawie wniosku złożonego przez Polskę i po wydaniu pozytywnej opinii przez Komitet ds. Wspólnej Organizacji Rynków Rolnych w dniu 21 marca 2014 r. przyjęto rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji przyjmujące nadzwyczajne środki wspierania rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce ([1]).

([1]) http://old.eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:095:SOM:EN:HTML

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002469/14
to the Commission
Czesław Adam Siekierski (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: African swine fever — assistance for farmers

African swine fever (ASF) has recently been identified in a number of dead wild boar in Lithuania and Poland. A couple of weeks ago Poland's first case of ASF in a dead wild boar was identified 900 metres from the border with Belarus. As a result, Russia and a number of other non-EU countries have introduced import restrictions for EU pork. Russia's actions are completely unreasonable and out of proportion. I hope that the Commission's talks with Moscow will result in this trade embargo being lifted very soon.

The risk of the disease spreading to other parts of the EU is very high, as is the threat of it spreading to pigs. There has been serious disruption to Poland's pork market. Pig livestock prices are in freefall, and consumer trust is being lost, despite the fact that ASF poses no threat to human health. Pig farmers in Poland are starting to experience serious financial difficulties.

Given the current situation and the bleak outlook for the market, I should like to ask the Commission to take immediate action with a view to improving the situation and limiting the losses suffered by farmers.

Will the Commission be taking urgent action to mobilise exceptional support measures for Poland's pork market to help farmers in the 'protection and risk' area and other areas in Poland in line with recently adopted Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

Following the occurrence of several cases of African Swine Fever in wild boars in Lithuania and Poland, the Russian import restrictions against EU pig meat, together with measures taken by other third countries against the affected Members states, have put the pig meat market under pressure. Prices declined during a period of the year when normally there is a seasonal increase. Poland is particularly affected, especially the regions under restriction.

Based on a request from Poland and after a favourable opinion of the Committee for the Common Organisation of the Agricultural Markets on 21 March 2014 a Commission Implementing Regulation adopting exceptional support measures for the pigmeat market in Poland was adopted [1].

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[1] http://old.eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:095:SOM:EN:HTML

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002470/14
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: African swine fever

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious disease in pigs. In recent months the disease has spread from Russia to Ukraine and Belarus, and has now been carried by wild boar into Lithuania and Poland. EU pig farmers are worried that it could enter other Member States, as the ASF virus can survive for many weeks on objects such as vehicles, equipment and clothing.

Moreover, the EU's main export destination for pig meat — Russia — has blocked EU pig meat imports. This has created a surplus of pig meat on the internal market and has driven the EU price down. Farmers are very concerned that if the disease is not contained quickly it will have a negative impact on their businesses. They are also worried that other significant trade partners could follow Russia's example and introduce a ban on EU imports.

What actions is the Commission taking to prevent the further spread of the disease and to help the affected Member States with its swift eradication?

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

Following African swine fever (ASF) confirmation in wild boar in Lithuania and Poland, national control measures in accordance with the EU legislation on ASF control ([1]) were immediately applied.

The Commission swiftly adopted interim protection measures to avoid its further spread from the infected areas in Lithuania and Poland ([2]).

On 27 March 2014 the Commission adopted revised ASF control measures that consolidate existing national and EU measures into one legal act establishing sustainable risk mitigation measures modulated on the bases of the different levels of risk ([3]).

The Commission also deployed its Community Veterinary Emergency team for technical assistance to Lithuania and Poland; and allocated EUR 3.5 million to support the Member States at higher risk of ASF introduction, providing them with a financial contribution for the emergency measures implemented in 2014.

To compensate Polish farmers in areas under sanitary restriction ([4]) for income losses, the Commission adopted exceptional market support measures for Poland under Art. 220 of Regulation (EU) 1308/2013.

The Commission is fully engaged with EU trade partners to ensure they only apply risk-based restrictions on trade in live pigs and other pig commodities originating from the infected areas of the Member States affected by ASF, in line with the principle of the Sanitary and PhytoSanitary Agreement of the WTO.

On 8 April 2014 the Commission announced that since there seemed to be no solution forthcoming from the negotiations entered into with the Russia, the EU has decided to resort to the WTO's dispute settlement procedures by requesting formal consultations with Russia.

([1]) Council Directive 2002/60/EC of 27 June 2002 laying down specific provisions for the control of African swine fever and amending Directive 92/119/EEC as regards Teschen disease and African swine fever (OJ L 192, 20.7.2002, p. 27).

([2]) Commission Implementing Decision 2014/43/EU of 27 January 2014 concerning certain interim protective measures relating to African swine fever in Lithuania (OJ L 26, 29.1.2014, p. 44) and Commission Implementing Decision 2014/93/EU of 14 February 2014 concerning certain protective measures relating to African swine fever in Lithuania (OJ L 46, 18.2.2014, p. 20).

([3]) Commission Implementing Decision 2014/178/EU of 27 March 2014 concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States (OJ L 95, 29.3.2014, p. 47).

([4]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 324/2014 of 28 March 2014 adopting exceptional market support measures for the pigmeat market in Poland (OJ L 95, 29.3.2014, p. 24).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002471/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D) and David Martin (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Offshore helicopter safety in the EU

Can the Commission update Parliament on the actions it has taken concerning offshore helicopter safety in light of recent tragedies in the North Sea? Furthermore, what lessons can the EU learn from how Norway — where offshore helicopter safety appears to be far better than in the EU — operates in similar conditions?

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

For the purpose of ensuring the proper functioning and development of civil aviation safety at EU level, the Commission works together with the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). EASA, one of whose tasks is to develop legislation to maintain and improve civil aviation safety levels.

In the specific context of offshore helicopter operations EASA already has several on-going rulemaking activities. Some of these might lead to an amendment of existing requirements. In addition EASA issues so-called Airworthiness Directives when necessary for aircraft it certifies, including helicopters. These ensure the continued airworthiness of an aircraft type over time.

An analysis of accident rates do not demonstrate that operations in one area where EU aviation safety rules apply are safer or less safe than in another one. In the case mentioned by the Honourable Member, Norway applies the same safety rules as the EU in view of its participation in the activities of EASA under Article 66 of the regulation 216/2008 ([1]).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Council Directive 91/670/EEC, Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 and Directive 2004/36/EC, OJ L 79, 19.3.2008, p. 1-49.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002472/14
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Dyskryminacja na unijnym rynku pracy

Z dniem 1 maja 2009 r. zniesione zostały ograniczenia w dostępie do belgijskiego rynku pracy w stosunku do obywateli Polski oraz krajów, które przystąpiły do Unii Europejskiej w 2004 r.

Swobodny przepływ pracowników to jedna z podstawowych zasad UE – została ujęta w art. 45 Traktatu o funkcjonowaniu Unii Europejskiej. Obywatele UE mają prawo poszukiwać pracy w innym państwie członkowskim UE. Europejskie Służby Zatrudnienia EURES (European Employment Services), powołane przez Komisję Europejską w celu umożliwienia swobodnego przepływy pracowników na poziomie międzynarodowym, w rejonie Brukseli współpracują z agencją pracy Actiris.

Pracownicy agencji pracy Actiris odmawiają udzielania informacji w języku angielskim i mają zakaz posługiwania się nim na terenie agencji. Jest to zachowanie wysoko dyskryminujące dla osób, które nie posługują się ani językiem francuskim, ani flamandzkim, a są obywatelami UE. Celem Actiris jest udzielanie informacji i pomoc w aktywnym poszukiwaniu pracy, natomiast ten cel jest negowany poprzez odmowę komunikacji i udzielenia podstawowych informacji przez pracowników agencji.

Z licznych sygnałów otrzymywanych od moich rodaków przebywających w Belgii wnioskuję, iż w strukturach stworzonych w celu pomocy bezrobotnym może dochodzić do łamania zasad równego traktowania obywateli UE w kontekście rynku pracy. W związku z tym chciałbym zapytać, dlaczego Komisja dopuszcza dyskryminację obywateli UE w zakresie wolnego dostępu do rynku pracy? Czy Komisja zdaje sobie sprawę z takiej praktyki? Jakie działania podejmie Komisja w celu zweryfikowania tych praktyk i zaprzestania dyskryminacji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(29 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Fakt, że służby zatrudnienia danego państwa członkowskiego nie udzielają osobom szukającym pracy pochodzącym z innych państw członkowskich informacji w językach innych niż języki urzędowe tego państwa członkowskiego nie narusza przepisów UE w zakresie swobodnego przepływu pracowników ani nie jest przejawem dyskryminacji obywateli UE pochodzących z innych państw członkowskich.

Komisja jednocześnie przyznaje, że znajomość języka jest ogólnie jednym z czynników wpływających na mobilność transnarodową. Nieznajomość języków obcych może być postrzegana jako przeszkoda dla mobilności pracowników. Komisja z zadowoleniem przyjmuje zatem świadczenie usług tłumaczeniowych, dzięki czemu informacje są łatwo dostępne dla pracowników z innych państw członkowskich, co z kolei polepsza perspektywy ich integracji (por. odpowiedź na pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie E-000865/2014 ([1])).

Publiczne służby zatrudnienia wspierają mobilność pracowników w obrębie UE w ramach sieci EURES. Praktyki administracyjne w przedsiębiorstwie Actiris umożliwiają udzielenie pomocy obcokrajowcom, jeżeli nie posługują się oni językiem francuskim ani niderlandzkim. Jest to zgodne z Kartą EURES – wytycznymi, w których zachęca się takie służby do zapewnienia, aby doradcy EURES posługiwali się językiem angielskim, francuskim lub niemieckim. Jeżeli język angielski, francuski lub niemiecki jest podstawowym językiem roboczym doradcy EURES powinien on także posługiwać się w mowie i piśmie drugim językiem UE na dobrym poziomie. Język angielski nie jest zatem jedynym, ale jednym z trzech zalecanych języków, które należy znać.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002472/14
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Discrimination in the EU labour market

On 1 May 2009, the restrictions on access to the Belgian labour market for nationals of Poland and the other countries which joined the EU in 2004 were lifted.

Freedom of movement for workers is one of the fundamental principles of the EU — it was enshrined in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. EU citizens have the right to seek work in another EU country. In the Brussels region, EURES (European Employment Services), set up by the Commission to facilitate the free movement of workers at international level, works together with the Actiris employment agency.

Staff at Actiris refuse to provide information in English and are banned from using English on work premises. This is highly discriminatory against people who speak neither French nor Flemish but are EU citizens. Actiris's role is to provide help and information to people actively looking for work, but they cannot do this if the agency's staff refuse to communicate and provide basic information.

From what I have heard from many of my compatriots living in Belgium, the structures established to provide help to the unemployed may infringe the principles of equal treatment of EU citizens in the context of the labour market. Why does the Commission permit discrimination against EU citizens when it comes to free access to the labour market? Is the Commission aware of this practice? What steps will the Commission take to check on these practices and stop the discrimination?

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

The fact that the employment services of a Member State do not provide information to jobseekers from other Member States in languages other than the official languages of that Member State does not infringe EC law on free movement of workers nor does it constitute discrimination against EU citizens from other Member States

At the same time, the Commission acknowledges that language is one of the factors that influences transnational mobility in general and may be perceived as an obstacle to worker mobility. It therefore welcomes translation services to make information easily accessible to workers coming from other Member States and help to improve their prospects of integration (cf reply to Written Question E-000865/2014 ([1])).

Public employment services support intra-EU labour mobility within the framework of the EURES network. Actiris has established administrative practices to assist foreign speakers, in case they do not speak French or Dutch. This is in line with the EURES Charter, a guidance document that invites those services to ensure that EURES advisers speak English, French or German. If English, French or German is his/her primary working language, the EURES adviser should have a good oral and written knowledge of a second EU language. The use of English is, thus, one of the three recommended language skills, not the only one.

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002473/14
do Komisji
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Zła sytuacja polskich hodowców trzody chlewnej w związku z ustanowieniem w Polsce obszaru zakażenia afrykańskim pomorem świń

Na mocy decyzji Komisji Europejskiej nr 2014/100/UE z dnia 18 lutego 2014 r. wprowadzono w Polsce obszar zakażony afrykańskim pomorem świń, obejmujący kilkadziesiąt gmin w województwie podlaskim, mazowieckim i lubelskim. Według szacunków w gospodarstwach rolnych na tym obszarze znajduje się ok. 400 tys. świń, z czego ok. 40 tys. sztuk są to tuczniki do niezwłocznej sprzedaży.

Jednocześnie na skutek ustanowienia obszaru zakażenia w całej Polsce nastąpił głęboki kryzys na rynku trzody chlewnej i gwałtowny spadek cen do poziomu znacznie poniżej kosztów produkcji żywca wieprzowego.

Czy Komisja zamierza uruchomić jakieś środki na odszkodowania dla polskich rolników wynikające z niezawinionej przez nich sytuacji związanej z ustanowieniem obszaru zakażenia?

Czy rząd polski zwrócił się do Komisji z jakimś wnioskiem w tym zakresie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloșa w imieniu Komisji
(25 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Komisja pragnie zwrócić uwagę szanownego Pana Posła na odpowiedzi udzielone na pytania wymagające odpowiedzi na piśmie P-2469/2014 i P-2444/2014.

Na podstawie wniosku złożonego przez Polskę i po wydaniu pozytywnej opinii przez Komitet ds. Wspólnej Organizacji Rynków Rolnych w dniu 21 marca 2014 r. przyjęto rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji przyjmujące nadzwyczajne środki wspierania rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce ([1]).

([1]) Rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji (UE) nr 324/2014 z dnia 28 marca 2014 r. przyjmujące nadzwyczajne środki wspierania rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce, Dz.U. L 95 z 29.3.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002473/14
to the Commission
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Problems for Polish pig farmers resulting from the establishment of an African swine fever infected area in Poland

An African swine fever infected area has been established in Podlaskie, Mazowieckie and Lubelskie provinces in Poland, pursuant to Commission Decision 2014/100/EU of 18 February 2014. There are estimated to be some 400 000 pigs on the farms in that area, around 40 000 of which are fatteners ready for sale.

The establishment of this infected area has sparked off a major crisis throughout Poland's pig sector, with market prices falling well below production costs.

Does the Commission intend to make arrangements for Polish farmers to be compensated for the losses they have sustained — through no fault of their own — as a result of the situation brought about by the establishment of the infected area?

Has the Polish Government made any approaches to the Commission in this connection?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the replies given to the Written Questions P-2469/20014 and P-2444/2014.

Based on a request from Poland and after a favourable opinion of the Committee for the Common Organisation of the Agricultural Markets on 21 March 2014 a Commission Implementing Regulation adopting exceptional support measures for the pigmeat market in Poland was adopted ([1]).

([1]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 324/2014 of 28 March 2014 adopting exceptional support measures for the pigmeat market in Poland, OJ L 95, 29.3.2014.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002474/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(4 martie 2014)

Subiect: Agenda UE pentru drepturile copilului

Agenda UE pentru drepturile copilului a fost adoptată la 15 februarie 2011 și are în vedere ca fiecare politică UE cu repercusiuni asupra copiilor să respecte drepturile acestora. Aceasta definește principiile și obiectivele UE în domeniu și prezintă 11 acțiuni pe care Comisia le va întreprinde. Printre aceste acțiuni se află și revizuirea legislației UE de facilitare a recunoașterii și executării hotărârilor privind răspunderea părintească. În documentul privind situația actuală a punerii în aplicare a celor 11 acțiuni din data de 17 septembrie 2013 se menționează faptul că, la data respectivă, aplicarea Regulamentului (CE) nr. 2201/2003 era încă în curs de evaluare.

Poate preciza Comisia când va face publice rezultatele acestor evaluări și cum se anticipează că va fi revizuit acest Regulament astfel încât să asigure faptul că interesul copilului va fi primordial, iar hotărârile judecătorești vor fi recunoscute și executate cât mai repede cu putință?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(13 mai 2014)

Uniunea Europeană acordă o atenție prioritară drepturilor copilului, astfel cum sunt consacrate de articolul 24 din Carta drepturilor fundamentale. În acest sens, Regulamentul (CE) nr. 2201/2003 ([1]) („Regulamentul Bruxelles IIa”) prevede norme clare și uniforme în materie de jurisdicție, precum și recunoașterea și asigurarea punerii în aplicare a hotărârilor în chestiuni privind răspunderea parentală, inclusiv cu privire la drepturile de acces.

Comisia este în măsură să aducă la cunoștința stimatului deputat că a lansat un proces de revizuire a regulamentului și, într-o primă etapă, a adoptat un raport privind punerea efectivă în practică a regulamentului în cauză ([2]). În plus, pentru a putea efectua o analiză cuprinzătoare a preocupărilor identificate in raportul menționat, Comisia intenționează să inițieze o evaluare suplimentară a acestui domeniu de politică din perspectiva normelor existente, dar și a impactului acestora asupra cetățenilor, inclusiv în ceea ce privește procedura de recunoaștere și de asigurare a punerii în aplicare în statele membre. De asemenea, Comisia a lansat în paralel o consultare publică.

Pe baza evaluării și a răspunsurilor primite în cadrul consultării publice, Comisia va adopta măsurile corespunzătoare.

([1]) JO L 338, 23.12.2003, p.1.
([2]) COM (2014) 225 din 15 aprilie 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002474/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: EU Agenda for the rights of the child

The EU Agenda for the rights of the child, which was adopted on 15 February 2011, seeks to ensure that children's rights are respected in all the EU policies which affect them. The Agenda sets outs the EU's principles and objectives in this area and establishes 11 actions the Commission is to undertake. One of those actions is the revision of EU legislation to facilitate the recognition and enforcement of decisions on parental responsibility. The document of 17 September 2013 on the state of play of implementation of those 11 actions indicates that, on the date concerned, the application of Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 was still under evaluation.

Can the Commission specify when it will publish the results of these evaluations and how it anticipates that the regulation will be revised to ensure that the interests of the child are the top priority, and that judicial decisions are recognised and executed as swiftly as possible?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

The European Union attaches central importance to the protection of the rights of the child as enshrined in Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. In this respect Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 ([1]) ('the Brussels IIa regulation') provides for clear, uniform rules on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matters of parental responsibility including access rights.

The Commission can inform the Honourable Member that it has launched a review of the regulation and, as a first step it has adopted a report on the application in practice on this regulation ([2]). In addition, in order to explore comprehensively the concerns identified in this report, the Commission intends to launch an additional policy evaluation of the existing rules and their impact on citizens, including on the recognition and enforcement procedure in the Member States. In parallel, the Commission has also launched a public consultation.

On the basis of the evaluation and the replies to the public consultation, the Commission will take action as appropriate.

([1]) OJ L 338, 23.12.2003, p. 1.
([2]) COM(2014) 225 of 15 April 2014.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-002475/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(4 martie 2014)

Subiect: Implementarea numerelor rezervate 116

În 2007, Comisia a decis rezervarea, la nivelul statelor membre, a unor numere telefonice de urgență compuse din șase cifre, începând cu 116, menite a semnala diverse situații de urgență, una dintre cele mai importante fiind copiii dispăruți. Documentul de lucru al Comisiei, referitor la implementarea numerelor rezervate (116) până la data de 1 noiembrie 2013 arată faptul că doar unul dintre cele 5 astfel de numere este implementat la nivelul tuturor statelor membre.

Referitor la situația acestor numere, care sunt măsurile pe care le poate lua Comisia pentru a asigura implementarea lor la nivelul tuturor statelor membre? De asemenea, se află Comisia în posesia unor statistici sau date care pot evidenția gradul de recunoaștere și utilizare al acestor numere de către cetățenii europeni?

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(16 aprilie 2014)

Comisia împărtășește punctul de vedere al distinsei membre potrivit căruia numerele armonizate care încep cu 116 pentru servicii cu caracter social ar trebui să fie operaționale în întreaga Europă.

Comisia invită în mod activ statele membre să promoveze serviciile 116, conform cerințelor legislației UE. Cu toate acestea, cerința legală pentru statele membre ca serviciul 116 să fie operațional se aplică numai pentru numărul 116 000, linia telefonică de urgență pentru copiii dispăruți. Prin acțiunile susținute ale Comisiei, inclusiv conferințe anuale pe această temă și finanțare pentru a sprijini înființarea și îmbunătățirea liniilor telefonice de urgență, acest serviciu este acum operațional în toate statele membre, cu excepția Finlandei. În ceea ce privește organizarea serviciilor 116, statele membre au sarcina de a stabili normele privind încredințarea și funcționarea acestor servicii.

Comisia publică periodic date cu privire la stadiul punerii în aplicare pe site-ul său de internet cu privire la numărul 116 ([1]) (următorul raport este prevăzut pentru 25 mai 2014). De asemenea, Comisia dorește să atragă atenția asupra faptului că al doilea număr telefonic, 116 111 — asistență telefonică pentru copii — este, de asemenea, disponibil pe scară largă, în prezent în 20 de state membre.

De asemenea, în ultimii ani, Comisia a depus eforturi pentru creșterea gradului de cunoaștere a serviciilor de telefonie 116. În 2011, Comisia a creat o coaliție cu operatorii de telecomunicații pentru a consolida și a raționaliza publicitatea pentru serviciile 116 000 în 14 state membre. Printre acțiunile pentru 2012/13 s-au numărat publicitate pe internet, mesaje text și informarea abonaților prin intermediul facturilor.

Aceste eforturi sunt, de asemenea, necesare, dat fiind că ultimul sondaj Eurobarometru efectuat în 2012 a indicat un nivel foarte scăzut de cunoaștere corelat cu necesitatea exprimată în mod clar de cetățeni de a primi mai multe informații cu privire la liniile telefonice 116.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/about-116-helplines

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002475/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Implementation of the reserved '116' number

In 2007, the Commission decided to set aside, across the Member States, certain six-figure emergency telephone numbers starting with '116' for the notification of a range of emergency situations, one of the most important of which was missing children. The Commission working document on the implementation on reserved '116' numbers as of 1 November 2013 shows that only one of the five 116 numbers has been implemented in all the Member States.

What steps can the Commission take to ensure that these numbers are implemented across the Member States? Does the Commission have any statistics on the extent to which these numbers are recognised and used by the European public?

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

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that the 116 harmonised numbers for services of social value should be operational throughout Europe.

The Commission actively engages Member States to promote 116 services as required by EC law. However, the legal requirement for Member States to render their 116 service operational applies only to 116 000, the hotlines for missing children. Through the Commission's sustained actions, including dedicated annual conferences and funding to support the setting up and improvement of hotlines, this is now operational in all Member States except Finland. Concerning the organisation of 116 services, Member States are vested with the task of establishing the rules on the assignment and operation of these services.

The Commission regularly publishes the state of implementation on its 116 website ([1]) (next report is expected by 25 May 2014). The Commission would also draw attention to the fact that the second number, 116 111 — child helplines — is also widely available, currently in 20 Member States.

In the past years the Commission has also been active in raising awareness for 116 numbers. In 2011, the Commission forged a coalition with telecommunications operators to increase and streamline publicity for 116 000 services in 14 Member States. 2012/13 actions included web publicity, text messages and informing subscribers through their bills.

These efforts are also needed, as the last Eurobarometer survey carried out in 2012 indicated very low awareness rates, paired with the clear need expressed by citizens to receive more information on 116.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/about-116-helplines

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. P-002476/14
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2014 m. kovo 4 d.)

Tema: Europos Komisijos tyrimas prieš bendrovę „Gazprom“

2012 m. rugsėjo 4 d. Komisija pradėjo formalias tyrimo procedūras bendrovės „Gazprom“ atžvilgiu siekdama nustatyti, ar šios bendrovės veiksmai galimai pasinaudojant dominuojančia padėtimi Centrinės ir Rytų Europos valstybių narių dujų rinkose nepažeidžia ES konkurencijos taisyklių ir ES sutarties nuostatų.

Lietuva, būdama visiškai priklausoma nuo šios bendrovės tiekiamų dujų, yra viena iš labiausiai nukentėjusių valstybių narių. Apskaičiuota, kad nuo 2004 iki 2012 metų bendrovės „Gazprom“ tiekiamų dujų kaina smarkiai padidėjo dėl dujų kainos formulės pakeitimų ir dėl to kasmet šildymo sezono metu Lietuvos gyventojai patiria tūkstančius litų siekiančias papildomas išlaidas, o dėl brangių dujų Lietuvos pramonė ir verslas praranda milijonus ir mažėja Lietuvos konkurencingumas.

Šis Komisijos tyrimas Lietuvai yra ypač svarbus, kadangi Lietuva Stokholmo arbitraže yra pateikusi bendrovei „Gazprom“ 5 milijardų litų ieškinį dėl kainų už dujas permokos. Numatoma, kad arbitražo procesas gali užtrukti ketverius metus ar ilgiau, o tai reiškia, kad dar ilgą laiką Lietuva mokės politinę kainą už šios bendrovės tiekiamas dujas.

Norėčiau sužinoti, kada tiksliai Komisija ketina užbaigti tyrimą ir kada ketina paskelbti jo rezultatus? Jei bendrovei „Gazprom“ Komisija paskirs baudą, ar Lietuva galėtų tikėtis iš šios baudos kompensacijos už šios bendrovės padarytą žalą?

J. Almunios atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. kovo 26 d.)

Komisija dar nebaigė su „Gazprom“ susijusio antimonopolinio tyrimo. Neįmanoma nuspėti, kada tyrimas bus baigtas. Antimonopolinių tyrimų trukmė priklauso nuo daugelio veiksnių, tokių kaip bylos sudėtingumas, bylos šalių, su ja susijusių valstybių ir tyrimo metu surinktų dokumentų kiekis. Šios konkrečios bylos trukmė priklausys ir nuo, pavyzdžiui, to, ar „Gazprom“ pasiūlys taisomąsias priemones, kuriomis visapusiškai ir efektyviai reaguojama į Komisijos susirūpinimą.

Kiekvienas asmuo ar bendrovė, kuriems antikonkurenciniais veiksmais padaryta nuostolių, gali pateikti ieškinį valstybių narių teismuose ir reikalauti atlyginti žalą. Norint reikalauti nuostolių atlyginimo, Komisijos sprendimas nėra būtina sąlyga. Tačiau pagal Teismo praktiką ir Tarybos reglamentą (EB) Nr. 1/2003, Komisijos sprendimas, kuriame nustatytas pažeidimas, yra teisinę galią turintis įrodymas nacionaliniuose teismuose, nesvarbu, buvo paskirta bauda, ar ne. 2013 m. birželio mėn. Komisija priėmė pasiūlymą dėl direktyvos, kuria siekiama antikonkurencinių veiksmų aukoms palengvinti sąlygas gauti tokį žalos atlyginimą (COM(2013) 404, 2013 m. birželio 11 d.).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002476/14
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: The European Commission's investigation into Gazprom

On 4 September 2012, the Commission launched formal investigation procedures in respect of Gazprom to determine whether the company's actions in possibly taking advantage of its dominant position on the gas markets of Central and Eastern European Member States infringe EU competition rules and the provisions of the EU Treaty.

Being totally dependent on the gas supplied by this company, Lithuania is one of the most affected Member States. It is estimated that from 2004-2012 the price of the gas supplied by the company significantly increased due to changes in the gas price formula, and therefore every year during the heating season residents of Lithuania suffer additional expenses that may reach thousands of litas. Consequently, expensive gas causes Lithuanian industry and business to lose a lot of money and reduces the country's competitiveness.

The Commission's investigation is particularly important to Lithuania, since it has submitted a claim for 5 billion litas on gas price overpayment in respect of Gazprom to the Stockholm Arbitrary. It is expected that the arbitration process will take four years or more, which means that for a long time Lithuania will pay a political price for the gas supplied by this company.

I would like to know exactly when the Commission intends to complete the investigation and when it intends to publish the results. If the Commission imposes a fine on Gazprom, can Lithuania expect to receive compensation for the damage caused by this company?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The Commission's antitrust investigation against Gazprom is on-going. It is not possible to predict when the investigation will be completed. The timing of antitrust investigations depends on a number of different factors such as the complexity of the case, the number of parties and countries involved and the number of documents collected in the course of the investigation. The timing in this particular case will also depend, for example, on whether Gazprom will offer remedies that fully and effectively address the Commission's concerns.

Any person or company affected by anti-competitive behaviour may bring the matter before the courts of the Member States and seek damages. A Commission decision is not a prerequisite for being able to bring a damages claim. However, according to the case law of the Court and Council Regulation 1/2003, a Commission decision finding an infringement is binding proof before national courts that the behaviour took place and was illegal — irrespective of whether a fine was imposed or not. In June 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal for a directive that aims to make it easier for victims of anti-competitive practices to obtain such damages (COM(2013) 404, 11 June 2013).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002477/14
a la Comisión
Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Ayuda contra el temporal en el norte de España

Como destaqué en sendas intervenciones ante el Pleno del Parlamento Europeo el 5 y el 27 de febrero, continuos temporales han asolado la costa cantábrica y, en especial, la costa asturiana, desde comienzos del año. Una vez más, esta semana el temporal ha vuelto a golpear muy duro.

Me he reunido con los damnificados de los sectores de la pesca, la agricultura, el turismo y las comunicaciones. Los daños han sido muy cuantiosos.

¿Podría la Comisión Europea adoptar un criterio amplio en relación con unas condiciones de ayuda como las que se reclaman en la Comisión del Arco Atlántico?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

En lo que respecta al Fondo de Solidaridad de la UE, la concesión de cualquier tipo de ayuda depende en primer lugar de la presentación de una solicitud por el Gobierno de España en un plazo de diez semanas a partir de la fecha en que se produjeron los primeros daños. Toda solicitud debe basarse en la evaluación de los daños y sus consecuencias para las condiciones de vida y la economía. En 2014, el umbral aplicable a España para la movilización del Fondo de Solidaridad de la UE son unos daños directos que superen los 3 752 millones de euros (3 000 millones a precios de 2002). Por debajo de este umbral, solamente puede movilizarse el Fondo con arreglo al denominado criterio de catástrofe regional extraordinaria. Para ello, deben aportarse pruebas de que la catástrofe ha afectado a la mayor parte de la población de la región en cuestión y de que existen repercusiones graves y duraderas en las condiciones de vida y la estabilidad económica de la región.

De conformidad con el artículo 107, apartado 2, letra b), del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea, los Estados miembros pueden conceder ayudas destinadas a reparar a las empresas por los perjuicios causados por desastres naturales. Estas medidas deben notificarse a la Comisión, que a continuación verificará que se haya producido la catástrofe y que la ayuda solamente se concede por los daños directamente provocados por esta catástrofe y no representa una compensación excesiva.

La siguiente lista de control para los Estados miembros ofrece orientaciones prácticas:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/disaster_aid_checklist_es.pdf

De conformidad con el nuevo Reglamento general de exención por categorías, que entrará en vigor en julio de 2014, no será obligatorio, en determinadas condiciones, notificar estas ayudas.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002477/14
to the Commission
Antonio Masip Hidalgo (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Aid to repair storm damage in northern Spain

As I specifically mentioned when addressing the plenary of Parliament on 5 and 27 February 2014, Spain's Cantabrian coast has been lashed by continuous storms since the beginning of this year. The coast of Asturias has been particularly hard hit. This week, the region was again battered by heavy storms.

I met with people affected by the disaster, from the fishing, agriculture, tourism and communications sectors. The cost of the damage is very high.

Could the Commission adopt a broad approach in relation to aid conditions, along the lines of those it requires from the Atlantic Arc?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

As far as the EU Solidarity Fund is concerned, any assistance depends in the first instance on an application to be submitted by the Spanish national government within 10 weeks of the date of the first damage. Any application should be based on the assessment of the damage and its consequences for living conditions and the economy. In 2014, the threshold applicable to Spain for mobilising the EU Solidarity Fund is direct damage in excess of EUR 3.752 billion (3 billion in 2002 prices). Below that threshold the Fund can only be mobilised under the so-called exceptional regional disaster criterion. This requires evidence to be provided that the disaster has affected the major part of the population in the region concerned, and that there are lasting and serious repercussions for the living conditions and the economic stability of the region.

Under Article 107(2)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States may grant aid to compensate for the damage suffered by enterprises due to a natural disaster. Such measures have to be notified to the Commission, which will verify the occurrence of the disaster, and that aid is only granted for damage directly caused by this disaster and does not lead to overcompensation.

Practical guidance is available in a checklist for Member States:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/studies_reports/disaster_aid_checklist_en.pdf

Under the new General Block Exemption Regulation, entering into force in July 2014, such aid will be exempted from notification under certain conditions.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002478/14
aan de Commissie
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(4 maart 2014)

Betreft: Tenuitvoerlegging van Verordening (EU) nr. 260/2012 en automatische afschrijvingen volgens SEPA

Recentelijk hebben EU-burgers ons hun bezorgdheid kenbaar gemaakt over praktijken die in strijd zijn met de doelstellingen van het project voor een eengemaakte eurobetalingsruimte (Single Euro Payments Area — SEPA), en met name de tenuitvoerlegging van Verordening (EU) nr. 260/2012.

Telecomexploitanten in bepaalde lidstaten weigeren het gebruik van automatische SEPA-afschrijvingen toe te staan, tenzij deze afkomstig zijn van een bankrekening in dezelfde lidstaat. In de plaats daarvan kunnen klanten gebruik maken van overmakingen.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze praktijken?

2. Meent de Commissie dat dergelijke praktijken in strijd zijn met artikel 9 van Verordening (EU) nr. 260/2012, waarin wordt bepaald dat begunstigden die automatische SEPA-afschrijvingen accepteren niet mogen discrimineren tussen betaalrekeningen in verschillende lidstaten?

3. Zo ja, welke stappen wil de Commissie dan ondernemen om deze discriminerende praktijken aan te pakken en de correcte tenuitvoerlegging van SEPA te verzekeren?

Antwoord van de heer Barnier namens de Commissie
(9 april 2014)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van dit soort praktijken die, afhankelijk van de concrete omstandigheden van de zaak, overtredingen kunnen zijn van artikel 9 van Verordening (EU) nr. 260/2012 tot vaststelling van technische en bedrijfsmatige vereisten voor overmakingen en automatische afschrijvingen in euro en tot wijziging van Verordening (EG) nr. 924/2009.

De Commissie heeft deze praktijken besproken tijdens het meest recente EU-forum van nationale coördinatiecomités voor de SEPA. In sommige landen waar de migratie naar de automatische SEPA-incasso nog niet is gebeurd, is een grensoverschrijdende automatische incasso niet mogelijk. Bovendien wees een vertegenwoordiger van het Comité van eindgebruikers van het betalingssysteem, het *End-Users Committee* (EUC), erop dat vele grotere gebruikers technische problemen ondervinden bij het aanvaarden van grensoverschrijdende automatische incasso's. De reden hiervoor is dat de databanken voor het opslaan van de mandaten moeten worden aangepast om ook de BIC-informatie, die nog altijd nodig is voor grensoverschrijdende betalingen, te kunnen bevatten. Deze technische problemen zouden tegen 1 augustus 2014 opgelost moeten zijn, wanneer de nieuwe termijn voor het einde van de migratie naar SEPA afloopt, als omschreven in Verordening (EU) nr. 248/2014 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 26 februari 2014 tot wijziging van Verordening (EU) nr. 260/2012 betreffende de migratie naar Uniebrede overmakingen en automatische afschrijvingen. In de tussentijd heeft de Commissie besloten een brief te sturen naar de bevoegde autoriteiten van de lidstaten van de eurozone, om informatie in te winnen over de stappen die zij zullen nemen om deze kwestie op te lossen en om hen te waarschuwen dat inbreukprocedures kunnen worden opgestart indien grensoverschrijdende automatische incasso's nog steeds worden geweigerd.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002478/14
to the Commission
Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Implementation of Regulation N260/2012 and SEPA direct debits

We have been contacted recently by EU citizens who are concerned about practices that are in contradiction with the goals of the single euro payments area (SEPA) project, and in particular the implementation of Regulation N260/2012.

Telecom operators in some Member States refuse their customers the option of making SEPA direct debits unless they are authorised by a bank account opened in the same Member State. Customers are given the alternative of using credit transfers instead of direct debits.

1. Is the Commission aware of these practices?

2. Does the Commission consider that such practices are in violation of Article 9 of Regulation N260/2012, which stipulates that companies that accept SEPA direct debits cannot discriminate between bank accounts in different Member States?

3. If so, how will the Commission tackle these discriminatory practices and ensure the effective implementation of SEPA?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of this type of practice which, depending on the concrete circumstances of the case, may be found in breach of Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 260/2012 establishing technical and business requirements for credit transfers and direct debits in euro and amending Regulation (EC) No 924/2009.

The Commission has discussed these practices at the most recent EU Forum of national SEPA Coordination Committees. In some countries where the migration to SEPA DD has still not happened, the cross-border direct debit service is not available. In addition a representative of the payment end-user committee indicated that many larger billers have technical problems accepting cross-border direct debits because the databases storing the mandates have to be adapted to include the BIC information which is still needed for cross-border payments. These technical problems should be solved by 1 August 2014, which is the new deadline for the end of the migration to SEPA as defined by Regulation (EU) No 248/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 amending Regulation (EU) No 260/2012 as regards the migration to Union-wide credit transfers and direct debits. In the meantime, the Commission has decided to send letters to the National Competent Authorities of euro Member States to inquire on the steps they will take to solve this issue and to warn them that infringement cases may be launched if cross-border direct debits are still being refused.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002479/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Il-bilanċ tal-ġeneri fit-teħid ta' deċiżjonijiet politiċi

Skont statistiki riċenti ppubblikati mill-Kummissjoni dwar il-bilanċ tal-ġeneri fit-teħid ta' deċiżjonijiet politiċi fl-UE-28, is-sehem medju tan-nisa fil-kmamar inferjuri tal-parlamenti nazzjonali fl-UE-28 baqa' kostanti (27 %) tul l-2013. Bl-istess mod, is-sehem medju ta' nisa ministri għolja fil-gvern fl-UE-28 hu ta' 27 %.

FL-amministrazzjonijiet nazzjonali, is-sehem medju ta' nisa li għandhom pożizzjonijiet fl-ogħla żewġ livelli tal-amministrazzjoni fl-UE-28 żdied b'mod progressiv mill-2012. Fl-ogħla livell ta' amministraturi (livell 1), il-medja attwali ta' nisa hi ta' 30 % (fejn qabel kienet 29 %), filwaqt li l-perċentwal għal-livell 2 issa jinsab qrib ħafna tal-livell ta' bilanċ tal-ġeneri (39 %, fejn qabel kien 37 %).

Il-Kummissjoni ilha li rrikonoxxiet il-ħtieġa li tippromwovi l-bilanċ tal-ġeneri fil-proċessi tat-teħid ta' deċiżjonijiet. Il-Karta tan-Nisa adottata mill-Kummissjoni f'Marzu 2010 u l-Istrateġija tal-UE għall-Ugwaljanza bejn in-Nisa u l-Irġiel (2010-2015) b'liema mod qed jgħinu biex jiżdied il-bilanċ tal-ġeneri fil-proċessi tat-teħid ta' deċiżjonijiet fl-EU-28?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(9 ta' April 2014)

Il-Karta tan-Nisa u l-Istrateġija tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea għall-Ugwaljanza bejn in-Nisa u l-Irġiel (2010-2015) jipprovdu qafas ambizzjuż għall-promozzjoni tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi fl-UE. Il-promozzjoni tal-ugwaljanza fit-teħid tad-deċiżjonijiet hija waħda mill-prijoritajiet fiż-żewġ dokumenti li juru impenn imsaħħaħ mill-Kummissjoni biex tikkontribwixxi biex tittejjeb is-sitwazzjoni. Eżempji ta' azzjonijiet konkreti mill-Kummissjoni jinkludu l-adozzjoni f'Novembru 2012 tal-proposta għal Direttiva dwar it-titjib tal-bilanċ bejn is-sessi fost diretturi mhux eżekuttivi ta' kumpaniji elenkati fuq il-Borża, li rċeviet appoġġ qawwi mill-Parlament Ewropew [1]. Il-Kummissjoni tappoġġja wkoll inizjattivi tal-Istati Membri biex jippromwovu rappreżentazzjoni aħjar ta' nisa f'pożizzjonijiet ta' tmexxija, b'mod partikolari permezz ta' kofinanzjament ta' proġetti transnazzjonali.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni qed tqajjem għarfien dwar il-kwistjoni u qed issegwi s-sitwazzjoni permezz tal-bażi tad-dejta tagħha dwar in-nisa u l-irġiel fit-teħid ta' deċiżjonijiet f'pożizzjonijiet ta' livell għoli f'numru ta' oqsma. Il-bażi tad-dejta ilha disponibbli bla ħlas għal konsultazzjoni onlajn mill-2004 [2].

Informazzjoni dwar l-implimentazzjoni tal-Istrateġija tal-Kummissjoni għall-Ugwaljanza bejn in-Nisa u l-Irġiel mill-Kummissjoni u s-Servizz Ewropew għall-Azzjoni Esterna tista' tinstab fid-dokument "Mid-term review of the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men" [3].

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002479/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Gender balance in political decision-making

According to recent statistics published by the Commission on gender balance in political decision-making in the EU-28, the average share of women in lower houses of national parliaments remained constant at 27% across the EU-28 throughout 2013. Similarly, the EU-28 average share of women senior ministers in government stood at 27%.

For national administrations, the average share of women holding positions in the two top administrative levels across the EU-28 has increased incrementally since 2012. The highest level of administrators (level 1) now has an average of 30% women (up from 29%), while the figure for level 2 is very close to the gender balance mark (39%, up from 37%).

The Commission has long recognised the need to promote gender balance in decision-making processes. In what ways are the Women's Charter, adopted by the Commission in March 2010, and the EU Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) helping to increase gender balance in decision-making processes in the EU-28?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The Women's Charter and the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015) provide an ambitious framework for promoting gender equality in the EU. The promotion of equality in decision-making is one of the priorities in both documents showing a strengthened commitment from the Commission to contribute to improving the situation. Examples of concrete actions from the Commisssion include the adoption in November 2012 of the proposal for a directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges, which received strong support from the European Parliament ([1]). The Commission also supports Member State initiatives to promote a better representation of women in leadership positions, in particular through the co-financing of transnational projects.

Moreover, the Commission is raising awareness on the issue and monitoring the situation through its database on women and men in decision-making in high level positions in several areas. The database has been freely available for online consultation since 2004 ([2]).

Information on the implementation of the Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men by the Commission and the External Action Service can be found in the document 'Mid-term review of the strategy for Equality between Women and Men' ([3]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002480/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Il-mard rari fl-Ewropa

Fl-Istati Membri, kwalunkwe marda li taffettwa lil anqas minn 5 persuni minn kull 10 000 titqies bħala marda rari. Huwa stmat li llum fl-UE hemm bejn wieħed u ieħor minn 5 000 sa 8 000 marda rari distinta li jaffettwaw bejn 6 % u 8 % tal-popolazzjoni, jew bejn 27 u 36 miljun ruħ. Sfortunatament, għad trid issir ferm aktar riċerka biex jiġi żgurat l-iżvilupp ta' trattamenti u kuri effikaċi għal tali mard.

1. Il-Kummissjoni kif qed tinkoraġġixxi r-riċerka dwar il-mard rari?

2. Problema kbira b'ċertu mard rari hija li t-trattament biex dan jiġi kkurat normalment ikun għali ħafna u mhux il-pazjenti kollha jistgħu jaffordjawh. X'qed isir biex ikun żgurat li dawn il-pazjenti jkollhom aċċess għal trattamenti u mediċini għall-but ta' kulħadd?

3. Jidher li hemm nuqqas ta' għarfien u edukazzjoni dwar ċerti tipi ta' mard rari. Xi strateġiji qed jiġu implimentati biex jiżdied l-għarfien dwar dan il-mard fl-UE-28?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' April 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni investiet aktar minn EUR 620 miljun fir-riċerka bil-għan li jittejjeb il-fehim ta' mard rari u bil-għan li jiġu żviluppati mezzi ġodda għad-dijanjożi, it-trattament u l-prevenzjoni tiegħu ([1]). Hija mexxiet ukoll it-tnedija ta' Konsorzju Internazzjonali tar-Riċerka dwar il-Mard Rari ([2]) li mistenni jwassal 200 terapija ġdida u metodi għad-dijanjożi tal-biċċa l-kbira mill-mard rari sal-2020. L-impenn qawwi favur ir-riċerka dwar il-mard rari se jkompli matul il-perjodu kollu tal-programm il-ġdid ta' finanzjament tal-UE għar-riċerka msejjaħ "Orizzont 2020" ([3]).

Ir-Regolament (KE) Nru 141/2000 dwar il-prodotti mediċinali orfni ([4]) għandu l-għan li jipprovdi inċentivi għar-riċerka, l-iżvilupp u t-tqegħid fis-suq ta' mediċini għal mard rari. Sal-lum, il-Kummissjoni awtorizzat 97 prodott mediċinali orfni u ħatret 1 009 prodotti bħala prodotti mediċinali orfni.

Kull Stat Membru għandu jiddeċiedi huwa stess dwar l-inklużjoni tal-prodotti mediċinali fil-kamp ta' applikazzjoni tas-sistema ta' assigurazzjoni tas-saħħa nazzjonali u l-livell ta' kopertura tagħhom. Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea ma tistax tieħu xi azzjoni dwar dawn id-deċiżjonijiet ħlief li tippromwovi l-kooperazzjoni u l-iskambju tal-aħjar prattiki. B'mod partikulari, il-Proċess dwar ir-Responsabbiltà Korporattiva fil-Qasam tal-Farmaċewtika rawwem il-kooperazzjoni fost l-Istati Membri u l-partijiet interessati rilevanti sabiex jinstabu approċċi komuni u mhux regolatorji għall-aċċess f'waqtu u ġust għall-mediċini ([5]). It-titjib fir-rikonoxximent u l-viżibbiltà ta' mard rari ġie identifikat bħala wieħed mill-għanijiet ewlenin fil-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni tal-2008 dwar il-mard rari ([6]) u fir-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill tal-2009 ([7]). Fil-kuntest tal-Programm dwar is-Saħħa, il-Kummissjoni kkofinanzjat l-azzjoni konġunta msejħa "Orphanet", li għandha l-għan li ttejjeb il-portal Ewropew tal-internet tal-mard rari.

([1]) Din iċ-ċifra tirreferi għall-proġetti ffinanzjati fil-kuntest tas-Seba' Programm Kwadru tal-UE għar-riċerka u l-iżvilupp teknoloġiku (FP7) li dam għaddej mill-2007 sal-2013.
([2]) Ara s-sit tal-internet www.irdirc.org
([3]) Għal aktar tagħrif, ara l-paġna tal-internet li ġejja: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/health-demographic-change-and-wellbeing u, għal eżempju ta' tema rilevanti, ara l-paġna tal-internet li ġejja: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2278-phc-14-2015.html
([4]) ĠU L 18, 22.1.2000, p. 1.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/healthcare/competitiveness/process_on_corporate_responsibility/platform_access/index_en.htm#h2-2
([6]) COM(2008) 679 finali.
([7]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:151:0007:0010:MT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002480/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Rare diseases in Europe

In the Member States, any disease affecting less than 5 people in every 10 000 is considered to be a rare disease. It is estimated that today in the EU there are approximately 5 000 to 8 000 distinct rare diseases which affect 6% to 8% of the population, or between 27 and 36 million people. Unfortunately, more research needs to be done to ensure the development of effective treatment and cures for such diseases.

1. How is the Commission encouraging research into rare diseases?

2. A major problem with certain rare diseases is that the treatment to cure them is usually very expensive and not all patients can afford it. What is being done to ensure that these patients have access to affordable treatment and medicine?

3. There seems to be a lack of awareness and education about certain types of rare disease. What strategies are being implemented to raise awareness of these diseases in the EU-28?

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

The Commission has invested over EUR 620 million in research aimed at improving the understanding of rare diseases and at developing new means of diagnosis, treatment and prevention ([1]). It also spearheaded the launch of the International Rare Diseases Research Consortium ([2]) set to deliver 200 new therapies and ways to diagnose most rare disease by the year 2020. The strong commitment to rare disease research will continue throughout Horizon 2020, the EU's new research funding programme ([3]).

Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 on orphan medicines ([4]) aims at providing incentives for the research, marketing and development of medicines for rare diseases. To date, the Commission has authorised 97 orphan medicines and designated 1 009 products as orphan medicinal products.

It is up to each Member State to decide on the inclusion of medicinal products in the scope of national health insurance system and the level of coverage. European Commission cannot take any action concerning these decisions other than promoting cooperation and exchange of best practices. Notably, the Process on Corporate Responsibility in the Field of Pharmaceuticals fostered cooperation among Member States and relevant stakeholders in order to find common, non-regulatory approaches to timely and equitable access to medicines ([5]). The improved recognition and visibility of rare diseases is identified as a key objective in the 2008 Commission Communication on Rare Diseases ([6]) and in the 2009 Council Recommendation ([7]). Under the Health Programme, the Commission co-funded the Joint Action Orphanet which aimed at improving the European web-portal of rare diseases

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([1]) The figure refers to projects funded under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) 2007-2013.
([2]) See www.irdirc.org
([3]) See https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/health-demographic-change-and-wellbeing for more information and, for an example of a relevant topic. See: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/2278-phc-14-2015.html
([4]) OJ L 18, 22. 1. 2000, p. 1.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/healthcare/competitiveness/process_on_corporate_responsibility/platform_access/index_en.htm#h2-2
([6]) COM(2008) 679 final
([7]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:151:0007:0010:EN:PDF

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002481/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sistema eCall

Il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta biex tiżgura li sa Ottubru 2015, il-vetturi bil-mutur isejħu b'mod awtomatiku lis-servizzi ta' emerġenza f'każ ta' inċident gravi.

Skont l-istimi, permezz ta' din it-teknoloġija jistgħu jiġu salvati sa 2 500 ruħ kull sena.

L-abbozz ta' leġiżlazzjoni jistipula li, minn Ottubru 2015, il-mudelli l-ġodda kollha ta' karozzi tal-passiġġieri u vetturi għal użu ħafif iridu jkunu mgħammra bis-servizz eCall ibbażat fuq in-numru 112 u li trid tinħoloq l-infrastruttura meħtieġa biex l-eCalls jaslu fiċ-ċentri ta' rispons għas-sejħiet ta' emerġenza u li dawn jiġu pproċessati kif suppost, biex b'hekk jiġu żgurati l-kompatibilità, l-interoperabilità u l-kontinwità tas-servizz eCall fl-UE kollha.

1. Il-Kummissjoni kif beħsiebha tiżgura li l-vetturi manifatturati ġodda kollha jkunu mgħammra b'sistema eCall sal-1 ta' Ottubru 2015?

2. Il-konsumatur kif inhu protett minn spejjeż addizzjonali huwa u jixtri vettura ġdida mgħammra b'sistema eCall?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' April 2014)

L-għan tar-Regolament propost ([1]) huwa li jintroduċi rekwiżit għall-installazzjoni ta' sistema eCall immuntata fil-vettura, fis-sistema tal-KE għall-approvazzjoni tat-tip ta' vetturi bil-mutur. Dan jifforma parti minn sett ta' atti legali tal-UE biex jiżguraw li sal-1 ta' Ottubru 2015 jibda jintuża s-servizz eCall ibbażat fuq in-numru 112, kif mitlub mill-Parlament Ewropew fir-riżoluzzjoni tiegħu tat-3 ta' Lulju 2012. Madankollu, fl-aħħar mill-aħħar il-koleġiżlaturi jridu jiftehmu bejniethom dwar id-data tal-applikazzjoni. Dan il-ftehim għadu ma ntlaħaqx. Ta' min jinnota li l-Kummissjoni mhix beħsiebha teżiġi li "l-vetturi ġodda kollha mmanifatturati" jkunu mgħammra bis-servizz eCall. Il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni se timponi dan ir-rekwiżit fuq it-tipi ta' vetturi ġodda tal-kategorija M1 (il-karozzi tal-passiġġieri) u tal-kategorija N1 (il-vetturi kummerċjali ħfief) biss.

Ir-Regolament propost se jeħtieġ li l-manifattur joffri s-servizz eCall bħala tagħmir standard. Għalhekk, is-servizz eCall mhux se jkun jista' jinbiegħ f'dawn il-vetturi bħala tagħmir mhux obbligatorju u bi spiża addizzjonali. Madankollu, il-Kummissjoni ma tistax teskludi l-possibbiltà li l-manifatturi jżidu l-prezz ġenerali tal-bejgħ tal-prodotti tagħhom b'reazzjoni għal dan ir-rekwiżit regolatorju l-ġdid.

([1]) Proposta għal REGOLAMENT TAL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW U TAL-KUNSILL li jikkonċerna r-rekwiżiti tal-approvazzjoni tat-tip għall-iskjerament tas-sistema eCall immuntata fil-vettura u li jemenda d-Direttiva 2007/46/KE — 2013/0165 (COD) tat-13 ta' Ġunju 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002481/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: ECall system

The Commission has adopted a proposal to ensure that by October 2015, motor vehicles will automatically call emergency services in the event of a serious accident. It is has been estimated that through this technology, up to 2 500 lives could be saved every year. The draft legislation stipulates that from October 2015, all new models of passenger cars and light duty vehicles must be fitted with the 112 eCall system, and that the necessary infrastructure must be created for the proper receipt and handling of ecalls in emergency response centres, ensuring the compatibility, interoperability and continuity of the EU-wide eCall service.

1. How does the Commission expect to ensure that all newly manufactured vehicles are equipped with the eCall system by 1 October 2015?

2. How are consumers protected against additional expenses when purchasing a new vehicle equipped with the eCall system?

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

The purpose of the proposed Regulation ([1]) is to introduce in the EC motor vehicle type-approval system a requirement for fitting an eCall in-vehicle system. This forms part of a set of EU legal acts for ensuring the deployment of the 112-based eCall service by 1 October 2015, as requested by the European Parliament in its resolution of 3 July 2012. However, it is ultimately up to the co-legislators to agree on the date of application. Such an agreement has not been reached yet. It should be noted that it is not the intention of the Commission to require 'all newly manufactured vehicles' to be equipped with eCall. The Commission's proposal would impose this requirement only on new vehicle types of category M1 (passenger cars) and category N1 (light commercial vehicles).

The proposed Regulation would require the manufacturer to offer eCall as standard equipment. It will, therefore, not be possible to sell eCall as optional equipment and at an additional cost in these vehicles. However, the Commission cannot exclude the possibility that manufacturers increase the overall sales price of their products in reaction to this new regulatory requirement.

([1]) Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system and amending Directive 2007/46/EC 2013/0165 (COD) of 13 June 2013.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002482/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: L-adozzjoni għall-koppji b'riżorsi limitati

L-adozzjoni, b'mod partikolari l-adozzjoni internazzjonali, hija proċedura li tiswa l-flus. Diversi studji juru li l-kunsiderazzjonijiet finanzjarji huma fost ir-raġunijiet ewlenin biex koppji Ewropej jirrinunzjaw għall-proċedura ta' adozzjoni. Din is-sitwazzjoni mhux biss hija waħda infeliċi u deplorevoli, iżda tikkostitwixxi wkoll diskriminazzjoni ċara ħafna bejn il-koppji li jaffordjaw jadottaw it-tfal u dawk li m'għandhomx ir-riżorsi finanzjarji biex jagħmlu dan.

1. Il-Kummissjoni taf b'din il-problema?

2. Il-Kummissjoni se tistieden lill-Istati Membri jikkooperaw u jwettqu skambju tal-aħjar prattiki fuq din il-kwistjoni sabiex itejbu l-effikaċja u t-trasparenza tal-proċeduri ta' adozzjoni internazzjonali?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Mejju 2014)

L-adozzjoni mhix regolata fil-livell tal-UE. Fil-livell internazzjonali, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġa l-implimentazzjoni korretta tal-Konvenzjoni tal-Aja dwar l-Adozzjoni bejn Pajjiż u ieħor [1] billi tieħu sehem fuq bażi regolari fil-Kummissjonijiet Speċjali organizzati fil-kuntest tal-Konferenza tal-Aja dwar id-Dritt Internazzjonali Privat. Dawn il-laqgħat għandhom l-għan tat-titjib tal-funzjonament tal-Konvenzjoni u tal-iskambju tal-aqwa prassi.

L-aspetti finanzjarji tal-adozzjoni bejn pajjiż u ieħor huma inklużi fil-kwistjoni li jridu jiġu ttrattati fil-Kummissjoni Speċjali li jmiss dwar it-tħaddim fil-prattika tal-Konvenzjoni tal-Aja tal-1993, ippjanat għall-ewwel nofs tal-2015.

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[1] 93 Stat huma diġà Parti mill-Konvenzjoni tal-Aja tal-1993, fosthom l-Istati Membri kollha tal-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002482/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Adoption for couples with limited means

Adoption, particularly international adoption, is an expensive endeavour. Various studies show that financial considerations are among the primary reasons for European couples giving up the adoption procedure. This situation is not only sad and regrettable, it also constitutes very clear discrimination between couples who can afford to adopt children and those who lack the financial means to do so.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. Will the Commission invite Member States to cooperate and exchange best practices on this issue so as to improve the effectiveness and transparency of international adoption procedures?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

Adoption is not regulated at EU level. At international level, the Commission supports the correct implementation of the 1993 Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption ([1]) by participating on a regular basis in the Special Commissions organised in the context of the Hague Conference on Private International Law. These meetings are aimed at improving the functioning of the Convention and at exchanging best practices.

The financial aspects of inter-country adoption are included in the issues to be dealt with at the next Special Commission on the practical operation of the 1993 Hague Convention, scheduled for the first half of 2015.

([1]) 93 States are already Party to the 1993 Hague Convention, including all EU Member States.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-002485/14
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: L-Isvezja se tfittex lill-Kummissjoni

L-Isvezja mminaċċjat li tfittex lill-Kummissjoni għal dewmien fil-pubblikazzjoni tal-kriterji li huma neċessarji għall-projbizzjoni ta' sustanzi li għandhom effett fuq l-ormoni ([1]). Il-Kummissjoni ddikjarat li qed twettaq analiżi tal-impatt.

Reazzjoni bħal din hi insolita għall-Isvezja. X'passi se tieħu l-Kummissjoni dwar din il-kwestjoni?

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

Il-Parlament u l-Kunsill taw is-setgħa lill-Kummissjoni fil-leġiżlazzjoni dwar prodotti għall-protezzjoni tal-pjanti u prodotti bijoċidali biex tiżviluppa kriterji xjentifiċi għall-identifikazzjoni ta' sustanzi b'karatteristiċi li jinterferixxu s-sistema endokrinali.

Il-Kummissjoni se twettaq valutazzjoni sħiħa tal-impatti soċjoekonomiċi u ambjentali potenzjali ta' firxa ta' għażliet differenti għal dawn il-kriterji u għall-implimentazzjoni tagħhom fil-leġiżlazzjoni. Pjan direzzjonali li jiddefinixxi l-għażliet differenti u l-approċċ ġenerali għal din l-istima tal-impatt jinsab fi stadju finali ta' ftehim.

Minħabba din il-valutazzjoni tal-impatt, l-iffissar tal-kriterji qed jieħu aktar żmien milli kien ippjanat oriġinarjament. Madankollu, dan huwa ġġustifikat minħabba l-kumplessità partikolari tal-kwistjoni, ix-xjenza li qed tevolvi u l-opinjonijiet diverġenti attwali fost ix-xjenzjati u fost il-partijiet interessati.

Fi kwalunkwe każ, l-interferenti endokrinali fi prodotti għall-protezzjoni tal-pjanti u prodotti bijoċidali huma regolati billi ż-żewġ atti ta' leġiżlazzjoni diġà jippreved l-applikazzjoni ta' kriterji stretti interim.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/health/sweden-sue-commission-delaying-h-news-533772

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002485/14
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Sweden to sue the Commission

Sweden has threatened to sue the Commission for a delay in the publication of the criteria that are necessary to ban hormone-affecting substances ([1]). The Commission has stated that it is conducting an impact analysis.

Such a reaction is uncommon for Sweden. What steps will the Commission take regarding this matter?

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

The Parliament and the Council have empowered the Commission in the legislation on plant protection products and biocidal products to develop scientific criteria for the identification of substances with endocrine disrupting properties.

The Commission will carry out a full assessment of the potential socioeconomic and environmental impacts of a range of different options for these criteria and for their implementation in the legislation. A roadmap defining the different options and the general approach for this impact assessment is in a final stage of agreement.

Because of this impact assessment, the establishment of the criteria is taking more time than originally planned. However, this is justified because of the particular complexity of the issue, evolving science, and the diverging views existing among scientists and among stakeholders.

In any case, endocrine disruptors in plant protection and biocidal products are regulated as both pieces of legislation already provide for the application of strict interim criteria.

([1]) http://www.euractiv.com/health/sweden-sue-commission-delaying-h-news-533772

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-002486/14
Komisii
Eduard Kukan (PPE)
(4. marca 2014)

Vec: Postavenie Slovenska a jeho zaradenie do skupiny v rámci programu Erasmus+

V príručke k programu Erasmus+ platnej od 1. januára 2014 sú vymedzené pravidlá financovania spolu s výškou finančných prostriedkov osobitne stanovenou pre príslušné krajiny. Vo väčšine tabuliek je Slovensko zaradené do skupiny spolu s Chorvátskom, Bulharskom, Estónskom, Lotyšskom, Litvou, Maďarskom, Poľskom, Rumunskom, bývalou Juhoslovanskou republikou Macedónsko a s Tureckom.

Medzi jednotlivými krajinami existujú zjavné rozdiely, pokiaľ ide o príjem za rovnakú prácu. Z údajov uvedených v programovom dokumente vyplýva, že ak by slovenská univerzita chcela spolupracovať s českou alebo rakúskou univerzitou v rámci projektu „znalostné aliancie", výška príjmu slovenského riadiaceho pracovníka by predstavovala 106 EUR na deň, kým výška príjmu českého správcu by bola 197 EUR a rakúskeho riadiaceho pracovníka 353 EUR za rovnakú prácu.

Podľa usmernení na vykonávanie projektu v rámci aliancií sektorových zručností by učitelia a školitelia patriaci do skupiny, ktorej členom je Dánsko, dostávali 289 EUR na deň, pričom učiteľ alebo školiteľ na Slovensku by za rovnaký objem práce dostával 88 EUR na deň.

1. Na základe čoho boli krajiny zaradené do jednotlivých skupín?

2. Čo je dôvodom výrazných rozdielov medzi rôznymi členskými štátmi, pokiaľ ide o platy a výšku diét za rovnakú náplň práce?

3. Ktoré faktory rozhodujú o výške finančných prostriedkov poskytovaných na vyplácanie platov riadiacim pracovníkom a školiteľom v jednotlivých krajinách?

Odpoveď pani Vassiliouovej v mene Komisie
(10. mája 2014)

Otázka sa týka výšky finančných prostriedkov rozdelených podľa rôznych zoskupení krajín a vyplácaných v rámci programu Erasmus+ ako príspevok na náklady na zamestnancov, ktoré vznikli v rámci projektov financovaných týmto programom. V súlade s nariadením o rozpočtových pravidlách sa metóda výpočtu príspevkov na jednotkové náklady stanovuje na základe minulých skutočných nákladov podľa porovnateľných akcií – t. j. centralizovaných projektov v období rokov 2009 – 2011 v rámci programu celoživotného vzdelávania (PCV) – a v prípade potreby sa indexuje k súčasným nákladom. Na účely zjednodušenia boli krajiny, v ktorých skutočné náklady vykazovali jasnú štatistickú vyrovnanosť, zaradené do rovnakej skupiny na základe objektívnych kritérií. Na určenie najvhodnejších zoskupení sa vykonalo viacero simulácií.

Rozdiely v príspevkoch na jednotkové náklady preto odrážajú rozdielne skutočné náklady, ktoré uviedli účastníci projektov v rámci programu celoživotného vzdelávania. Náklady sú zoskupené podľa týchto kategórií zamestnancov: „riadiaci pracovník", „výskumný pracovník", „technik" a „administratívny personál". Príspevok na jednotkové náklady pre každú kategóriu zamestnancov v každej skupine krajín bol vypočítaný váženým priemerom príslušných krajín. Skutočnosť, že jednotkové náklady sa môžu líšiť od sadzieb priemernej mzdy zhromaždených a zverejnených na iné účely, s týmto výpočtom nesúvisí.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002486/14
to the Commission
Eduard Kukan (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Status and grouping of Slovakia under the ERASMUS+ programme

The ERASMUS+ programme guide, valid as of 1 January 2014, specifies the funding rules with amounts specific to particular countries. In most of the tables, Slovakia has been grouped with Croatia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.

There is a clear difference in income for the same work depending on the country in question. According to the figures in the programme document, if a Slovak university wishes to cooperate with a Czech or Austrian university under the project's 'knowledge alliance', a Slovak manager would be paid EUR 106 per day, while a Czech would receive EUR 197 and an Austrian EUR 353 for the same work.

In the project implementation guidelines for the sector skills alliances, teachers and trainers in the group of which Denmark is a member would receive EUR 289 per day, while a teacher or trainer in Slovakia would receive EUR 88 per day for the same workload.

1. On what grounds are countries grouped together?

2. What is the reason for the significant gaps between various Member States in terms of salaries and per diem rates for the same job descriptions?

3. What factors determine the amount of money made available for the payment of salaries to managers and trainers in each country?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2014)

The question refers to the amounts, differentiated according to different groupings of countries, which are paid under Erasmus+ as a contribution to staffing costs incurred within projects financed by the programme. In accordance with the Financial Regulation, the method for calculating contributions to unit costs is based on past real costs reported under comparable actions — i.e. centralised projects 2009-2011 under the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) — and indexed to current costs, where appropriate. For reasons of simplification, where real costs of various countries showed significant statistical alignment, they were grouped using objective criteria. Many simulations were conducted to determine the most appropriate groupings.

Differences in contributions to unit costs therefore reflect the different real costs reported by project participants under the LLP. Costs are grouped according to the staffing categories of 'manager', 'researcher', 'technician' and 'administrative staff'. The contribution to unit costs for each staff category in each group of countries was calculated by the weighted average of the countries concerned. The fact that unit costs may differ from average salary rates collected and published for other purposes is independent from this calculation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002490/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Attacchi deliberati contro la comunità ebraica di Kiev

Un esponente della comunità ebraica di Kiev ha chiesto che venga posta la giusta attenzione su «un attacco sistematico e continuo nei confronti degli ebrei» che rischia di passare inosservato a causa dell'immobilismo internazionale. Il rabbino in questione sostiene che gli attacchi contro la comunità, inclusi attacchi contro le proprietà e contro i cimiteri ebraici di Kiev, siano iniziati in novembre, in coincidenza con lo scoppio delle proteste. Il rabbino teme in particolare le frange neofasciste del partito nazionalista, ma non esclude che gli attacchi arrivino da altre direzioni.

Il rabbino parla di una vera e propria emergenza sicurezza, mentre si rammarica che l'Unione europea non abbia finora adottato toni più duri e si sia limitata a reagire agli eventi anziché attrarre a sé l'Ucraina in passato.

In merito ai rischi corsi dalla comunità ebraica, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se è a conoscenza di questi atti di violenza contro la comunità;

2. se ritiene che i disordini possano portare a un rafforzamento dei poteri ultranazionalisti o neonazisti;

3. se è entrata in contatto con i rappresentanti di questa comunità, anche alla luce del fatto che alcuni membri ricoprivano ruoli politici significativi ed erano stati interpellati dalle forze di governo in veste di «saggi»?

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

Non vi sono prove concrete di un aumento dell'attività antisemita in Ucraina dopo l'insediamento del nuovo governo. Nelle ultime settimane molti leader di spicco della comunità ebraica tra cui Josef Zisels, presidente dell'associazione delle comunità e delle organizzazioni ebraiche dell'Ucraina, hanno dichiarato infondate le segnalazioni di pressioni o di politiche antisemite da parte del governo ucraino. Il nuovo governatore della provincia di Dnipropetrovsk, Ihor Kolomoyskyy, è un esponente attivo e molto conosciuto della comunità ebraica ucraina. Le manifestazioni degli elementi estremisti presenti sulla scena politica ucraina sono eclissate dalla voce dei cittadini che aspirano a una società inclusiva e democratica. Secondo l'Alto commissario dell'OSCE per le minoranze nazionali e sottosegretario generale delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti umani Ivan Šimonović, in Ucraina desta notevole preoccupazione il caso della Crimea, dove gli ucraini e i tatari sono particolarmente a rischio a causa delle iniziative illegali prese dalla Russia per annettere la penisola. L'UE invita tutte le parti a garantire la sicurezza e il rispetto dei diritti umani, compresi i diritti delle minoranze, per tutte le persone presenti sul territorio ucraino, indipendentemente dall'appartenenza etnica, dalla religione o dall'origine nazionale. L'Unione ritiene di fondamentale importanza che l'Ucraina si doti di un governo più inclusivo, che garantisca la massima protezione alle minoranze nazionali in tutte le regioni del paese. Qualsiasi atto di razzismo o di xenofobia è comunque inaccettabile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002490/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Deliberate attacks on the Jewish community of Kiev

A spokesperson for the Jewish community of Kiev has requested that proper attention be paid to 'a systematic and continuous attack against Jews' which runs the risk of going unnoticed due to international inertia. The rabbi in question claims that the attacks on the community, including attacks on property and on the Jewish cemeteries of Kiev, began in November, at the time when the protests broke out. The rabbi is particularly afraid of the neo-fascist fringes of the nationalist party, but does not rule out attacks from other quarters.

The rabbi refers to a real security crisis, and regrets that the European Union has not up to now taken a harder line and has limited itself to reacting to events rather than engaging with Ukraine on the issue in the past.

In view of the risks to which the Jewish community is exposed, can the Commission clarify:

1. whether it is aware of these acts of violence against the community;

2. whether it considers that these disturbances may lead to a strengthening of ultranationalist or neo-Nazi forces;

3. whether it has engaged in contact with the representatives of this community, bearing in mind the fact that some members held important political roles and were called upon by government forces in the capacity of 'wise men'?

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

There is no concrete evidence of increased anti-Semitic activity in Ukraine since the new Government has been in place. In recent weeks, many prominent Jewish leaders, including Josef Zisels, Chairman of the Association of Jewish Communities and Organisations of Ukraine, have dismissed reports of pressure or anti-Semitic policies by the Ukrainian Government. The new Governor of Dnipropetrovsk oblast, Ihor Kolomoyskyy, is a well-known and active member of Ukraine's Jewish community. Although there are extremist elements on the political scene in Ukraine, these voices are overwhelmed by those of Ukrainians who aspire for inclusive and democratic society. According to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović, a big concern in Ukraine is Crimea, where Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar groups are at particular risk following Russia's illegal steps to annex the peninsula. The EU urges all sides to ensure security and respect for human rights, including minority rights, for all those present on Ukrainian territory, regardless of ethnicity, religion or national origin. The EU believes that a more inclusive Ukrainian Government that reaches out to all Ukrainian regions and population groups to ensure full protection of national minorities is essential. Racism and xenophobia of any kind are unacceptable.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002491/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Chat online che garantiscono l'anonimato totale

Una recente notizia dal mondo della tecnologia ci informa della messa a punto, da parte di un'impresa specializzata nello sviluppo di software che permettono di navigare in incognito su Internet, di un servizio di messaggistica istantanea in cui è possibile chattare protetti dal più completo anonimato. Si tratta di un'applicazione che già da questo mese potrebbe comparire sui pc di numerosi utenti europei e che in futuro potrebbe anche essere accessibile tramite smartphone e altri dispostivi portatili.

La protezione della privacy, offline così come online, è un tema ancora in discussione in sede legislativa, ma altra cosa è l'anonimato totale, che in numerosi casi, in Italia e nel resto d'Europa, è alla base di atti di cyber bullismo che hanno talvolta condotto a conseguenze gravissime, incluso il suicidio della vittima.

In merito allo sviluppo e alla diffusione di queste applicazioni, può la Commissione specificare se ritiene che possano ulteriormente aggravare i rischi legati al cyber bullismo? Ritiene che misure specifiche debbano essere adottate dai governi nazionali in materia?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(29 aprile 2014)

Per contrastare in modo efficace il ciberbullismo è necessario ricorrere a un approccio coordinato basato su una combinazione di soluzioni, quali attività di sensibilizzazione, formazione e istruzione, autoregolamentazione, strumenti tecnici e imposizione del rispetto delle leggi, come le leggi contro i messaggi di odio. La combinazione di queste strategie può aiutare bambini e giovani a difendersi da contenuti dannosi e contatti pericolosi e a comprendere la responsabilità che essi stessi devono assumersi per il proprio comportamento online.

La strategia per un'internet migliore per i ragazzi ([1]) propone l'adozione congiunta di azioni da parte della Commissione, degli Stati membri e delle imprese del settore. Tale strategia intende fornire a genitori e bambini gli strumenti necessari per sfruttare pienamente e in sicurezza i vantaggi della Rete, anche attraverso meccanismi di segnalazione e attività di formazione volte a educare i bambini di tutte le scuole dell'UE alla cultura digitale e a un uso responsabile di internet. La Commissione cofinanzia i centri «Internet più sicuro», presenti in tutti gli Stati membri ([2]), il cui compito principale è sensibilizzare i più giovani, gli insegnanti e i genitori circa i possibili rischi ai quali sono esposti i ragazzi in Rete, fornendo loro gli strumenti per difendersi. I centri gestiscono un servizio telefonico di assistenza per i bambini che fornisce consigli su come affrontare eventuali problemi che si presentano online, incluso il ciberbullismo. Grazie all'iniziativa della coalizione CEO ([3]), le imprese operanti nel settore delle TIC mostrano che è possibile aumentare la disponibilità degli strumenti di segnalazione, migliorare il feedback e coinvolgere un maggior numero di organizzazioni per rendere più semplici ed efficaci tali strumenti.

Internet continua a evolvere, così come evolve l'esperienza dei bambini. Secondo uno studio in corso ([4]), il 23 % di tutti i bambini di età compresa tra gli 11 e i 16 anni che utilizzano internet sostiene di essersi imbattuto in messaggi di odio o offensivi. Dalle ricerche risulta ([5]) tuttavia che la percentuale di bambini che segnala gli abusi è inferiore. È quindi importante distinguere i rischi dai danni subiti.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286
([2]) http://www.saferinternet.org/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/self-regulation-better-internet-kids
([4]) http://www.netchildrengomobile.eu/
([5]) http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20III/Classification/Country-classification-report-EU-Kids-Online.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002491/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Internet chat rooms that guarantee complete anonymity

According to a recent report from the technology sector, a company that specialises in developing software that allows users to surf the Internet incognito has developed an instant messaging service through which it is possible to chat whilst remaining completely anonymous. This application has just this month been made available to huge numbers of PC users throughout Europe, and could also be rolled out for smartphones and other portable devices in the future.

Privacy protection, whether offline or online, is a topic that is still being discussed at a legislative level, but complete anonymity is a different matter entirely. In many instances, both in Italy and the rest of Europe, the cloak of complete anonymity is what drives cyberbullying, and these actions have sometimes had extremely serious consequences, including the victims killing themselves.

With these types of applications continuing to be developed and made available, does the Commission believe that they could further exacerbate the risks associated with cyberbullying? Does it also believe that national governments need to adopt specific measures concerning this issue?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2014)

To combat cyberbullying effectively requires a joined-up approach, combining awareness-raising, training and education, self-regulation and technical tools as well as enforcement of relevant legal provisions such as exist for hate messages. These combined strategies can support children and young people to deal with harmful content and contacts and to understand the responsibility they themselves need to take for their behaviours online.

The 'Strategy for a Better Internet for Children' ([1]) proposes actions to be undertaken jointly by the Commission, Member States and industry. It aims to give parents and children the tools they need to fully and safely benefit from being online, including providing report mechanisms and teaching children in all EU schools to be digital literate and self-responsible online. The Commission co-funds Safer Internet Centres in all Member States ([2]), whose main task is to raise awareness among children, teachers and parents, regarding the possible risks children may encounter online and empower them to deal with these risks. The Centres run helplines for children if they need advice on any issue they face online, including cyber-bullying. Through the process of the CEO Coalition ([3]), ICT companies show that reporting can be made more available, feedback can be improved and more organisations can be involved to make reporting tools simple and more robust.

The Internet continues to change, and so does the experience of children. According to an on-going study ([4]) 23% of all 11-16 year olds who use the Internet say they have come across hateful or abusive messages online. Research shows ([5]) that the proportion of children who report harm is lower. It is therefore important to distinguish risk from harm.

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/286
([2]) http://www.saferInternet.org/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/self-regulation-better-Internet-kids
([4]) http://www.netchildrengomobile.eu/
([5]) http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20III/Classification/Country-classification-report-EU-Kids-Online.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002492/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo prototipo di cellulare modulare

Il «Mobile World Congress» di Barcellona ha visto la presentazione di un nuovo progetto di dispositivo digitale portatile, che potrebbe avere importanti ripercussioni in termini sociali, economici e ambientali, da parte di una nota azienda attiva nel settore della telefonia mobile.

L'ideatore del progetto è uno studente olandese, che ha immaginato un telefono cellulare modulare ed espandibile a piacimento del consumatore. È un'idea nata dalla possibilità di poter rinnovare anche la parte hardware del dispositivo, senza doverlo necessariamente sostituire in caso di malfunzionamento di un solo componente. Il progetto, sviluppato concretamente negli ultimi mesi, è estremamente innovativo, permettendo la sostituzione della batteria, dell'auricolare, del processore, del microfono o della fotocamera, e conservando il resto dell'apparecchio.

I vantaggi potrebbero essere molteplici. Innanzitutto a livello economico: il consumatore risparmierebbe sull'acquisto iniziale del dispositivo (si parla di circa 50 USD) e non sarebbe costretto a sostituirlo per intero in caso di malfunzionamento. In questo modo, il dispositivo sarebbe accessibile anche a fasce di popolazione a basso reddito. Si risparmierebbe molto anche sui costi di produzione e, di conseguenza, sulle emissioni inquinanti prodotte dal processo produttivo.

1. Alla luce di quanto detto, può la Commissione chiarire se è a conoscenza del dispositivo?

2. È a conoscenza di possibili date di lancio sul mercato europeo?

3. Ritiene che i vantaggi potenziali sopra elencati possano incidere in maniera significativa sul benessere dei cittadini europei?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(5 maggio 2014)

Anche se l'innovazione nel settore della telefonia mobile è costante e rapido, la Commissione mantiene i suoi sforzi per monitorare le nuove tecnologie collegate alle sue responsabilità politiche. Nel caso specifico, alcuni annunci della stampa hanno concentrato l'attenzione della Commissione su almeno due progetti con finalità analoghe, Phonebloks ([1]) e Google's Ara ([2]).

La Commissione accoglie con favore questo tipo di innovazioni che sono ad un tempo promettenti e potenzialmente vantaggiose sia per i consumatori finali che per l'ambiente. I consumatori possono avvantaggiarsi di questa progettazione modulare in quanto potrebbero adattare il numero e la tipologia dei moduli necessari (fotocamere, chip, schermi, ecc.) e il relativo costo totale, migliorando le prestazioni del telefono, se necessario, cambiando parti obsolete/non funzionanti invece di cambiare l'intero apparecchio. Il potenziale riciclaggio genererebbe inoltre effetti positivi per l'ambiente.

Sembra tuttavia che questi progetti siano attualmente solo nella fase di creazione di prototipi e la Commissione non è a conoscenza di una loro eventuale disponibilità sul mercato (come indicato negli articoli) entro il 2015. I consumatori, inoltre, potranno effettivamente trarre vantaggio dalle innovazioni descritte solo se le parti sostituibili saranno facilmente disponibili; ciò richiederà specifici canali di distribuzione in grado di adeguarsi alla nuova concezione.

([1]) https://phonebloks.com/en/goals
([2]) http://www.extremetech.com/extreme/177708-googles-modular-smartphone-project-ara-could-go-on-sale-next-year-for-50

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002492/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: New prototype for a modular mobile phone

At the Mobile World Congress held recently in Barcelona, a well-known mobile phone company unveiled its latest project for a portable digital device, which could have significant social, economic and environmental benefits.

The project is the brainchild of a Dutch student, who has dreamt up a modular mobile phone that can be customised to just how the consumer wants it. The concept is based on the possibility of replacing individual items of hardware, which means that if one component of the phone malfunctions, the consumer does not need to buy a new phone. The project, which has made very real headway over the past few months, is extremely innovative and allows the battery, earpiece, processing unit, microphone or camera to be replaced whilst retaining the rest of the device.

The potential benefits of this new mobile phone are manifold. First of all, from an economic perspective, it will allow consumers to save money when initially purchasing the device (a starting price of around USD 50 has been mentioned), and they will not necessarily have to buy a new phone if something goes wrong with it. This means that the device will also be accessible to people on low incomes. In addition, it will significantly bring down manufacturing costs, and thus reduce the amount of pollutants that are emitted by the manufacturing process.

1. Is the Commission aware of the device described above?

2. Does it know when it might be launched on the European market?

3. Does it believe that the potential benefits listed above could have a substantial positive effect on the well-being of European citizens?

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

Although innovation in the field of mobile phone technology is constant and rapid, the Commission always tries to monitor any new technologies related to its policy responsibilities. In the specific case, press announcements have brought to the Commission's attention that at least two projects having similar goals exist, Phonebloks ([1]) and Google's Ara ([2]).

The Commission welcomes any innovations like these, promising and potentially beneficial for both end-consumers and the environment. Consumers could benefit from such modular design in that they could adapt the number and type of needed modules (cameras, chips, displays, etc.) and the overall cost to their needs, and they could upgrade the phone if needed and change obsolete/non-functioning parts instead of changing phone. Positive environmental effects could also derive from such recycling potential.

Nevertheless, these projects appear to be only at prototype level and the Commission is not aware of their availability on the market (as envisaged in the articles) by 2015. Also, the consumer will benefit of the innovation described only if the changeable parts are easily available, which would require distribution channels to adapt to the new concept.

([1]) https://phonebloks.com/en/goals
([2]) http://www.extremetech.com/extreme/177708-googles-modular-smartphone-project-ara-could-go-on-sale-next-year-for-50

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002493/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Partecipazione di agenzie europee allo scandalo Datagate

Lo scandalo Datagate è ancora oggi all'attenzione delle istituzioni europee, e la ferita causata nelle relazioni transatlantiche non potrà essere lenita così semplicemente, soprattutto se nuove e preoccupanti notizie continuano ad emergere dai documenti top-secret trafugati dalla talpa americana. Questa volta nel mirino delle accuse vi è un'agenzia di sorveglianza britannica che, con l'aiuto dell'NSA, pare abbia intercettato e immagazzinato le immagini prese dalle webcam di milioni di utenti di un colosso digitale americano, tramite una operazione chiamata Optic Nerve.

L'operazione risale al 2008 e pare che in pochi mesi abbia raccolto 1,8 milioni tra immagini e video. Secondo il quotidiano britannico che ha dato la notizia, l'operazione non aveva un criterio di preselezione e le persone i cui dati sono stati trafugati non erano e non sono sospettate di aver commesso reati.

Alla luce di quanto detto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza del coinvolgimento di altre agenzie europee colpevoli di violazione della privacy nell'ambito dello scandalo Datagate;

2. sta conducendo indagini per verificare la collaborazione, o per lo meno il silenzio-assenso, di altre agenzie degli Stati membri alle operazioni di spionaggio?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

Le notizie trasmesse dai media sui programmi di sorveglianza attuati dalle agenzie di intelligence degli Stati membri, che pare consentano di accedere e trattare su larga scala i dati degli europei, hanno suscitato la preoccupazione della Commissione.

A seguito della diffusione di queste notizie, la Commissione si è adoperata per approfondire la questione. Quanto alle presunte pratiche rilevate nel Regno Unito e in Francia, la Commissione ha chiesto alle autorità di questi due paesi di chiarire rispettivamente la portata del cosiddetto programma «Tempora» e del programma della direzione generale francese per la sicurezza esterna. La Commissione ha inoltre chiesto alle autorità britanniche e francesi di fornire informazioni sulla proporzionalità di questi programmi e di precisare la portata del controllo giurisdizionale applicato, tenendo presente che spetta alle autorità nazionali, in particolare alle autorità di controllo della protezione dei dati, garantire la corretta attuazione e applicazione della legislazione UE in materia di protezione dei dati nei confronti degli enti pubblici e privati nell'Unione europea.

La Commissione desidera inoltre richiamare l'attenzione dell'onorevole deputato sulla proposta di riforma della normativa UE in materia di protezione dei dati ([1]). Il quadro legislativo proposto dalla Commissione rafforza e migliora le norme vigenti sulla protezione dei dati e stabilisce norme generali per la protezione dei dati personali trattati nell'ambito delle attività di contrasto.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002493/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Involvement of European agencies in the Datagate scandal

The Datagate scandal still lies very much at the forefront of the European institutions' concerns, and the damage caused to Europe's relationships with the United States cannot be mended so easily, especially when alarming reports are continuing to surface of top-secret documents being purloined by American spies. This time it is a British intelligence agency that is in the firing line, accused of having intercepted and stored, with the NSA's help, the webcam images of millions of users of an American Internet giant, as part of an operation codenamed Optic Nerve.

The operation dates back to 2008, when it appears that 1.8 million images and videos were collected in the space of a few months. According to the British newspaper that broke the story, the operation had no pre-selection criteria and the people whose data was intercepted were not suspected of any wrongdoing.

1. In light of the above, does the Commission know if any other European agencies have committed privacy violations by being involved in the Datagate scandal?

2. Is it conducting any investigations to check whether other agencies of Member States are involved in, or at least tacitly approve of, spying operations?

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

The Commission has been 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.

After the media reports broke out the Commission has actively followed-up on the reported allegations. With regard to the alleged practices in the UK and France, the Commission has asked the UK and French authorities to clarify the scope of the so-called 'Tempora programme' on the one hand and of the programme of the French Directorate General for External Security (DGSE) on the other hand. The Commission has also asked the UK and French authorities to provide information about the proportionality of those programmes, and the extent of judicial oversight that applies, bearing in mind that 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 Commission would also like to draw your attention to its proposed reform of the EU data protection legislation ([1]). The legislative framework proposed by the Commission strengthens and enhances existing data protection rules and establishes 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).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002494/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo software per sventare crimini digitali

Un gruppo di ricerca dell'Università di Trento ha messo a punto un nuovo software in grado di individuare in tempo reale e automatico i tentativi di furto di identità. Il progetto è durato tre anni ed è finanziato dalla Direzione generale affari interni della Commissione europea (200 mila EUR circa).

Il progetto può avere una valenza molto importante e un'applicazione pratica concreta e proficua dato che, come sottolineano numerosi esperti, nell'era informatica spesso vi è un continuo rincorrersi tra criminali digitali e forze di polizia postale, una gara in cui a vincere è spesso il più rapido, ma dove, purtroppo, scoprire un crimine e ancor più rintracciarne il colpevole risulta spesso essere un'operazione molto più lenta e tardiva rispetto al crimine stesso. In questo contesto, il software studiato a Trento potrà dare un contributo significativo non solo nella lotta, ma anche nella prevenzione di questi crimini informatici.

Alla luce di quanto detto, quali sono i prossimi passi che la Commissione intende porre in essere in merito all'ulteriore sviluppo e diffusione del software?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(25 aprile 2014)

Il finanziamento della Commissione a titolo della precedente linea di bilancio «Prevenzione e lotta contro la criminalità» (ISEC) ha tra i suoi obiettivi prioritari quello di fornire strumenti di facile utilizzo alle forze dell'ordine degli Stati membri, gratuitamente o a prezzi ragionevoli. Tale obiettivo continuerà ad essere sostenuto dal futuro Fondo sicurezza interna.

Tra i criteri chiave per la selezione dei progetti figurano la strategia di diffusione delle informazioni e la sostenibilità dei risultati. I fondi UE possono essere utilizzati anche a fini divulgativi. Nell'ambito del progetto citato dall'onorevole deputato si è scelto di divulgare i risultati attraverso vari canali, tra cui una serie di seminari e conferenze, nonché sul sito web dedicato al progetto stesso ([1]) e con la pubblicazione della relazione finale ([2]): tutte queste attività di divulgazione sono state finanziate a titolo dell'ISEC.

La Commissione richiama ulteriormente l'attenzione sui progetti rendendo disponibili le informazioni al riguardo sul proprio sito web e in pubblicazioni, a seconda dei casi. Per gli strumenti e i programmi software che potrebbero rivelarsi utili alle forze dell'ordine, la Commissione ha chiesto all'Europol di creare un «repertorio di strumenti» che le forze dell'ordine e altre parti interessate negli Stati membri possano utilizzare per passare in rassegna le soluzioni disponibili. La banca dati dovrebbe permettere la raccolta di strumenti e software sviluppati grazie a finanziamenti UE, o messi a disposizione dagli Stati membri o da altre fonti, per garantire che tutte le forze dell'ordine abbiano accesso alle opzioni più recenti.

([1]) https://www.webproid.unitn.it/index.php/it
([2]) https://www.webproid.unitn.it/report/eCrime_Research_Reports-01.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002494/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: New software to deter digital crime

A research team from Trento University has developed a new software package capable of detecting identity theft automatically and in real time, the outcome of a project which has lasted three years and is funded by the European Commission's Directorate General for Home Affairs (at a cost of approximately EUR 200 000).

The project could be of key significance and have practical, concrete and fruitful application given that, as emphasised by a number of experts, there are frequently, in this electronic age, on-going games of cat and mouse between digital criminals and postal police forces, in which the fastest will win. Unfortunately, however, the discovery of the crime and, to an even greater extent, identification of the culprit, is frequently a far slower process than the crime itself. Given this situation, the software package designed at Trento could provide a significant contribution not only in terms of combating, but also preventing this kind of computer crime.

In the light of the above, what steps does the Commission intend to take in the near future to further the development and use of the software?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The Commission's funding under the previous Prevention of and Fight Against Crime (ISEC) budget line has as one of its central aims to deliver easy-to-use tools, free of charge or at reasonable prices, to law enforcement in the Member States. This goal will continue to be supported under the future Internal Security Fund.

A dissemination strategy and the sustainability of results are among the key criteria for the selection of projects, and EU funding can also be used for dissemination purposes. The project cited by the Honourable Member has chosen to disseminate its results through various channels, including a series of workshops and conferences, as well as through its website ([1]) and the publication of its final report ([2]), all of which have been financed via ISEC.

The Commission draws additional attention to projects by making information on them available on its own website and in publications, as appropriate. For tools and software that could be potentially useful to law enforcement, the Commission has asked Europol to build a 'tools repository' as a resource for law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders from the Member States, to provide an overview of available solutions. This repository should allow for the collection of tools and software both developed with EU funding and available from Member States or other sources to ensure that all law enforcement agencies have access to the latest options.

([1]) https://www.webproid.unitn.it/index.php/en
([2]) https://www.webproid.unitn.it/report/eCrime_Research_Reports-01.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002495/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Prospettive e applicazioni della «carta connessa»

La tecnologia digitale ha un ruolo sempre più importante nella vita quotidiana dei cittadini europei, così come il suo grado di penetrazione è sempre maggiore anche nel mondo delle imprese. Una novità interessante è stata presentata la scorsa settimana al «Mobile Wold Congress» di Barcellona: una famosa multinazionale svedese ha presentato un dimostratore della «connected paper», la «carta connessa», di cui un'anteprima era stata data anche al CES di Las Vegas, poche settimane fa.

Questa tecnologia permette alla carta di comunicare direttamente con un dispositivo elettronico — smartphone o tablet — tramite il semplice contatto tra i due. La tecnologia è potenzialmente applicabile a riviste, giornali, pacchi postali, confezioni alimentari e così via. In tal modo, sarà possibile visionare sullo schermo del dispositivo diverse informazioni aggiuntive relative a un prodotto, come la scadenza, le caratteristiche essenziali o informazioni sulla tracciabilità.

In termini pratici, l'etichetta stampata è costruita attorno ad una antenna, una batteria e un piccolo chip di silicio in cui sono inseriti i dati relativi al prodotto. È poi il corpo stesso a fungere da collegamento con il dispositivo, su cui sarà possibile ricevere e visualizzare i dati.

La tecnologia è in fase sperimentale, ma le applicazioni sono potenzialmente infinite e potrebbero portare a numerosi vantaggi in termini di garanzia di qualità e sicurezza dei prodotti, garantendo la solidità della posizione del consumatore sul mercato.

1. In merito a quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se è già a conoscenza della tecnologia in oggetto?

2. Ha in programma di analizzare le potenziali ripercussioni positive di questa nuova tecnologia ai fini del potenziamento del mercato interno e della protezione dei consumatori?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(22 aprile 2014)

La risposta alla prima domanda è sì.

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle tecnologie cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato e ne ha sostenuto lo sviluppo nell'ambito di svariati progetti a partire dal Sesto programma quadro per la ricerca e lo sviluppo. Alcune delle tecnologie sviluppate hanno raggiunto un grado elevato di maturità e presentano ora opportunità commerciali.

La Commissione è consapevole dei potenziali benefici per il mercato interno e la protezione dei consumatori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002495/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Perspectives and applications of 'connected paper'

Digital technology is playing an increasing role in the everyday lives of European citizens and its level of penetration is also increasing in the corporate world. An interesting innovation was presented last week at the 'Mobile World Congress' in Barcelona. A famous Swedish multinational presented a 'connected paper' demonstrator, a preview of which had also been given at the Las Vegas CES a few weeks ago.

The technology allows the paper to communicate directly with an electronic device (smartphone or tablet) based simply on contact between the two and is potentially applicable to magazines, newspapers, parcels, food packaging and so on. It will enable additional information on a product, i.e. sell-by dates, essential features and information on traceability, to be displayed on the screen of the device used.

In practical terms, the printed label is built around an antenna, battery and small silicone chip in which data on the product is entered. The human body then acts as a link to the device, on which it will be possible to receive and display data.

Although still at the experimental stage, the applications of this technology are potentially infinite and could bring numerous benefits in terms of guaranteed product quality and safety and enhancement of the consumer's position on the market.

1. With reference to the above, can the Commission clarify whether it is aware of the technology in question?

2. Does the Commission envisage analysing the potential positive repercussions of this new technology in terms of strengthening of the internal market and consumer protection?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The answer to the first question of the Honourable Member is yes.

The Commission is indeed aware of the technologies referred to and in fact has been supporting their development in several projects since the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development. Some of the technology developments reached a high level of maturity and can be exploited in the market.

The Commission is aware of the potential benefits for the internal market and consumer protection.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002496/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Salvaguardia dei mercati rionali

Nella città capitolina si tenta di ridare slancio ad antichi e tradizionali luoghi deputati allo scambio economico e all'interazione interpersonale: i mercati rionali.

Centri peculiari, che svolgono una funzione necessaria sia a livello sociale che economico per i diversi quartieri romani, essi si ripropongono quali elementi di sviluppo e rigenerazione territoriale, svecchiando la propria immagine, attraverso una serie di misure idonee a promuoverne le attività.

Riguardo a tali misure viene proposto, ad esempio, un programma di apertura dei mercati itinerante, per le differenti aree urbane; si considera la collaborazione con soggetti della media e grande distribuzione (al fine di rilevare e riattivare i banchi abbandonati) e la possibilità di somministrare alimenti ai clienti.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione:

1. fornire informazioni riguardo al ruolo dei mercati rionali nell'economia europea;

2. fornire informazioni riguardo alle buone pratiche di rigenerazione dei mercati in altri Stati membri;

3. far sapere se esistono progetti pilota da cui trarre ispirazione e insegnamento?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione non raccoglie dati sul ruolo dei mercati locali nell'economia europea.

2.-3. La Commissione non raccoglie dati sui progetti di riqualificazione dei mercati locali. È tuttavia a conoscenza di un progetto nell'ambito del quale la città di Rotterdam sta riqualificando il suo mercato locale del centro città in modo sostenibile e intelligente, combinando ristorazione, attività per il tempo libero, abitabilità e parcheggi. Per ulteriori informazioni:
www.markthalrotterdam.nl/en/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002496/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Preserving local markets

Rome is attempting to breathe new life into local markets, which have traditionally been focal points for commerce and community life.

These markets, which play an important social and economic role in Rome's various districts, are now viewed as key vehicles for local regeneration and development and a range of measures are being taken to given them a higher, more modern profile.

One example of this is a programme to open travelling markets in various parts of the city. Other measures, such as working with medium-sized and large retail outlets with a view to taking over and reopening abandoned stalls and serving food, are also being considered.

1. Can the Commission provide information on the role local markets play in the European economy?

2. Can it provide information on best practice in the regeneration of markets in other Member States?

3. Can it say whether any pilot projects are in place from which ideas and lessons may be drawn?

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

1. The Commission does not collect data on the role of local markets in the European economy.

2 and 3. The Commission does not collect data on projects which regenerate local markets. However, it is aware of a project where the city of Rotterdam is regenerating its inner city market in a sustainable and intelligent way by combining food, leisure, living and parking. For more information: www.markthalrotterdam.nl/en/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002497/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Dati personali e danni economici

Il rapporto del Ponemon Institute «Dati persi, soldi persi», che analizza in maniera puntuale i danni economici causati dai dati personali «rubati» da terzi, mostra dati preoccupanti. Il rapporto suddivide la perdita di dati personali in base alle cause, che vanno dall'errore umano, a problemi di sistema, fino al problema più frequente e pericoloso, quello degli attacchi criminali, per causare un danno economico alle aziende e impossessarsi dei dati personali dei visitatori dei siti, dei clienti e degli iscritti alle newsletter. A guidare questa triste classifica ci sono ovviamente gli Stati Uniti, ma sono seguiti a ruota dagli Stati membri dell'UE: solo Germania, Francia, Regno Unito e Italia hanno subito un danno aggregato di oltre 1,8 miliardi di dollari. I crimini informatici causano ogni anno danni per 113 miliardi di dollari e nel 2012 le vittime di queste frodi sono state oltre 378 milioni.

1. Ciò premesso, può la Commissione indicare quali strumenti legislativi e non offre a garanzia e protezione dei dati personali di cittadini e aziende degli Stati membri?

2. È in possesso di report o dati dell'EDPS che possano confermare, negare o integrare quelli del Ponemon Institute?

3. Può chiarire se, nel corso dei numerosi attacchi informatici che le istituzioni europee hanno subito negli ultimi anni, sono stati rubati dati personali a dipendenti, deputati, funzionari, o semplicemente contatti e, in caso affermativo, può quantificare il danno?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

La direttiva 95/46/CE ([1]) sulla protezione dei dati personali è il principale strumento a livello dell'UE che stabilisce i diritti delle persone fisiche i cui dati personali sono oggetto di trattamento. Tutti gli Stati membri hanno recepito tale direttiva nel diritto nazionale. La protezione prevista dalla direttiva si applica alle persone fisiche, a prescindere dalla nazionalità o dal luogo di residenza, in relazione al trattamento dei dati personali ([2]).

In materia di notifiche di violazioni dei dati personali, esistono attualmente norme armonizzate a livello dell'UE solo per quanto riguarda la comunicazione elettronica, ai sensi della direttiva ePrivacy riveduta (2009/136/CE). La proposta della Commissione di un regolamento generale sulla protezione dei dati ([3]) introduce un obbligo generale di notifica delle violazioni dei dati personali, in linea con le norme per il settore delle comunicazioni elettroniche. La proposta è attualmente oggetto di dibattito presso il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio.

Il trattamento dei dati personali da parte delle istituzioni, organi e organismi dell'Unione è disciplinato dal regolamento (CE) n. 45/2001 ([4]), il quale non contiene alcuna disposizione per quanto riguarda la notifica delle violazioni dei dati personali.

La Commissione è consapevole della seria minaccia costituita da possibili attacchi informatici contro le istituzioni dell'UE.

Per quanto riguarda la Commissione e le sue infrastrutture, nell'ultimo anno gli strumenti di sicurezza esistenti hanno rilevato e respinto molti tentativi, sempre maggiori e sempre più sofisticati, di infiltrazione nella rete e nei server. È stato sviluppato un piano d'azione globale contro gli attacchi informatici che viene costantemente aggiornato. Sono stati predisposti strumenti per rafforzare il controllo degli accessi e delle autenticazioni e per migliorare il monitoraggio della rete e del sistema.

Per evitare di fornire agli hacker informazioni sugli strumenti di difesa utilizzati, non è possibile divulgare maggiori informazioni.

([1]) Direttiva 95/46/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 24 ottobre 1995, relativa alla tutela delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali, nonché alla libera circolazione di tali dati (GU L 281 del 23.11.1995, pag. 31).
([2]) Volker und Markus Schecke GbR (C-92/09).
([3]) COM(2012) 11 definitivo.
([4]) Regolamento (CE) n. 45/2001 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 18 dicembre 2000, concernente la tutela delle persone fisiche in relazione al trattamento dei dati personali da parte delle istituzioni e degli organismi comunitari, nonché la libera circolazione di tali dati (GU L 8 del 12.1.2001, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002497/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Personal data and economic loss

The report by the Ponemon Institute 'Data lost, money lost', which provides a detailed analysis of economic loss caused by the 'theft' of personal data by third parties, makes for disturbing reading. The report categorises personal data loss according to the causes, which range from human error to system problems to criminal attack (the most frequent and dangerous problem), causing economic loss to companies and appropriating personal data on visitors to websites, customers and newsletter subscribers. Unsurprisingly, the United States heads this sad league table, although hot on its heels are the Member States. Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy alone have suffered an aggregated loss of over 1.8 billion dollars. Computer crime results in the loss of 113 billion dollars per year and in 2012 there were over 378 million victims of this type of fraud.

1. In consideration of the above, can the Commission identify the legislative instruments, if any, it provides to guarantee and protect personal data on citizens and companies in Member States?

2. Is the Commission in possession of reports or data from the EDPS which confirm, deny or augment those produced by the Ponemon Institute?

3. Can the Commission clarify whether, during the numerous computer attacks sustained by European institutions in recent years, personal data on employees, parliamentarians, officials or simply contacts has been stolen and, if so, can it quantify the resultant economic loss?

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

Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of personal data ([1]) is the main instrument at EU level which sets out the rights of individuals when their personal data are being processed. All Member States have implemented this directive into national law. The protection afforded by the directive concerns natural persons, whatever their nationality or place of residence, in relation to the processing of personal data ([2]).

EU wide harmonised rules on the notification for personal data breaches currently only exist for the electronic communications sector under the revised ePrivacy Directive (2009/136/EC). The Commission's proposal for a General Data Protection Regulation ([3]) introduces a general personal data breach notification obligation, consistent with the rules for the electronic communications sector. This proposal is currently being discussed by the European Parliament and the Council.

The processing of personal data by Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies is governed by Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 ([4]). The latter does not contain a provision on personal data breach notification.

The Commission is aware of the serious threat from cyber-attacks against the EU institutions.

Concerning the Commission and its infrastructures, the protective security tools detected and repulsed a large, increasing, and more and more sophisticated number of attempts to infiltrate the network and servers during the last years. A comprehensive action plan against cyber-attacks was developed, which is constantly updated. Tools are implemented to strengthen access control and authentication and to improve network and system monitoring.

As attackers would get an insight of the defender's capabilities, no further information can be provided.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281 of 23.11.1995, p. 31.
([2]) Volker und Markus Schecke GbR (C-92/09).
([3]) COM(2012) 11 final.
([4]) Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002498/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Uccisione di cani randagi in Macedonia

Ci arrivano preoccupanti segnalazioni dagli animalisti dell'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia, dove il prezioso lavoro di sterilizzazione e segnalazione tramite microchip di cani randagi, compiuto da un gruppo di volontari, rischia di essere compromesso: i volontari denunciano che a breve i cani randagi verranno uccisi; per quelli di grossa taglia sarebbe già iniziata la mattanza, con metodi contrari a qualsiasi legislazione sul benessere animale, comprese le bastonate. Il caso dell'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia non è molto diverso da quanto accade — e già denunciato in precedenza dall'interrogante — in Bosnia-Erzegovina e in uno Stato membro come la Romania, o in qualsiasi altro paese che debba organizzare un evento di massa come la «UEFA European Championship 2012» in Ucraina o le Olimpiadi invernali in Russia. Più volte l'interrogante ha invitato le istituzioni europee a tentare, nei limiti delle loro competenze, di tutelare i diritti e la salute degli animali anche nelle relazioni esterne con i paesi partner, ma a quanto pare questo non avviene.

1. Non ritiene la Commissione di dover consigliare all'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia strumenti di sterilizzazione e adozione dei cani randagi, a fronte del suo status di candidato all'ingresso nell'Unione europea, nonché di vigilare sulle uccisioni di cani randagi?

2. Non ritiene la Commissione che l'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia, sempre in linea con il suo status di candidato, debba rispettare le legislazioni europee in materia di benessere animale?

3. Può la Commissione chiarire quale ruolo hanno le leggi sul benessere animale nell'ambito dell'adesione di paesi terzi all'Unione europea, o se a tale riguardo sono presi in considerazione soltanto indicatori economici e il rispetto dei diritti umani?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente del problema dei cani randagi nell'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia.

Rinvia quindi l'onorevole deputato alle denunce relative a questioni analoghe in Romania (risposta della Commissione europea alla denuncia CHAP(2013) 3076 (2013/C 343/10) ([1]).

Il benessere e la gestione delle popolazioni di animali randagi non sono disciplinati da norme UE, rientrando tra le competenze esclusive dei vari paesi. Il trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, che, all'articolo 13, prevede che nella formulazione e nell'attuazione di alcune politiche dell'UE si tenga pienamente conto delle esigenze in materia di benessere degli animali, non fornisce una base giuridica che permette di coprire tutte le questioni relative al benessere degli animali. La legislazione dell'UE in materia di protezione degli animali durante l'abbattimento [regolamento (CE) n. 1099/2009 del Consiglio] riguarda specificamente l'abbattimento degli animali nei macelli e negli allevamenti. Gli animali abbattuti in circostanze diverse non rientrano nel campo di applicazione di tale regolamento.

La Commissione sostiene il lavoro dell'*Organizzazione mondiale per la salute* degli animali (OIE) nell'ambito della piattaforma regionale sul benessere degli animali in Europa, assistendo i paesi membri dell'OIE, come l'ex Repubblica jugoslava di Macedonia, a raggiungere gli standard stabiliti.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013XC1123(02)&rid=1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002498/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Killing of stray dogs in Macedonia

We are receiving alarming reports from animal welfare groups in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where the valuable work of sterilising stray dogs and tagging them with microchips that has been carried out by a group of volunteers risks being undermined. The volunteers report that the country's stray dogs are shortly to be put down, and it would appear that this process has already begun with larger dogs, using methods that fly in the face of animal welfare legislation and include clubbing to death. The situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is not very different from that — as reported by me in an earlier question — in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Romania, which is a Member State, and in countries organising major events such as the UEFA European Championship (Ukraine) and the Winter Olympics (Russia). I have repeatedly called on the European institutions to do what they can within the limits of their powers to uphold the rights and welfare of animals, including in their relations with partner countries, but they would not appear to be doing so.

1. Would the Commission not agree that, given the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's status as a candidate country, it should advise it to use sterilisation and adoption as means of dealing with the problem of stray dogs and should monitor the situation as regards the killing of such dogs?

2. Would it not agree that, as a candidate country, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should observe European animal welfare legislation?

3. Can it say whether animal welfare laws are accorded any importance in connection within the accession of third countries to the European Union, or whether only economic indicators and respect for human rights are taken into consideration in this regard?

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

The Commission is aware of the issue of stray dogs in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the complaints related to similar issues in Romania (European Commission Reply to complaint CHAP(2013) 3076 (2013/C 343/10) ([1]).

The welfare and management of stray animal population is not governed by EU rules and remains under the sole responsibility of the country. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which under Article 13 requires full regard for the welfare requirements of animals when formulating and implementing some EU policies, does not provide a legal base permitting all animal welfare issues to be addressed. The EU rules on the protection of animals at the time of killing (Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009) deal specifically with the killing of animals in slaughterhouses and those kept for farming purposes. Animals killed under other circumstances are not covered by this regulation.

The Commission supports the work of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe, assisting OIE member countries, such as the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to reach set standards.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013XC1123(02)&rid=1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002499/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Baby app e ludopatie

I nomi richiamano l'infanzia ma l'uso che se ne fa è tra i più pericolosi. Infatti, Slots Jungle, Candy Slots, Dino Slots e Sweet Bingo altro non sono che baby app per smartphone e tablet, ossia app per slot machines rivolte ai più piccoli. A rivelarlo in un'inchiesta è un noto quotidiano italiano che parla di giochi d'azzardo per bambini, dove non si spendono soldi ma si guadagnano punti per continuare a giocare, creando dipendenza e abitudine al gioco. La notizia sconcertante arriva in concomitanza con la ricerca condotta dalla Asl di Milano, secondo la quale nel capoluogo lombardo, dove sono tra 4000 e 6000 i cittadini dipendenti dal gioco d'azzardo, molti degli intervistati dichiarano di aver aumentato la posta in gioco rispetto allo scorso anno (più di 100 euro al mese) e di stare male se non giocano. La ludopatia diventa così una dipendenza senza sostanze.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza della diffusione delle baby app?

2. Può far sapere se in altri Stati membri è stato ravvisato lo stesso problema e come questo viene affrontato?

3. Vista la gravità del problema, che può diventare un viatico per le dipendenze da gioco in età adulta, non reputa la Commissione necessario informare i bambini dei rischi fin dall'età prescolare e preparare con programmi adeguati e mirati insegnanti e genitori?

4. Può la Commissione fornire, ove possibile, i dati delle dipendenze da gioco nelle principali città europee?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(7 maggio 2014)

La Commissione prende nota delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputata.

La Commissione è al corrente della disponibilità di giochi per bambini nelle applicazioni per dispositivi mobili. Una larga maggioranza di bambini, e sempre più precocemente, utilizza Internet attraverso una serie di dispositivi connessi (cfr. le relazioni EU Kids Online ([1])).

La Commissione non è in possesso di dati esaurienti che ideb-ntificano un nesso tra i giochi per bambini e la creazione di una consuetudine a giocare d'azzardo e di una futura dipendenza, né dati su questo tema che siano comparabili tra uno Stato membro e l'altro. Tuttavia, un progetto europeo di ricerca ([2]) indica che circa il 6 % degli adolescenti gioca d'azzardo online, un dato che può indicare un uso disfunzionale di Internet.

Come l'onorevole deputata saprà da precedenti risposte ([3]), la Commissione condivide le preoccupazioni sollevate. È quindi importante adottare misure protettive contro contenuti potenzialmente pericolosi, come il gioco d'azzardo, agevolando al tempo stesso l'accesso di bambini e ragazzi ai vantaggi offerti da Internet per quanto riguarda attività ricreative, forme di apprendimento e altre interazioni online positive. L'istruzione e la consapevolezza riguardo al gioco d'azzardo sono fondamentali. Più in generale, le azioni intraprese dal comparto su base volontaria svolgono un ruolo importante ai fini della classificazione dei contenuti online e del miglioramento degli strumenti di controllo ad uso dei genitori ([4]).

Infine, la Commissione sta preparando due raccomandazioni con l'obiettivo di fornire un elevato livello di protezione comune ai consumatori dei servizi connessi al gioco d'azzardo, compresa la tutela dei minori, e di garantire una pubblicità del gioco d'azzardo responsabile. Gli Stati membri saranno incoraggiati ad attuare le raccomandazioni, compresa la raccolta di dati sui consumatori che partecipano ai servizi di gioco d'azzardo online.

([1]) http://www.lse.ac.uk/media%40lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx
([2]) http://www.eunetadb.eu/en/results/publications/6-eu-net-adb-short-versionhttp:/www.eunetadb.eu/en/results/publications/6-eu-net-adb-short-version
([3]) E-001725/2013, E-002927/2013.
([4]) Coalizione CEO per rendere Internet un luogo migliore per i bambini: http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/self-regulation-better-internet-kids.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002499/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Baby apps and compulsive gambling

The names take you straight back to childhood, but what is behind them is much more sinister. Slots Jungle, Candy Slots, Dino Slots and Sweet Bingo are slot-machine apps for smartphones and tablets that are targeted directly at very young children ('baby apps'). A leading Italian daily recently carried an article on these games of chance for children, in which, although no money is involved, points need to be earned in order to be able to carry on playing, thus drawing children into the habit of gambling and laying the groundwork for future dependency. This alarming news coincides with the publication of a survey conducted by the local health authority in Milan, where between 4 000 and 6 000 people are addicted to games of chance. Many of the respondents said they were betting more than they had the previous year (more than EUR 100 per month) and felt unhappy when they were not gambling. Compulsive gambling is thus a disorder on a par with drug dependency.

1. Is the Commission aware of the availability of baby apps?

2. Can it say whether the same problem has been identified in other Member States and, if so, how it is being dealt with?

3. Given that the use of such apps by children could increase the likelihood of them becoming addicted to gambling in adulthood, would the Commission not agree that children from pre-school age upwards should be made aware of the risks involved and appropriate, targeted programmes should be set up to help parents and teachers deal with this extremely serious problem?

4. Can the Commission provide figures on gambling addiction in Europe's main cities?

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

The Commission takes note of the information provided by the Honourable Member.

The Commission is aware of the availability of children's games through mobile applications. A large majority of children use the Internet, increasingly at younger ages through a range of connected devices (see e.g. the EU Kids Online reports ([1])).

The Commission does not have comprehensive researched data that would identify a link between children's games and drawing children into the habit of gambling and future dependency, or data that is comparable across Member States on this issue. Nevertheless, a European research project ([2]) suggests that around 6% of adolescents gamble online which can be associated with dysfunctional Internet behaviour.

As the Honourable Member was informed in previous responses ([3]), the Commission shares the concerns raised. It is important to take protective measures against potentially harmful content, such as gambling, while at the same time facilitating access of children to the benefits of the Internet, such as learning, leisure activities and other positive online interactions. Education and awareness about gambling are key. More generally, industry voluntary action plays an important role in the field of online content classification and improvement of parental control tools ([4]).

Finally, the Commission is preparing two recommendations with the aim of providing a high level of common protection of consumers of gambling services, including the protection of children, and responsible gambling advertising. Member States will be encouraged to implement the recommendations, including the collection of data about consumers participating in online gambling services.

([1]) http://www.lse.ac.uk/media%40lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx
([2]) http://www.eunetadb.eu/en/results/publications/6-eu-net-adb-short-version
([3]) E-001725/2013, E-002927/2013.
([4]) CEO Coalition to Make the Internet a Better Place for Kids: http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/self-regulation-better-Internet-kids

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002500/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Maltrattamenti di cani in Italia

Giungono numerose e preoccupanti segnalazioni relative ad abusi sugli animali che sarebbero stati compiuti in Sicilia, con l'avvelenamento di 13 cani a Monreale (in provincia di Palermo). Il tutto è un'ovvia conseguenza dell'assenza, sul territorio, di Presidi Sanitari, di locali ambulatoriali, di rifugi, di canili e/o di convenzioni con strutture private, assenza che costituisce un inadempimento delle leggi italiane in merito. Numerose persone hanno già scritto al Ministro della Sanità italiano chiedendogli di adempiere alle legislazioni europee e nazionali sul benessere animale, che evidentemente in Sicilia non riescono ad essere adeguatamente implementate per la mancanza di strutture adeguate.

La Commissione:

1. prevede strumenti di finanziamento per la creazione di rifugi per cani randagi?

2. Quali norme in tema di benessere animale è in grado di applicare in questi frangenti?

3. Non ritiene di dover monitorare con dati statistici aggiornati la presenza e la gestione dei cani randagi all'interno dei suoi Stati membri, così come gli atti criminali compiuti contro di loro?

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

Si rinvia l'Onorevole deputata alla risposta alle interrogazioni scritte E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 ed E-005276/2013 ([1]) che affrontano la problematica dei cani randagi e della gestione delle popolazioni canine.

Le competenze dell'UE non consentono alla Commissione di finanziare la creazione di rifugi per i cani randagi.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002500/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Ill-treatment of dogs in Italy

There have been numerous disturbing reports concerning the abuse of animals in Sicily, including the poisoning of 13 dogs in Monreale (in Palermo Province). This is a clear consequence of the absence in this area of veterinary facilities, outpatient clinics, refuges, kennels and/or participation agreements with private structures, an absence which represents a breach of the applicable Italian legislation. Many people have already written to the Italian Minister for Health calling for compliance with national and European animal welfare legislation, which is clearly not adequately implemented in Sicily due to a lack of adequate structures.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it envisage measures to fund the creation of refuges for stray dogs?

2. What animal welfare regulations can be applied in these problematic situations?

3. Does the Commission not accept the need to monitor, on the basis of up-to-date statistics, the existence and management of stray dogs in its Member States and the incidence of criminal acts perpetrated against them?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 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 the creation of refuges for stray dogs.

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002501/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Responsabilità in tema di etichettatura dei prodotti tessili

Gli artt. 4, 9 e 16 del regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 sull'etichettatura dei prodotti tessili prevedono responsabilità specifiche sull'immissione sul mercato dei prodotti tessili che devono essere etichettati con l'indicazione della composizione fibrosa e la denominazione per esteso delle fibre tessili nella lingua ufficiale dello Stato membro sul cui territorio i prodotti tessili vengono messi a disposizione del consumatore e con percentuale in peso di tutte le fibre in ordine decrescente.

In Italia, sulla scorta del decreto legislativo 194/1999, anche il piccolo operatore commerciale viene sanzionato — a seguito di un controllo visivo — con multe fino a 3 098 euro in caso di etichetta non conforme (ad esempio perché contiene la dicitura «100 % Cotton» anziché «Cotone» (e cioè in una lingua difforme da quella dello Stato membro in cui è venduto il prodotto) oppure perché è indicato un codice meccanografico anziché la denominazione della fibra per esteso («100 % CO» anziché «100 % Cotone»).

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione europea indicare:

— se tale sanzione ai piccoli commercianti sia prevista anche in altri Stati membri dell'UE, per non assistere a situazioni di concorrenza sleale ai danni dei commercianti italiani?

— Un quadro dell'applicazione di tale regolamento a livello di UE con particolare riguardo alla tutela dei piccoli commercianti?

— Un quadro delle misure previste a livello di UE per sostenere le attività legate al piccolo commercio?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(23 aprile 2014)

La Commissione sta attualmente preparando una relazione sull'applicazione del regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 ([1]), che dovrebbe essere presentata al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio entro l'8 novembre 2014 a norma dell'articolo 23 del medesimo regolamento.

Nella suddetta relazione la Commissione intende fornire una panoramica delle sanzioni irrogate negli Stati membri in caso di violazione delle disposizioni del regolamento ai distributori, compresi i piccoli distributori.

Come risulta dalla valutazione preliminare, il livello delle sanzioni dipende dalla gravità dell'infrazione e dalla sua frequenza, e la sanzione può variare da un avvertimento ad una pena più severa, quale il ritiro dal mercato dei prodotti non conformi. Non sono previste eccezioni per i piccoli distributori, anche se il livello delle sanzioni può essere diverso tra persone fisiche e giuridiche.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1007/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 27 settembre 2011, relativo alle denominazioni delle fibre tessili e all'etichettatura e al contrassegno della composizione fibrosa dei prodotti tessili — GU L 272 del 18.10.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002501/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Responsibilities with regard to the labelling of textile products

Articles 4, 9 and 16 of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 on the labelling of textile products impose specific responsibilities with regard to the introduction to the market of textile products, the labelling of which is required to indicate the fibre composition and full name of the textile fibres used in the official language of the Member State on whose territory the textile products are provided to the consumer and the percentage by weight of all fibres used in descending order.

In Italy, under Legislative Decree 194/1999, the sanctions extend to the small trader who, as a result of a visual inspection, is liable to fines of up to EUR 3 098 for labelling which does not comply with the above Regulation, for example because it contains the phrase '100% Cotton' rather than '*Cotone*' (hence in a language other than that of the Member State in which the product is sold) or a mechanised processing code rather than the full name of the fibre used ('100% CO' rather than '100% Cotone').

In consideration of the above, the European Commission is asked the following questions:

— Is this sanction on small traders imposed in other EU Member States to prevent unfair competition to the detriment of Italian traders?

— Can the Commission provide an overview of the application of this regulation at EU level, with particular reference to the protection of small traders?

— Can the Commission provide an overview of measures imposed at EU level to support the activities of small traders?

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

The Commission is currently preparing a report on the application of Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 ([1]) which is due to be submitted to the European Parliament and to the Council by 8 November 2014 on the basis of Article 23 of this regulation.

In this report, the Commission has the intention to provide an overview of sanctions for the infringement of the provisions of the regulation imposed in the Member States on distributors, including the small ones.

As it appears from the preliminary assessment, the level of sanctions depend on the gravity of infringement and its recurrence, and the sanction may go from a warning to a more severe penalty, such as the withdrawal of non-compliant products from the market. There are, however, no exceptions for small distributors, though the level of sanctions may be different for physical and legal persons.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1007/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of 27 September 2011 on textile fibre names and related labelling and marking of the fibre composition of textile products — OJ L 272, 18.10.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002502/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuova programmazione del programma di sviluppo «Spazio Alpino» 2014-2020

Nel settembre 2007 la Commissione europea ha avviato «Spazio Alpino», un programma di cooperazione transnazionale che coinvolgeva Italia, Germania, Francia, Austria e Slovenia con la partecipazione anche di Liechtenstein e Svizzera.

L'obiettivo di questo programma è accrescere la competitività e l'attrattiva delle regioni coinvolte attraverso lo sviluppo di azioni comuni in ambiti in cui la cooperazione transnazionale può risultare maggiormente efficace.

Può la Commissione indicare:

1. i dettagli in merito al futuro del programma Spazio Alpino per il 2014-2020?

2. Se intende predisporre programmi di sviluppo regionale (PSR) unici e coordinati tra aree omogenee tra regioni?

3. Quali saranno le priorità del programma, la dotazione economica e le percentuali di ripartizione della stessa per ogni priorità stabilita?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 aprile 2014)

1. Il programma «Spazio alpino» 2014-2020 è attualmente in via di preparazione ad opera di tutti e sette i paesi partecipanti. Esso dovrebbe essere sottoposto alla Commissione entro la metà di settembre 2014. La Task Force incaricata di definire i contenuti del programma, che comprende rappresentanti di tutti i paesi partecipanti, ha già concordato le seguenti tre priorità: «Uno spazio alpino innovativo», «Uno spazio alpino a basse emissioni di carbonio» e «Uno spazio alpino vivibile».

2. Nel dicembre 2013 il Consiglio europeo ha invitato la Commissione a sviluppare, in cooperazione con gli Stati membri, una strategia macroregionale dell'UE per la Regione alpina. Al di là dei programmi condotti nell'ambito dell'obiettivo di cooperazione territoriale, anche tutti gli altri programmi pertinenti dei fondi strutturali e di investimento europei condotti nei paesi e nelle regioni interessate dovrebbero contribuire adeguatamente a questa strategia macroregionale. Ciò serve a garantire che la strategia alpina dell'UE venga inserita in tutti i programmi pertinenti grazie a un quadro comune e a un'impronta comune, e sia sviluppata in partenariato con le autorità nazionali e regionali interessate.

3. I finanziamenti disponibili a valere sul FESR per il programma «Spazio alpino» 2014-2020 ammontano a 116 milioni di EUR, ma non è stato ancora deciso lo stanziamento che verrà attribuito a ciascuna priorità.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002502/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: New planning of the 'Alpine Space' Development Programme for 2014-2020

In September 2007 the European Commission launched the 'Alpine Space' Development Programme for transnational corporation between Italy, Germany, France, Austria and Slovenia with the participation of Lichtenstein and Switzerland.

The objective of the programme is to increase the competitiveness and attractiveness of the regions involved through the development of joint actions in areas in which transnational cooperation is liable to prove most effective.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can it provide details on the future of the Alpine Space Programme for 2014-2020?

2. Does the Commission intend to formulate Regional Development Programmes (RDP) which are unified and coordinated among homogenous areas in the regions?

3. Can the Commission define the priorities of this programme, its economic appropriation and the percentage allocation of funds to each defined priority?

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

1. The 2014-2020 Alpine Space Programme is currently being prepared by all seven participating countries. This is expected to be submitted to the Commission by mid-September 2014. The Task Force in charge of defining the contents of this programme, which includes representatives of all participating countries, has already agreed on the following three priorities: 'An Innovative Alpine Space'; 'A Low Carbon Alpine Space' and 'A liveable Alpine Space'.

2. In December 2013, the European Council invited the Commission to develop, in cooperation with the Member States, an EU Macro-regional Strategy for the Alpine Region. Beyond the programmes under the territorial cooperation objective all other relevant European Structural and Investment Fund programmes in the countries and regions concerned shall also contribute appropriately to this macro-regional strategy. This is to guarantee that the EU Alpine Strategy is embedded in all relevant programmes, by providing a common framework and rationale and is developed in partnership with the national and regional authorities concerned.

3. Available ERDF funding for the 2014-2020 Alpine Space Programme is EUR 116 million, but the allocation to each priority is not yet decided.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-002503/14
aan de Commissie
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(4 maart 2014)

Betreft: Bewustmaking van onze leefstijl

Meer dan 60% van onze ziekten zijn leefstijl gerelateerd. Wij, de Europese bevolking, eten nog steeds te vet, te zout en te zoet. Van kinds af aan worden wij hieraan verslaafd gemaakt en denken niet meer zonder te kunnen.

Voor tabak heeft de EU wettelijke maatregelen genomen om de consumenten te waarschuwen voor de gevaren van roken.

Reclames van eten en drinken met veel suiker, vet of zout op de Franse televisie worden vergezeld van een positieve opmerking onder in beeld.

Bijvoorbeeld: „Eet drie stuks vers fruit per dag", „Eet 300 gram verse groenten per dag", of „Beweeg tenminste een half uur per dag".

Dit heeft een preventieve werking op de leefstijl en hiermee kunnen ziekten worden voorkomen.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met de wijze van reclame in Frankrijk?

2. Is de Commissie met mij van mening dat veel ziekten kunnen worden voorkomen door aanpassing van de leefstijl?

3. Is de Commissie bereid om te onderzoeken of, zoals bij tabaksproducten, een leefstijladvies bijdraagt aan het gezonder worden van de bevolking? Zo ja wanneer? Zo neen, waarom niet?

4. Is de Commissie bereid om met voorstellen te komen voor leefstijladvies? Zo ja, wanneer? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(31 maart 2014)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van de wijze waarop in Frankrijk reclame wordt gevoerd.

Voedingsadviezen zijn een nationale verantwoordelijkheid. De Europese Commissie steunt de nationale inspanningen via maatregelen in het kader van de EU-strategie uit 2007 voor aan voeding, overgewicht en obesitas gerelateerde gezondheidskwesties ([1]). In dat verband zorgt de Commissie binnen de High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity voor een regelmatige uitwisseling van goede praktijken tussen de 28 EU-lidstaten ter bevordering van een gezonde levensstijl ([2]). De Commissie coördineert ook initiatieven zoals het actieplan tegen obesitas bij kinderen ([3]), waarbij op basis van vrijwillige initiatieven gepoogd wordt de reclamedruk op kinderen te verminderen.

De strategie bevordert ook de samenwerking via het Europees actieplatform op het gebied van voeding, lichaamsbeweging en gezondheid ([4]), dat een evenwichtige voeding en een actieve levensstijl voor iedereen promoot.

Ook de regelingen om in heel de EU fruit, groenten en melk op school te verdelen ([5]) ([6]) dragen bij aan gezondere eetgewoonten bij schoolkinderen. Op 30 januari 2014 heeft de Commissie een voorstel ([7]) goedgekeurd om de educatieve dimensie van de twee regelingen te versterken met het oog op meer doeltreffendheid. Verder heeft de Commissie drie proefprojecten opgestart ([8]): twee projecten beogen het verbruik van vers fruit en verse groenten in gemeenschappen met een gezinsinkomen van minder dan 50 % van het EU-gemiddelde te promoten; het derde project wil gezondere eetgewoonten bij kinderen, zwangere vrouwen en ouderen bevorderen. Ten slotte kan de Commissie via het gezondheidsprogramma ([9]) en Horizon 2020 ([10]) projecten en onderzoek met betrekking tot een gezonde levensstijl financieren.

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_en.htm
([7]) COM(2014) 32.
([8]) SANCO/2011/C4/01, SANCO/2012/C4/02 en SANCO/2013/C4/02.
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm
([10]) COM(2011) 809 def. van 30.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002503/14
to the Commission
Toine Manders (ALDE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Raising awareness of our lifestyle

More than 60% of our diseases are lifestyle-related. We, the people of Europe, still eat too much fat, salt and sugar. From childhood onwards we are encouraged to become addicted to them and no longer believe that we can do without them.

In the case of tobacco, the EU has legislated to warn consumers about the dangers associated with smoking.

On French television, advertising of food and drink containing large quantities of sugar, fat or salt is accompanied by positive advice at the bottom of the picture, e.g. 'Eat three pieces of fresh fruit every day', 'Eat 300 g of fresh vegetables every day' or 'Take at least half an hour's exercise every day'.

This has a preventive effect, improving people's lifestyles, and can prevent disease.

1. Is the Commission aware of the approach adopted in advertising in France?

2. Does the Commission agree that many diseases can be prevented by adjusting lifestyles?

3. Will the Commission investigate whether, as in the case of tobacco products, lifestyle recommendations help to make people healthier? If so, when? If not, why not?

4. Will the Commission make proposals for lifestyle advice? If so, when? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of the advertising approach adopted in France.

Establishing dietary recommendations is a direct national responsibility. The European Commission supports and complements national efforts through action under the 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]). In this context, the Commission ensures a regular exchange of good practices between the 28 EU Member States on the promotion of healthy lifestyles at the High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2]). It also coordinates initiatives such as the action plan on Childhood Obesity ([3]) which includes voluntary initiatives to reduce marketing pressure on children.

The strategy also encourages action-oriented cooperation through the stakeholders' EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([4]) which contributes to promote a balanced diet and active lifestyles for all.

The EU-wide School Fruit and Vegetables and School Milk Schemes ([5]), ([6]) further contributes to establishing healthier eating habits among school children. On 30 January 2014, the Commission adopted a proposal ([7]) that aims at strengthening the educational dimension of the two schemes in order to increase their effectiveness. In addition, the Commission has launched three pilot projects ([8]): two aim to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in communities where the household income is below 50% of the EU average; one aims to promote healthy diets among children, pregnant women and elderly. Finally, the Commission may fund projects or research on healthy lifestyles via the Health Programme ([9]) and Horizon 2020 ([10]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_en.htm
([7]) COM(2014) 32.
([8]) SANCO/2011/C4/01, SANCO/2012/C4/02 and SANCO/2013/C4/02.
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm
([10]) COM(2011) 809 final, 30.11.2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-002504/14
do Komisji
Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR)
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Łamanie przepisów UE przez publiczną telewizję w Polsce

Niedawno kierownictwo polskiej telewizji publicznej postanowiło przekazać firmie zewnętrznej swoich dziennikarzy, montażystów i innych pracowników (pracowników, których zakres pracy należy do podstawowej działalności spółki), co de facto oznacza późniejsze zwolnienie z pracy wieluset, a nawet tysięcy osób. Decyzja ta została podjęta w newralgicznym okresie, tzn. przed wyborami do Parlamentu Europejskiego. Jest ona niezgodna z dyrektywą Rady 2001/23/WE z dnia 12 marca 2001 r., z artykułem 22 polskiego Kodeksu pracy (wprowadzonego do przepisów krajowych na podstawie ww. dyrektywy), a także z obowiązującą w Polsce ustawą o radiofonii i telewizji i zapisami statutowymi.

Czy Komisji znana jest ta sprawa i czy zamierza podjąć odpowiednie działania w celu przeciwdziałania instrumentalnemu traktowaniu pracowników środków masowego przekazu przez władze państwowe kraju członkowskiego UE, a tym samym zagwarantowania pełnej wolności mediów oraz poszanowania prawa wspólnotowego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(28 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja nie otrzymała żadnych skarg dotyczących sytuacji opisanej przez szanownego Pana Posła i domniemanego naruszenia dyrektywy 2001/23/WE ([1]), której celem jest ochrona praw pracowniczych w przypadku przejęcia przedsiębiorstw. Komisja przypomina, że pracodawcy w Polsce muszą przestrzegać przepisów transponujących tę dyrektywę. Obowiązkiem władz krajowych, w tym sądów, jest zapewnienie, aby przepisy prawne były prawidłowo i skutecznie stosowane przez danego pracodawcę, uwzględniając szczególne okoliczności danego przypadku.

Unia Europejska jest zobowiązana do poszanowania wolności i pluralizmu mediów, które to prawa zapisane są w art. 11 Karty praw podstawowych Unii Europejskiej, i które Komisja, wspólnie z innymi instytucjami UE, promuje w ramach swoich kompetencji ([2]). Jednakże zgodnie z art. 51 ust. 1 Karty jej postanowienia mają zastosowanie do państw członkowskich wyłącznie wówczas, gdy stosują one prawo UE.

Komisja wspiera rolę radiofonii i telewizji publicznej jako integralnej części demokracji europejskiej. Protokół nr 29 w sprawie systemu publicznego nadawania w państwach członkowskich załączony do TUE i TFUE stwierdza jasno, że zarządzanie i wybory strategiczne w sprawie radiofonii i telewizji publicznej należą do państw członkowskich. Komisja przykłada szczególną wagę do roli dwoistego systemu nadawców publicznych i komercyjnych w zachowaniu pluralizmu mediów i promowaniu wartości europejskich. Komisja nie może jednak nakazać państwom członkowskim, w jaki sposób powinny zorganizować usługi swojego nadawcy publicznego.

([1]) Dyrektywa Rady 2001/23/WE z dnia 12 marca 2001 r. w sprawie zbliżania ustawodawstw państw członkowskich odnoszących się do ochrony praw pracowniczych w przypadku przejęcia przedsiębiorstw, zakładów lub części przedsiębiorstw lub zakładów, Dz.U. L 82 z 22.3.2001.

([2]) Zob. http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/media-freedom-and-pluralism

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002504/14
to the Commission
Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Polish public television breaches EU rules

Managers at Poland's public television provider recently decided to transfer journalists, editors and other staff (whose jobs form the core business of the company) to an external firm. In effect this means that many hundreds, if not thousands, or people will sooner or later lose their jobs. The decision was taken at a crucial time, i.e. before the European Parliament elections. It constitutes a breach of Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12 March 2001, and of Article 22 of the Polish Labour Code (brought into the national regulations on the basis of the Council directive), as well as of Polish broadcasting legislation and statutory regulations.

Is the Commission aware of this matter? Is it intending to take steps to prevent the national authorities in an EU Member State treating people working in the mass media like objects? Furthermore, is it intending to take steps to guarantee full media freedom and ensure that EC law is upheld?

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

The Commission has received no complaint relating to the situation described by the Honourable Member and alleging an infringement of Directive 2001/23/EC ([1]), the aim of which is to safeguard employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings. The Commission would point out that employers in Poland must abide by the legislation transposing that directive. It is for the national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the legislation is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

The European Union is committed to respecting media freedom and pluralism, which are enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and which the Commission, together with the other EU institutions, promotes within the scope of its competence ([2]). However, according to its Article 51(1), the Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing European Union law.

The Commission supports the role of public broadcasting as an integral part of European democracy. Protocol No 29 on the system of public broadcasting in the Member States attached to the TEU and TFEU makes it clear that the governance and strategic choices on public service broadcasting lie with Member States. The Commission attaches special importance to the role of the dual system of public and commercial service broadcasters in preserving media pluralism and promoting European values. However, the Commission cannot prescribe Member States how to organise their public service broadcaster.

([1]) Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12 March 2001 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses, OJ L 82, 22.3.2001.
([2]) See http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/media-freedom-and-pluralism

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002506/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Incursiones militares en Colombia

Mientras el Gobierno de Juan Manuel Santos sigue manteniendo conversaciones de paz en La Habana, el conflicto armado persiste en Colombia. Según la Asociación Colectiva de Objetores y Objetores de Conciencia (ACOOC, organización colombiana), la Dirección Nacional de Reclutamiento recluta 100 000 jóvenes cada año.

Aunque en 2009 la Corte Constitucional reconoció que la objeción de conciencia era un derecho constitucional, al parecer este derecho es conculcado con regularidad, dando lugar a la vulneración de otros derechos como el derecho a la educación o al trabajo, debido a las limitaciones impuestas a las personas que no portan una tarjeta militar.

Es especialmente preocupante la práctica de batidas militares que destaca la ACOOC. En estas incursiones, el ejército llega a una zona y se lleva a los jóvenes que no poseen un documento de identidad militar al cuartel para reclutarlos a la fuerza y enviarlos a zonas rurales que son teatro de conflicto intenso.

Tras estudiar tres casos, el Grupo de Trabajo de las Naciones Unidas sobre la Detención Arbitraria declaró en 2008 que estas personas fueron detenidas y privadas de su libertad contra su voluntad, con el fin de incorporarlas al ejército, y que la privación de libertad […] había sido arbitraria porque había sido llevada a cabo vulnerando el artículo 9 del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos.

En 2011, la Corte Constitucional declaró en la sentencia C-879 que un ciudadano «solo puede ser retenido de manera momentánea mientras se verifica tal situación y se inscribe […] no puede implicar la conducción del ciudadano a cuarteles o distritos militares y su retención por autoridades militares por largos períodos de tiempo con el propósito no solo de obligarlo a inscribirse, sino de someterlo a exámenes y si resulta apto finalmente incorporarlo a filas.»

¿Ha tratado el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior este asunto en un diálogo sobre derechos humanos entre la UE y Colombia?

¿Cómo prevé el SEAE abordar este asunto?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de mayo de 2014)

Si bien las prácticas de reclutamiento de las fuerzas armadas colombianas no puedan equipararse a las de los grupos armados ilegales, la UE es consciente de una serie de casos de supuesto reclutamiento de objetores de conciencia y está dispuesta a plantear el tema ante las autoridades colombianas en los foros adecuados.

Cabe destacarse también que, entre 2010 y 2013, se llevó a cabo un proyecto sobre «El derecho a oponerse al servicio militar por motivos de conciencia como uno de los derechos humanos y una de las libertades fundamentales», aplicado con el apoyo financiero de la IEDDH, a raíz de la sentencia del Tribunal Constitucional a la que se refiere la pregunta. Además de prestar apoyo a cierto número de jóvenes, el proyecto ha contribuido a fomentar un debate sobre la objeción de conciencia y también a que se presentara un proyecto de ley que considera legal la objeción de conciencia al servicio militar, que se está examinando actualmente en el Congreso colombiano.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002506/14
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL) und Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4. März 2014)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Razzien des Militärs in Kolumbien

Während die Regierung von Juan Manuel Santos weiterhin Friedensgespräche in Havanna führt, dauert der bewaffnete Konflikt in Kolumbien an. Nach Angaben der ACOCC, einer kolumbianischen Organisation für Wehrdienstverweigerer aus Gewissensgründen, rekrutiert das nationale Amt für Heeresrekrutierung jährlich bis zu 100 000 junge Menschen.

Zwar hat das kolumbianische Verfassungsgericht im Jahre 2009 die Wehrdienstverweigerung aus Gewissensgründen als ein verfassungsmäßiges Recht anerkannt, jedoch scheint dieses Recht regelmäßig verletzt zu werden. Aufgrund von Beschränkungen, die für Menschen ohne Militärausweis gelten, führt dies darüber hinaus zur Verletzung weiterer Rechte wie zum Beispiel des Rechts auf Bildung oder des Rechts auf Arbeit.

Besonders besorgniserregend ist die von der ACOOC hervorgehobene Praxis von Razzien des Militärs. Hierbei sucht das Militär ein Gebiet auf und verbringt junge Menschen, die sich nicht im Besitz eines Militärausweises befinden, zwecks Zwangsrekrutierung zu einem Bataillon, um sie dann in ländliche Gebiete zu entsenden, in denen der bewaffnete Konflikt besonders heftig ausgetragen wird.

Nach der Untersuchung von drei Fällen erklärte die Arbeitsgruppe der Vereinten Nationen für willkürliche Inhaftierungen im Jahre 2008, dass „diese Menschen gegen ihren Willen festgenommen und ihrer Freiheit beraubt wurden, um sie in die Landstreitkräfte aufzunehmen", und dass dieser „Entzug der Freiheit […] willkürlich war, da er gegen Artikel 9 des Internationalen Pakts über bürgerliche und politische Rechte verstieß".

2011 erklärte das Verfassungsgericht in Urteil C-879, dass Bürger „nur vorübergehend, solange ihre Situation überprüft und dokumentiert wird, gefangen gehalten werden dürfen […]. Dies umfasst nicht das Verbringen von Bürgern in Kasernen oder militärische Bereiche oder ihre längerfristige Gefangenhaltung durch Militärbehörden, um sie zu zwingen, in die Streitkräfte einzutreten, oder auch medizinischen Untersuchungen zu unterziehen und sie bei positivem Ergebnis zum Militärdienst einzuziehen".

Hat der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst diese Angelegenheit in einem Menschenrechtsdialog zwischen der EU und Kolumbien zur Sprache gebracht?

Wie gedenkt der EAD mit dem Problem umzugehen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(13. Mai 2014)

Obgleich die Rekrutierungspraxis der kolumbianischen Streitkräfte nicht mit derjenigen der illegalen bewaffneten Gruppen gleichzusetzen ist, sind der EU Fälle bekannt, in denen es angeblich zur Rekrutierung von Wehrdienstverweigerern gekommen ist. Die EU ist bereit, diese Fälle in den geeigneten Foren gegenüber den kolumbianischen Behörden anzusprechen.

Es sei darauf hingewiesen, dass vor dem Hintergrund der in der Anfrage genannten Entscheidung des Verfassungsgerichts zwischen 2010 und 2013 ein Projekt zum Thema „Wehrdienstverweigerung als Menschenrecht und Grundfreiheit" mit finanzieller Unterstützung aus Mitteln des EIDHR durchgeführt wurde. Zusätzlich zur Unterstützung einer Reihe von Jugendlichen leistete das Projekt einen Beitrag zur Förderung einer Debatte zum Thema Wehrdienstverweigerung aus Gewissensgründen und zur Vorlage eines Gesetzesentwurfs über die Legalisierung der Wehrdienstverweigerung aus Gewissensgründen, über den derzeit im kolumbianischen Kongress beraten wird.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002506/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Military raids in Colombia

While the government of Juan Manuel Santos continues to hold peace talks in Havana, armed conflict is persisting in Colombia. According to the ACOOC, a Colombian organisation of conscientious objectors to compulsory military service, the National Office for Army Recruitment is recruiting 100 000 young people every year.

While conscientious objection was recognised as a constitutional right by the Constitutional Court in 2009, it seems that this right is being violated on a regular basis, leading to the violation of other rights such as the right to education or work, due to the limitations imposed on people who do not hold a military identity card.

Of particular concern is the practice of military raids highlighted by the ACOOC. During these raids the army arrives in an area and takes young people who do not hold a military ID card to the battalion to forcibly recruit them and send them to rural areas where conflict is severe.

Having studied three cases, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention stated in 2008 that 'these people were arrested and deprived of their liberty against their will, in order to incorporate them into the army' and that this 'deprivation of liberty […] was arbitrary as it was carried out in violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights'.

In 2011, the Constitutional Court declared in Judgment C-879 that citizens 'can only be held momentarily while their situation is verified and recorded […] this does not involve taking citizens to military barracks or districts or citizens being held by the military authorities for long periods of time in order not only to force them to enlist, but also subjecting them to tests and incorporating them into military service if they pass these tests'.

Has the European External Action Service addressed this issue in a human rights dialogue between the EU and Colombia?

How does it plan to address this issue?

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

While the recruitment practices of the Colombian armed forces cannot be equated with those of the illegal armed groups, the EU is aware of a number of cases of alleged recruitment of conscientious objectors and it is ready to raise them with the Colombian authorities in the appropriate fora.

It must also be highlighted that a project on 'the Right to Object to Military Service on Conscientious Grounds as a Human Right and Fundamental Freedom', implemented between 2010 and 2013, was carried out with the financial support of the EIDHR, following the Constitutional Court ruling to which the question refers. In addition to providing support to a number of individual youths, the project contributed to fostering a debate on conscientious objection and also to the presentation of a draft law making the conscientious objection to the military service legal, currently under examination in the Colombian Congress.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002507/14
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(4 mars 2014)

Objet: Aides à l'agriculture industrielle

Des voix s'élèvent en France contre la création ou l'extension des élevages industriels, comme c'est déjà le cas depuis le 1er janvier pour les porcheries — les éleveurs qui veulent créer ou agrandir une porcherie comprenant jusqu'à 2 000 porcs ou 750 truies n'ont plus à demander une autorisation à l'administration, mais doivent simplement s'enregistrer.

L'agriculture et l'élevage industriels ne cessent de montrer leurs limites: casse sociale, pollution des eaux, algues vertes, insécurité alimentaire et impacts sur la santé publique et des travailleurs agricoles, perte de la biodiversité, destruction des sols, dérèglements climatiques, déclin des abeilles, disparition des agriculteurs (qui ne représentent que 3 % de la population française en 2013).

L'agriculture industrielle utilise en masse des pesticides et des engrais chimiques de synthèse toxiques qui polluent l'eau et le sol. La France est le premier pays consommateur d'herbicides, de fongicides et d'insecticides en Europe et le 3e au monde.

1. La Commission a-t-elle octroyé des aides à la France pour création et extension d'élevages ou production agricoles industriels? Quelles sont les sociétés agricoles industrielles bénéficiaires des aides européennes?

2. Au vu des conséquences sociales, économiques et environnementales pour l'agriculture paysanne, quels sont les moyens à travers lesquels la Commission entend lutter contre l'agriculture industrielle ou protéger l'agriculture paysanne?

3. Quel est le modèle agricole européen défendu par la Commission? Existe-t-il une étude de faisabilité des différents modèles agricoles en Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(28 avril 2014)

1. La Commission octroie deux grands types d'aides agricoles: les paiements directs (soutien des revenus de tous les agriculteurs admissibles) et des aides ciblées au titre des programmes de développement rural (tels que les paiements compensatoires pour les agriculteurs des régions montagneuses, les paiements agro-environnementaux, les aides à l'investissement, etc.). La liste des bénéficiaires par pays est accessible depuis l'adresse suivante:
http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/beneficiaries/shared/index_fr.htm

Il n'est pas possible, à partir de ces listes, de recenser les «entreprises agricoles industrielles», qui ne sont pas identifiées comme telles dans le système.

2. Plusieurs mesures de la PAC peuvent contribuer à soutenir l'agriculture paysanne, et notamment, à l'avenir, le «régime des petits agriculteurs», qui permettra de distribuer les paiements directs de manière beaucoup plus simple aux petits agriculteurs, le paiement redistributif, destiné à assurer un soutien accru pour les premiers hectares des exploitations, le plafonnement possible des aides directes et certaines mesures de développement rural, comme le volet «développement des petites exploitations» de la mesure «Développement des exploitations agricoles et des entreprises».

3. La réforme actuelle de la PAC encourage de toute évidence la diversité de l'agriculture. L'objectif de la PAC n'est pas de parvenir à un modèle agricole unique dans l'ensemble des pays européens, mais plutôt de préserver la riche diversité des exploitations et des modes de production en Europe. Les modifications des politiques reposent sur des «analyses d'impact» préalables ainsi que sur diverses évaluations et consultations. De plus amples informations sur la PAC 2014-2020 sont disponibles à l'adresse: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/policy-perspectives/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002507/14
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Aid for industrial agriculture

In France, people are voicing their opposition to the establishment or extension of industrial livestock farms; for pig farms, since 1 January, farmers who wish to establish or enlarge a pig farm having up to 2 000 pigs or 750 troughs no longer have to request permission from the authorities, but simply have to register themselves.

The limitations of industrial agriculture and industrial livestock farms are constantly being shown up: reductions in social protection, water pollution, green algae, food insecurity and impact on public health and agricultural workers, loss of biodiversity, soil destruction, climate change, loss of bees, and decreasing numbers of farmers (who in 2013 constituted only 3% of the French population).

Industrial agriculture makes large-scale use of pesticides and toxic synthetic chemical fertilisers which pollute water and the soil. France is the largest consumer of herbicides, fungicides and insecticides in Europe, and the third largest in the world.

1. Has the Commission granted aid to France to support the establishment and extension of industrial agricultural production or industrial livestock farms? Which industrial agricultural companies benefit from European aid?

2. In view of the social, economic and environmental consequences for small-scale agriculture, what means does the Commission intend to use to fight against industrial agriculture or to protect small-scale agriculture?

3. What is the European agriculture model supported by the Commission? Does any feasibility study of the various agricultural models in Europe exist?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 April 2014)

1. There are 2 main types of agricultural aids granted by the Commission: direct payments (supporting all eligible farmer's income), and targeted supports under the rural development programmes (such as compensatory payments for mountain farmers, agri-environmental payments, support for investments etc.). The list of beneficiaries per country is available from the webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-funding/beneficiaries/shared/index_en.htm. It is not possible to sort out from these lists 'industrial agricultural companies' which are not specifically earmarked in the system.

2. Several measures can help promote small-scale farming in the CAP, notably in the future: the 'small farmer scheme' to distribute direct payments in a much simplified way to small farmers; the redistributive payment to give higher supports for the first hectares of the farms, the possible capping of direct aids, and some rural development measures, notably the 'development of small farms' component of the measure 'Farm and business development'.

3. The current reform promotes clearly the diversity of agriculture. The aim of the CAP is not to reach one unique model of farming throughout European territories, but rather to maintain the rich diversity of farms and productions in Europe. The policy developments are based on prior 'impact assessments' and various analysis and consultations. For the CAP 2014-2020, you can find more on: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/policy-perspectives/index_en.htm.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-002508/14
upućeno Komisiji
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(4. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju

Nakon transformacije Pakta o stabilnosti za Jugoistočnu Europu Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju sa sjedištem u Sarajevu preuzelo je operativne poslove tajništva koje daje potporu političkom okviru suradnje koji se odvija u okviru Procesa suradnje u jugoistočnoj Europi.

Zanima me procjena Komisije o učinkovitosti i dodatnoj vrijednosti koju Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju pruža državama jugoistoka Europe u provođenju reformi na putu u Europsku uniju te unaprjeđenju dijaloga i regionalne suradnje?

Kako Komisija vidi komplementarnost godišnjih izvješća o napretku i strateških dokumenata o procesu proširenja s nastojanjima da Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju pomogne državama jugoistoka Europe pri ostvarivanju ciljeva Strategije Europa 2020.?

Odgovor g. Fülea u ime Komisije
(8. travnja 2014.)

Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju postalo je važan partner EU-a i država u regiji osiguravanjem platforme za raspravu o zajedničkim izazovima i njihovim mogućim rješenjima. Regija nije dovoljno konkurentna, a države ne stvaraju dostatan broj radnih mjesta, posebno za mlade. Strategiju Jugoistočna Europa (SEE) 2020 razradilo je Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju u bliskoj suradnji s državama iz regije, a njezin je cilj stvaranje milijun radnih mjesta do 2020. poboljšanjem konkurentnosti i povećanjem mogućnosti za trgovinu u regiji i s EU-om. Za potpunu provedbu Strategije bit će potreban niz nacionalnih reformi, a svaka država trenutačno priprema Nacionalne akcijske planove strategije SEE 2020 za dopunu regionalnih akcijskih planova iste strategije, kao što je Srednjoeuropski ugovor o slobodnoj trgovini, koje su pripremili izabrani čelnici regionalne strategije SEE 2020. Uz to, Vijeće za regionalnu suradnju bilo je učinkovito i u pomaganju ostvarivanja veće uključenosti u regionalnu suradnju dodavanjem Kosova ([1]) kao punopravnog i jednakog sudionika u Vijeću u veljači 2013.

Zemlje Zapadnog Balkana nisu funkcionalna tržišna gospodarstva te neće moći pristupiti EU-u ako ne postanu konkurentnija. Strategija se temelji na strategiji Europa 2020, ali je prilagođena specifičnim potrebama i situaciji Zapadnog Balkana. Godišnja izvješća o napretku, kao i nacrt strateških dokumenata države (ili više njih) pretpristupne pomoći (IPA II) jasno se pozivaju na strategiju SEE 2020, stoga je smatramo važnim elementom u pripremi država za članstvo u EU-u.

([1]) „Ova oznaka ne dovodi u pitanje stajališta o statusu i u skladu je s Rezolucijom Vijeća sigurnosti Ujedinjenih naroda br. 1244 i mišljenjem Međunarodnog suda pravde o proglašenju neovisnosti Kosova."

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002508/14
to the Commission
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Regional Cooperation Council

Now that it has superseded the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, the Regional Cooperation Council, based in Sarajevo, has assumed the operational function of a secretariat supporting the political framework for cooperation under the South-East European Cooperation Process.

What is the Commission's assessment of the effectiveness and added value that the Regional Cooperation Council is bringing to the south-east European countries, engaged as they are in implementing reforms to move them closer to the EU and advancing on a path of dialogue and regional cooperation?

What kind of complementary relationship exists, in the Commission's opinion, between, on the one hand, the annual progress reports and the enlargement process strategy documents and, on the other, the efforts of the Regional Cooperation Council to help the south-east European countries achieve the Europe 2020 goals?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) has become a valuable partner for the EU and the countries in the region by providing a platform for discussing common challenges and their possible solutions. The region is not sufficiently competitive and the countries do not create enough jobs notably for the young. The South Eastern Europe (SEE) 2020 strategy has been elaborated by the RCC in close collaboration with the countries of the region, and it aims to create 1 million jobs by 2020 by improving competitiveness and enhancing trade opportunities within the region and with the EU. The full implementation of the strategy will require a series of national reform efforts, and each country is currently preparing National SEE 2020 action plans to complement the regional SEE 2020 action plans prepared by the designated regional SEE 2020 component leaders such as the Central European Free Trade Agreement. In addition, the RCC has also been effective in helping to bring about more inclusiveness in regional cooperation by adding Kosovo ([1]) as a full and equal participant to the RCC in February 2013.

The Western Balkan countries are not functioning market economies, and they cannot join the EU unless they become more competitive. The strategy builds on the Europe 2020 agenda but it is adapted to the specific needs and situation of the western Balkans. The annual progress reports as well as the draft IPA II country (and multi-country) strategy papers make clear references to the SEE 2020 strategy, and we see it as an important element of preparing the countries for membership of the EU.

([1]) 'This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence'.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-002509/14
upućeno Komisiji
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(4. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Strategija EU-a za jadransko-jonsku regiju

Tijekom 2014. Vijećem EU-a predsjedaju Grčka i Italija, a očekuje se i predstavljanje Komunikacije o Jadransko-jonskoj strategiji EU-a od strane Komisije te usvajanje Strategije tijekom jeseni. Riječ je o vrlo značajnom instrumentu koji će na temeljima iskustva Baltičke i Dunavske strategije potaknuti suradnju između četiriju država članica EU-a i četiriju država koje za sada nisu članice EU-a u četirima područjima suradnje: 1. poticanju inovativnog pomorskog i morskog rasta; 2. povezivanju regije; 3. očuvanju, zaštiti i poboljšanju kvalitete okoliša te 4. povećanju atraktivnosti regije.

Zanima me kako će Komisija povezati korištenje strukturnih fondova i instrumente pretpristupne pomoći s provedbom projekata u okviru Strategije EU-a za Jadransko-jonsku regiju, te koliko će financijskih sredstava biti alocirano u tu svrhu?

Također, zanima me kakav je stav Komisije o mogućem uključivanju Kosova i Makedonije među zemlje obuhvaćene Strategijom EU-a za Jadransko-jonsku regiju budući da su one susjedne države ovom području, a nemaju privilegij biti obalne države?

Odgovor g. Hahna u ime Komisije
(12. svibnja 2014.)

Buduća strategija EU-a za jadransku i jonsku regiju provest će se uz pomoć svih relevantnih fondova EU-a i nacionalnih fondova, fondova koje bi međunarodne financijske institucije mogle učiniti dostupnima (npr. s pomoću mehanizama za spajanje bespovratnih sredstava i zajmova) te fondova iz privatnog sektora.

U pogledu Europskih strukturnih i investicijskih fondova (ESIF) te Instrumenta pretpristupne pomoći (IPA) trenutačno se usklađuju mjerodavni planski i programski dokumenti za razdoblje 2020. — 2014. (sporazumi o partnerstvu, strateški dokumenti, operativni i akcijski programi) kako bi se uzeli u obzir ciljevi jadransko-jonske strategije. Projekti za provedbu strategije uzet će se u obzir za potporu u okviru, među ostalim, ESIF-a i IPA-e, prema potrebi.

Buduća strategija EU-a za jadransku i jonsku regiju temelji se na međuvladinoj Jadransko-jonskoj inicijativi (JJI). Vijeće će razmatrati sadržaj i zemljopisno područje primjene strategije u jesen 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002509/14
to the Commission
Andrej Plenković (PPE)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region

In 2014 the Council presidency will be held by Greece and Italy, and it is expected that, once the Commission has submitted the necessary communication, the EU's Adriatic and Ionian strategy will be adopted sometime in the autumn. Drawing on the experience of the Baltic Sea and Danube region strategies, this is a highly significant strategy which will aim to encourage cooperation between four Member States and four countries that do not at present belong to the EU, centring on four areas, namely: 1. driving innovative maritime and marine growth; 2. connecting the region; 3. preserving and protecting the environment and improving its quality; and 4. enhancing the region's attractiveness.

How will the Commission link the use of the Structural Funds and pre-accession aid instruments to the implementation of projects falling under the EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region, and how will financial resources be allocated to that end?

Furthermore, what does the Commission think about the possibility of including Kosovo and Macedonia among the countries to be covered by the EU strategy, bearing in mind that they are neighbours of the region concerned, but do not have the privilege of being coastal states?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The forthcoming EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region will be implemented by mobilising all relevant EU and national funds, as well as funds which could be made available by international financial institutions (e.g. through mechanisms blending grants and loans) and from the private sector.

With regard to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the relevant planning and programming documents 2014-2020 (Partnership Agreements, Strategy Papers, Operational and Action Programmes) are being aligned so as to take on board the objectives of the Adriatic Ionian Strategy. Projects which will be identified for the implementation of the strategy will be considered for support from, *inter alia*, ESIF and IPA, where appropriate.

The forthcoming EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region builds on the intergovernmental Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII). The content and geographical coverage of the strategy will be considered by the Council in the autumn 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002512/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Violenza sugli animali

Come dovrebbe essere noto, la legislazione dell'UE sul benessere degli animali è di portata assai vasta. Va dagli allevamenti agli zoo, dalla sperimentazione nei laboratori alla circolazione e al trasporto di animali da compagnia. C'è tuttavia un settore in cui la violenza sugli animali è palese e talvolta legittimata dalle normative amministrative nazionali, come quelle relative all'autorizzazione dell'apertura di «bordelli» appositi in cui gli animali vengono sottoposti alla depravazione umana.

La Commissione:

1. Non ritiene che in questi luoghi venga esercitata violenza nei confronti degli animali utilizzati per la bisogna?

2. E laddove c'è violenza, non crede che si attenti consapevolmente al benessere degli animali, che dovrebbe essere tutelato dalla normativa dell'UE?

3. Perché, appunto, tale normativa non contempla la tutela del benessere contro questo tipo di violenza sugli animali?

4. Perché non dichiara che questa violenza è un reato?

5. Qualora non conoscesse il problema, perché non fa riferimento alle petizioni presentate e ai siti web che diffondono immagini di zooerastia (zoo sex), facilmente accessibili anche ai bambini?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2014)

I trattati UE limitano esplicitamente la considerazione del benessere degli animali da parte delle istituzioni UE a specifiche politiche UE come l'agricoltura o il mercato interno ([1]). In tutti gli altri casi la competenza esclusiva è riservata agli Stati membri.

Le pratiche sessuali con animali non sembrano rientrare in nessuno dei particolari obiettivi o politiche UE elencati nei trattati UE.

Di conseguenza, la Commissione non dispone della competenza giuridica per disciplinare questa materia e la questione rimane nell'ambito di responsabilità unicamente degli Stati membri.

Dal momento che la Commissione non ha la competenza giuridica in materia, non è in grado di fornire risposte specifiche alle altre interrogazioni.

([1]) Articolo 13 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (GU C 326 del 26.10.2012, pag. 54): «Nella formulazione e nell'attuazione delle politiche dell'Unione nei settori dell'agricoltura, della pesca, dei trasporti, del mercato interno, della ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico e dello spazio, l'Unione e gli Stati membri tengono pienamente conto delle esigenze in materia di benessere degli animali in quanto esseri senzienti, rispettando nel contempo le disposizioni legislative o amministrative e le consuetudini degli Stati membri per quanto riguarda, in particolare, i riti religiosi, le tradizioni culturali e il patrimonio regionale».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002512/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Violence against animals

EU legislation on animal welfare is generally known to cover a broad spectrum, ranging from breeding to zoos, laboratory experimentation to pet movement and transportation. However, in one sector violence against animals is evident and at times legitimised under national administrative regulations, namely those which authorise the opening of 'brothels', where animals are subjected to depravity by humans.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it accept that, in such places, violence is perpetrated against animals for sexual gratification?

2. Given the reality of this kind of violence, does the Commission not believe that this represents a deliberate attack on the welfare of animals, who require protection under EU regulations?

3. Why exactly do EU regulations not safeguard animal welfare by combating this type of violence?

4. Why do EU regulations not declare this type of violence to be a crime?

5. If the Commission is not aware of this problem, why does it not make reference to the petitions submitted and the websites circulating images of zooerastia (sexual abuse of animals) which are readily accessible to children?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

The EU Treaties are explicit in limiting the consideration of animal welfare by the EU institutions to specific EU policies such as agriculture or internal market ([1]). In all other cases exclusive competence is reserved to the Member States.

Sexual practices with animals do not appear to be covered by any of the particular EU objectives or policies listed in the EU Treaties.

Consequently the Commission has no legal competence to regulate in this matter and this issue remains under the sole responsibility of the Member States.

Since the Commission has no legal competence in the matter, the Commission is not in a position to give specific answers to the other questions raised.

([1]) Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 54) states that: 'In formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space policies, the Union and the Member States shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals, while respecting the legislative or administrative provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage.'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002513/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Il G20 di Sidney

Il tema principale del summit di Sidney non avrebbe dovuto essere la politica di investimenti di lungo termine per riavviare la ripresa e il rilancio dei settori delle nuove tecnologie, delle PMI e delle infrastrutture? Perché allora la dichiarazione finale del G20 vede come evento principale i recenti segnali di un presunto miglioramento dell'economia globale e in particolare il rafforzamento della crescita negli Usa, in Gran Bretagna e in Giappone? Non si poteva certo riportare in dettaglio lo scontro in realtà avvenuto tra poteri e interessi differenti, tra la politica monetaria degli Stati Uniti, che prima inonda di liquidità il sistema e poi ha cominciato a prosciugarlo creando fughe di capitali dai paesi emergenti, e le possibili ricadute negative sul resto del mondo. Negli ultimi 12 mesi infatti il real brasiliano ha perso il 24 % nei confronti del dollaro, la rupia indiana si è svalutata del 28 %, il rublo russo del 17 % e il rand sudafricano del 31 %. I Brics avevano espresso lamentele e ci si aspettava un coordinamento delle politiche economiche e monetarie.

1. Queste manovre monetarie statunitensi vanno nel senso della riforma del sistema globale, oppure mirano esclusivamente alla tutela dei propri ed esclusivi interessi?

2. Perché ancora una volta l'UE non si è distinta dalla Fed e non ha cercato di comprendere le ragioni dei paesi emergenti?

3. Qual è la ratio e la strategia di una scelta così radicale?

4. Quali sono le ragioni vere che hanno spinto l'UE a non sostenere la politica di investimenti di lungo termine per riavviare la ripresa e il rilancio dei settori industriali e manifatturieri, comprese le PMI e le infrastrutture?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

La Commissione rispetta l'indipendenza della Federal Reserve statunitense, come delle altre banche centrali, e quindi non ne commenta la politica monetaria.

Rinvia peraltro l'onorevole parlamentare alla dichiarazione che i leader del G 20 hanno rilasciato in occasione del vertice svoltosi a San Pietroburgo il 5-6 settembre 2013: «La politica monetaria continuerà ad essere orientata verso la stabilità dei prezzi interni e il sostegno alla ripresa economica secondo il mandato delle rispettive banche centrali. Riconosciamo il sostegno fornito all'economia mondiale negli ultimi anni da politiche monetarie accomodanti, comprese quelle non convenzionali. Siamo ben coscienti dei rischi e degli effetti collaterali negativi indesiderati dei periodi prolungati di allentamento monetario. Riconosciamo che una crescita più solida e duratura si tradurrà infine nella transizione verso la normalizzazione delle politiche monetarie. Le banche centrali si sono impegnate affinché in futuro le modifiche all'assetto della politica monetaria siano attentamente valutate e comunicate in modo chiaro.»

Alla riunione del G 20 tenutasi a Sydney dal 22 al 23 febbraio i ministri delle finanze e i governatori delle banche centrali hanno concordato di sviluppare politiche ambiziose al fine di aumentare il PIL di un ulteriore 2 per cento nei prossimi 5 anni e di precisare interventi concreti, in particolare aumentare gli investimenti, sostenere l'occupazione e la partecipazione, rafforzare gli scambi commerciali e promuovere la concorrenza; tali azioni costituiranno la base delle strategie di crescita globali che saranno adottate in occasione del vertice di Brisbane. È stato creato uno speciale gruppo di lavoro del G 20 per guidare gli sforzi internazionali volti a stimolare gli investimenti, segnatamente nelle infrastrutture e nelle PMI.

Promuovere gli investimenti resta una priorità fondamentale per l'UE. In questo senso, il 27 marzo la Commissione ha pubblicato una comunicazione sul finanziamento a lungo termine ([1]).

([1]) La comunicazione propone un pacchetto di misure volte a stimolare nuove e diverse modalità per mettere a disposizione finanziamenti a lungo termine e sostenere una crescita economica sostenibile in Europa. (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-238_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002513/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: The Sydney G20

Should the main theme of the Sydney summit not have been long-term investment policy to restart the recovery and the relaunch of the new technologies, SMEs and infrastructure sectors? Why then does the final declaration of the G20 view the main event as the recent signs of a supposed improvement of the global economy and in particular the strengthening of growth in the USA, the UK and Japan? Obviously there could not be a detailed report of the clash which actually occurred between different powers and interests, between US monetary policy, which first floods the system with liquid funds and then starts to mop it up, causing flight of capital from emerging countries, and its possible negative impacts on the rest of the world. Indeed, over the last 12 months the Brazilian real has lost 24% against the dollar, the Indian rupee has devalued by 28%, the Russian rouble by 17% and the South African rand by 31%. The BRIC countries had made complaints and we were expecting a coordination of economic and monetary policy.

1. Are these US monetary manoeuvres aimed at reforming the global system, or are they aimed solely at protecting their own exclusive interests?

2. Why yet again has the EU not distanced itself from the Federal Reserve System and tried to understand the motives of the emerging countries?

3. What is the reason and the strategy behind such a radical choice?

4. What are the real reasons which have led the EU not to sustain its long-term investment policy to restart the recovery and relaunch of the industrial and manufacturing sectors, including SMEs and infrastructure?

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

The Commission does not comment on the monetary policy of the US Federal Reserve or any other central bank, in full respect of their independence.

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the statement of the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Saint Petesburg on 5-6 September 2013: 'Monetary policy will continue to be directed towards domestic price stability and supporting the economic recovery according to the respective mandates of central banks. We recognise the support that has been provided to the global economy in recent years from accommodative monetary policies, including unconventional monetary policies. We remain mindful of the risks and unintended negative side effects of extended periods of monetary easing. We recognise that strengthened and sustained growth will be accompanied by an eventual transition toward the normalization of monetary policies. Our central banks have committed that future changes to monetary policy settings will continue to be carefully calibrated and clearly communicated.'

At the G20 meeting in Sydney 22-23 February, Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors agreed to develop ambitious policies to lift GDP by an additional 2% over the coming 5 years and to specify concrete actions, including to increase investment, support employment and participation, enhance trade and promote competition, which will form the basis of the comprehensive growth strategies to be adopted at the Brisbane Summit. A special G20 Working Group has been set up to steer the international efforts for boosting investment, in particular in infrastructure and SMEs.

Promoting investment also remains a key priority for the EU. In this sense, the Commission released a communication on Long Term Financing on 27 March ([1]).

([1]) This communication sets out a package of measures to stimulate new and different ways of unlocking long-term financing and to support sustainable economic growth in Europe. (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-238_en.htm).

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-002514/14
Komisijai
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(2014 m. kovo 4 d.)

Tema: Energetinio saugumo didinimas ES

2013 m. rugsėjo 10 d. Europos Parlamento rezoliucijoje dėl postūmio energijos vidaus rinkai buvo išsakyta aiški Europos Parlamento pozicija, jog Europos energijos bendrija turi būti grindžiama tvirta bendra energijos rinka bei energijos pirkimo už ES ribų koordinavimu (įsteigiant dujų pirkimo grupę). Iki šiol valstybės narės atskirai derisi dėl energetinių išteklių kainos su monopolistiniais trečiųjų šalių tiekėjais. Tai lemia skirtingų kainų formulių taikymą, sukuria nevienodas konkurencines sąlygas valstybėse narėse bei silpnina visą ES.

Ne kartą buvo išsakyta pozicija, jog Komisija turi imtis atsakomybės bei sudaryti sąlygas centralizuotam energetinių resursų, ypač dujų, pirkimui iš trečiųjų šalių, kas leistų užtikrinti sąžiningesnes dujų pirkimo kainas ypač tokiems iki šiol energetiškai izoliuotiems ES regionams kaip, pvz., Baltijos regionui, kuris iki šiol už dujas moka žymiai daugiau palyginti su kitomis ES valstybėmis narėmis. Iki šiol Komisija nesiėmė jokių veiksmų.

Be to, atsižvelgiant į pastaruoju metu besiklostančią situaciją Ukrainoje bei Rusijos veiksmus, būtina turėti tvirtą ir solidarią ES poziciją dėl energetinių išteklių pirkimo iš Rusijos tiekėjų.

Iki šiol priimti sprendimai, kuriais buvo siekiama surinkti duomenis apie energetinius susitarimus su trečiosioms šalimis, nebuvo veiksmingi dėl neprivalomojo pobūdžio. Tai iš esmės neleidžia ES surinkti duomenų apie monopolistinio tiekėjo taikomas kainų formules atskirose valstybėse narėse bei kontroliuoti savo vidaus energetikos rinkos.

Ar Komisija nemano, jog būtina imtis skubių veiksmų formuluojant aiškią ES strategiją dėl energetinių resursų pirkimo iš Rusijos bendrovių siekiant apsaugoti ES ir atskirų valstybių narių energetikos rinkas ir tokiu būdu mažinti energetinę, o kartu ir politinę priklausomybę nuo išorės tiekėjų? Ar Komisija nemano, jog būtina peržiūrėti 2012 m. spalio 25 d. Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos sprendimą, kuriuo nustatomas keitimosi informacija apie tarpvyriausybinius valstybių narių ir trečiųjų šalių energetikos susitarimus mechanizmas, bei jį pakeisti privalomojo pobūdžio mechanizmu, kas leistų ES surinkti duomenis energetikos srityje bei efektyviau kontroliuoti ES vidaus energijos rinką.

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. balandžio 24 d.)

Pastarojo meto įvykiai darsyk parodė, kad Europos Sąjungai svarbu įvairinti energijos šaltinius, kad ji galėtų užsitikrinti energijos tiekimo saugumą. Atsiliepdama į Europos Vadovų Tarybos raginimą ([1]), Komisija atliks išsamų ES energijos tiekimo saugumo tyrimą ir iki 2014 m. birželio mėn. pateiks visapusį ES energetinės priklausomybės mažinimo planą. Be to, ypač svarbu plėtoti stiprų vidinį energetikos tinklą, kurio pakaktų atsilaikyti prieš išorės sukrėtimus ir nukreipiant energiją į tas ES dalis, kuriose jos reikia. Toks yra vienas iš Europos infrastruktūros tinklų priemonės tikslų. Joje taip pat numatyta nuolat dėti pastangas įvairinti tiekimą, plėtoti vietinius energijos išteklius ir toliau stengtis energiją vartoti efektyviau.

2012 m. spalio 25 d. Sprendimas 994/2012/ES dėl tarpvyriausybinių energetikos susitarimų yra viena pirmųjų priemonių, kuriomis užtikrinamas skaidrumas ir derėjimas su vidaus rinkos taisyklėmis šioje srityje. Komisija atidžiai stebi ES teisės aktų efektyvumą ir, kai tinkama, toliau skatina laikytis ambicingesnio požiūrio, kuriuo atsižvelgiama į ES tikslus ir tolimos perspektyvos uždavinius energetikos politikos srityje. Komisija aktyviai palaiko tęstinius ryšius su atitinkamomis valstybėmis narėmis tais atvejais, kai tarpvyriausybiniai energetikos susitarimai neatitinka galiojančių europinių energetikos ir susijusių su energetika teisės aktų.

([1]) Europos Vadovų Tarybos išvados (2014 m. kovo 20-21 d.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002514/14
to the Commission
Zigmantas Balčytis (S&D)
(4 March 2014)

Subject: Enhancing energy security in the EU

The European Parliament resolution of 10 September 2013 on making the internal energy market work expresses the clear position of the European Parliament that the European Energy Community should be based on a strong common energy market and the coordination of energy purchasing outside the EU (by establishing a gas purchasing group). So far, Member States have individually been negotiating on energy prices with monopolistic third party suppliers. This leads to the application of different price formulas, creates an uneven playing field in Member States and weakens the EU as a whole.

Time and again the position has been raised that the Commission has to take responsibility and facilitate the centralised purchasing of energy resources (especially gas) from third parties, which would allow fairer gas purchase prices to be ensured, especially for such energy-isolated regions as the Baltic region, which to date has been paying much more for gas compared to other EU Member States. So far, the Commission has not taken any action.

In addition, with regard to the recent situation in Ukraine and Russia's actions, it is necessary to have a strong and unified EU position on purchasing energy resources from Russian suppliers.

The decisions taken to this point, which were aimed at gathering data on energy agreements with third parties, have not been effective due to their non-binding nature. This makes it virtually impossible for the EU to gather data on the price formulas applied by the monopolistic supplier in individual Member States and to control its internal energy market.

Does the Commission not believe that it is necessary to take immediate action to formulate a clear EU strategy for the purchasing of energy resources from Russian companies to protect the EU and individual Member States' energy markets, thus reducing energy and hence political dependence on external suppliers? Does the Commission not believe that it is necessary to review the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 fixing the mechanism for exchanging information on intergovernmental energy agreements between Member States and third parties and to replace it with a binding mechanism which would allow the EU to gather data on the energy sector and to more effectively control its internal energy market?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

Recent events have once again demonstrated that it is important for the EU to diversify its sources of energy in order to ensure security of supply. In response to the request by the European Council [1], the Commission will conduct an in-depth study of EU energy security and present by June 2014 a comprehensive plan for the reduction of EU energy dependence. In addition, the development of a strong internal energy network able to cope with external shocks and to re-direct energy to the parts of the EU where it is needed is essential. This is one of the objectives of the Connecting Europe Facility. It also involves continued efforts to diversify supplies, develop domestic energy resources and continued efforts to use energy more efficiently.

Decision 994/2012/EU of 25 October 2012 on intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) in the energy field is one of the first steps to ensure transparency and consistency with internal market rules in this area. The Commission closely monitors the effectiveness of the EU legislation and where deemed appropriate continues to encourage a more ambitious approach, reflecting the EU's challenges and far reaching objectives in the area of energy policy. The Commission is actively following up with Member States concerned, in cases where IGAs are not in line with existing EU energy and energy related legislation.

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[1] Conclusions of the European Council (20/21 March 2014).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-002515/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(5 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Bancarización de las cajas de ahorro

En los medios de comunicación del País Vasco se publicaron el pasado 22 de febrero titulares como los siguientes: «Kutxabank y sus cajas se enfrentan a la gran revolución impuesta por la troika», «Europa empuja a la entidad a un cambio histórico y radical» o «La troika ha impuesto como contrapunto al salvamento (bancario español) que las cajas desaparezcan».

Los titulares se referían a que las cajas de ahorro vascas (BBK, Gipuzkoa-Donostia Kutxa y Vital Kutxa) se han visto abocadas a un proceso radical de bancarización que comenzó con la creación de Kutxabank y que seguiría con la entrada en Kutxabank de capital ajeno a las entidades fundadoras hasta un 70 %. Todo ello sería consecuencia de recomendaciones u órdenes de las instituciones europeas y, más concretamente, de la troika. Se pone en boca de Mario Fernández, presidente de Kutxabank, la afirmación siguiente: «La troika no quiere que las cajas controlen un banco». Y él mismo veía así el futuro de Kutxabank: «Imagino una entidad con un 30 % de las acciones en manos de las fundaciones bancarias y un 70 % en *free float* ([1])».

Siendo la Comisión parte de la troika:

¿Es verdadera la afirmación de que la troika ha impuesto al Reino de España la desaparición de las cajas de ahorro como condición para el salvamento del sistema bancario español?

¿Ha impulsado, recomendado o impuesto la Comisión la bancarización de las cajas de ahorro del Reino de España?

¿Conoce la Comisión la situación económica, financiera y de solvencia de Kutxabank?

¿Tiene alguna opinión sobre la misma?

¿Es verdadera la afirmación del presidente de Kutxabank de que la troika no quiere que las cajas de ahorro controlen un banco?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de abril de 2014)

Las cajas de ahorro españolas se rigen por la Ley 26/2013 de cajas de ahorros y fundaciones bancarias, aprobada por el Congreso el 27 de diciembre de 2013. La Ley establece un nuevo marco jurídico para este sector. En su preámbulo se exponen los motivos de este nuevo marco. Con anterioridad a la aprobación de esta Ley se habían adoptado varias medidas regulatorias para reforzar la gobernanza de las cajas de forma correcta y profesional, como consecuencia de las debilidades del sistema de cajas de ahorros, que quedaron patentes durante la crisis en un número significativo de cajas de ahorros. Uno de los fundamentos de la nueva Ley fue el objetivo de consolidar las diversas disposiciones legislativas existentes en este sector. España decidió establecer un nuevo marco jurídico para las cajas de ahorros que combinase sus valores y puntos fuertes tradicionales, esto es, su carácter social y sus raíces territoriales, con las lecciones aprendidas de la crisis.

La nueva Ley refleja las condiciones aplicables por el Memorando de Entendimiento sobre condiciones de política sectorial financiera, firmado en julio de 2012 por España y la Comisión Europea en nombre de la FEEF/el MEDE. En lo que se refiere a las cajas de ahorros, dicho Memorando de Entendimiento (anexo 2) estipula la elaboración de legislación que clarifique la función de estas como accionistas de entidades de crédito, con vistas a acabar reduciendo su participación por debajo del nivel de participación de control, la proposición de medidas encaminadas a reforzar las normas de aptitud y honorabilidad de sus órganos de gobierno, y la introducción de normas de incompatibilidad entre los órganos de gobierno de las antiguas cajas de ahorros y los de los bancos comerciales controlados por ellas.

Las condiciones acordadas estaban destinadas a superar las deficiencias del sector que ya habían sido detectadas por las autoridades españolas y que habían dado lugar a la realización de reformas legales en el sector antes de la firma del Memorando de Entendimiento.

([1]) http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2014/02/22/economia/kutxabank-ante-su-encrucijada

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002515/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Conversion of cajas into commercial banks

On 22 February, the media in the Basque Country published headlines such as: 'Kutxabank and its cajas having to face the great troika-imposed revolution', 'Europe pushes the bank towards historical and radical change' and 'In exchange for bailing out the Spanish banks, the troika has said the cajas must go'.

The headlines referred to the fact that the Basque savings banks (BBK, Gipuzkoa-Donostia Kutxa and Vital Kutxa) were heading for a radical bank conversion process that had started with the establishment of Kutxabank and would continue with the inflow into Kutxabank of capital, up to 70% of which from outside sources. All this is apparently the result of recommendations or orders from the EU institutions and, more specifically, the troika. Mario Fernandez, President of Kutxaban , allegedly stated: 'The troika does not want the cajas to control a bank'. And he too, saw the future of Kutxabank along the same lines: 'I imagine it will be a bank with 30% of its shares held by banking foundations and 70% in free float ([1])'.

Since the Commission is part of the troika:

— Is it true that the troika has ordered the Kingdom of Spain to get rid of its savings banks (*cajas*) as a condition for bailing out the Spanish banking system?

— Has the Commission urged, recommended or ordered that the savings banks of the Kingdom of Spain be converted into commercial banks?

— Is the Commission aware of the economic and financial situation and solvency of Kutxabank?

— Does it have any opinion on the matter?

— Is the President of Kutxabank's claim true, i.e. that the troika does not want savings banks to control commercial banks?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The Spanish savings banks, cajas de ahorros, are regulated by the Law 26/2013 de cajas de ahorros y fundaciones bancarias, approved by the Spanish Congress on 27 December 2013. The Law defines a new legal framework for this sector. Its Preamble lays out the reasons for such new framework. Prior to the approval of this law, several regulatory measures had been taken to enhance the proper and professional governance of cajas, as a consequence of the weaknesses of the savings banks model, which became clearly visible during the crisis in a significant number of savings banks,. One of the reasons of the new law was to consolidate the disperse pieces of regulation on this sector. Spain decided to define a new legal framework for savings banks which reconciled their traditional strengths and values, i.e. social nature and territorial roots, with the lessons learnt from the crisis.

The new Law reflected the applicable conditions by the memorandum of understanding on Financial Sector Conditionality (MoU) signed in July 2012 by Spain and the European Commission on behalf of the EFSF/ESM. That MoU (Annex 2) stipulated, as regards savings banks, to prepare legislation clarifying their role as shareholders of credit institutions with a view to eventually reducing their stakes to non-controlling levels, to propose measures to strengthen fit and proper rules for their governing bodies and introduce incompatibility requirements regarding the governing bodies of the former savings banks and the commercial banks controlled by them.

The conditions agreed were aimed to overcome the weaknesses of the sector which had already been detected by Spanish authorities and which triggered the legal reforms of the sector previously to the signature of the MoU.

([1]) http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2014/02/22/economia/kutxabank-ante-su-encrucijada

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002516/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(5 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Vulneración del Derecho de la contratación pública y del Derecho medioambiental

Las políticas actuales de la empresa pública valenciana VAERSA ponen de relieve la mala gestión medioambiental del actual Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana y la mala gestión en materia de contratación pública.

De hecho, la empresa adquirió 65 vehículos sin convocar ningún concurso público para adjudicar este servicio. En total, firmó 7 contratos de arrendamiento financiero que ascienden a 1 447 841 EUR.

Durante 2010, la empresa adquirió también otros tres vehículos todoterreno, por importe de 69 419 EUR, así como otros elementos accesorios, por importe de 90 000 EUR, sin la formalización de documento contractual. Además, la empresa invirtió 786 668 EUR en arrendamientos de vehículos todoterreno facturados por una misma sociedad sin formalización contractual. En total, según consta en la denuncia, se pagaron más de 2,3 millones EUR vulnerando la ley de contratos públicos.

En marzo de 2010 la empresa ya había adquirido 115 vehículos todoterreno de gama alta por un valor de 2 320 049 euros. En este caso hubo licitación pública, pero la compra fue polémica, ya que al mismo tiempo la empresa anunció recortes en la contratación de personal de prevención de incendios forestales —y cerró áreas de acampada y recreativas— por un importe prácticamente idéntico al de la compra de los vehículos.

Sin embargo, según el Derecho de la Unión, por lo que se refiere a las empresas públicas, los contratos públicos de suministro cuyo coste sea superior a 200 000 EUR deben someterse al procedimiento de adjudicación. Más precisamente, en aquel caso se debe aplicar el procedimiento formalizado de principio, eso es, el procedimiento de licitación. Esto quiere decir que la empresa pública tiene que publicar un anuncio de licitación pública y luego someter a la competencia a los diferentes operadores económicos interesados, basándose en criterios precisos.

Esas actuaciones vulneran también la política de la UE en materia de gestión de riesgos de catástrofes y van en contra de las disposiciones de la Comunicación de la Comisión sobre infraestructuras verdes (COM(2013)0249), que permiten generar a la vez ventajas ecológicas, económicas y sociales gracias a soluciones naturales.

¿Conoce la Comisión el caso?

¿Qué opina la Comisión sobre las políticas practicadas por el Gobierno de la Comunidad Valenciana en la empresa VAERSA? ¿Le parecen compatibles con dichas disposiciones del Derecho de la Unión?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de mayo de 2014)

Los procedimientos de contratación pública a los que se refiere su Señoría no se habían puesto en conocimiento de la Comisión hasta ahora. Además, la Comisión no tiene constancia de prácticas administrativas sistemáticas contrarias a las normas de contratación pública de la UE por parte de las autoridades regionales de Valencia en general o por Vaersa, empresa pública valenciana, en particular.

De los hechos comunicados se desprende que todos los contratos en cuestión han sido ya plenamente ejecutados. Según la jurisprudencia del Tribunal de Justicia de la UE, el recurso ante el Tribunal de Justicia en asuntos de contratación pública no es admisible cuando el contrato en cuestión ha sido totalmente ejecutado.

La Comunicación de la Comisión sobre infraestructura verde ([1]) promueve el uso de soluciones naturales, para que los beneficios ecológicos, económicos y sociales se generen de forma simultánea. No obstante, no incluye disposiciones en materia de contratación pública.

([1]) COM(2013) 0249 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002516/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Breach of the law on public contracting and environmental law

The current policies of the Valencian public company Vaersa highlight bad management of environmental matters and of public contracting on the part of the present government of the Valencian Regional Community.

It turns out that this company has acquired 65 vehicles without any public call for tenders for this service. In total it has entered into 7 financial leasing contracts amounting to EUR 1 447 841.

Furthermore, during 2010 the company also acquired three all-terrain vehicles for a price of EUR 69 419, as well as other accessories amounting to EUR 90 000, without signing any formal contract. Moreover, the company spent EUR 786 668 on leasing all-terrain vehicles with invoices from a single firm but with no formal contract. In total, according to a formal complaint that has been lodged, more than EUR 2.3 million were paid, in breach of the law on public contracting.

In March 2010 the company had already bought 115 top-of-the-range all-terrain vehicles for a price of EUR 2 320 049. In this case there was a public call for tenders, but the purchase was nevertheless contentious, since the company announced at the same time cuts in the hiring of forest fire prevention personnel and closed recreational zones and camp-sites, which produced savings of practically the same amount as the cost of the vehicles.

However, according to EC law on public companies, public supply contracts for more than EUR 200 000 have to be subject to a tendering process. Specifically, in that case the procedure formalised at the beginning should be applied, i.e. a call for tenders. This means that the public company in question must publish a notice of public tendering and then submit the contract to competitive bidding by whatever commercial enterprises are interested in it, based on specific criteria.

These actions also infringe EU policy on catastrophe risk management and are contrary to the provisions of the Commission document on green infrastructures (COM(2013)0249), which, thanks to natural solutions, allow ecological, economic and social benefits to be generated simultaneously.

Is the Commission aware of this case?

What are the Commission's views on the policies implemented by the government of the Valencian Regional Community in the public company Vaersa? Does it consider them to be compatible with the provisions of EC law referred to above?

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

The procurement procedures referred to by the Honourable Member had not been brought to the attention of the Commission so far. Moreover, the Commission is not aware of systematic administrative practices contrary to EU public procurement rules by the Valencia regional authorities in general or by Vaersa, the Valencian public company, in particular.

From the facts submitted it appears that all contracts in question are already fully executed. According to the case law of the EU Court of Justice, application before the Court in the field of public procurement is not admissible when the contract in question has been fully performed.

The Commission's Communication on Green Infrastructure ([1]) promotes the use of natural solutions, to allow ecological, economic and social benefits to be generated simultaneously. It does however not include provisions on public procurement.

([1]) COM(2013)0249 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002518/14
a la Comisión
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(5 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Cumbre UE-Brasil: Mercosur

El pasado 24 de febrero se celebró en Bruselas la VII Cumbre UE-Brasil.

En este contexto y en relación con las negociaciones sobre el Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur:

¿Considera la Comisión que la celebración de esta Cumbre ha supuesto un impulso al proceso negociador del Acuerdo de Asociación UE-Mercosur?

¿Considera la Comisión que habría de barajarse la posibilidad de encontrar una solución, como el Acuerdo Multipartes Perú-Colombia, con la puerta abierta al resto de los socios?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de abril de 2014)

En la Cumbre UE-Brasil de 24 de febrero de 2014, los mandatarios de Brasil y de la UE confirmaron su firme compromiso con un ambicioso y exhaustivo Acuerdo EU-Mercosur. Este apoyo político es importante, tanto para las negociaciones como para el actual proceso que debe conducir a un intercambio de ofertas de acceso al mercado en los próximos meses.

Hasta ahora, la posición del Mercosur ha sido que en su oferta estarán incluidos los cuatro países con los que la UE ha establecido negociaciones. La oferta no incluirá a Venezuela. Por tanto, la Comisión trabaja sobre esta base y no considera ninguna otra solución.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002518/14
to the Commission
José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: EU-Brazil Summit: Mercosur

The 7th EU-Brazil Summit was held in Brussels on 24 February 2014.

In this context and in connection with the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement:

Does the Commission think that the holding of this Summit has given impetus to the negotiation process for the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement?

Does the Commission think that consideration ought to be given to the possibility of finding a solution, such as the Peru-Colombia Multi-Party Agreement, that opens the door to the rest of the Mercosur members?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(15 April 2014)

At the EU-Brazil Summit of February 2014, the leaders of Brazil and the EU confirmed their strong commitment to an ambitious and comprehensive EU-Mercosur agreement. This political support is important for negotiations, and for the ongoing process leading to the exchange of market access offers in the coming months.

Mercosur has so far taken the position that its offer will encompass the four member countries with whom the EU has been negotiating so far. The offer will not include Venezuela. The Commission is therefore working on that basis and no other solution is being envisaged.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002519/14
an die Kommission
Markus Pieper (PPE)
(5. März 2014)

Betrifft: Marktabschottung von Agrarland in Ungarn — Vereinbarkeit mit EU-Grundrecht auf Gleichbehandlung

Am 30.6.2013 hat Ungarn das Gesetz über den Verkehr von „land- und forstwirtschaftlichen Flächen" erlassen. Nach dem Gesetz entscheiden lokale Gremien bei einem Eigentumswechsel über Kaufvertrag und Preis. Obwohl grundsätzlich auch anderen Unionsbürgern der Erwerb von Agrarflächen erlaubt ist, haben sie einen schwereren Zugang zum Markt, da örtliche Liegenschaftskommissionen jedem Kaufvertrag zustimmen müssen und dieses Urteil unanfechtbar ist.

Ist das ungarische Gesetz mit dem Grundrecht der EU auf Gleichbehandlung vereinbar? Wenn nicht, was tut die Kommission, um auch für Ungarn das Grundrecht auf Gleichbehandlung garantieren zu können?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(2. Mai 2014)

Bei der Regelung des Erwerbs landwirtschaftlicher Flächen müssen die Mitgliedstaaten das Unionsrecht einhalten, insbesondere im Hinblick auf den freien Kapitalverkehr. Einschränkungen des freien Kapitalverkehrs, auch durch nationale Vorschriften, die einen grenzüberschreitenden Erwerb landwirtschaftlicher Flächen verhindern könnten, sind nur dann zulässig, wenn dies aus in Artikel 65 Absatz 1 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union spezifizierten Gründen oder zwingenden Gründen des Allgemeininteresses gerechtfertigt ist. Darüber hinaus sollten einschränkende Maßnahmen im Einklang mit den im Unionsrecht verankerten Grundsätzen der Verhältnismäßigkeit und der Nichtdiskriminierung stehen.

In diesem Zusammenhang hat der Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union präzisiert, dass Entscheidungen zur Erteilung einer vorherigen Genehmigung sich „auf objektive und im Voraus bekannte Kriterien stützen [müssen], und jedem, der von einer solchen einschränkenden Maßnahme betroffen ist, muss der Rechtsweg offen stehen" (vgl. Rechtssache C-452/01, Ospelt, Rndnr. 34).

Die Dienststellen der Kommission haben die Entwicklung der ungarischen Rechtsvorschriften im Zusammenhang mit landwirtschaftlichen Flächen genau verfolgt, auch Rechtsakt CXXII aus dem Jahr 2013 und die damit verbundenen Rechtsvorschriften, die den Erwerb landwirtschaftlicher Flächen nach Auslaufen der im Beitrittsvertrag vorgesehenen Übergangsfrist am 30. April 2014 regeln werden.

Sollte die Kommission zu dem Schluss kommen, dass die betreffenden ungarischen Rechtsvorschriften nicht mit dem Unionsrecht vereinbar sind, wird sie bei Bedarf alle erforderlichen Maßnahmen ergreifen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002519/14
to the Commission
Markus Pieper (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Foreclosure of the market for agricultural land in Hungary — compatibility with the fundamental EU right to equal treatment

On 30 June 2013, Hungary issued the Law on the Transfer of 'Land used for Agriculture and Forestry'. According to the Law, local committees are to reach a decision with regard to the contract for sale and the price in the case of change of ownership. Although, in principle, other citizens of the Union are also permitted to acquire agricultural land, it is difficult for them to access the market as local land committees must approve every contract for sale, and this decision cannot be contested.

Is the Hungarian Law compatible with the EU's fundamental right to equal treatment? If not, what is the Commission doing in order that the fundamental right to equal treatment can also be guaranteed for Hungary?

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

When regulating the acquisition of agricultural land, Member States have to respect EC law, in particular the free movement of capital. Restrictions to this freedom, including national rules that are likely to hinder the cross-border acquisition of agricultural land, are only acceptable if justified by reasons specified in Article 65(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union or by overriding reasons in the public interest. Furthermore, restrictive measures should comply with the principle of proportionality and non-discrimination as specified by EC law.

In this context, the Court of Justice of the European Union has clarified that decisions made in the framework of a prior authorisation procedure 'must be based on objective criteria which are known in advance and which allow all persons affected by a restrictive measure of that type to have a legal remedy available to them' (see Case C-452/01 Ospelt, para. 34).

The Commission services have been monitoring the developments in Hungarian legislation on agricultural land closely, including Act CXXII of 2013 and related pieces of legislation that will regulate the acquisition of agricultural land after the transitional period provided by the Accession Treaty expired on 30 April 2014.

Should the Commission come to the conclusion that the Hungarian law concerned does not respect EC law, it will take all the necessary measures, as appropriate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002520/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Support for the motor industry

European car sales are growing at the fastest pace in four years. What is the Commission doing to maximise growth in manufacturing and the motor industry?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

European car sales have not grown at all during the last four years.

New passenger car registrations (closest figure to car sales) reached 11.85 million of units in the EU in 2013, signalling a decline of 1.7% compared to 2012.

Year-on-year car registrations have declined over the past few years:

2009/08 -1.6%

2010/09 -5.5%

2011/10 -1.7%

2012/11 -8.2%

2013/12 -1.7%

Demand for new passenger cars have increased month per month since September 2013 compared to the same period one year before.

Increases have been relevant. September 2013: +5.4%, October: +4.7%, November: +1.2%, December: +13.3%, January 2014: +5.5%, February: +8%.

Nevertheless, in seasonal terms, these results are still below the monthly results of the years of market expansion.

In November 2012, the Commission adopted the CARS 2020 Action Plan Communication. The document includes a set of actions in four critical areas which are envisaged to strengthen the competitiveness of the European automotive industry. The measures are being implemented by the Commission with the aim of contributing to a sustainable growth of the sector.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002521/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Christian persecution in Mali

What steps are being taken at an EU level to allay fears expressed by Christians in Mali?

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

Since the beginning of the crisis in Mali in 2012, an important number of human rights violations have been reported in the north of Mali.

In February 2013, the Foreign Affairs Council encouraged EU institutions to support the deployment of civilian human rights observers by the African Union and independent civil society organisations. Such observers have been deployed progressively in key towns of the centre and the north of Mali to prevent violations of human rights and investigate allegations of such crimes.

In addition, the EU has undertaken numerous high level demarches to ensure that fundamental rights and the rights of religious minorities are protected. This objective is also part of the political dialogue between the EU and Mali, and of the EU Human Rights Strategy for Mali. Today, the constitution of the Malian Republic remains secular and provides an overall framework for the protection of the rights of all religious communities in Mali.

The EU fully supports the national dialogue and reconciliation process with the north. This, along with the restoration of delivery of public services in the north, should bring stability and peace dividends for the population. Moreover, the EU is helping to reform the rule of law, internal security and governance sectors. The support to the justice sector aims to ensure that human rights violations are investigated and adjudicated effectively, impartially, and without improper influence, while ensuring that the rights of suspects and victims are protected.

Finally, CSDP mission EUTM Mali is training the armed forces and modules on human rights are an integral part of the training.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002522/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Attacks on Churches in Egypt

The priest of an Egyptian church which was attacked at the end of January 2014 has informed World Watch Monitor that he believes the attack to have been carried out by the Muslim Brotherhood. Father Morcos Joachim stated that the attackers were seeking to avenge the recent arrest of many members of the Muslim Brotherhood. A policeman was killed and two others injured when the Church of the Virgin Mary in the 6th of October diocese came under fire.

What is the Commission doing to raise awareness of, and help stop, persecution of Christians and other minority faith groups in Egypt and those other Islamic states in the region where there has been a long-established trend of discrimination and persecution?

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

The EU is aware and concerned about the constraints that different religious minorities face in the world and condemns all forms of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons because of their religion or belief, wherever it takes place and regardless of the religion.

In the case of Egypt, the HR/VP has repeatedly called on the Egyptian authorities to ensure freedom of religion or belief in the country. The EU Delegation in Cairo is closely following cases of sectarian violence and emphasises the importance of avoiding discrimination on religious grounds in its contacts with Egyptian authorities.

In order to support the improvement of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt, the EU is engaging with the relevant stakeholders in the country as well as with the regional and international organisations sharing EU's values and objectives in this respect.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002523/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Taliban-Pakistan talks

This week has seen the first formal meeting between the Pakistani government and figures representing the Taliban, aimed at laying out a roadmap to end a decade-long terrorist campaign by Taliban extremists, which has resulted in thousands of deaths. More than 100 people died in January 2014 alone.

This violence must be stopped, but not at any cost. According to World Watch Monitor, Christians in Pakistan face 'severe persecution' and the situation is even worse in neighbouring Afghanistan, once ruled by the Taliban, where Christians face 'extreme persecution'.

With this in mind, what is the Commission doing to:

1. assist peace-building and combat terrorism in the region?

2. convince the Pakistani government that any deal with the Taliban and other Islamic extremists should not be made at the expense of already persecuted minority faiths within their borders?

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

The EU is following the dialogue between the Government of Pakistan and the Pakistani Taliban. While it is for the government to determine the content of that dialogue, it is worth noting that it has repeatedly stressed that they can only take place within the framework of the Constitution, which protects fundamental rights including the right to profess one's faith. The EU has expressed its support for this stance and will continue to stress the need to ensure that nothing in the negotiations infringes on Pakistan's international human rights commitments, including the rights of women and minorities. Minority rights remain a crucial issue for the EU in Pakistan and are raised at every opportunity, including at an EU-Pakistan ministerial meeting in March 2014.

EU-Pakistan cooperation on counter-terrorism (CT) and the rule of law is part of the 5-Year Engagement Plan and a regular CT dialogue with the Government is in place. Joint approaches for future EU support in the field of rule of law and countering extremism have been proposed to the Government. The EU and provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also co-chair sector reform coordination groups on peace-building and rule of law under the Strategic Development Partnership Framework, a landmark initiative in the most terrorism-stricken province. Since 2010 EU-Pakistan cooperation has provided 57.4 M Euros in the sector. Major programmes and projects are due to start in 2014. In Punjab, support for CT is also provided via a UK-led prosecution reform initiative. In addition the EU funds smaller peace-building initiatives in support of civil society.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002524/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Immigration from North Africa

According to press reports, on 3 October 2013 the Italian Navy rescued 1 123 people from inflatable boats close to Lampedusa in the space of 24 hours. In February 2014, seven migrants died in the Spanish exclave of Ceuta in North Africa. Immigration from North Africa has soared to record levels, with some 2 000 immigrants arriving in Italy in January 2014 — nearly 10 times the number for the same period last year.

1. What is the Commission doing at European level to remedy the many issues raised by such immigration from North Africa to Member States, both in humanitarian terms and in terms of securing borders?

2. Is the Commission engaging in any way with North African states to encourage and assist attempts at stopping would-be migrants risking their lives to enter Member States illegally, so that they instead use the established official and legal routes of entry?

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

After the tragedy at Lampedusa, the European Commission established a Task Force which developed a comprehensive strategy to prevent loss of lives and improve migration management in the Mediterranean. The report on the work of the Task Force, which details operational steps to be implemented in the short and medium term, was adopted as a communication ([1]) and welcomed by the December 2013 European Council.

The action identified includes the improvement of the operational picture in the Mediterranean and the strengthening of Frontex, the stepping-up of political dialogue and operational cooperation with third countries as well as further steps to tackle trafficking and smuggling in human beings, also in cooperation with countries in North Africa. These should be complemented by a proactive migratory policy in order to allow migrants to access Europe in a safe and orderly manner, including by reinforcing legal avenues to Europe.

A Mobility Partnership was concluded with Morocco in June 2013 and, since the adoption of the communication, the Commission has concluded a readmission agreement with Turkey, concluded a Mobility Partnership with Tunisia, expanded the Regional Protection Programme in North Africa, and is financing the Sahara Mediterranean Project in Libya. EASO has started a capacity building project in Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan and the resettlement commitment of the EU has increased in response to the Syrian crisis. Europol has provided support to Italy. Frontex has reinforced its operations in the Mediterranean, while co-legislators have agreed on a compromise text on rules of border surveillance at the external sea border. Finally, emergency funds have been mobilised to support Member States.

([1]) COM(2013) 869 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002525/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Polish beef

Can the Commission detail the amount of Polish beef, in tonnes, imported into the UK over the past 12 months, compared with the previous 12 months?

Can the Commission also outline how much EU funding has been received by the Polish beef sector since Poland joined the EU?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 April 2014)

According to the information available in Eurostat [1], the amount of beef imported into the UK from Poland in 2012 and 2013 was as follows:

	2012	2013
Fresh or Chilled Bovine Meat	5 663 tons	6 894 tons
Frozen Bovine Meat	1 504 tons	627 tons

The source of data is the Intrastat system [2], which is based on the direct collection of data from trade operators.

The total Union market related expenditure to the beef sector in Poland for the years 2004 to 2013 was EUR 61.4 million and concerned exclusively export refunds for beef meat.

In addition, Poland has benefitted from decoupled direct payments under the single area payment scheme (SAPS). The Commission is not in possession of specific information regarding the part of SAPS expenditure that was paid to beef producing farms.

(1) Comext database.
(2) Regulation (EC) No 638/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 3330/91 (OJ L 102, 7.4.2004, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002526/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Extent of EU corruption

A recent report published by the Commission estimates that corruption across Europe costs the EU economy at least EUR 120 billion every year.

In this context, can the Commission detail what steps it has taken — and will take — to assist Member States in formulating efforts to tackle corruption and organised crime across the EU moving forward?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(14 April 2014)

The EU Anti-Corruption Report focuses on selected key issues of particular relevance to each Member State. The Commission will engage Member States in dialogue on the follow-up of future steps suggested in the report. The Commission will put in place this year an experience sharing programme to help Member States, local NGOs and other stakeholders exchange good practice and overcome shortcomings in anti-corruption policy, facilitate follow-up, raise awareness, and provide training.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002527/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Children seeking asylum

Australia's Human Rights Commission recently announced that it will conduct an inquiry into the mandatory practice of detaining children seeking asylum. It is estimated that more than 1 000 children are currently being held in Australian immigration detention facilities.

In this context, and with due regard for the need to ensure that all countries have the right to regulate their own borders, can the Commission detail the steps it is taking to ensure that those seeking asylum, including undocumented migrants, are treated in a way that is fair and proportionate?

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

The EU asylum *acquis* contains detailed provisions aimed at ensuring a dignified standard of living for asylum-seekers and an effective access to a fair and efficient asylum procedure. The recast legislation in this area adopted by the co-legislators in June 2013 further strengthens these guarantees. In particular, it provides for better access to asylum for those in need of protection, higher quality of reception conditions as well as faster and more reliable asylum status determination procedures, while at the same time limiting the possibilities for abuse.

The EU asylum *acquis* contains specific provisions aimed at ensuring that decisions to detain asylum-seekers are lawful. The recast Reception Conditions Directive ([1]) further clarified and strengthened these rules. Concerning detention of minors in particular, Article 11 of this directive allows the detention of minors only as a measure of last resort and after it has been established that less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively. Unaccompanied minors are to be detained only in exceptional circumstances and all efforts are to be made to release the detained unaccompanied minor as soon as possible.

It is the task of Member States to correctly implement the EU asylum *acquis* and transpose and implement the new legislation. The Commission closely monitors and assists Member States in this task by organising expert meetings and encouraging Member States to use the new Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund to improve their system, including in developing alternatives to detention.

On behalf of the European Union, the Commission promotes similarly high standards at international level.

([1]) Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast), OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, p.96.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002528/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Elections in Afghanistan

With the presidential election in Afghanistan due to take place on 5 April 2014, the political campaign has formally begun, with several rallies for candidates taking place in the capital, Kabul. However, security remains a prominent issue. Only last Saturday (2 February 2014), two workers employed by a candidate were shot dead in the western city of Herat.

In this context, can the Commission highlight what steps it has taken — and will take — to support fair, free and safe elections in Afghanistan?

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

Security remains a key challenge for the Afghan authorities in holding a successful presidential election. The international community, with the EU playing a prominent role, has held regular discussions with the relevant Afghan bodies, including the Ministry of Interior which holds lead responsibility for election security. At present, the Afghan authorities estimate that around 90% of polling centres should be open on election day. Unfortunately, insurgent groups have shown that they are willing to resort to the callous targeting of civilians, including women and children, in their attempts to deny the Afghan people their right to determine who rules the country. The Afghan National Security Forces have foiled many attempted attacks, but it is likely that further attempts will be made.

The EU has focused attention on supporting an improved electoral process to ensure that the outcome reflects the will of the Afghan people as accurately as possible. An invitation to deploy an Electoral Assessment Team to observe the elections has been accepted and the team is currently deployed under the leadership of Chief Observer MEP Thijs Berman. Previous EU observation missions made 37 recommendations, the majority of which have been taken on board ahead of these elections. In particular, this included the passing of laws to give a firm legal framework for elections and establish the independence and permanent institutionalisation of key electoral bodies, streamline the vetting process, and put in place a comprehensive anti-fraud strategy.

The EU is one of the largest donors to these elections. The EU has provided EUR 20 million to fund the institutional development of the independent electoral bodies and support voter education activities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002529/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Car safety

Recently in India, five small cars failed crash tests performed by UK-based car safety watchdog Global NCAP. The results showed that in real-life incidents the cars could cause death or serious injury. In addition, the cars had apparently been stripped of safety features and mechanisms to make them more affordable for Indian motorists.

In this context, can the Commission state what provisions are in place, and what steps have been taken at EU level, to ensure that cars — whether manufactured in the Member States or imported from third countries — are safety tested?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(14 April 2014)

The European Union type-approval system for motor vehicles for sale in the European Union applies to vehicles sold in the EU regardless of the place of manufacturing, whether it is in an EU Member State or in a third country.

The framework was established already in 1970, namely with Council Directive 70/156/EEC on the approximation of the laws of Member States relating to the type-approval of motor vehicles and their trailers ([1]). More recently, this directive was replaced by Directive 2007/46/EC of the European Parliament and Council establishing a framework for the approval of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles ([2]).

Notably, the framework Directive mandates compliance with the strict type-approval requirements for frontal crash and side impact safety, amongst others. The mandatory testing of safety has therefore been ensured through the legislation that has been in place for many years.

([1]) OJ L 42, 23.2.1970, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 263, 9.10.2007, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002530/14
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Legacy of an existing rebate to a new Member State

As the Commission will be aware, on 18 September 2014 Scotland will be engaging in a referendum on becoming an independent country. Should this referendum result in a majority of Scots voting for independence, it has been stated that an independent Scotland would negotiate EU membership from within the EU and approach membership negotiations on the principle of 'continuity of effect'. Furthermore, it has been stated that the current EU budget has been agreed until 2020 and that a newly independent Scottish Government would not intend to reopen budget discussions until the next period post 2020.

Could the Commission confirm that in the negotiations that would necessarily be held prior to an independent Scotland's application for membership, budget discussions, in particular regarding the UK's present rebate, would not be reopened, and that the present rebate, as it stands for the UK, would be subject to negotiation solely between the remainder of the UK and Scotland, i.e. that a newly independent Scotland could negotiate its EU membership without further consideration of its rebate until 2020?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012, and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002531/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Tackling gang-related crime

Last month in Dublin, a forty-two year old man was killed in what police have described as a gang-related murder.

In light of this, and with due regard to the increasing prevalence of gang-related criminal activity across EU borders, can the Commission please detail what steps are being taken at European level to tackle organised crime across the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

In relation to the fight against organised crime of cross-border dimension, the Commission is implementing the Internal Security Strategy and the Stockholm programme, both framing the EU relevant actions. From an operational point of view the EU policy cycle 2011-2013 and 2014-2017 for organised and serious international crime aims to tackle priority areas characterised from strong organised crime presence notably in its cross-border dimension ([1]).

The Commission provides support and funding of relevant actions while ensuring coherence with other policies ([2]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/137401.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002532/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Sectarianism in football

In recent months, a section of supporters of Celtic Football Club has come under greater scrutiny for ongoing sectarianism and the glorification of terrorism.

What does the Commission plan on doing to target such behaviour and eradicate it from sport?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The Commission is in regular contact with the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) on various topics, including acts of violence and hate crimes committed by certain small groups of supporters. Sectarianism and the glorification of terrorism mentioned by the Honourable Member should first of all be addressed by the appropriate authorities in Member States and the football clubs concerned.

The Commission has provided financial support for preventive and educational projects in the sector of sport and education, involving supporters, schools and clubs, within the framework of the 2010 and 2011 Preparatory Actions in the field of sport as well as the former Lifelong Learning Programme.

The sport chapter of the new Erasmus+ Programme includes among its objectives the tackling of transnational threats to sport, such as violence, racism and intolerance. Erasmus+ can provide financial support for transnational projects with a focus on supporters.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002533/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Countering extremism

The Commission's 2014 Work Programme includes a commitment to bring forward proposals for countering extremism.

Can the Commission confirm that such proposals will cover the increasing danger of Islamic extremism and include a requirement to support victims and vulnerable constituent groups in society, such as Christians living in uncertain political contexts?

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

The Commission is concerned by the growing of extremism movements across Europe. It continues to work on ways to assist Member States in addressing prevention of violent extremism regardless of motivation and methods bearing in mind that the primary responsibility remains at local and national level.

On 15 January 2014, the Commission has published a communication ([1]) identifying 10 areas where Member States and the EU could reinforce their actions to prevent all types of extremisms that lead to violence. Empowering victims to help in preventing violent extremism is highlighted in the communication. The Commission has also published an online repository of practices developed by the RAN ([2]) intended to further support the communication. The Commission will present a report on the implementation of the different actions contained in the communication towards the end of 2015.

The Commission's communication is a contribution to the on-going work to revise the EU Strategy to Combat Radicalisation and Recruitment to terrorism.

The support and protection of all categories of victims is also a priority for the Commission. The Victims' package ([3]) launched in May 2011 will ensure that victims are given the same non-discriminatory minimum level of rights, services and access to justice, everywhere in the EU.

([1]) 'Communication on preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response' COM(2013) 941 final — http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/2014/20140115_01_en.htm

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/collection_of_approaches_lessons_learned_and_practices_en.pdf

([3]) The Victims' package consists of the directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime ('Victims' Directive'), the Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order applying to criminal law protection measures ('EPO criminal') and the Regulation (EU) No 606/2013 on the mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters ('EPO civil').

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002534/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: EU Social Enterprise Conference

The EU Social Enterprise Conference took place in Strasbourg on 16 and 17 January 2014.

Can the Commission please detail the focus of the conference and the outcomes arising therefrom, and also outline the steps that are being taken at EU level to harness the transformative potential of social enterprises for our economy and the Community?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The 'Social Entrepreneurs — have your say!' took place in Strasbourg on 16-17 January 2014 and gathered around 2000 social entrepreneurs (SEs) and supporters of the economy from the public and private sector. Aim of the event was to take stock of what has been achieved following the launch of the Social Business Initiative (SBI) in November 2011 and discuss priorities for the future. There were statements by and discussions between high-level speakers from across Europe as well as animated discussions in targeted workshops and discussion fora. This led to the adoption of the so-called 'Strasbourg Declaration' which lists concrete on how to take the SBI project further.

Much has been achieved since the launch of the SBI. SEs are no longer working in isolation, but form part of bigger networks across Europe through which best practice is exchanged. The organisation of network and information events — both physical and virtual — is facilitating this. Access to finance has also improved. Through the Employment and Social Innovation Programme, at least EUR 86 million will be made available to finance SEs. Member States can now finance SEs through structural funds. In addition, the creation of an EU framework for social entrepreneurship funds is boosting private investment. Finally, following the recently revised public procurement legislation, public authorities have today more leeway for taking account of SEs when awarding public contracts.

Having said this, much remains to be done. The Commission remains committed to continue encouraging further development of the SBI. For instance, the Commission issued recently a communication on Crowdfunding to boost the development of this alternative investment tool.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002536/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Focus on e-services

The Commission's 2014 Work Programme aims to bring forward proposals to implement e-identification and e-procurement more widely across the EU.

Can the Commission please detail the nature and scope of these proposals and indicate how it envisages these plans will impact on cross-border trade and consumer confidence?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(28 April 2014)

The Commission has recognised the importance of e-identification (eID), trust services and e-procurement for the internal market. Proposals for a regulation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS) and for a directive on electronic invoicing in public procurement have now been agreed by the legislators.

eIDAS Regulation will establish legal interoperability of national eID means and trust services, therefore enhancing the legal certainty of cross-border and cross-sector e-transactions.

The directive on electronic invoicing in public procurement sets out the vision for the full digitisation of the public procurement process. In addition, a Multi-Stakeholder Forum organised by the Commission on e-procurement will identify further interoperability work areas and contribute to share best practice. The Commission is also involved in several interoperability work streams aiming at creating a true internal market for public procurement and at facilitating cross-border trade.

Regarding technical interoperability in both areas, the Commission co-funded two large scale pilots to look for practical solutions to remove barriers between Member States (Peppol on e-procurement and STORK on eID). The results were positive and provided building blocks to be reused by the 'Digital Services Infrastructures' of the Connecting Europe Facility: interoperability of eID is already included in its work programme of 2014 and e-procurement is foreseen in 2015. The outcome of these undertakings will lead to innovative cross-border e-services, for example, it will become possible to create remotely a company in other Member State.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002539/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Migrant benefits

As the UK Government investigates avenues to curb the number of people migrating to the country in order to take advantage of a more generous system of benefits and services than they may be entitled to in their home state, whilst at the same time welcoming migrants who come to work, what is the Commission doing to ensure that undue pressure is not put upon individual Member States and that they are able to put in place their own reasonable measures to make the burden of migration more bearable?

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

On 25 November 2013, the Commission presented its communication 'Free movement of EU citizens and their families: Five actions to make a difference' ([1]). This communication aims to clarify the free movement rights and obligations of EU citizens. It also explains the safeguards which exist under EC law to fight possible abuse and fraud and to avoid unreasonable burdens for the social assistance systems of host Member States.

The communication also presents data that show that most EU citizens move to another Member State to work and they help the host country's economy to function better because they help to tackle skills shortages and labour market bottlenecks. Moreover, mobile EU citizens tend to be net contributors to the host country's welfare system, because they are more likely to be in employment than nationals of the host countries and less likely to claim social benefits.

The Commission recognises that there can be local problems created by a large, sudden influx of people from other EU countries into a particular geographical area. For example, they can put a strain on education, housing and infrastructure. It therefore stands ready to engage with Member States and to help municipal authorities and others use the European Social Fund to its full extent. From 1 January 2014, at least 20% of ESF funds should be spent on promoting social inclusion and combating poverty in each Member State.

([1]) COM(2013) 837 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002541/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Rise in obesity

The UK-based National Obesity Forum has warned that unless more is done in terms of awareness campaigns and a more proactive approach on the part of GPs to managing individuals wishing to change their eating and exercise habits, as has been done effectively with smoking, Britain is in danger of surpassing the already alarming estimate that half of the population will be obese by 2050.

What is being done by the Commission across Europe to lower obesity levels so that our children, and indeed adults, age in better health?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyle for all. The strategy encourages action-oriented partnerships involving the 28 EU Member States (High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2])) and civil society (EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([3])).

In cooperation with the Member States, the Commission works on promoting healthier lifestyles. Through the EU School Fruit and Vegetables Scheme and School Milk Scheme ([4]) ([5]) the Commission contributes to establishing healthier eating habits among school children. On 30 January 2014, the Commission adopted a new proposal ([6]) that aims at strengthening the educational dimension of the two schemes in order to increase their effectiveness. On 24 February 2014 the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity agreed upon an Action Plan on Childhood Obesity ([7]) ([8]).

The Commission has launched three pilot projects ([9]): two aim to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in communities where the household income is below 50% of the EU average; one aims to promote healthy diets among children, pregnant women and the elderly.

The promotion of sport and health-enhancing physical activity, covering also children, ranks high on the Commission's agenda for sport, with concrete measures laid out in the 2013 Council Recommendation on HEPA ([10]) and in the new programme Erasmus+ ([11]).

Finally, the Commission has programmes in place that could fund project or research proposals on healthy lifestyles, such as the Health Programme (2014-2020) ([12]) or the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([13]).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_en.htm
([6]) COM(2014) 32.
([7]) However, the Dutch Member of the High Level Group informed that, based on subsidiarity concerns, they could not join in the initiative.
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
([9]) SANCO/2011/C4/01, SANCO/2012/C4/02 and SANCO/2013/C4/02.
([10]) OJ C 354/1 of 4.12.2013.
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/sport/opportunities/index_en.htm
([12]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm
([13]) COM(2011) 809 final, 30.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002542/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Institutional abuse

This week has seen the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry (HIA), the UK's largest ever inquiry of its kind, begin its first public hearings in my constituency of Northern Ireland. It is to examine claims of abuse in children's residential institutions (both state-run and those operated by voluntary organisations and the Roman Catholic Church) over a 73-year period from 1922. It is harrowing that 434 people have contacted the inquiry to date with allegations of abuse.

What is being done by the Commission on an EU level to combat child abuse wherever it may occur, and to support victims seeking support and justice in relation to crimes committed in the past?

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

The Child Sexual Exploitation Directive ([1]) approximates the definition of 20 offences, sets minimum levels for criminal penalties and facilitates reporting, investigation and prosecution. In particular, prosecution must be possible for a sufficient period of time after the victim has reached the age majority. It extends national jurisdiction to cover abuse by EU nationals abroad, gives child victims easier access to legal remedies and includes measures to prevent additional trauma from participating in criminal proceedings. Offenders will be subject to risk assessments, and have access to special intervention programmes. Information on convictions and disqualifications will circulate more easily among criminal records and background checks will be more reliable. The Commission is monitoring its implementation by Member States.

The European Cybercrime Centre at Europol has included the fight against online child sexual exploitation as one of its priorities. Cooperation at international level among all actors is essential. The Commission has supported the launch of the Global Alliance against child sexual abuse online, whereby 53 countries have committed to step up the identification of child victims, improve investigations, enhance public awareness and reduce the availability of child pornography.

In addition, the Commission provides funding for projects to fight child sexual abuse, combat violence against children and protect children from abuse online through financial programmes, in particular 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime', 'Daphne', and 'Safer Internet'.

([1]) Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA; OJ L 335, 17.12.2011, p. 1-14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002543/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Persecution of Christians in Sri Lanka

It is welcome news that Sri Lanka has moved to arrest 24 people, including 8 Buddhist monks, who were involved in the attacks of Sunday, 12 January 2014 on two churches, video footage of which shows monks hurling bricks and stones. There were also reports of an arson attack on another church earlier the same day. Indeed, Christians have not been the only victims of increasing hardline Buddhist nationalism, with a recent spate of attacks on Muslims and mosques also having been reported. Worryingly, victims have reported that at times there has seemed to be an unwillingness to act immediately to halt attacks.

What steps can, and will, the Commission take to communicate concern over the situation and influence the authorities in Sri Lanka to work proactively to bring an end to the persecution of minority faiths within their borders?

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

The EU remains concerned about the rise of violence against religious minorities in Sri Lanka and the human rights and the rule of law situation in general.

These concerns have been highlighted in public statements issued in the recent months by the EU Delegation in Colombo, calling upon the Sri Lankan authorities to ensure justice through speedy and impartial investigations. Human rights concerns, including religious tensions and attacks against places of worship, were also given prominence in EU dialogue with the Sri Lankan authorities at the recent Joint Commission meeting in December 2013.

As in 2012 and 2013, the EU Member States have co-sponsored another critical resolution on Sri Lanka at the latest UN Human Rights Council session in March. The resolution expresses concerns over the issues that you have highlighted and urges the Government of Sri Lanka to investigate all attacks on churches and other places of worship, to hold perpetrators accountable and take steps to prevent future attacks.

The EU is monitoring the situation together with other international organisations and intends to continue raising these matters in its contacts with the Sri Lankan authorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002544/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Does the Commission Work Programme 2014 provide value for public money?

Can the Commission please assess the content of its 2014 Work Programme in terms of whether it provides value for public money?

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

The Commission Work Programme 2014 (CWP 2014) ([1]) outlines priorities and key actions targeted at growth and jobs with a view to consolidating efforts under way to deliver tangible results for EU citizens before the end of the mandate.

The smooth start of the new programmes supported by the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2014-2020 is a particularly important priority for 2014. The new programmes are more result oriented to better serve the Europe 2020 strategy; policies and programmes have been simplified; structural funds linked to economic governance; and the use of financial instruments promoted to increase the leverage effect of the EU budget.

Other important elements of the CWP 2014 include completing the banking union and strengthening economic governance, fully exploiting the potential of the single market, protecting values and promoting citizens' rights, as well as strengthening the EU's role as a global actor.

The work programme also includes 21 initiatives to simplify legislation and to reduce regulatory burden within the Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) which remains an important objective for the Commission

All Commission proposals with significant impacts are subject to an impact assessment which evaluates the potential economic, social and environmental consequences. It provides evidence regarding the need for action at EU level and assesses alternative policy choices with a view to designing legislation which serves its purpose in the most effective and efficient way. In addition, an increasing number of policy areas are covered by *ex-post* evaluations to identify the impact and benefits of EU action. All impact assessments and evaluations are publicly available.

([1]) COM(2013) 739, 22.10.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002545/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Promoting air ambulance services

Given the principle of free movement and the need for cross-border cooperation in the field of health, what is the Commission doing to support air ambulance services across the EU?

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

Article 10 of Directive 2011/24/EU ([1]) on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare stipulates that the Commission shall encourage Member States, particularly neighbouring countries, to cooperate in cross-border healthcare provision in border regions and to conclude agreements among themselves for this purpose.

The Commission provides funding to support various projects on cross-border healthcare cooperation, mainly in the area of cross-border collaboration of hospitals.

The Commission does not support any cross-border cooperation in air ambulance services.

([1]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002546/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Treatment for cancer patients

What steps are being taken at EU level to further develop healthcare capacity for the increasing numbers of cancer patients in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

The European Commission has developed several initiatives in the area of cancer care through the European Partnership Action Against Cancer. These included the identification of best practices in cancer services and the promotion of innovative network approaches to exchange experiences.

In this context, a Policy statement on multidisciplinary cancer care ([1]) was developed to define the core elements that all tumour-based multidisciplinary teams should address. The implementation of clinical guidelines for cancer care was also examined, with a special focus on inequalities. The findings were published in a report on implementing clinical guidelines in cancer care with a focus on addressing health inequalities ([2]).

To build upon this work, a new Joint Action on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control 2014-2016 was launched in 2014. Co-funded by the Health Programme, this Joint Action is due to develop a European Guide addressing the topics of: evidence-based and quality-based cancer screening programmes, comprehensive cancer network organisation, community-based cancer care and survivorship. A model of a Comprehensive Cancer Network will be developed to integrate services at national or regional levels. Member States can then adapt the network models to their own contexts.

([1]) http://www.ejcancer.com/article/S0959-8049(13)01007-1/abstract
([2]) http://www.epaac.eu/healthcare

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002548/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Reduction in real wages

According to findings published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in the UK, real wages have dropped consistently since 2010, with shorter working hours cited as one determining factor in light of the economic crisis.

In this context, can the Commission please detail what efforts are being made at an EU level to consolidate and support employment with wages that are fair, proportionate and rising?

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

In its Employment Package from April 2012 the Commission identified the EU's main job potential areas and the most effective ways for EU countries to create more jobs ([1]). Specifically as regards wages, the Commission stressed the importance of decent and sustainable wages within the Member States.

The current broad policy agenda has been set out in the Annual Growth Survey 2014, published in November last year ([2]). In the area of employment, the Commission identified the following priorities:

— Stepping up active labour market measures, notably active support and training for the unemployed, improving the performance of public employment services and implementing a Youth Guarantee.

— Further reform efforts to ensure that wage developments are in line with productivity and thus support both competitiveness and aggregate demand, to remedy labour market segmentation, notably by modernising employment protection legislation, to support job creation in fast-growing sectors and to facilitate labour mobility.

— Pursuing the modernisation of education and training systems, including life-long learning, vocational training and dual learning schemes.

Following these policies it should be ensured that employment growth and wage developments are mutually reinforcing.

([1]) COM(2012)0173 final.
([2]) COM(2013) 800 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002549/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Persecution of Christians in northeastern Nigeria

On 26 January 2014 in Adamawa State, northeastern Nigeria, 45 people died in an attack by suspected Boko Haram militants on a Catholic Church. Since May of last year, Adamawa and Borno states have been under a government-imposed state of emergency in an effort to tackle the activities of Boko Haram.

In this context, can the Commission please detail the steps it has taken — and will take — to support the Nigerian Government and its authorities in tackling Islamic extremism in the ravaged states of Adamawa and Borno? In addition, what efforts are being made to support and protect Christian communities in these states?

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

The continued violence in the North East of Nigeria is of great concern.

The EU is working with the Nigerian authorities to help bring an end to the cycle of violence through continuous political dialogue and targeted aid interventions focusing on the underlying root causes for violence.

The 10th EDF is supporting a broad range of actions in the field of democratisation, rule of law, water, sanitation and maternal health. The IcSP (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace) is supporting several peace and mediation programmes and projects to reform criminal justice and strengthen the Office of the National Security Advisor. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights funds actions to protect human rights, particularly with NGOs.

The terrorist attacks target both Christians and Muslims. They are perpetrated by an amalgam of variously motivated terrorist groups seeking to destabilise the State of Nigeria by all means, especially by seeking to widen all differences, including religious (which in recent years have not been a problem in Nigeria). It is important to avoid actions which may exacerbate inter-communal tensions.

Moreover, the humanitarian service of the Commission provides assistance to victims of violence in the Borno and Adamawa states. Protection is a key component as the vast majority of the displaced are women and children. Assistance in terms of nutrition and healthcare is being provided to people, both Nigerians and returnees, who have sought refuge across the border in Niger.

This year, the Commission though its department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, has allocated EUR 7.5 million to help those most in need in Nigeria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002551/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Civilian evacuations from Homs

It has been reported that the first group of civilians is to be evacuated from the city of Homs in Syria, as the pause in fighting between the government and rebels continues under a UN-negotiated ceasefire, and aid is allowed to reach those trapped in the city.

In this context, can the Commission please detail what steps are being taken at an EU level to build on the recent ceasefire witnessed in Syria, and to better target support and assistance for those living in the besieged city of Homs in particular?

Answer given by Commissioner Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(30 April 2014)

The ceasefire that took place at the beginning of February allowed the evacuation of 1 366 people from the Old City of Homs. The report of the United Nation's Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2139 (UNSCR 2139) nevertheless confirms that shelling and bombing returned to pre-ceasefire levels during the reporting period. Since the 15th of March an additional 200 people have been evacuated from the Old City following an agreement between the parties and the Governor of Homs. It is estimated that 2 000 people remain trapped in the Old City of Homs.

Around 220 000 people in total remain besieged in different cities in Syria including the Old City of Homs, Nubl and Zahra, Madamiyet Elsham, Eastern Ghouta and Darayya. 3.5 million people are estimated to be in need of assistance in hard-to-reach areas.

The EU has spearheaded the international humanitarian and development response to the Syria crisis and mobilised over EUR 2.6 billion in total support from the Commission and the Member States. More than 44.8% of the Commission's humanitarian funding to this crisis goes to responding to needs inside Syria.

The EU has also been active in the field of advocating for more humanitarian access. The EU is active in the High Level Group on Humanitarian Challenges, whose members include countries with influence over parties to the Syrian conflict. The Group meets regularly to discuss and undertake steps in order to guarantee humanitarian access in line with the UNSCR 2139 throughout Syria to allow for the prompt and safe delivery of assistance to those in need, wherever they are, through the most direct routes, across lines and across borders, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable living in besieged and hard-to-reach areas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002552/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Risk of deflation in the eurozone

Despite the European Central Bank's insistence that deflation does not represent a threat to the eurozone, inflation decreased from 0.8% in December 2013 to 0.7% in January 2014, and there are fears that this may curtail economic growth.

In this context, can the Commission please detail what steps it has taken — and will take — to ensure that potential deflation in the eurozone does not negatively impact the limited growth witnessed recently in non-eurozone countries, including the United Kingdom?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The recent drop in euro area headline inflation reflects both external and internal factors, for example falling energy and commodity prices, an easing of underlying price pressures in the wake of a prolonged slack in the economy and a lower impact of short-term factors, such as taxes and food. Some Member States experience very low, or even temporarily negative, inflation as part of their necessary adjustment process. The Commission Winter Forecast expects a protracted period of low inflation, with a very gradual increase in inflation throughout 2015, in line with the ongoing recovery. The Commission expects the gradual recovery that is currently underway in Europe to continue with a moderate acceleration over the next two years. Furthermore, there are visible signs that the economic rebalancing in Europe is proceeding. The economic strategy pursued is paying off in terms of improvement in competitiveness as well as fiscal and external accounts. As set out in the Annual Growth Survey published November last year, the Commission considers that the biggest challenge now is to keep up the pace of reform to improve competitiveness and secure a lasting recovery, building on the same balanced strategy for growth and jobs as in 2013 while shifting emphasis to adapt the priorities to the economic and social situation faced in the current recovery phase.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002553/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Fall in retail sales

According to findings published by Eurostat, retail sales in January 2014 in the eurozone countries fell by 1.6% compared with the same period last year.

Can the Commission please detail what efforts are being made at EU level to facilitate greater consumer spending across the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The issue of facilitating domestic demand can be related to the general economic situation in Europe, the gradual recovery that is currently underway and the policies that are being implemented to bolster this recovery. The Commission expects the gradual recovery to continue with a moderate acceleration over the next two years. Furthermore, there are visible signs that the economic rebalancing in Europe is proceeding. The economic strategy pursued is paying off in terms of improvement in competitiveness as well as fiscal and external accounts. As set out in the Annual Growth Survey published November last year, the Commission considers that one of the biggest challenges now is to keep up the pace of reform to improve competitiveness and secure a lasting recovery, building on the same balanced strategy for growth and jobs as in 2013, while shifting emphasis to adapt the priorities to the economic and social situation faced in the current recovery phase.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002554/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Study on the Netherlands' EU membership

A study recently conducted by the UK consultancy firm Capital Economics estimated that the Netherlands would save over EUR 1 trillion if it were to leave the EU next year. This would include up to EUR 240 billion in savings from opting out of EU spending programmes alone.

In this context, what action is being taken at EU level to make EU membership, and EU funding programmes, more affordable for families, households and businesses across the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2014)

The multi-annual financial framework regulation for the period 2014-2020 has been formally adopted in December 2013 with the unanimous approval of all Member States and the consent of the European Parliament.

It lays down total ceilings for commitment and payment appropriations of respectively EUR 960 billion and EUR 908.4 billion (in 2011 prices).

These ceilings for the period 2014-2020 from which the maximum amounts for the annual EU budgets are derived, represent a real decrease of 3.4% for commitment ceilings and a real decrease of 3.7% for payment ceilings compared to the ceilings for 2007-2013 (also expressed in 2011 prices).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-002555/14
à la Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(5 mars 2014)

Objet: Compléments alimentaires/Dispositifs médicaux

De plus en plus de fabricants de compléments alimentaires décident de commercialiser leurs produits sous le statut «dispositif médical».

Cette opération permet en effet d'échapper à toute preuve visant à démontrer l'efficacité du produit car le certificateur n'en expertise que la sécurité. Il est même possible de constater que certains des produits concernés avaient reçu un avis négatif de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments après examen de leur dossier clinique.

Je m'inquiète en particulier de la «conversion» de certains compléments alimentaires à base de canneberge en dispositifs médicaux appartenant à la classe II a. Ces produits, qui ont obtenu le marquage CE auprès de certains organismes notifiés, revendiquent une activité sur les infections urinaires, alors même qu'ils ne disposent pas de dossier clinique validé.

Ce changement de classification permet de contourner l'interdiction d'emploi d'allégations de santé.

Face à ce risque de santé publique, comment la Commission envisage-t-elle de renforcer le contrôle de ces produits?

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(26 mars 2014)

La Commission est très sensible au problème soulevé par l'auteur de la question.

Concernant les produits contenant de la canneberge qui sont destinés à la prévention des infections urinaires, les services de la Commission ont déjà pris contact avec les autorités compétentes des États membres dans lesquels des organismes notifiés ont obtenu les certificats de validation. Dans l'un des cas, les services de la Commission ont été informés du retrait du marquage CE. Les autres enquêtes sont encore en cours. La Commission attirera également l'attention des organismes notifiés sur ce problème à l'occasion d'une réunion prévue le 15 avril 2014.

Les autorités françaises ont demandé à la Commission de prendre une décision relative à la qualification de ces produits, sur la base de l'article 13, paragraphe 1, de la directive 93/42/CEE ([1]). La procédure correspondante est en cours.

Plus généralement, les services de la Commission, dans le cadre du groupe d'experts sur les dispositifs médicaux «frontière» et leur classement («Borderline and Classification Medical Devices Expert Group») ([2]), analysent avec les États membres les cas spécifiques des produits situés à la limite entre les compléments alimentaires et les dispositifs médicaux, l'objectif étant de promouvoir une méthode uniforme pour leur qualification dans l'Union européenne.

En plus du resserrement des critères de contrôle des preuves cliniques, la Commission, dans sa proposition de règlement sur les dispositifs médicaux ([3]), a soumis l'idée de classer les dispositifs composés de substances destinées à être ingérées, absorbées par le corps humain ou dispersées dans celui-ci, dans la classe à risque la plus élevée ([4]). La Commission a également proposé que ces dispositifs soient conformes, par analogie, aux prescriptions pertinentes figurant à l'annexe I de la directive 2001/83/CE. Malheureusement, ces dispositions n'ont pas été approuvées par le Parlement européen à l'occasion du vote du 22 octobre 2013.

([1]) JO L 169 du 12.7.1993, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/medical-devices/documents/borderline/index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 542 final — Projet de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif aux dispositifs médicaux, et modifiant la directive 2001/83/CE, le règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 et le règlement (CE) n° 1223/2009.
([4]) Annexe VII, règle 21, du projet de règlement du Parlement européen et du Conseil relatif aux dispositifs médicaux, et modifiant la directive /83/CE, le règlement (CE) n° 178/2002 et le règlement (CE) n° 1223/2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-002555/14
to the Commission
Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Food supplements/medical devices

An increasing number of dietary supplement manufacturers are deciding to market their products as 'medical devices'.

This makes it possible to avoid having to provide evidence that the product is effective, since the certifier merely certifies its safety. It has even happened that some of the products concerned had received negative opinions from the European Food Safety Authority after their clinical documentation had been reviewed.

I am particularly concerned about the 'conversion' of certain dietary supplements containing cranberry into Class IIa medical devices. These products, which have obtained CE marking from certain notified bodies, claim to have an effect on urinary tract infections, when they do not have any validated clinical documentation to that effect.

This change in classification allows companies to circumvent the ban on making health claims.

Regarding this threat to public health, how does the Commission intend to step up its monitoring of these products?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2014)

The Commission is very sensitive to the issue raised by the Honourable Member.

In the case of products which contain cranberry, intended for the prevention of cystitis, the Commission services already took contact with the competent authorities of those Member States in which Notified Bodies issued the corresponding certificates. In one case, the Commission services have been informed that the CE marking has been withdrawn. The other investigations are ongoing. The Commission will also bring the issue to the attention of Notified Bodies on the occasion of a meeting scheduled on 15 April 2014.

The Commission has been requested by the French authorities to take a decision on the qualification of these products on the basis of Article 13(1)d of Directive 93/42/EEC ([1]). The corresponding procedure is ongoing.

In a broader context, the Commission services, in the framework of the Borderline and Classification Medical Devices Expert Group ([2]), are analysing together with Member States specific cases of products that are on the borderline between food supplements and medical devices, in order to promote a uniform approach on their qualification throughout the European Union.

In addition to reinforced clinical evidence requirements, in its proposal for a regulation on medical devices ([3]), the Commission has suggested classifying devices composed of substances intended to be ingested and that are absorbed by or dispersed in the human body into the highest risk class ([4]). The Commission has also proposed that such devices comply, by analogy, with the relevant requirements laid down in Annex I to Directive 2001/83/EC. Unfortunately, those provisions have not been approved by the European Parliament in the vote that took place on 22 October 2013.

([1]) OJ L 169, 12.7.1993, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/medical-devices/documents/borderline/index_en.htm
([3]) COM(2012) 542 final — draft Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on medical devices, and amending Directive 2001/83/EC, Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009.
([4]) Annex VII, rule 21, of draft Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on medical devices, and amending Directive 2001/83/EC, Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002556/14
til Kommissionen
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5. marts 2014)

Om: Udfasning af mælkekvoterne

Mælkekvoterne vil som bekendt blive udfaset pr. 1. april 2015.

I Sundhedstjekket blev det bestemt, at der skal ske en »blød landing« af mælkekvoterne. Én af forudsætningerne herfor var, at værdien af kvoterne ville udhules som følge af større produktionstilladelser og af den stadig kortere periode frem mod ophørsdatoen for EU's mælkekvoteordning.

I visse medlemsstater, herunder Danmark, peger prognoser imidlertid på, at værdien af mælkekvoterne forbliver høj frem mod sidste kvotebørs.

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, om EU har en erstatningspligt over for indehavere af mælkekvoter, hvis værdi forbliver høj frem mod sidste kvotebørs?

Kan Kommissionen oplyse, hvordan EU vil sikre en blød landing af mælkekvoterne hos de medlemsstater, der ikke står overfor en blød landing?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Dacian Cioloş
(29. april 2014)

Kommissionen henviser det ærede medlem til sit svar på forespørgsel E-014095/2013 ([1]).

At investere i mælkekvoter er en privat erhvervsmæssig beslutning, som en landbruger/virkomhed træffer for egen regning. Der gives ingen mulighed for at betale kompensation for høje priser på mælkekvoter.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002556/14
to the Commission
Jens Rohde (ALDE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Phasing-out of milk quotas

It is a well known fact that milk quotas will be phased out completely on 1 April 2015.

As part of the CAP Health Check, it was decided that there should be a 'soft landing' with regard to those quotas. One prerequisite for this was that the value of quotas would be eroded as a result of authorising increased production in the run-up to the expiry date for the EU milk quota regime.

In some Member States, including in Denmark, the value of milk quotas is now forecast to remain high, having regard to the latest quota exchange.

Can the Commission say whether the EU is liable to pay compensation to milk quota holders, if, having regard to the latest quota exchange, values remain high?

Can the Commission say how, with regard to milk quotas, the EU will ensure a 'soft landing' for Member States with no such prospect?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-014095/2013 ([1]).

Investments in milk quota are private business decisions of farmers/entrepreneurs at their own risk. There are no possibilities to pay compensation for high quota prices.

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

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002557/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5. März 2014)

Betrifft: Alte Arzneimittel und ihre Umweltfolgen

Weltweit werden in Wasserläufen Rückstände von Hunderten verschiedener Arzneimittelwirkstoffe nachgewiesen, und es wächst die Sorge über die Schäden, die diese Rückstände mit Blick auf die menschliche Gesundheit und die Umwelt hervorrufen können. Sachverständige können die Umweltfolgen dieser Stoffe aber nur bewerten, wenn ihnen für alle Arzneimittel entsprechende Daten vorliegen.

1. In Verkehr gebrachte (alte) human- und veterinärmedizinische Arzneimittel sind in Bezug auf ihre Umweltfolgen noch nie bewertet worden. Welche Strategie wird die Kommission diesbezüglich verfolgen, bzw. was wird sie in dieser Hinsicht unternehmen?

2. Wird die Kommission Maßnahmen treffen, um die Bewertung vorhandener Arzneimittel auf den Stand der für neu in Verkehr gebrachte Arzneimittel vorgeschriebenen Bewertungen zu bringen, für die Daten zur Bewertung ihrer Umweltfolgen vorgelegt werden müssen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(11. April 2014)

Die Kommission erarbeitet derzeit gemäß den einschlägigen Rechtsvorschriften über prioritäre Stoffe im Bereich der Wasserpolitik ([1]) ein strategisches Konzept gegen die Wasserverschmutzung durch pharmazeutische Stoffe.

Bei der Entwicklung dieses Konzepts wird sich die Kommission auf eine Studie über die Umweltrisiken von Arzneimitteln stützen, die sie in Auftrag gegeben hat und die momentan durchgeführt wird.

Die Kommission beabsichtigt zurzeit nicht, den Rechtsrahmen für die Genehmigung von Humanarzneimitteln zu ändern.

([1]) Richtlinie 2013/39/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. August 2013 zur Änderung der Richtlinien 2000/60/EG und 2008/105/EG in Bezug auf prioritäre Stoffe im Bereich der Wasserpolitik (ABl. L 226 vom 24.8.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002557/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Old pharmaceuticals and their impact on the environment

As hundreds of different active pharmaceutical residues are being discovered in waterways around the world, concern is increasing about the harm they may do to human health and the environment. But only when data for all pharmaceuticals are available will experts be able to assess their impact on the environment.

1. What strategy or steps will the Commission follow to address the fact that existing (old) pharmaceuticals on the market for human and veterinary use have never been assessed for their environmental impact?

2. Will the Commission take action to bring the assessment of existing pharmaceuticals into line with the assessment of new ones being put on the market, for which data will be required in order to assess their environmental impact?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2014)

The Commission is working on a strategic approach to pollution of water by pharmaceutical substances in accordance with the relevant provisions of the legislation on priority substances in the field of water policy ([1]).

In the development of the strategic approach, the Commission will use a study on the risks posed by medicinal products in the environment which it has commissioned and is currently under preparation.

At present the Commission has no plans to change the legislative framework dealing with the authorisation of human medicinal products.

([1]) Directive 2013/39/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 August 2013 amending Directives 2000/60/EC and 2008/105/EC as regards priority substances in the field of water policy. OJ L 226, 24.8.2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002558/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5. März 2014)

Betrifft: EU-Richtlinie über die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden und Wechselwirkungen mit anderen EU-Rechtsvorschriften

In einem Begleitdokument zu dem Richtlinienvorschlag (EU) Nr. 1107/2009 wird folgendes festgestellt: *„Einer der Schwachpunkte der geltenden Rahmenregelung für Pestizide liegt darin, dass der eigentlichen Anwendungsphase, die ein Schlüsselelement für die Identifizierung des von Pestiziden ausgehenden Gesamtrisikos ist, nicht genügend Rechnung getragen wird. Hauptziel dieser thematischen Strategie ist die Schließung dieser Rechtslücke.“* Folglich muss eine effektive Umsetzung der Richtlinie betreffend die nachhaltige Pestizidverwendung über das hinausgehen, was in anderen EU-Rechtsvorschriften bereits umgesetzt wurde.

Indessen besteht ein Ziel des zyprischen Nationalen Aktionsplans darin, die Anzahl der Fälle, in denen die Rückstandshöchstmengen überschritten wurden, so zu reduzieren, dass der Prozentsatz der Überschreitung bis zum 26. November 2017 nicht mehr als 3 % beträgt, während der deutsche Nationale Aktionsplan bis 2021 eine Senkung dieses Prozentsatzes auf 1 % — sowohl bei importierten als auch bei in Deutschland produzierten Erzeugnissen — vorsieht. Der bulgarische Nationale Aktionsplan hat zum Ziel, sicherzustellen, dass die EU-Richtlinien über Trinkwasser und Oberflächengewässer und die Wasserrahmenrichtlinie eingehalten werden, und der Nationale Aktionsplan des Vereinigten Königreichs zielt vorrangig darauf ab, zu gewährleisten, dass die Pestizidkontamination im Wasser nicht dazu führt, dass das VK seine Zielvorgaben nach der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie nicht mehr erfüllen kann.

1. Beabsichtigt die Kommission rechtliche Schritte gegen Mitgliedstaaten einzuleiten, die lediglich eine Mindesterfüllung des EU-Rechts anstreben, wie das VK und Bulgarien?

2. Beabsichtigt die Kommission rechtliche Schritte gegen Mitgliedstaaten einzuleiten, die die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden als Anlass zur Nichteinhaltung von EU-Recht nehmen (also beispielsweise 1 % Überschreitungen für Rückstandshöchstmengen bei heimisch erzeugten Lebensmitteln), wie Deutschland und Zypern?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(8. April 2014)

Die Kommission verfolgt derzeit aufmerksam die Umsetzung und Durchführung der Richtlinie 2009/128/EG ([1]) über die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden, die die Mitgliedstaaten bis zum 26. November 2011 umsetzen mussten und nach der sie ihre nationalen Aktionspläne zur Durchführung der Richtlinie bis zum 26. November 2012 erlassen mussten.

Wegen der Verzögerungen sowohl bei der Umsetzung als auch bei der Durchführung der Richtlinie in mehreren Mitgliedstaaten hat die Kommission Vertragsverletzungsverfahren und Pilotverfahren eingeleitet, die letztendlich dazu führten, dass alle nationalen Aktionspläne Ende 2013 vorgelegt wurden.

Ferner analysiert die Kommission derzeit Angaben, die die Mitgliedstaaten in ihren nationalen Aktionsplänen übermittelt haben, und wird dem Europäischen Parlament und dem Rat nach Artikel 4 der obengenannten Richtlinie Bericht erstatten. Erst wenn diese Analyse abgeschlossen ist, kann die Kommission entscheiden, wie sie in den von der Frau Abgeordneten angeführten Fällen vorgehen wird.

Und schließlich stellt die Kommission gemäß Artikel 4 Absatz 4 der Richtlinie der Öffentlichkeit alle übermittelten Angaben auf einer Internetseite unter folgender Adresse zur Verfügung:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/sustainable_use_pesticides/index_en.htm

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([1]) Richtlinie 2009/128/EG über die nachhaltige Verwendung von Pestiziden:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:de:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002558/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: EU Directive on the sustainable use of pesticides (SUD) and interactions with other EC law

In an accompanying document to the proposal for Regulation (EU) No 1107/2009 it is clearly stated: 'One of the shortcomings of the current legal framework is that the actual use-phase of pesticides is not sufficiently addressed, although it is a key element for determining the overall risks. The very purpose of this Thematic Strategy is to address this deficiency.' As a result, an effective compliance with the Sustainable Use Directive must go beyond what has already been fulfilled in other EC laws.

However, one objective of the Cypriot National Action Plan (NAP) is to reduce the number of cases exceeding the Maximum Residue Limits (MRL), so that by 26 November 2017 the percentage of exceedences will not be over 3%, while the German NAP includes an objective to reduce exceedence of MRLs to 1% for both imported and domestically produced products by 2021. The Bulgarian NAP includes an objective to ensure compliance with EU directives on drinking water, surface water and the Water Framework Directive, and the United Kingdom NAP lays out the target of ensuring that pesticide pollution of water does not result in the UK failing to meet its objectives under the Water Framework Directive.

1. Does the Commission intend to take legal actions against Member States which ensure only minimum compliance with EC law, like UK and Bulgaria?

2. Does the Commission intend to take legal actions against Member States which use the SUD as a motive for non-compliance with EC law (ex 1% exceedance for MRLs in 'domestically produced food'), like Germany and Cyprus?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

The Commission is currently following closely the transposition and implementation of the directive 2009/128/EC ([1]) on the sustainable use of pesticides which required Member States to transpose it by 26 November 2011 and to elaborate their National Action Plans on its implementation by 26 November 2012.

Due to the delay of several Member States both in transposition and implementation, the Commission has opened infringement and pilot cases, which finally resulted in the submission of all National Action Plans by end of 2013.

In addition, the Commission is currently carrying out an analysis of information communicated by Member States in the National Action Plans and will report to the European Parliament and the Council in compliance with provisions of Article 4 of the abovementioned Directive. It is only once this analysis has been concluded that the Commission can decide on how to proceed in cases as referred to by the Honourable Member.

Finally, in accordance with the same Article 4 paragraph (4) the Commission is keeping all information communicated available to the public on a specific webpage at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/sustainable_use_pesticides/index_en.htm

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([1]) Directive 2009/128/EC on sustainable use of pesticides: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0071:0086:en:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002559/14
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Gibraltar's inclusion in the Common Aviation Area

Europe's Common Aviation Area (CAA) aims to foster the gradual opening of the aviation market between the EU and its neighbours. The CAA is implemented through comprehensive air transport agreements that promote economic, trade and tourism relations. The EU has thus far concluded such agreements with the western Balkans (the ECAA Agreement), Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Moldova and Morocco.

Can the Commission confirm that:

1. Gibraltar is included under the definition of European Union 'territory', in line with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, for the purposes of all ratified CAA Agreements;

2. Gibraltar will be included in future draft agreements that aim to extend the CAA;

3. the exclusion of a Member State territory from the CAA is incompatible with the application of the TFEU?

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

The Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of a European Common Aviation Area ([1]) contains the following wording:

'Gibraltar airport

1. The application of this Agreement to Gibraltar airport is understood to be without prejudice to the respective legal positions of the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom with regard to the dispute over sovereignty over the territory in which the airport is situated.

2. The application of this Agreement to Gibraltar airport shall be suspended until the arrangements in the Joint Declaration made by the Foreign Ministers of the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom on 2 December 1987 enter into operation. '

All the other agreements referred to in the question of the honourable Member are in essence ([2]) worded as follows:

'"territory" means, […], and, for the European Union, the land areas (mainland and islands), internal waters and territorial sea in which the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is applied and under the conditions laid down in those Treaties and any successor instrument. The application of this Agreement to Gibraltar airport is understood to be without prejudice to the respective legal positions of the Kingdom of Spain and the United Kingdom with regard to the dispute over sovereignty over the territory in which the airport is situated and to the continuing suspension of Gibraltar airport from EU aviation measures existing as at 18 September 2006 as between Member States in accordance with the Ministerial Statement on Gibraltar airport agreed in Cordoba on 18 September 2006;'

Any future agreement aiming to extend the Common Aviation Area should duly take into account the situation of the Gibraltar airport.

([1]) Multilateral Agreement between the European Community and its Member States, the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Iceland, the Republic of Montenegro, the Kingdom of Norway, Romania, the Republic of Serbia and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo on the establishment of a European Common Aviation Area, OJ L 285, 16.10.2006 pp. 0003-0046. See Article 33.

([2]) The agreement with Morocco being prior to the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, refers to the 'Community' and the 'Treaty establishing the European Community'.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002560/14
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 mars 2014)

Objet: Référendum sur la vente de terrains aux étrangers en Lituanie

Suite à une initiative populaire qui a réuni la signature de plus de 10 % de la population lituanienne (soit environ 300 000 personnes), le gouvernement lituanien a annoncé, le 17 février dernier, la tenue d'un référendum, entre le mois de mai et le mois de juillet 2014, portant sur le maintien ou non de la législation interdisant la vente de terrain aux ressortissants étrangers, y compris aux ressortissants de l'Union européenne.

La crainte des deux partis politiques à l'origine de cette initiative populaire (l'Union nationaliste lituanienne et l'Union des Verts et des Paysans) est de voir le prix des terrains augmenter du fait de la spéculation d'investisseurs étrangers.

Cette initiative lituanienne fait écho à la récente votation suisse concernant la libre circulation des personnes, et semble mettre à mal l'idée d'intégration au sein de la famille européenne.

Lorsqu'elle a adhéré à l'Union européenne en 2004, la Lituanie s'était engagée à supprimer cette interdiction de vendre des biens fonciers à des étrangers. Néanmoins, elle a eu droit à une période supplémentaire de transition qui s'achève en mai prochain, alors qu'elle était initialement prévue pour 2011.

Si le peuple lituanien s'exprimait en faveur du maintien d'une telle législation, la Lituanie se retrouverait alors clairement en violation du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne en ce qui concerne le titre IV, chapitre IV, articles 63 à 66 relevant de la libre circulation des capitaux.

Eu égard à cette menace, quelle est la réaction de la Commission, elle qui est la «gardienne des traités»?

En outre, en cas de violation avérée du droit de l'Union européenne, quelles pourraient être les sanctions prises par la Commission à l'encontre du gouvernement lituanien?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(25 avril 2014)

La Commission est informée des événements récents en Lituanie, auxquels l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence, et suit l'évolution de la situation.

À l'expiration, le 1er mai 2014, de la période de transition relative à la vente de terrains, la Lituanie devra faire en sorte que sa législation soit mise en conformité avec les règles de l'UE sur la libre circulation des capitaux, telles qu'elles ont été interprétées à plusieurs reprises par la Cour de justice. Selon la jurisprudence, des restrictions peuvent être justifiées par des motifs liés à l'ordre public mais elles doivent être non discriminatoires, proportionnées et nécessaires pour atteindre les objectifs poursuivis.

Les services de la Commission ont fait savoir aux autorités lituaniennes qu'ils se tenaient à leur disposition pour les aider dans l'élaboration de la nouvelle législation afin d'en garantir la conformité avec la législation de l'UE dans cet important domaine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002560/14
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Referendum on the sale of land to foreigners in Lithuania

On 17 February of this year, following a popular initiative that collected the signatures of over 10% of the Lithuanian population (approximately 300 000 people), the Lithuanian Government announced that, between the months of May and July 2014, a referendum is going to be held on whether or not to keep the legislation prohibiting the sale of land to foreign nationals, including to European Union nationals.

The concern of the two political parties behind this popular initiative (the Lithuanian Nationalist Union and the Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union) is that the price of land will increase as a result of speculation by foreign investors.

This Lithuanian initiative resembles the recent Swiss vote regarding the free movement of persons and appears to undermine the idea of integration within the European family.

When it acceded to the European Union in 2004, Lithuania had undertaken to withdraw this prohibition on the sale of real property to foreigners. Nonetheless, it was entitled to an additional transitional period that will come to an end next May, even though it was initially scheduled for 2011.

If the Lithuanian people were to vote in favour of such legislation being kept, Lithuania would then clearly find itself in breach of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in so far as Title IV, Chapter IV, Articles 63 to 66 relating to the free movement of capital is concerned.

As the 'guardian of the Treaties', what is the reaction of the Commission going to be in view of this threat?

Furthermore, what sanctions might the Commission impose on the Lithuanian Government in the event that European Union law is found to have been breached?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of the developments in Lithuania mentioned by the Honourable Member and is monitoring the situation.

After the expiry of the transitional period regarding acquisition of land on 1 May 2014, Lithuania will have to ensure that its legislation complies with the EU rules on free movement of capital, as interpreted on repeated occasions by the European Court of Justice. According to case law, restrictions may be justified on public policy grounds but must be non-discriminatory, proportionate and necessary in order to achieve the objective pursued.

As has been communicated to the Lithuanian authorities, the Commission Services are at their disposal to provide assistance in the preparation of the new legislation in order to ensure compliance with EC law in this important area.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002561/14
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 mars 2014)

Objet: Examen de l'aide financière de l'Union européenne à la Bosnie-Herzégovine

Depuis le début du mois de février 2014, les manifestations en Bosnie-Herzégovine contre la pauvreté et la corruption qui gangrènent cet État se multiplient, comme en témoigne l'incendie de bâtiments officiels le 9 février dernier à Sarajevo.

Le lundi 10 février 2014, en commission des affaires étrangères du Parlement européen, de nombreux députés membres de la délégation pour les relations avec la Bosnie-Herzégovine ont exprimé leur vive inquiétude face à ces événements, qui s'étendent aujourd'hui aux principales villes du pays que sont Mostar ou Tuzla, mettant à mal la difficile unité nationale.

Aujourd'hui, la situation économique en Bosnie-Herzégovine paraît catastrophique puisque le chômage frappe 44 % de la population active et qu'un habitant sur cinq vit dans la pauvreté.

La Bosnie-Herzégovine a été retenue comme candidat potentiel à l'adhésion à l'Union européenne lors du sommet européen de Thessalonique en juin 2003.

Depuis lors, plusieurs accords sont entrés en vigueur entre l'Union et la Bosnie-Herzégovine, comme l'accord visant à faciliter la délivrance de visas et l'accord de réadmission en 2008.

En outre, la dotation financière de l'Union européenne à destination de cet État était de 108,84 millions d'euros pour l'année 2013.

Comment la Commission peut-elle garantir l'utilisation efficace des fonds européens, eu égard aux récents événements et aux soupçons de corruption?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(25 avril 2014)

L'instrument d'aide de préadhésion (IAP) en Bosnie-Herzégovine n'est pas mis en œuvre par les autorités de Bosnie-Herzégovine elles-mêmes, mais par la délégation de l'UE à Sarajevo. Les événements récents n'ont donc eu aucun impact sur l'utilisation efficace des fonds de l'IAP affectés à la Bosnie-Herzégovine. Le suivi de l'aide s'effectue, entre autres, par des groupes de pilotage pour chaque projet mis en œuvre, des missions de suivi axées sur les résultats, ainsi que par les comités de suivi de l'IAP, qui sont présidés par la Commission et le coordonnateur national pour l'IAP. Enfin, les projets mis en œuvre en Bosnie-Herzégovine sont également contrôlés par des auditeurs externes et par la Cour des comptes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002561/14
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Assessment of the financial aid given to Bosnia and Herzegovina by the European Union

As demonstrated by the government buildings being set alight in Sarajevo on 9 February of this year, the amount of protesting in Bosnia and Herzegovina against the poverty and corruption crippling the nation has increased since the beginning of February 2014.

On Monday, 10 February 2014, in the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, several committee members from the Delegation for Relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed their grave concern over these events that have now reached the main cities of the country, Mostar and Tuzla, and are undermining the uneasy national unity.

With an unemployment rate of 44% of the active population and one in five citizens living in poverty, the current economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina looks catastrophic.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was retained as a potential candidates for European Union accession at the European Summit in Thessaloniki in June 2003.

Since then, several agreements between the Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina have entered into force, such as the agreement aiming to facilitate the issuance of visas and the readmission agreement in 2008.

Furthermore, the European Union allocated this nation EUR 108.84 million in funds in 2013.

How can the Commission guarantee the effective use of European funds in view of the recent events and suspicions of corruption?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is not implemented by the BiH authorities themselves but by the EU Delegation in Sarajevo. The effective use of IPA funds committed to BiH was therefore not affected by recent events. The monitoring of the assistance is performed, among others, by steering groups for each implemented project, by result oriented monitoring missions and the IPA Monitoring Committees which are chaired by the Commission and the National IPA Coordinator. Finally, projects implemented in BiH are also audited by external auditors and the Court of Auditors.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002564/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Apertura alla modifica del diritto dell'UE in materia di OGM

Durante l'ultimo Consiglio Ambiente, tenutosi lunedì scorso, il ministro tedesco ha riaperto la questione dei prodotti transgenici, nel senso di una maggiore autonomia decisionale per gli Stati membri.

Per gli stati che auspicano una maggiore autonomia decisionale in materia, una riapertura della modifica della pertinente direttiva comunitaria potrebbe portare a un maggiore riconoscimento del principio di sussidiarietà.

La presidenza ha infatti sottoposto ai ministri dell'Ambiente una bozza di compromesso che merita di essere studiata con attenzione. Si tratta senza dubbio di un passo in avanti verso il necessario equilibrio tra il mantenimento del sistema di autorizzazione dell'UE e l'esigenza di garantire agli stati la possibilità di vietare la coltivazione di OGM alla luce delle specifiche caratteristiche sul territorio.

Qual è la posizione della Commissione in merito a questa apertura? Ritiene che il principio di sussidiarietà vada ulteriormente rafforzato in materia?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 aprile 2014)

La Commissione esprime il proprio compiacimento per il fatto che, nel Consiglio Ambiente del 3 marzo 2014, gli Stati membri abbiano reagito positivamente al suo invito a porre fine con urgenza alla situazione di stallo in seno al Consiglio in cui si trovava la sua proposta legislativa risalente al 2010 onde consentire agli Stati membri di limitare o vietare la coltivazione di OGM sul loro territorio per motivi diversi dai rischi sanitari e ambientali.

Le intense discussioni che hanno accompagnato il progetto di decisione di autorizzazione alla commercializzazione del granoturco 1507 a fini di coltura, che la Commissione ha presentato al Consiglio nel novembre 2013, hanno dimostrato in modo perspicuo l'urgenza di conciliare un sistema unionale saldo e scientificamente fondato di autorizzazione degli OGM con un'adeguata presa in conto delle specificità nazionali allorché si tratta di decidere se coltivare o meno una coltura OGM recante l'autorizzazione unionale sul territorio di tale Stato membro.

A seguito del riavvio di questa dinamica la Commissione è impegnata ad adoperarsi attivamente con la Presidenza greca e con gli Stati membri per pervenire rapidamente a un accordo in prima lettura in seno al Consiglio preparando così la via per discussioni in seconda lettura tra il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002564/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Opening the way to amendment of EC law on GMOs

At the most recent Environment Council meeting last Monday, the German Minister reopened the question of genetically modified products, with a view to greater decision-making autonomy for the Member States.

Reopening the relevant Community directive for amendment might further uphold the subsidiarity principle for Member States hoping for greater decision-making autonomy in this field.

The presidency put a draft compromise to the Environment Ministers which deserves careful consideration. It doubtless marks a step towards striking the right balance between preserving the EU authorisation system and the need to guarantee Member States the option of prohibiting GMO cultivation, in the light of the specific features of their regions.

What is the Commission's stance on the reopening of this issue? Does it consider that the subsidiarity principle needs to be further upheld in this respect?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

The Commission is pleased that, at the Environment Council of 3 March 2014, the Member States reacted positively to its call to urgently break the deadlock in Council on the legislative proposal it made back to 2010 to allow Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory for other grounds than risks to health and the environment.

The intense discussions on the draft decision for marketing authorisation of the maize 1507 for cultivation, which was submitted to Council by the Commission in November 2013, have demonstrated in an obvious manner the pressing need for reconciling a robust and science based EU authorisation system for GMOs, with fair consideration of national specificities when it comes to the decision of cultivating or not an EU authorised GM crop on the territory of the Member State.

Based on this renewed momentum, the Commission is committed to actively work with the Greek Presidency and the Member States to rapidly find a first reading agreement in Council, hence paving the way towards second reading discussions between the European Parliament and Council.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002565/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Egitto mette Hamas fuori legge — rischi alla sicurezza

Il Tribunale per gli Affari Urgenti del Cairo si è pronunciato in merito a una denuncia effettuata lo scorso anno da alcuni avvocati egiziani, che avevano richiesto che il Movimento islamico di resistenza fosse identificato come organizzazione terroristica, anche alla luce dei legami tra Hamas e i Fratelli musulmani. Il Tribunale ha deciso di mettere al bando tutte le attività di Hamas in Egitto, disponendo inoltre la confisca degli uffici e il congelamento dei beni del gruppo palestinese presenti in Egitto. L'organizzazione ha immediatamente risposto alla decisione, interpretandola come un «forma di ostilità contro la resistenza palestinese».

La decisione del Tribunale del Cairo rischia di esacerbare ulteriormente le tensioni interne al paese africano, in particolar modo perché l'organizzazione domina sulla Striscia di Gaza, esattamente al confine con l'Egitto. L'organizzazione è già stata inserita dall'Unione europea nell'elenco delle organizzazioni terroristiche, tramite decisione del Consiglio 2005/930/EC del 21 dicembre 2005.

Alla luce di questa sentenza, ritiene la Commissione che la sicurezza in Egitto possa essere ulteriormente esposta al rischio di ritorsioni di natura terroristica? Può la Commissione chiarire se l'Unione dispone di mezzi che possano aiutare l'Egitto a garantire il processo di democratizzazione e la sicurezza del bacino mediterraneo?

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

In numerose occasioni, l'UE ha espresso preoccupazione per gli episodi di violenza in Egitto e ha condannato gli attacchi terroristici: nelle conclusioni del Consiglio del 21 agosto 2013, i ministri degli Esteri dell'UE hanno condannato fermamente tutti gli atti di terrorismo e così ha fatto l'Alta Rappresentante nelle sue dichiarazioni dell'11 e 19 gennaio 2014. Ora come ora l'Unione europea non collabora con l'Egitto nel campo della lotta al terrorismo.

L'UE è pronta a sostenere le autorità egiziane affinché possano controllare le frontiere in modo più efficiente. Finora le autorità egiziane non hanno espresso interesse per un'eventuale cooperazione relativa alle riforme nel settore della sicurezza. È difficile tuttavia che la situazione migliori se non saranno attuate una riforma radicale del settore della sicurezza e misure complementari di lotta alla tratta di esseri umani e alla criminalità organizzata.

L'UE continua a sostenere il processo di transizione verso la democrazia in Egitto e a tale riguardo invierà anche una missione di osservazione elettorale alle prossime elezioni presidenziali del 26 e del 27 maggio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002565/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Egypt outlaws Hamas — security risks

The Cairo Court for Urgent Matters has ruled on a complaint filed last year by some Egyptian attorneys. These had petitioned for the Islamist Resistance Movement to be named as a terrorist organisation, in the light of the links between Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. The Court has decided to ban all Hamas activities in Egypt and also ordered the confiscation of the Palestinian group's offices and the freezing of its assets in Egypt. The organisation immediately responded to the decision, describing it as a 'form of hostility against the Palestinian resistance'.

The Cairo court ruling risks exacerbating the strains within the African country, especially because Hamas is dominant in the Gaza Strip which borders Egypt directly. The European Union has already entered Hamas on its list of terrorist organisations, by Council Decision 2005/930/EC, of 21 December 2005.

In the light of this judgment, does the Commission believe that security in Egypt may thereby be further exposed to the risk of terrorist retaliation? Can the Commission clarify whether the EU has resources at its disposal which may help Egypt to guarantee the process of democratisation and the security of the Mediterranean rim?

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

The EU has on numerous occasions expressed concern at the violent events in Egypt, and condemned terrorist attacks: in the Council Conclusions of 21 August 2013, the Foreign Ministers of the EU strongly condemned all acts of terrorism, and so did the High Representative in her statements of 11 and 19 January 2014. Currently, however, the European Union is not cooperating with Egypt on counter-terrorism measures.

The EU stands ready to support the Egyptian authorities to control the borders in a more efficient manner. Unfortunately The Egyptian authorities, to date, have not been forthcoming on the offer for cooperation on Security Sector Reform. Without a thorough reform of the security sector as well as complementary measures to fight trafficking and organised crime, it is unlikely that the situation will improve.

The EU continues to support the transition process towards democracy in Egypt. The EU is also going to deploy an Election Observation Mission to the upcoming presidential elections on 26th and 27th May.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002566/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: L'Islanda annulla il referendum popolare sull'adesione all'UE

Il governo di coalizione islandese aveva annunciato, lo scorso settembre, che avrebbe cambiato rotta e rinunciato allo status di candidato all'adesione all'Unione. Un referendum popolare avrebbe dovuto tenersi a maggio per decidere le sorti dell'isola atlantica in merito all'adesione, ma pare che ora il governo di coalizione abbia deciso di proporre un testo di legge in cui il governo ritira formalmente la candidatura islandese.

Può la Commissione far sapere qual è la sua opinione in merito a questa decisione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(8 aprile 2014)

Nel maggio 2013 il governo islandese ha annunciato la sospensione dei negoziati di adesione all'UE, subordinandone la ripresa a un referendum preliminare. La Commissione è al corrente del fatto che il governo islandese ha recentemente presentato una risoluzione parlamentare sul ritiro della candidatura islandese e che questo ha suscitato un acceso dibattito nel paese. Il parlamento islandese sta ancora discutendo sia su questo progetto di risoluzione che sui progetti di risoluzione presentati dai partiti dell'opposizione relativi all'organizzazione di un referendum sull'opportunità di proseguire i negoziati di adesione. Spetta all'Islanda decidere se e in che modo portare avanti la propria candidatura

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002566/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Iceland cancels referendum on joining the EU

Iceland's coalition government announced a change of direction last autumn, and reversed the country's status as a candidate for EU membership. A referendum was to have been held in May to decide the fate of the Atlantic island's accession. Now, it seems, the coalition government has decided to put forward a bill already, in which it formally withdraws Iceland's candidature.

Can the Commission state its opinion on this decision?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

The Icelandic government announced in May 2013 that the acession negotiations for EU membership would be put on hold and would not be resumed without a prior referendum. The Commission is aware of the fact that the Icelandic government has recently introduced a parliamentary resolution to withdraw the country's EU accession application and that this has generated much debate in Iceland. The discussion on this draft resolution as well as on draft resolutions put forward by the opposition parties to have a referendum on whether to continue the accession negotiations is still ongoing in the Icelandic parliament. The decision on whether and how to take forward its membership application is a decision which lies with Iceland.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002567/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Parità di genere nei paesi subsahariani

Numerosi paesi subsahariani hanno sperimentato livelli di crescita economica incoraggianti negli ultimi anni e pare che questo trend sia destinato a continuare nel prossimo futuro. In questo contesto di crescita, gioca senza dubbio un ruolo chiave l'estrazione di materie prime, ma per una reale crescita sostenibile del paese è indispensabile la diversificazione del portafoglio economico dei paesi africani.

In quest'ottica, una risorsa enorme, non ancora valorizzata, è il ruolo attivo che la donna può ricoprire nella società. Secondo alcuni studi, una maggiore partecipazione delle donne in settori e occupazioni tradizionalmente ritenuti «maschili» potrebbe portare a un aumento della produttività del 25 %. Per raggiungere questi risultati occorre però agire alla base dei problemi, cercando di rompere barriere culturali secolari e garantendo alle donne l'istruzione, la sanità e la partecipazione attiva alla società.

In tale contesto, si chiede alla Commissione quali siano stati i principali risultati raggiunti dalle azioni avviate o finanziate dall'Unione nei paesi subsahariani al fine di promuovere l'accesso delle donne di tutte le età all'istruzione, garantirne la piena partecipazione alla società e favorire la parità di genere.

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2014)

Sono stati registrati notevoli progressi per quanto riguarda gli OSM 2 e 3: il numero dei bambini che frequentano la scuola elementare è aumentato di 47 milioni rispetto al 2000. La situazione in termini di scolarizzazione primaria è notevolmente migliorata e si è prossimi alla parità di genere, con un tasso di iscrizione di 97 bambine per 100 bambini contro un tasso di 86/100 nel 1990. L'Africa subsahariana registra una tendenza analoga (il tasso di iscrizione alla scuola elementare è di 93 bambine per 100 bambini), ma occorrono ulteriori sforzi. Inoltre, tre quarti dei paesi che accusano il maggiore ritardo in termini di parità di genere si trovano nell'Africa subsahariana ([1]).

Questa tendenza positiva è frutto sia del deciso impegno politico e delle politiche costruttive dei paesi partner che del sostegno fornito dalla comunità internazionale. La relazione annuale sul piano d'azione 2010-2015 dell'UE sulla parità di genere e l'emancipazione femminile nella cooperazione allo sviluppo, ad esempio, rileva un progressivo aumento dell'integrazione della parità di genere nei settori di intervento dell'Unione.

Occorre proseguire lo sforzo collettivo per sostenere l'istruzione femminile, in particolare al livello secondario inferiore, per il quale l'Africa subsahariana accusa ancora un ritardo in termini di parità (85 ragazze per 100 ragazzi). Tra il 2004 e il 2013 l'UE ha contribuito all'iscrizione di 300 000 ragazze supplementari alla scuola secondaria.

Le politiche dell'Unione sottolineano l'importanza di un pari accesso all'istruzione e del miglioramento della qualità in questo campo. La sensibilità di genere viene inoltre definita una precondizione fondamentale per creare un contesto favorevole alla qualità dell'istruzione.

([1]) UNESCO Education for all Global monitoring report 2013-2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002567/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Gender equality in sub-Saharan countries

Many countries in the sub-Saharan region have recorded encouraging levels of economic growth in the last few years, and the trend seems set to continue for the foreseeable future. The mining of raw materials has without question played a key role in this period of prosperity, but in order for the growth of these African countries to be truly sustainable, they simply have to broaden their range of industries.

From this perspective, the part that women could play in society constitutes an enormous resource that has still not been properly tapped into. According to various studies, increased female participation in sectors and jobs that are traditionally considered 'male' could raise productivity by as much as 25%. However, if such results are to be achieved, then the problems need to be tackled at their roots, with cultural and secular barriers being broken down and women being guaranteed an education, good healthcare and an active role in society.

In this context, can the Commission indicate what main results have been achieved by initiatives launched or funded by the Union in sub-Saharan countries aimed at giving women of all ages access to an education, ensuring that they play a full role in society and promoting gender equality?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2014)

Significant progress in MDG 2 and 3 have been made: 47 million more children are in primary school than in 2000. Gender parity in primary enrolment has improved significantly and gender parity in primary education is close to being achieved (97 girls per 100 boys are enrolled, up from 86 in 1990). In sub-Saharan Africa the trend is similar although there are still efforts to be made with 93 girls enrolled per 100 boys in primary school. In addition, three quarters of the most off-track countries regarding gender parities are in sub-Saharan Africa ([1]).

This positive trend is due to the strong political commitment and sound policies of partner countries as well as to support from the international community. The annual reporting on the 2010-2015 EU Action Plan for Gender equality and Women Empowerment in Development, for instance, shows that the mainstreaming of gender equality in EU sectors of intervention is progressively increasing.

We all need to continue to support girls' education, notably at lower secondary level where sub-Saharan Africa is still lagging behind in terms of parity (85 girls per 100 boys). Between 2004 and 2013, the EU contributed to the enrolment of 300 000 new female students in secondary education.

EU policy underlines the importance of equity of access to education, and improving its quality. Our policies also highlight the importance of gender sensitivity as a precondition for an environment that enables good quality education.

([1]) According to Unesco Education for all Global monitoring report 2013-2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002568/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Potenziare la competitività del settore Ricerca & Sviluppo di fronte ai competitori internazionali

Il progresso economico e industriale della Cina non ha conosciuto rivali negli ultimi trent'anni e il nuovo programma industriale ha obiettivi molto ambiziosi, puntando a raggiungere e superare i propri competitori globali in sette diversi settori, tra cui energia pulita, IT, biotecnologie. Si stima che questo programma potrebbe arrivare a garantire finanziamenti fino a duemila miliardi di dollari nei prossimi cinque anni.

Nonostante questo, alcuni studiosi ritengono che diversi indicatori della crescita del paese asiatico, se osservati attentamente, abbiano diverse interpretazioni, non necessariamente positive per la Cina. Ad esempio, un ricercatore cita il numero di brevetti registrati: la Cina riceve più domande di qualsiasi altro paese al mondo, ma in realtà si stima che meno di un terzo di questi siano classificati come «innovazioni». Un altro esempio può essere rappresentato dalle pubblicazioni scientifiche cinesi, che in sempre più casi sono state accusate di plagio o di essere costruite ad arte senza un reale fondamento scientifico.

Nonostante ciò si deve riconoscere che nel settore R&S la Cina ha davvero compiuto significativi passi avanti: si pensi ad esempio al programma spaziale cinese o alla crescente rete ferroviaria interna al paese. In effetti, le potenzialità dell'apertura di diversi settori del mercato cinese continuano ad attrarre numerosi investitori, rendendo il mercato cinese particolarmente competitivo.

In merito a quanto detto, la Commissione:

1. Ritiene che la Cina possa divenire leader mondiale nel settore R&S?

2. Quali strategie intende adottare per rilanciare a livello globale e in maniera competitiva il settore R&S europeo?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(23 aprile 2014)

Negli ultimi decenni i risultati conseguiti dal sistema cinese di ricerca e innovazione sono notevolmente migliorati. Secondo recenti dati OCSE, la Cina si colloca già al secondo posto (dopo l'UE) per numero di ricercatori (2012, equivalenti a tempo pieno) e terza (dopo gli Stati Uniti e l'UE) per spesa interna lorda destinata a ricerca e sviluppo in termini assoluti, con il raddoppio delle propria spesa rispetto al 2008 (2012; in termini relativi, vale a dire che rispetto al PIL la Cina ha superato l'UE dell'1,98 % rispetto all'1,97 % del 2012). Essa inoltre è quarta (dopo l'UE, gli Stati Uniti e il Giappone) in termini di richieste di brevetti a norma del trattato sulla cooperazione in materia di brevetti (2012). Stando alla relazione sulla competitività dell'Unione dell'innovazione 2013, la Cina vanta il terzo posto (dopo gli Stati Uniti e l'UE) in termini di pubblicazioni a forte impatto. La Commissione non è in grado di prevedere se le recenti tendenze saranno confermate e se la Cina diventerà il leader mondiale in materia di ricerca e innovazione.

La strategia Europa 2020 è stata concepita per conseguire una crescita intelligente, sostenibile e inclusiva. La ricerca e l'innovazione, su cui si concentrano uno dei cinque obiettivi principali e una delle sette iniziative faro (l'Unione dell'innovazione) della strategia Europa 2020, costituiscono gli elementi fondamentali di questa strategia. Uno strumento fondamentale a livello dell'UE per la realizzazione dell'Unione dell'innovazione è Orizzonte 2020, il programma di finanziamento dell'UE per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020), che intende garantire l'eccellenza scientifica dell'Europa, promuoverne la leadership industriale e affrontare le urgenti sfide sociali, garantendo al contempo crescita, competitività, creazione di posti di lavoro e qualità della vita in Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002568/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Making the research and development sector more competitive against international rivals

China's economic and industrial progress has been unequalled in the past 30 years. The country's new industrial programme sets highly ambitious targets, seeking to equal and surpass its global competitors in seven sectors. These include: clean energy; IT; and biotechnology. It is estimated that the programme could guarantee funding of up to USD 2 000 billion over the next five years.

Despite this, some researchers believe that various indicators of the Asian country's growth, if carefully monitored, are open to different interpretations, and not necessarily in China's favour. One researcher cites the number of patents registered. China receives more applications than any other country in the world, but it is estimated that fewer than one-third of these are actually classified as 'innovations'. Another example are Chinese scientific publications, increasingly accused of plagiarism or of artificial compilation without genuine scientific foundation.

Admittedly, China's R&D sector has taken really significant steps forward. One example is the Chinese space programme; another, its expanding domestic rail network. In fact the potential openings in various sectors of the Chinese market continue to attract many investors, making the Chinese market especially competitive.

In view of the foregoing, does the Commission:

1. Believe that China can become the world leader in the R&D sector?

2. What strategies does it intend to adopt to relaunch European R&D as a competitive sector at global level?

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

The performance of the Chinese research and innovation system has improved noticeably over the past decades. According to recent OECD data, China already ranks second (after the EU) in terms of the number of researchers (2012, FTE); third (after the US and the EU) in terms of Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D in absolute terms, doubling its expenditure since 2008 (2012; in relative terms, i.e. compared to GDP, China outperformed the EU with 1.98% compared to 1.97% in 2012); and fourth (after the EU, the US, and Japan) in terms of Patent Cooperation Treaty patent applications (2012). According to the Innovation Union Competitiveness Report 2013, China ranks third (after the US and the EU) in terms of high impact publications. It is not possible for the Commission to predict whether recent trends will be sustained and whether China will become the world research and innovation leader.

The Europe 2020 strategy has been devised to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Research and innovation, on which one of the five Europe 2020 headline targets and one of the seven Europe 2020 flagship initiatives (the one on 'Innovation Union') are focused, constitute key components of this strategy. A key tool at EU level to achieve the 'Innovation Union' is Horizon 2020, the EU funding Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), which aims to ensure Europe's scientific excellence, promote its industrial leadership, and address urgent societal challenges, in the process adding to Europe's growth, competitiveness, job creation and quality of life.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002570/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Studio scientifico sul paracetamolo

Uno studio scientifico svolto da un'università danese mette in allarme le donne in gravidanza riguardo all'uso del paracetamolo, principio attivo di diversi medicinali di uso comune, utilizzato soprattutto contro i sintomi influenzali.

A detta degli scienziati, l'assunzione in dosi massicce può compromettere la salute del feto, aumentando il rischio di provocare nel bambino disturbi dell'attenzione e iperattività. I media riportano alcuni dati comunicati dagli scienziati, secondo cui i bambini nati da mamme che avevano assunto il paracetamolo hanno evidenziato probabilità di avere diagnosi di sindrome dell'attenzione con iperattività elevata (ADHD) più alte del 37 % rispetto alla media degli altri bambini, mentre il 29 % dei bambini le cui mamme avevano assunto il farmaco hanno mostrato una maggiore probabilità di essere sotto cura farmacologica per il disturbo.

I dati sono ancora in fase di verifica e occorre pertanto trattarli con la massima cautela, soprattutto alla luce del fatto che si tratta di un principio attivo estremamente diffuso e che non necessita di prescrizione medica.

Onde evitare inutili allarmismi nei cittadini europei, dispone la Commissione di ulteriori dati relativi a questo studio o a studi che hanno interessato questo principio attivo, per verificarne l'effettiva pericolosità?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(8 aprile 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei risultati dello studio pubblicato nel febbraio 2014 sul Journal of the American Medical Association dai ricercatori dell'American UCLA Fielding School of Public Health in collaborazione con l'università di Aarhus (Danimarca), in cui si suggerisce che l'assunzione di acetaminofen (paracetamolo) durante la gravidanza potrebbe essere associata ad un rischio maggiore che il bambino sviluppi disturbi dell'attenzione, iperattività e ipercinesia.

I medicinali possono essere immessi sul mercato dell'UE soltanto se ne sono state previamente valutate qualità, sicurezza ed efficacia e si è giunti alla conclusione che vi è un bilancio positivo rischi/benefici derivante dal loro uso. L'acetaminofen è stato valutato e autorizzato in base a procedure nazionali di autorizzazione.

Dopo l'autorizzazione iniziale, la sicurezza di un medicinale è oggetto di follow-up durante il suo intero ciclo di vita. Le segnalazioni di sospetti effetti collaterali negativi nei pazienti in seguito all'uso di un prodotto medicinale sono raccolte e monitorate. Il comitato di valutazione dei rischi per la farmacovigilanza (PRAC), facente capo all'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, valuta le segnalazioni in materia di sicurezza legate all'uso di medicinali ([1]). Tale comitato ha discusso gli studi sugli effetti dell'uso del paracetamolo durante la gravidanza e sul neurosviluppo dei bambini. Le risultanze cui perverrà il comitato di valutazione dei rischi per la farmacovigilanza saranno caricate sul sito web dell'Agenzia europea per i medicinali www.ema.europa.eu.

([1]) Ulteriori informazioni sulle procedure di gestione delle segnalazioni usate dal PRAC sono disponibili sul sito web dell'Agenzia europea per i medicinali: http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/regulation/document_listing/document_listing_000375.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002570/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Scientific study on paracetamol

A scientific study conducted by a Danish university has set alarm bells ringing for pregnant women over the use of paracetamol, which is the active ingredient found in many commonly used medicinal products, especially those that combat cold symptoms.

According to the university's researchers, the ingestion of large doses of paracetamol could have an impact on foetal brain development, thereby increasing the risk of the child suffering from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and other similar conditions. The media has already reported some of the researchers' findings, according to which the children of mothers who took paracetamol during pregnancy are on average 37% more likely to diagnosed with ADHD, and 29% more likely to be prescribed medications for the condition, than those children whose mothers did not take paracetamol during pregnancy.

The results are still being verified and so should be treated with the greatest caution, especially seeing as they relate to an active ingredient that is extremely widespread and available over the counter.

In order to prevent unnecessary panic for European citizens, does the Commission have access to any further data relating either to this study or to other studies on paracetamol, which could confirm its potentially hazardous effects?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(8 April 2014)

The Commission is aware of the results of the study published in February 2014 in the Journal of the American Medical Association by researchers from the American UCLA Fielding School of Public Health in collaboration with the University of Aarhus (Denmark), suggesting that taking acetaminophen (paracetamol) during pregnancy could be associated with a higher risk in children developing attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and hyperkinetic disorder.

Medicines can be placed on the EU market only after their quality, safety and efficacy have been evaluated and it is concluded that there was a positive benefit-risk balance for their use. Acetaminophen has been assessed and authorised through national authorisation procedures.

After the initial authorisation, the safety of a medicine is followed during its whole life-cycle. Reports of suspected adverse reactions in patients following the use of a medicine are collected and monitored. The European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee assesses safety signals related to use of medicines ([1]). This Committee has discussed studies on the effect of paracetamol use in pregnancy and the neurodevelopment of children. The outcome of the Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee review will be made available on the European Medicines Agency website www.ema.europa.eu

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([1]) Further information on PRAC signal management procedures is available on the EMA website, see: http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/regulation/document_listing/document_listing_000375.jsp

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002573/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Instalaciones de riesgo medioambiental en territorio gallego

Diferentes países del continente europeo han prohibido ya la instalación en sus territorios de granjas peleteras por considerarlas un grave riesgo para el entorno y la biodiversidad, hechos estos corroborados por estudios de organizaciones internacionales, como CE Delft, en los que se advierte del enorme consumo de recursos y del coste medioambiental que genera la producción de piel de animales como el visón americano. Grandes empresas y grupos económicos parecen estar refugiándose en España y, concretamente, en el territorio gallego, donde la legislación contra estas instalaciones es más laxa y permisiva, constituyendo un «coladero normativo» que permite no responder en casos de fuga de animales o contaminación, hechos probables a la vista de lo sucedido en las últimas décadas. La degradación generada por los purines y las condiciones de dudoso bienestar animal constituyen cuestiones añadidas a un negocio que no deja de derrumbarse, al existir alternativas éticas y responsables no solo con el medio ambiente, sino también con la fauna. Resulta de difícil justificación el gaseo de cientos de miles de animales cada año para nutrir a una industria que explota la vanidad y la atracción económica como reclamo. El lobby peletero también es responsable de crear normativas a su medida, como en el caso de Galicia y España, en virtud de las cuales las granjas son perdonadas por los poderes públicos a pesar de constituir auténticas bombas de relojería biológicas. En diferentes ocasiones la Asociación Animalista Libera ha advertido ya acerca de la sobreexposición a la que se ve sometido el territorio gallego, donde se concentran alrededor del 80 % de las granjas peleteras del Estado español y donde las carencias evidentes de seguridad de las instalaciones han propiciado en décadas pasadas la fuga de decenas de ejemplares que han causado graves perjuicios a la fauna autóctona, al competir por alimento y vencer por su voracidad.

¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión la permisividad del Gobierno español y de las autoridades gallegas con la instalación de nuevas granjas peleteras? ¿Piensa la Comisión desarrollar alguna iniciativa para impedir estas instalaciones, como han realizado diferentes países europeos? ¿Cómo afronta la Comisión el refugio peletero en territorio gallego gracias a las facilidades gubernamentales? ¿Piensan seguir plegándose a los designios del *lobby* peletero o apostarán por escuchar a los expertos?

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

La decisión de autorizar granjas peleteras compete al Estado miembro, siempre que se cumpla toda la legislación pertinente de la UE, y, por lo tanto, no corresponde a la Comisión pronunciarse al respecto. Por esa misma razón, la Comisión no prevé examinar la postura adoptada por las autoridades gallegas en relación con la cría de animales de peletería ni prohibir ese tipo de granjas.

Cuando la Comisión lanza iniciativas, actúa de manera independiente, objetiva y totalmente transparente y consulta cumplidamente a los Estados miembros, a todas las partes interesadas y a expertos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002573/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Farms endangering the environment in Galicia

Various European countries have already prohibited fur farms from being set up in their territories because they consider them to represent a serious danger to biodiversity and the environment. These risks have been corroborated in studies by international bodies such as CE Delft, which warn of the enormous resource consumption and environmental cost generated by the production of fur from animals such as the American mink. Large financial corporations and enterprises seem to be seeking refuge in Spain, specifically in Galicia, where the laws against these farms are more permissive and lax. This situation constitutes a 'regulatory colander' that permits no response when animals escape or in cases of pollution, which are likely to occur in view of what has happened over the past decades. The degradation caused by slurry and the doubtful welfare conditions of the animals are additional questions for an industry in a state of continuous decline, since responsible and ethical alternatives exist for both the environment and the fauna. It is hard to justify the gassing of hundreds of thousands of animals each year just to feed an industry that exploits vanity and the attraction of wealth as enticements. The fur lobby is also responsible for the promulgation of legislation to suit it, as in the cases of Galicia and Spain, by virtue of which these farms are pardoned by the public authorities even though they in fact constitute biological time-bombs that are ticking away. The animal protection organisation Asociación Animalista Libera has issued several warnings about the over-exploitation of land in Galicia, where around 80% of Spanish fur farms are concentrated and where their obvious deficiencies in security have led in decades past to dozens of animals escaping. These escapees have then caused serious problems for the native fauna due to their voracity in competing for food.

What are the Commission's views on the permissiveness shown by the Spanish Government and the Galician authorities towards the creation of new fur farms? Does the Commission plan to develop any initiative to prohibit these farms, as various European countries have already done? How does the Commission intend to deal with the fur farm refuge that Galicia has become thanks to the facilities offered by the authorities? Does it intend to carry on submitting to the designs of the fur lobby or will it listen to the experts?

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

Provided that all relevant EU legislation is respected, the decision to allow the establishment of fur farms is a matter of national competence and it is therefore not for the Commission to express its views on this subject. For the same reason, the Commission does not have plans to address the stance taken by the Galician authorities as regards fur farming, nor to prohibit these farms.

In developing policy initiatives, the Commission acts independently, objectively and in full transparency, consulting widely with Member States, and all relevant stakeholders and experts.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002574/14
an die Kommission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(5. März 2014)

Betrifft: Sanierungsklausel — § 8c Absatz 1a KStG

Mit dem Beschluss des Europäischen Gerichtshofs vom 18. Dezember 2012 in der Rechtssache T-205/11 hat das Gericht die Nichtigkeitsklage der Bundesrepublik Deutschland gegen den Beschluss 2011/527/EU der Kommission abgewiesen.

Eine inhaltliche Klärung fand in der Urteilsbegründung jedoch nicht statt. Somit stehen viele Unternehmen in Deutschland vor der Bewältigung einer gewaltigen Steuerlast. Daraus ergeben sich folgende Fragestellungen:

1. Hält die Kommission die „Sanierungsklausel" als Gesamtes unvereinbar mit EU-Recht oder nur deren unbefristete Einführung durch das Wirtschaftswachstumsgesetz (Gesetz zur Beschleunigung des Wirtschaftswachstums vom 22. Dezember 2009 (BGBl. I Nr. 81, S. 3950), Artikel 2 Absatz 3 Buchstabe b) durch die Bundesrepublik Deutschland?

2. Hält die Kommission ihren Eingriff in das Körperschaftssteuergesetz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland mit Rückwirkung für vertretbar, in Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass einige Unternehmer zum Zeitpunkt der Übernahme des sanierungsbedürftigen Unternehmens darauf vertrauten, den Steuervorteil in ihren Finanzierungsplan einzuarbeiten?

3. Hat die Kommission die Möglichkeit in Betracht gezogen, die bis zum Zeitpunkt des Beschlusses 2011/527/EU genehmigten Steuervorteile unbeachtet zu lassen, um eine extreme wirtschaftliche Beeinträchtigung von Unternehmen zu vermeiden?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(29. April 2014)

Mit Beschluss vom 15. April 2011 (C 7/2010) erklärte die Kommission die auf der Grundlage von Paragraf 8c Absatz 1a des Körperschaftsteuergesetzes gewährte staatliche Beihilferegelung, die Deutschland unter Verstoß gegen Artikel 108 Absatz 3 AEUV rechtswidrig gewährt hatte, für mit dem Binnenmarkt unvereinbar und ordnete ihre Rückforderung an. Ausgenommen davon sind Beihilfen bis zu einem Betrag von 500 000 EUR, die die in Artikel 2 des Beschlusses festgesetzten Kriterien erfüllen. Die Kommission forderte die deutschen Behörden auf, ihr eine Liste der Unternehmen zu übermitteln, die von dieser Maßnahme seit ihrem Inkrafttreten am 1. Januar 2008 profitiert hatten.

Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland hätte die Kommission über diese Bestimmungen vor deren Umsetzung in Kenntnis setzen müssen, um Rechtssicherheit für die Beihilfeempfänger zu gewährleisten. Nach ständiger Rechtsprechung des Gerichtshofs der Europäischen Union können sich die Empfänger einer solchen rechtswidrigen Beihilfe nur unter ganz besonderen Umständen auf den Vertrauensschutz berufen, die in diesem Fall nicht gegeben waren.

Gegenwärtig zieht die Kommission nicht in Betracht, die bis zum Zeitpunkt des Beschlusses genehmigten Steuervorteile unberücksichtigt zu lassen. Die Kommission ist verpflichtet, ihren Beschluss durchzusetzen und gemeinsam mit Deutschland für seine tatsächliche Umsetzung zu sorgen. Die deutschen Behörden können sich in diesem Zusammenhang auch an die Kommission wenden, falls Schwierigkeiten bei der Rückforderung auftreten. Die von rund 14 Unternehmen gegen den Beschluss erhobenen Nichtigkeitsklagen haben keine aufschiebende Wirkung; der Beschluss ist in vollem Umfang durchsetzbar und muss umgesetzt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002574/14
to the Commission
Michael Theurer (ALDE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: The reorganisation clause — Section 8c(1a) of the German Corporation Tax Act (KStg)

By order of the European Court of Justice of 18 December 2012 in case T-205/11, the Court dismissed the Federal Republic of Germany's action for annulment of Commission Decision 2011/527/EU.

No substantive clarification was provided in the grounds of the judgment, however. Many undertakings in Germany are therefore faced with overcoming a huge tax burden. This raises the following questions:

1. Does the Commission believe that the 'reorganisation clause' (Sanierungsklausel) is entirely incompatible with EC law, or does it believe that it is merely its permanent introduction by the Federal Republic of Germany via the *Wirtschaftswachstumsgesetz* (*Gesetz zur Beschleunigung des Wirtschaftswachstums* — Act on the Acceleration of Economic Growth of 22 December 2009 (BGBl. (Federal Gazette) I No 81 p. 3950), Article 2(3)(b)) that is incompatible?

2. Does the Commission believe that its intervention in the Federal Republic of Germany's Corporation Tax Act with retroactive effect is reasonable considering the fact that, at the time of acquisition of the undertaking in need of reorganisation, some business owners relied on the inclusion of the tax benefit in their financing plan?

3. Has the Commission considered the possibility of disregarding the tax benefits granted up until the date of Decision 2011/527/EU in order to prevent undertakings from being subjected to serious financial impairment?

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

By its decision of 15 April 2011 (n°C7/2010), the Commission declared that the state aid granted on the basis of §8c (1a) 'Körperschaftssteuergesetz', unlawfully put into effect by Germany in breach of Article 108(3) of the TFEU, was incompatible with the internal market and ordered its recovery, with the exception of aid up to EUR 500 000 provided the criteria set out in the decision's Article 2 were met. The Commission requested the authorities to draw up a list of enterprises which had benefited from the measure as of 1 January 2008, when it entered into force.

The provision should have been notified by the Federal Republic of Germany to the Commission before its implementation in order to ensure legal certainty to the beneficiaries. According to constant case law by the European Court of Justice, beneficiaries of such unlawfully granted aid cannot rely on legitimate expectations, except in very exceptional circumstances, which were not met in this case.

The Commission is not currently considering the possibility of disregarding the tax benefits granted up until the date of the decision. The Commission is obliged to enforce its decision and to cooperate with Germany with a view to achieving its effective implementation. In that context, the German authorities may also raise with the Commission any difficulties encountered during the recovery process. Even though around 14 undertakings have brought actions for annulment against the decision, these Court proceedings have no suspensive effect; the decision is fully enforceable and must be implemented.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002575/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Νέα στοιχεία για τον ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης

Η Επιτροπή στην απάντησή της E-011456/2013 στις 23.1.2014, μετά από καταγγελίες μου για την κακή λειτουργία του ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης, τόνισε ότι «θα επικοινωνήσει με τις ελληνικές αρχές προκειμένου να εξακριβωθεί κατά πόσον οι εν λόγω χώροι υγειονομικής ταφής είναι σύμμορφοι με τις απαιτήσεις της οδηγίας περί υγειονομικής ταφής».

Εν τω μεταξύ, η Διεύθυνση Περιβάλλοντος και Χωρικού Σχεδιασμού της Περιφέρειας Κεντρικής Μακεδονίας, απαντώντας (2.2.2014 — Αρ. Πρωτ.36884/911 ([1])) σε ερώτηση Ελλήνων Βουλευτών για τον ΧΥΤΑ Μαυροράχης, διατυπώνει με απόλυτη σαφήνεια ότι, μετά από ελέγχους, διαπίστωσε ότι υπάρχει ρέμα που διέρχεται από τον χώρο του ΧΥΤΑ και το οποίο οδηγεί στον φυσικό αποδέκτη, στο οποίο υπερχειλίζουν «υγρά». Μάλιστα τονίζεται ότι ελήφθησαν δείγματα από τα ύδατα του ρέματος και ότι «τα αποτελέσματα των αναλύσεων έδειξαν σημαντικές υπερβάσεις σε μια σειρά παραμέτρων από τις προβλεπόμενες από την κείμενη νομοθεσία …». Να σημειωθεί ότι ο φυσικός αποδέκτης είναι το ρέμα Μπογδάνας που καταλήγει στην Λίμνη Κορώνεια, η οποία είναι γνωστό ότι βρίσκεται σε τραγική οικολογική κατάσταση.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Έχει επικοινωνήσει με τις ελληνικές αρχές; Έχει λάβει τις σχετικές απαντήσεις; Προτίθεται να συνεξετάσει και τα ανωτέρω στοιχεία μαζί με την όποια απάντηση;

2. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη και την πρόσφατη Έκθεση της Επιτροπής Αναφορών του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για την Διερευνητική Αποστολή στην Ελλάδα στις 18-20.9.2013 σχετικά με την διαχείριση των απορριμμάτων, μπορεί η Επιτροπή να δηλώσει με βεβαιότητα ότι υπάρχει έστω και ένας ΧΥΤΑ στην Ελλάδα που να λειτουργεί χωρίς να μολύνει το περιβάλλον;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Απριλίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή ζήτησε από τις ελληνικές αρχές να παράσχουν πληροφορίες σχετικά με το θέμα των διασταλαζόντων υγρών στον χώρο υγειονομικής ταφής (ΧΥΤΑ) Μαυροράχης. Μόλις ληφθούν αυτές οι πληροφορίες, η Επιτροπή θα τις αξιολογήσει για να προσδιοριστεί κατά πόσον ο ΧΥΤΑ πληροί τις σχετικές απαιτήσεις δυνάμει της οδηγίας περί υγειονομικής ταφής ([2]).

Παρόλο που η υγειονομική ταφή των αποβλήτων είναι η λιγότερο προτιμητέα επιλογή όσον αφορά τον περιβαλλοντικό αντίκτυπο, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει καμία πληροφορία που θα μπορούσε να οδηγήσει στην παραδοχή ότι κανένας ΧΥΤΑ στην Ελλάδα δεν συμμορφώνεται με τις διατάξεις της νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ.

([1]) http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/UserFiles/67715b2c-ec81-4f0c-ad6a-476a34d732bd/8352071.pdf (σελ. 9/17).
([2]) Οδηγία 99/31/ΕΚ, ΕΕ L 182 της 16.7.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002575/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: New information regarding the Mavrorachi landfill site

Following my complaints regarding poor operation of the Mavrorachi landfill site, the Commission stated in its answer E-011456/2013 of 23 January 2014 that it 'will contact the Greek authorities in order to verify if the landfill in question complies with the requirements of the Landfill Directive'.

In the meantime, in its answer no 36884/911 ([1]) of 2 February 2014 in response to a question tabled by Greek Members of Parliament regarding the Mavrorachi landfill site, the Directorate for the Environment and Urban Planning of the Region of Central Macedonia stated quite clearly that, following inspection, it had ascertained that there is a stream from the landfill site leading to a natural catchment into which 'fluids' are discharging. It states that fluid samples were taken from the stream and the results of analysis confirmed that a series of limits provided for under current legislation had been exceeded. It should be noted that the natural catchment is the River Bogdana that flows into Lake Koronia, which is well known to be in a dire ecological condition.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Has it contacted the Greek authorities? Has it received any answer? Does it intend to examine the above data in conjunction with any such answer?

2. In view of the recent report by the European Parliament Committee on Petitions on the investigative mission to Greece on 18-20 September 2013 in connection with waste management, can the Commission say with certainty that there is at least one landfill site in Greece that is operating without causing any environmental damage?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

The Commission has asked the Greek authorities for information regarding the leachate issue at the Mavrorachi landfill. Once this information has been received, the Commission will assess it to determine whether the landfill complies with the relevant requirements under the Landfill Directive ([2]).

Athough the landfilling of waste is the least preferred option with regard to environmental impacts, the Commission has no information that would lead to the assumption that all landfills in Greece are not respecting the provisions of EU legislation.

([1]) http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/UserFiles/67715b2c-ec81-4f0c-ad6a-476a34d732bd/8352071.pdf (p. 9/17).
([2]) Directive 99/31/EC, OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002576/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(5 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποιήσεις ημικρατικών οργανισμών ως ρήτρα του μνημονίου

Όπως είναι γνωστό, η Βουλή των Αντιπροσώπων της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας απέρριψε το νομοσχέδιο για ιδιωτικοποιήσεις των κερδοφόρων οργανισμών που έφερε η κυβέρνηση Αναστασιάδη στις 27 Φεβρουαρίου 2014, ζητώντας την επαναδιαπραγμάτευση της συγκεκριμένης ρήτρας με την Τρόικα. Η κυβέρνηση επανέφερε το νομοσχέδιο για ψήφιση χωρίς να προηγηθεί η επαναδιαπραγμάτευση στις 4 Μαρτίου, όπου και υπερψηφίστηκε. Η δικαιολογία για την επαναφορά του ήταν πως η Επιτροπή, μέσω του Επιτρόπου Όλι Ρεν, δεν αποδέχτηκε οποιαδήποτε επαναδιαπραγμάτευση στο θέμα των ιδιωτικοποιήσεων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: είναι αληθές ότι ο Επίτροπος Ρεν δεν αποδέχτηκε την επαναδιαπραγμάτευση της ρήτρας του μνημονίου για τις ιδιωτικοποιήσεις; Γιατί η Επιτροπή δεν αποδέχεται επαναδιαπραγμάτευση αφού αποτέλεσε δημοκρατική απόφαση του κοινοβουλίου της χώρας και αφού σαφώς υπήρχε χρόνος να γίνει αυτό;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Απριλίου 2014)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή τηρεί ουδέτερη στάση έναντι του διλήμματος δημόσιο ή ιδιωτικό ιδιοκτησιακό καθεστώς, δεσμευόμενη από το άρθρο 345 της Συνθήκης για τη Λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης (ΣΛΕΕ).

Τον Μάρτιο του 2013, οι κυπριακές αρχές επιβεβαίωσαν «τη δέσμευσή τους να επιταχύνουν τις προσπάθειές τους στους τομείς της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων και της ιδιωτικοποίησης», όπως αυτή αντανακλάται στη δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας και στο μνημόνιο συμφωνίας που ακολούθησε ([1]).

([1]) http://eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002576/14
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Privatisation of partly-privatised organisations as a clause of the memorandum

It is common knowledge that the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus rejected the bill on the privatisation of profitable organisations tabled by the Democratic Rally on 27 February 2014 and requested the clause in question be renegotiated with the Troika. The Government put the bill to the vote on 4 March, prior to any renegotiation, at which point it was passed. The excuse for re-tabling the bill was that the Commission, via Commissioner Olli Rehn, had refused to negotiate on the matter of privatisations.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Is it true that Commissioner Rehn refused to negotiate the clause of the memorandum on privatisations? Why does the Commission refuse to renegotiate, given that the request to do so was a democratic decision taken by the country's Parliament and given that there was adequate time to do so?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(9 April 2014)

The European Commission has a neutral position on the public or private ownership, in accordance with Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

In March 2013, the Cypriot authorities reaffirmed 'their commitment to step up efforts in the areas of fiscal consolidation, structural reforms and privatisation', as reflected in the Eurogroup statement and the memorandum of understanding has followed from this ([1]).

([1]) http://eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-002577/14
upućeno Komisiji
Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(5. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Europska pomorska tradicija

Europa ima dugu pomorsku tradiciju. Broj europskih pomoraca već godinama je u padu i industriji prijeti manjak radne snage. Konkurentnost europskih pomoraca također je ugrožena niskom cijenom radne snage iz trećih zemalja.

Koje su mjere koje Komisija poduzima kako bi:

1. sačuvala europsku pomorsku tradiciju,

2. zaštitila konkurentnost pomoraca iz EU-a u odnosu na mnogo „jeftiniju" radnu snagu iz trećih zemalja i

3. potaknula mlade unutar EU-a da se bave pomorskom profesijom?

Odgovor g. Kallasa u ime Komisije
(28. travnja 2014.)

Komisija je 2009. predstavila Komunikaciju u kojoj se iznosi niz strateških ciljeva za europski sustav pomorskog prometa do 2018. godine ([1]). Strategijom su utvrđena ključna područja u kojima bi djelovanje EU-a moglo poboljšati konkurentnost sektora, uključujući sposobnost izravnog i neizravnog stvaranja radnih mjesta u cijelom klasteru pomorskih industrija.

Kada je riječ o aspektima zapošljavanja, u međunarodnoj je plovidbi sve učestalije zapošljavanje pomoraca koji nisu državljani EU-a, a u pojedinim su državama članicama zapošljavanje i zadržavanje časnika i dalje problematični. Poboljšanje mogućnosti zapošljavanja pomoraca iz EU-a i povećanje privlačnosti pomorskih zanimanja stoga su neki od temeljnih ciljeva „socijalnog pomorskog programa". Mjere koje je Komisija predložila u proteklih nekoliko godina bile su usredotočene na tri naročita aspekta:

— promicanje privlačnosti pomorskih zanimanja među Europljanima, a osobito među mladima ([2]),

— stremljenje održavanju visokih standarda osposobljavanja i stručne osposobljenosti posade (Konvencija o standardima osposobljavanja, izdavanja svjedodžbi i straže za pomorce iz 1978. — STCW) ([3]) i

— poboljšanje uvjeta rada pomoraca uz istovremeno očuvanje konkurentnosti europske flote (Konvencija o radu pomoraca koja je stupila na snagu 20. kolovoza 2013.) ([4]).

EU financira projekt pod nazivom „Vasco da Gama", čiji je cilj na razini EU-a uspostaviti model razmjene među ustanovama za pomorsko osposobljavanje u državama članicama. Opći su ciljevi promicanje obrazovne mobilnosti, poboljšanje kvalitete obrazovanja i osposobljavanja te doprinos unaprjeđenju kapaciteta za osposobljavanje pomorskih institucija i tijela u EU-u.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/2018_maritime_transport_strategy_en.htm
([2]) Prijedlog Direktive Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o pomorcima i izmjenama Direktiva 2008/94/EZ, 2009/38/EZ, 2002/14/EZ, 98/59/EZ i 2001/23/EZ (COM(2013) 798 završna verzija — 2013/0390 COD).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/seafarers/doc/new_stcw_directive.pdf
([4]) Direktiva 2009/13/EZ od 16. veljače 2009. o provedbi Konvencije o radu pomoraca iz 2006., Direktiva 2013/54/EU od 20. studenoga 2013. o nekim nadležnostima države zastave za usklađivanje s Konvencijom o radu pomoraca i njezinu provedbu, 2006. te Direktiva 2013/38/EU od 12. kolovoza 2013. o izmjeni Direktive 2009/16/EZ o nadzoru države luke.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002577/14
to the Commission
Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Europe's maritime tradition

Europe has a long maritime tradition. The number of European seamen, however, has been in steep decline for years, and the maritime sector is faced with a potential shortage of workers. The competitiveness of European seamen is also threatened by the low wages paid to workers from third countries.

What steps is the Commission taking in order to:

1. preserve Europe's maritime tradition;

2. protect the competitiveness of EU seamen vis-à-vis their much less well-paid competitors from third countries;

3. and encourage young people in the EU to take an interest in maritime careers?

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

In 2009, the Commission presented a communication outlining a number of strategic objectives for the European maritime transport system up to 2018 ([1]). The strategy identified key areas where action by the EU could strengthen the competitiveness of the sector, including its capacity to generate employment, both directly and indirectly, through the whole cluster of maritime industries.

With regard to employment aspects, there is an increasing trend in the recruitment of non-EU seafarers for international voyages while, in some Member States, officer recruitment and retention remain problematic. Enhancing employment opportunities for EU seafarers and increase the attractiveness of maritime professions are therefore among the core objectives of the 'social maritime agenda'. Measures proposed by the Commission in the past few years focused on three particular aspects:

— To promote the attractiveness of maritime professions among Europeans, and youngsters in particular ([2]),

— To strive for the maintenance of high training standards and the professional competence of crews (Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978 — STCW) ([3]) and,

— To enhance seafarers' employment conditions whilst preserving the competitiveness of the European fleet (Maritime Labour Convention which entered into force on 20.8.2013) ([4]).

The EU is funding a project, called Vasco da Gama, aimed at the creation of an EU wide model for exchanges between the maritime training institutions of the Member States. The overall objective is to promote learning mobility, to improve the quality of education and training and to contribute to the enhancement of training capacity of maritime institutions and bodies in the EU.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/2018_maritime_transport_strategy_en.htm
([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on seafarers amending the directives 2008/94/EC, 2009/38/EC, 2002/14/EC, 98/59/EC and 2001/23/EC (COM(2013) 798 final — 2013/0390 COD).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/maritime/seafarers/doc/new_stcw_directive.pdf
([4]) Directive 2009/13/EC of 16 February 2009, implementing the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, Directive 2013/54/EU of 20 November 2013 concerning certain flag State responsibilities for compliance with and enforcement of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and Directive 2013/38/EU of 12 August 2013 amending Directive 2009/16/EC on port State control.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002578/14
do Komisji
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(5 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Unijne dopłaty bezpośrednie

Artykuł w onet.pl „Wojna z agropiratami" ([1]) donosi o tym, że kiedy polscy rolnicy bezprawnie użytkują państwową ziemię, pobierają dodatkowo z tytułu jej użytkowania unijne dopłaty bezpośrednie. Te osoby to najczęściej tzw. użytkownicy bezumowni, byli dzierżawcy, którym wygasły umowy najmu, a ci nie zdecydowali się na ich przedłużenie lub na wykup ziemi wynikający z prawa pierwokupu. Zgodnie z ustawą o dopłatach bezpośrednich, osoby te są zobowiązane jedynie do złożenia odnośnego wniosku do Agencji Restrukturyzacji i Modernizacji Rolnictwa, w którym deklarują użytkowanie nieruchomości bez konieczności okazania dokumentacji dotyczącej najmu lub własności ziemi.

Jakie jest stanowisko Komisji w tej sprawie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloșa w imieniu Komisji
(29 kwietnia 2014 r.)

W ramach I filaru WPR Polska stosuje system jednolitej płatności obszarowej (SAPS) przewidziany w rozporządzeniu Rady (WE) nr 73/2009 ([2]). Tylko rolnicy podlegający definicji ustalonej w rozporządzeniu Rady (WE) nr 73/2009, którzy prowadzą działalność rolniczą, kwalifikują się do otrzymania tego wsparcia. Kwalifikujące się grunty pozostają w dyspozycji rolnika w dniu określonym przez państwo członkowskie.

Odpowiedzialne za wdrażanie prawa Unii zgodnie z art. 291 TFUE państwo członkowskie zobowiązane jest do ustanowienia odpowiedniego systemu oraz sprawdzenia, czy warunki systemu jednolitej płatności obszarowej są rzeczywiście spełnione.

([1]) Poniżej link do artykułu: http://m.onet.pl/biznes/branze/rolnictwo-i-rybactwo,hp8zx
([2]) Dz.U. L 30 z 31.1.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002578/14
to the Commission
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: EU direct subsidies

An article on the portal Onet.pl entitled 'War on agro-pirates' ([1]) has reported that when Polish farmers unlawfully use state land, they additionally receive EU direct subsidies for its use. These persons are most often so-called non-contractual users, i.e. former tenants whose lease agreements have lapsed but who have not decided to extend the term or to purchase the land under a pre-emption right. In accordance with the Act on Direct Subsidies, these persons are merely required to submit an appropriate application to the Agriculture Restructuring and Modernisation Agency (Agencja Restrukturyzacji i Modernizacji Rolnictwo), in which they declare use of real estate without the need to submit any documentation regarding lease or ownership of the land.

What is the Commission's view of this issue?

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

Under the 1st pillar of the CAP, Poland applies the single area payment scheme (SAPS) provided for in Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([2]). Only farmers within the definition laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 who exercise an agricultural activity qualify for this support. The eligible land shall be at the farmer's disposal on the date fixed by the Member State.

It is for the Member State, responsible for the implementation of Union law pursuant to Article 291 TFEU, to establish the relevant system and to check whether the conditions for the single area payment scheme are actually met.

([1]) Here is a link to the article: http://m.onet.pl/biznes/branze/rolnictwo-i-rybactwo.hp8zx
([2]) OJ L 30, 31.1.2009.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002579/14
do Komisji
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(5 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Stosowanie rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1025/2012 w sprawie normalizacji europejskiej – nowa wieloletnia umowa ramowa na lata 2014-2020

W kontekście stosowania rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1025/2012 w sprawie normalizacji europejskiej podstawową sprawą jest zawarcie wieloletniej umowy ramowej, a kolejna taka umowa ma obejmować lata 2014-2020. Umowa ramowa jest tak ważna, ponieważ stanowi ona pierwszy etap, który umożliwia potem zawieranie kolejnych kontraktów, a te z kolei przeznaczane są na wspieranie konkretnych działań celowych. Jeżeli przyjęta zostaje norma zharmonizowana to jest to bardzo duże ułatwienie szczególnie dla przedsiębiorców, ponieważ ułatwiają im one spełnienie wymogów prawa europejskiego i wprowadzanie produktów na rynek. Należy w tym miejscu zaznaczyć, że normalizacja poprawia konkurencyjność przedsiębiorstw, ułatwia swobodny przepływ towarów i usług, a także poprawia ogólne funkcjonowanie rynku wewnętrznego.

W związku z powyższym chciałabym zapytać Komisję:

1. Kiedy podpisana zostanie nowa wieloletnia umowa ramowa?

2. Czy zdaniem Komisji znaczące zmniejszenie budżetu na normalizację europejską nie stanie się czynnikiem znacznie blokującym prace normalizacyjne?

3. Kluczowe wskaźniki wydajności nie powinny być zawarte w umowach ramowych, ponieważ umowy te są tylko wstępem do podpisywania konkretnych umów na konkretne działania, których zakres jest zróżnicowany. Dlatego efektywniejsze wydaje się być określanie tych wskaźników dla konkretnych umów – dostosowanych do realizowanych w nich działań. Czy Komisja zgadza się, że określenie ogólnych kluczowych wskaźników wydajności w umowie ramowej stanowić będzie raczej utrudnienie niż rzeczywistą ocenę efektywności działań?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(23 kwietnia 2014 r.)

1. Prace nad nową umową ramową o partnerstwie obejmującą wieloletnią współpracę między Komisją a europejskimi organizacjami normalizacyjnymi zostaną wkrótce zakończone.

Dokument został zmieniony zgodnie z przepisami nowego rozporządzenia finansowego i priorytetami wyznaczonymi w komunikacie „Strategiczna wizja w zakresie norm europejskich” z 2011 r. ([1]) oraz zgodnie z wymaganiami przewidzianymi w rozporządzeniu nr 1025/2012 w sprawie normalizacji europejskiej ([2]).

2. Podczas dyskusji nad wieloletnimi ramami finansowymi na lata 2014-2020 przewidziano zmniejszenie budżetu na normalizację europejską. Komisja bada obecnie sposoby podziału zmniejszonego budżetu na dotacje operacyjne (funkcjonowanie europejskich organizacji normalizacyjnych) i dotacje na działania (opracowywanie norm). Komisja prowadzi dyskusje z europejskimi organizacjami normalizacyjnymi w celu znalezienia zrównoważonego rozwiązania. Takie rozwiązanie powinno kłaść szczególny nacisk na opracowywanie norm, które jest priorytetem w ramach polityki przemysłowej Komisji, oraz na zapewnienie, by dostępne były odpowiednie środki na te działania.

3. Kluczowe wskaźniki wydajności służą do pomiaru ewolucji wyników w różnych latach. Uwzględniając fakt, że umowy ramowe o partnerstwie obejmują wieloletnią współpracę między Komisją a europejskimi organizacjami normalizacyjnymi, uzgodniono, że należy uwzględnić kluczowe wskaźniki wydajności w ramach takich umów o partnerstwie. Wyniki będą mierzone corocznie w ramach dotacji operacyjnych oraz dotyczących ich sprawozdań rocznych. Ponadto dotacje na działania mogą mieć charakter wieloletni, a zatem coroczny pomiar wyników nie byłby możliwy.

([1]) COM(2011) 311 final.
([2]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1025/2012 z dnia 25 października 2012 r., Dz.U. L 316 z 14.11.2012, s. 12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002579/14
to the Commission
Małgorzata Handzlik (PPE)
(5 March 2014)

Subject: Application of Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 on European standardisation — new multi-annual framework agreement for 2014-2020

In the context of the application of Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 on European standardisation, the main issue is the conclusion of a multi-annual framework agreement. The next such agreement is to cover the period 2014-2020. The framework agreement is vitally important as it constitutes the first stage, enabling further contracts to be entered into, which in turn are earmarked for supporting certain target activities. If a harmonised standard is adopted, it considerably simplifies matters, especially for undertakings, as it makes it easier for them to comply with the requirements of European law and to introduce products onto markets. At this point, it should be stressed that standardisation improves undertakings' competitiveness and the free flow of goods and services and generally improves the operation of the internal market.

1. When will a new multi-annual framework agreement be signed?

2. In the Commission's opinion, will the substantial reduction in the budget for European standardisation not significantly hinder standardisation work?

3. Key performance indicators should not be included in framework agreements, as these agreements are always only preliminary to the signing of specific agreements for particular activities, the scope of which varies. It would be more effective, therefore, to set these indicators for specific agreements — adjusted to the activities to be performed under them. Does the Commission agree that setting general key performance indicators in the framework agreement would constitute more of a hindrance than a real assessment of the effectiveness of activities?

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

1. The new Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), covering the multiannual cooperation between the Commission and the European Standardisation Organisations will be finalised soon.

The document has been amended according to the provisions of the new Financial Regulation and the priorities set in the communication on 'A strategic vision for European standards' of 2011 ([1]) and the requirements provided in the European Standardisation Regulation 1025/2012 ([2]).

2. The budget reduction for European Standardisation was adopted in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 discussions. The Commission is examining the approach related to the allocation of the reduction to Operating Grants (functioning of the European Standardisation Organisations) and to Action Grants (development of standards). The Commission is engaged in discussions with the European Standardisation Organisations in order to find a balanced solution. This solution focuses on standards development as a priority under the Commission's Industrial Policy and on how to ensure that appropriate means are available to guarantee such development.

3. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) measure the evolution of performance over different years. As the framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) cover multiannual cooperation between the Commission and the European Standardisation Organisations, it was agreed with the European Standardisation Organisations to include the KPIs in the FPA. The performance will be measured annually through the Operating Grant and its annual reporting. In addition, Action Grants can be multiannual and therefore a yearly performance measurement would be out of the scope.

([1]) COM(2011) 311final.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012; OJ, L 316/12, 14.11.2012.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002580/14
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(6. marts 2014)

Om: Brug, mærkning og emballering af methylisothiazolinone (MI)(Opfølgende spørgsmål)

I et spørgsmål til Kommissionen den 24. oktober 2013 gjorde jeg Kommissionen opmærksom på en række negative sundhedsmæssige virkninger — herunder eksem og allergi — ved brug af methylisothiazolinone (MI). I sit svar fastslår Kommissionen blandt andet, at der i forbindelse med brugen af MI ikke skal forelægges et sikkerhedsdatablad.

Siden da har EU's Videnskabelige Komite for Forbrugersikkerhed blandt andet anbefalet, at MI skal reguleres i en række kosmetiske produkter, og herunder helt forbydes i såkaldte leave-on-produkter. Komiteens anbefalinger rejser i den forbindelse en række spørgsmål med relevans for de europæiske arbejdstagere, der under de nuværende regler ikke har mulighed for at fravælge MI.

Kommissionen bedes i den forbindelse svare på, om der på baggrund anbefalingerne fra Den Videnskabelige Komite for Forbrugersikkerhed vil blive taget tiltag for at begrænse brugen af MI i kosmetisk produkter.

Kommissionen bedes herunder svare på, om komiteens anbefalinger giver anledning til at ændre reglerne for brug, mærkning og emballering af MI i en række ikke-kosmetiske produkter, brugen af hvilke også er årsag til, at europæiske arbejdstagere udsættes for negative sundhedsmæssige virkninger. Der tænkes her eksempelvis på smøre-kølemidler, bilvoks og smøreolie. Hvis Kommissionen ikke har planer om at ændre reglerne for brug, mærkning og emballering af MI i produkter, der bliver brugt af europæiske arbejdstagere i forbindelse med deres arbejde, bedes Kommissionen videre svare på, hvordan den sundhedsrisiko, som arbejdstagere udsættes for, på relevant vis adskiller sig fra de risici, som Den Videnskabelige Komite for Forbrugersikkerhed anbefaler, at forbrugere skal beskyttes mod.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(19. maj 2014)

Kommissionen er bekendt med det sensibiliserende potentiale, som methylisothiazolinone (MI) har, og har anmodet Den Videnskabelige Komité for Forbrugersikkerhed (VKF) om at tage dette stof op til fornyet vurdering. I udtalelsen ([1]) konkluderede VKF, at der i forbindelse med kosmetiske produkter, som ikke afrenses, ikke foreligger tilstrækkelige beviser på, hvor høje koncentrationer der kan betragtes som sikre, hverken for fremkaldelse af kontaktallergi eller for udløsning. Ved kosmetiske produkter, som afrenses, blev MI derimod betragtet som sikker for forbrugerne for så vidt angår fremkaldelse af kontaktallergi ved en koncentration på 15 ppm (0,0015 %).

Kommissionen vil som reaktion på denne udtalelse diskutere nødvendige foranstaltninger med arbejdsgruppen og Det Stående Udvalg for Kosmetiske Produkter i juni 2014. Dette kunne omfatte, at der fastsættes grænseværdier eller yderligere mærkningskrav.

Allerede inden de lovgivningsmæssige foranstaltninger er blevet vedtaget, har den berørte erhvervsorganisation Cosmetics Europe foreslået, at MI ikke længere anvendes i kosmetiske produkter, som ikke afrenses.

På nuværende tidspunkt vurderes MI i henhold til biocidlovgivningen, og Slovenien er ved at udvikle et dossier, der indeholder en harmoniseret klassificering af dette stof, særligt for så vidt angår dets akutte toksicitet, irritation/ætsning, sensibilisering og dets toksiske virkninger i miljøet. I 2014 vil ECHA's ([2]) Udvalg for Risikovurdering vurdere dossieret.

Vedrørende beskyttelsen af arbejdstagere, der udsættes for farlige kemikalier, findes der allerede omfattende EU-lovgivningsrammer om arbejdssikkerhed og sundhed. Særligt relevante er direktiv 89/391/EØF ([3]) og direktiv 98/24/EF ([4]).

([1]) SCCS/1521/13.
([2]) Det Europæiske Kemikalieagentur.
([3]) EFT L 183 af 29.6.1989, s. 1.
([4]) EFT L 131 af 5.8.1998, s. 11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002580/14
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Use, labelling and packaging of methylisothiazolinone (MI) — Follow-up question

In a question dated 24 October 2013, I drew the Commission's attention to a number of adverse health effects, including eczema and allergies, of using methylisothiazolinone (MI). In its answer, the Commission stated *inter alia* that, in connection with the use of MI, a safety data sheet does not need to be supplied.

Since then, the EU's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) has *inter alia* recommended that, for a number of cosmetic products, the use of MI be regulated, including a blanket ban on its use in leave-on products. The SCCS' recommendations raise a number of questions of relevance to EU workers, who, under the current rules, are unable to opt out of using MI.

In the light of the SCCS' recommendations, will the Commission act to restrict the use of MI in cosmetic products?

In addition, do the SCCS' recommendations warrant amending the rules on the use, labelling and packaging of MI in respect of a number of non-cosmetic products the use of which exposes EU workers to adverse health effects? Coolants, car wax and lubricants are cases in point. Should the Commission have no plans to amend the rules on the use, labelling and packaging of MI in respect of products used by EU workers in their work, will it say how the health risks to which those workers are exposed differ in any meaningful way from the risks against which, as recommended by the SCCS, consumers should be protected?

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

The Commission is aware of the sensitizing potential of methylisothiazolinone (MI) and has requested the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) to reassess this substance. The SCCS opinion ([1]) concluded that for leave-on cosmetic products, no safe concentrations of MI for induction of contact allergy or elicitation have been adequately demonstrated. For rinse-off cosmetic products by contrast, MI was considered safe for the consumer from the view of induction of contact allergy at a concentration of 15 ppm (0.0015%).

In response to this opinion, the Commission will discuss necessary measures with the Working Group and the Standing Committee on Cosmetic Products in June 2014. This could include setting exposure limits or additional labelling obligations.

The relevant industry association Cosmetics Europe has already recommended discontinuing the use of MI in leave-on skin products, even before the regulatory measures are adopted.

MI is currently assessed under the biocides legislation and Slovenia is developing a dossier to obtain a harmonised classification for this substance, in particular for its acute toxicity, irritation/corrosion, sensitisation, and its toxicity for the environment. The dossier should be assessed by the Risk Assessment Committee of ECHA ([2]) in 2014.

In relation to the protection of workers exposed to hazardous chemicals, there is already a comprehensive EU legislative framework on Occupational Safety and Health. In particular, the relevant Directives are Directive 89/391/EEC ([3]) and Directive 98/24/EC ([4]).

([1]) SCCS/1521/13.
([2]) European Chemical Agency.
([3]) OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1.
([4]) OJ L 131, 5.8.1998, p. 11.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002581/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Violencia contra las mujeres y falta de acción por parte de la Comisión

En Europa, entre el 20 % y el 25 % de las mujeres ha sufrido actos de violencia física por lo menos una vez en su edad adulta. Más del 10 % ha sufrido violencia sexual con uso de fuerza. El 45 % de las mujeres ha padecido alguna forma de violencia. Entre el 12 % y el 15 % de las mujeres son víctimas de violencia doméstica en Europa, y siete mujeres mueren cada día en la EU a consecuencia de esta.

Según estudios, el coste económico de la violencia contra las mujeres en la EU en 2011 se estima en 228 000 millones de euros; la cifra incluye 45 000 millones de euros por servicios, 24 000 millones de euros por pérdidas de actividad económica y 159 000 millones de euros por dolor y sufrimiento. El coste de las medidas de prevención es sustancialmente inferior al coste de la violencia.

Actualmente no hay un acto legislativo que establezca medidas de fomento y apoyo de la acción de los Estados miembros en el ámbito de la prevención de la violencia contra las mujeres ni una estrategia global para combatir la violencia de género ejercida contra ellas. El Parlamento ha aprobado un informe de iniciativa legislativa con una clara petición a la Comisión: «que presente una propuesta de acto (Reglamento) que establezca medidas para promover y apoyar la acción de los Estados miembros en el ámbito de la prevención de la violencia contra las mujeres y las niñas».

1. ¿Está la Comisión preparando ya un acto legislativo que incluya una estrategia detallada para una acción de los Estados miembros de lucha contra la violencia contra las mujeres, satisfaciendo así la petición del Parlamento?

2. ¿Va a establecer la Comisión, en los próximos tres años, un Año Europeo contra la Violencia contra las Mujeres y la Niñas, a fin de sensibilizar a los ciudadanos y, especialmente, a los políticos sobre este problema generalizado que afecta a todos los Estados miembros?

3. ¿Cómo va a promover la Comisión la ratificación por parte de los Estados miembros del Convenio de Estambul sobre prevención y lucha contra la violencia contra las mujeres y la violencia doméstica?

4. ¿Puede indicar la Comisión si simplemente pretende esperar hasta que todos los Estados miembros hayan ratificado el Convenio de Estambul y, entonces, estimar esto como cumplimiento suficiente del Programa de Estocolmo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de abril de 2014)

La Comisión presentará un informe sobre el curso dado a las resoluciones del Parlamento Europeo sobre la violencia contra las mujeres [1], de conformidad con el Acuerdo marco entre el Parlamento Europeo y la Comisión.

La Comisión se ha comprometido a dar una enérgica respuesta política contra todas las formas de violencia contra las mujeres. Este compromiso se refleja, en particular, en el Plan de Acción por el que se aplica el programa de Estocolmo, en la Carta de la Mujer y en la Estrategia para la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres 2010-2015, así como en la adopción de propuestas legislativas como la orden europea de protección [2] y el paquete de medidas sobre los derechos de las víctimas [3].

Además, la Comisión seguirá haciendo uso de todos los instrumentos de que dispone para promover campañas de información a fin de ayudar a los Estados miembros en sus esfuerzos por poner fin a la violencia contra las mujeres y de facilitar el intercambio de mejores prácticas, como se ha hecho en el pasado mediante los programas Daphne y Progress. En el futuro, todas las instituciones podrían acordar un año europeo específicamente dedicado a combatir la violencia contra las mujeres.

En todas sus actividades relacionadas con la eliminación de la violencia contra las mujeres, la Comisión insta a los Estados miembros a que ratifiquen el Convenio del Consejo de Europa sobre prevención y lucha contra la violencia contra las mujeres y la violencia doméstica (Convenio de Estambul).

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[1] Resolución del Parlamento Europeo, de 25 de febrero de 2014, con recomendaciones a la Comisión sobre la lucha contra la violencia contra las mujeres [2013/2004 (INL)].

[2] Directiva 2011/99/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de diciembre de 2011, sobre la orden europea de protección, que se aplica en asuntos penales. http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:338:0002:0018:ES:PDF

[3] Directiva 2012/29/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2012, por la que se establecen normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos, y por la que se sustituye la Decisión marco 2001/220/JAI del Consejo («Directiva sobre las víctimas»). El plazo de transposición expira el 16 de noviembre de 2015.
http://eurex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0057:0073:ES:PDF
y Reglamento nº 606/2013 relativo al reconocimiento mutuo de medidas de protección en materia civil.
http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ES/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R0606

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002581/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Violence against women and lack of Commission action

Around 20-25% of women in Europe have experienced acts of physical violence at least once during their adult lives. Over 10% have suffered sexual violence involving the use of force. As many as 45% of women have endured some form of violence. 12-15% of women in Europe are victims of domestic violence and seven women die every day in the EU from it.

According to studies, the economic cost of violence against women in the EU in 2011 is estimated to be EUR 228 billion each year, including EUR 45 billion in services, EUR 24 billion in lost economic output and EUR 159 billion in pain and suffering. The costs of preventive measures are substantially less than those of violence.

Today, there is neither a legislative act establishing measures to promote and support the action of Member States in the field of prevention of violence against women, nor a comprehensive strategy to combat gender-based violence against women. Parliament has adopted a legislative own-initiative report with a clear demand to the Commission, namely: 'to present a proposal for an act (Regulation) establishing measures to promote and support the action of Member States in the field of prevention of violence against women and girls'.

1. Is the Commission already preparing a legislative act including a detailed strategy for action by Member States to fight violence against women, thus fulfilling Parliament's demand?

2. Will the Commission establish in the next three years an EU Year to End Violence against Women and Girls with the aim of raising awareness among citizens and among all politicians of this widespread problem which affects all the Member States?

3. How will the Commission promote the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on Violence against Women by Member States?

4. Can the Commission state whether it intends just to wait until all Member States have ratified the Istanbul Convention and then regard that as sufficient fulfilment of the Stockholm programme?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 April 2014)

The Commission will report on the follow-up of the European Parliament resolutions on violence against women ([1]) in accordance with the framework Agreement between the European Parliament and the Commission.

The Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women. This commitment is shown, in particular, in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 and the adoption of legislative proposals such as the European Protection Order ([2]) and the Victims' Package ([3]).

In addition, the Commission will continue making use of all tools available to promote information campaigns to help Member States' efforts to end violence against women and to facilitate the exchange of good practices, as it has done in the past through the Daphne and Progress programmes. In the future, all EU-Institutions could possibly agree on a European year specifically dedicated to fight violence against women.

In all its activities related to the elimination of violence against women, the Commission calls on Member States to individually ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

([1]) European Parliament resolution of 25 February 2014 with recommendations to the Commission on combating violence against women (2013/2004(INL)).
([2]) Directive 2011/99/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order, which is applicable in criminal matters http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:338:0002:0018:EN:PDF
([3]) Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA ('the Victims' Directive'). The transposition deadline is 16 November 2015. http://eurex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:315:0057:0073:EN:PDF and Regulation no. 606/2013 on the mutual recognition of civil law protection measures. http://new.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R0606

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-002583/14
til Kommissionen
Jutta Steinruck (S&D), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D) og Ole Christensen (S&D)
(6. marts 2014)

Om: Social dumping: Norwegian Air Shuttle's (NAS/NAI) forretningsmodel

Det amerikanske Department of Transportation undersøger i øjeblikket en ansøgning fra Norwegian Air International (NAI — et datterselskab af NAS) om at få tilladelse som udenlandsk luftfartsselskab i henhold til »Open Skies«-aftalen mellem EU og USA. På mødet i Det Fælles Udvalg EU-USA i januar 2014 stemte GD for Mobilitet og Transport til fordel for denne ansøgning og hilste Norwegians forretningsmodel velkommen som værende god for forbrugerne, konkurrence og virksomheder.

1. Kan Kommissionen forklare, hvorfor den støttede en forretningsmodel, der bygger på social dumping ved at flytte NAI til Irland, hvilket vil gøre det muligt for selskabet at omgå norsk lovgivning på social- og beskæftigelsesområdet og undgå store udgifter ved at basere kabinepersonale og piloter i Asien med midlertidige kontrakter under asiatisk lov?

2. Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at den finder det legitimt, at et luftfartsselskab bevidst opretter en selskabsstruktur, der vil tvinge NAI's piloter til at være falsk baseret i Thailand og dermed unddrage sig skat og sociale bidrag i Europa, hvor disse piloter for det meste vil opholde sig?

3. Kan Kommissionen bekræfte, at dens støtte til Norwegian — anført af GD for Mobilitet og Transport på vegne af »den europæiske delegation« — bakkes op af medlemsstaterne, og at GD for Mobilitet og Transport havde et mandat til dette? Koordinerede GD for Mobilitet og Transport denne holdning på forhånd med GD for Beskæftigelse, og støttede sidstnævnte det?

4. Kan Kommissionen forklare, hvad den gør for at imødegå fremkomsten af skadelig virksomhed og kontraktlig praksis (herunder falsk selvstændig beskæftigelse, falske besætningsbaser uden for Europa og forum shopping) i luftfarten?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Siim Kallas
(2. maj 2014)

1. På mødet i Det Fælles Udvalg EU-USA i januar 2014 videregav Kommissionen på de amerikanske myndigheders anmodning faktuelle oplysninger fra NAI med henblik på at forklare virksomhedens forretningsmodel.

2. Kommissionen har ikke modtaget noget bevis for, at en sådan praksis finder sted. Kommissionen vil ikke tøve med at gribe ind, hvis EU-reglerne ikke bliver overholdt.

3. Kommissionen bidrog til mødet i Det Fælles Udvalg EU-USA ved at videregive faktuelle oplysninger fra NAI, der ikke var til rådighed for offentligheden på det pågældende tidspunkt. Disse oplysninger udgør virksomhedens begrundelse for dens praksis. Desuden understregede Kommissionen principperne i aftalen mellem EU og USA, nemlig at konkurrencen på markedet generelt er en fordel for sektoren og forbrugerne, samtidig med at den anerkendte vigtigheden af aftalens sociale dimension.

4. Kommissionens tjenestegrene rapporterer jævnligt om tendenserne i sektoren, f.eks. gennem egnethedsundersøgelsen om det indre marked for luftfart ([1]) og undersøgelsen af, hvordan gennemførelsen af EU's indre marked for luftfart har påvirket beskæftigelsen og arbejdsforholdene i transportsektoren i perioden 1997-2010 ([2]).

([1]) Se GD MOVE's websted:.
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/doc/fitness_check_internal_aviation_market_en_commission_staff_working_document.pdf

([2]) Se GD MOVE's websted:.
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/studies/doc/internal_market/employment_project_final_report_for_publication.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002583/14
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D) und Ole Christensen (S&D)
(6. März 2014)

Betrifft: Sozialdumping: das Geschäftsmodell von Norwegian Air Shuttle (NAS)

Das US-Verkehrsministerium untersucht derzeit den Antrag von Norwegian Air International (NAI), einer Tochtergesellschaft der Fluggesellschaft Norwegian Air Shuttle (NAS), auf eine ausländische Betriebsgenehmigung nach dem zwischen der EU und USA geschlossenen Luftverkehrsabkommen. Bei dem Treffen des Gemeinsamen Ausschusses EU-USA im Januar 2014 nahm die GD MOVE zu diesem Antrag einen positiven Standpunkt ein und begrüßte das Geschäftsmodell von NAI als einen Gewinn für Verbraucher, Wettbewerb und Fluggesellschaften.

1. Kann die Kommission erläutern, warum sie ein Geschäftsmodell unterstützt, das auf Sozialdumping basiert, ist das Unternehmen durch seine Verlegung nach Irland doch in der Lage, norwegische sozial- und arbeitsrechtliche Vorschriften und Kosten zu umgehen, indem es Flugbegleitpersonal und Piloten in Asien mit befristeten, dem Recht asiatischer Länder unterliegenden Arbeitsverträgen beschäftigt?

2. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass sie es für rechtmäßig hält, dass NAI bewusst eine Unternehmensstruktur aufbaut, die die Piloten der Fluggesellschaft zwingt, ihren Wohnsitz fälschlicherweise in Thailand anzugeben, damit die Fluggesellschaft die Zahlung von Steuern und Sozialversicherungsbeiträgen in Europa umgehen kann, wo die Mehrheit der Piloten in Wirklichkeit lebt?

3. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass ihre Unterstützung der NAI, wie sie von der GD MOVE im Namen der europäischen Delegation ausgesprochen wurde, von den Mitgliedstaaten unterstützt wird und dass die GD MOVE eine solche Unterstützung aussprechen durfte? Hat die GD MOVE ihren Standpunkt vorher der GD EMPL dargelegt, und hat diese ihn unterstützt?

4. Kann die Kommission ihre Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung des Entstehens schädlicher Unternehmens- und Vertragspraktiken im Luftverkehrssektor, wie etwa die Scheinselbstständigkeit, die Scheinbeschäftigung von Begleitpersonal außerhalb Europas und die Wahl des günstigsten Gerichtsstands, ausführlich erläutern?

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

1. Auf der Sitzung des Gemeinsamen Ausschusses EU-USA im Januar 2014 hat die Kommission den US-amerikanischen Behörden auf ihren Wunsch hin alle sachdienlichen Angaben übermittelt, die von der NAI zur Erläuterung des Geschäftsmodells des Unternehmens vorgelegt wurden.

2. Der Kommission liegen keine Nachweise für eine solche Unternehmenspraxis vor. Im Falle eines Verstoßes gegen das EU-Recht wird die Kommission unverzüglich tätig werden.

3. Die Kommission unterstützte aktiv den Gemeinsamen Ausschuss EU-USA, indem sie alle sachdienlichen Angaben weiterleitete, die ihr von der NAI vorgelegt wurden und die zu dem Zeitpunkt noch nicht öffentlich verfügbar waren. Diese Angaben geben Aufschluss über das Grundprinzip der Unternehmenspraxis. Darüber hinaus hat die Kommission die Grundsätze des Abkommens zwischen der EU und den USA hervorgehoben, das den Wettbewerb auf dem Markt als allgemein vorteilhaft für die Branche und die Verbraucher anerkennt, und dabei gleichzeitig auf die Bedeutung der sozialen Dimension des Abkommens verwiesen.

4. Die Dienststellen der Kommission berichten regelmäßig über aktuelle Entwicklungen in dem Sektor, wie beispielsweise den Fitness Check für den Luftverkehrsbinnenmarkt (1) und die Studie über die Auswirkungen des Luftverkehrsbinnenmarktes auf die Beschäftigungs- und Arbeitsbedingungen im Luftverkehrssektor im Zeitraum 1997 bis 2010 (2).

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(1) Siehe auf der Website der GD MOVE:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/doc/fitness_check_internal_aviation_market_en_commission_staff_working_document.pdf

(2) Siehe auf der Website der GD MOVE:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/studies/doc/internal_market/employment_project_final_report_for_publication.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002583/14
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D), Knut Fleckenstein (S&D), Jörg Leichtfried (S&D) and Ole Christensen (S&D)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Social dumping: business model of Norwegian Air Shuttle (NAS)

The US Department of Transportation is currently examining the application by Norwegian Air International (NAI), a subsidiary of the company Norwegian Air Shuttle (NAS), to obtain a foreign air carrier permit under the EU-US Open Skies Agreement. At the January 2014 EU-US Joint Committee meeting, DG MOVE adopted a favourable position on this application and welcomed NAI's business model as being good for consumers, competition and companies.

1. Can the Commission explain its grounds for supporting a business model that builds on social dumping by moving NAI to Ireland, which will enable the company to bypass Norwegian social and labour legislation and costs by basing cabin crew and pilots in Asia, with temporary work contracts governed by Asian countries' law?

2. Can the Commission confirm that it considers it legitimate behaviour for NAI deliberately to set up a company structure that will force its pilots to be falsely based in Thailand, thereby allowing the airline to avoid paying tax and social security contributions in Europe, where the majority of the pilots actually live?

3. Can the Commission confirm that its support for NAI — as expressed by DG MOVE on behalf of the European delegation — is backed by Member States and that DG MOVE had a mandate to give such support? Did DG MOVE establish its position beforehand with DG EMPL, and did the latter support it?

4. Can the Commission detail the steps it is taking to counter the emergence of harmful business and contractual practices in the aviation sector, such as bogus self-employment, the bogus basing of crew outside Europe, and forum shopping?

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

1. At the January 2014 EU-US Joint Committee meeting, at the request of the US authorities, the Commission transmitted to the latter factual information given by NAI to explain the business model of the company.

2. The Commission has not received any evidence of any such practice. The Commission would not hesitate to intervene should any EU rule be infringed.

3. The Commission contributed to the EU-US joint committee by giving factual elements received from NAI which were not available in the public domain at the time. These elements set out the company's rationale for their operations. In addition the Commission stressed the principles of the EU-US Agreement, namely that competition on the market is in general good for the sector and the consumer, whilst acknowledging the importance of the social dimension of the Agreement.

4. The Commission's services regularly report on trends in the sector, such as the Fitness check on the aviation internal market ([1]) and 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 ([2]).

([1]) See on DG MOVE website;
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/internal_market/doc/fitness_check_internal_aviation_market_en_commission_staff_working_document.pdf

([2]) See on DG MOVE website; http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/studies/doc/internal_market/employment_project_final_report_for_publication.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002584/14
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Cyprus title deeds

As a condition of the bailout given to Cyprus by the Troika, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) setting out economic policy conditionality was drafted. Part of the MoU stipulated that the Cypriot authorities had to eliminate the title deed issuance backlog to less than 2 000 cases by the fourth quarter of 2014.

I understand from previous information given by the Commission in response to written questions that resolving the title deeds issue requires deep structural reforms in the housing market and the immovable property regulation. However, it has come to my attention that there has been a change in the agreement and that the MoU now requires only title deeds already lodged with the Land Registry to be completed.

Following up on previous questions on this issue, I would like an update on the current state of affairs.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether the MoU has been changed so that only title deeds already lodged with the Land Registry must be completed?

2. Does the Commission estimate that Cyprus will meet the deadline of the fourth quarter of 2014?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

While the memorandum of understanding (MoU) agreed between Cyprus and the ESM has introduced a clearer definition of title deed 'backlog', it did not change the overall objective. The MoU (paragraph 5.3) clearly states that the backlog is the sum of two items: (i) Title deed applications that have already been lodged with the Land Registry; and (2) Pending title deeds that are eligible for 'ex-officio issuance'; This means any title deeds that can be issued technically, even if no application has been lodged with the Land Registry yet. However, please note that this paragraph only refers to title deed issuance, which is mainly an administrative challenge. In contrast, the transfer of title deeds from developers to home owners is an integral part of paragraph 1.29 in the MoU ([1]).

Cyprus is making progress towards meeting the deadline of the fourth quarter of 2014 which is monitored closely and assessed during the regular programme implementation reviews.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-362_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002585/14
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(6 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Emergenza rifiuti nella Regione Calabria

Nella Regione Calabria è in atto una grave emergenza ambientale e sanitaria relativa al malfunzionamento del servizio di raccolta rifiuti.

La situazione, causata dai lavori nella discarica di Pianopoli, sta raggiungendo dimensioni allarmanti.

Da due settimane, i rifiuti non sono raccolti in numerose città e le stime parlano di decine di migliaia di tonnellate di rifiuti lasciati su strade, marciapiedi e nei pressi di strutture pubbliche, come scuole e ospedali.

I cumuli d'immondizia rendono difficile, se non impossibile, l'accesso degli studenti nelle scuole e le amministrazioni locali sono state costrette a vietare i mercati settimanali a causa delle condizioni igieniche precarie.

I sindaci restringono l'accesso alle discariche utilizzate dai loro piccoli comuni per evitare l'arrivo di camion carichi di rifiuti da altre zone.

La Calabria è l'unica regione dove i rifiuti da smaltire in discarica negli ultimi anni sono aumentati e ciò rappresenta un problema considerevole. In alcuni casi, chi gestisce le discariche è ostaggio della criminalità organizzata e delle attività affaristiche, favorite dalla mancanza di misure di sicurezza adeguate negli impianti.

In questo contesto, è assurdo che, con il blocco temporaneo della discarica di Pianopoli, gran parte della regione si trovi in una situazione di emergenza così grave.

È necessario che anche le altre istituzioni si attivino affinché l'emergenza non degeneri nei prossimi mesi.

1. È la Commissione a conoscenza della grave situazione di disagio sociale creata dall'emergenza rifiuti in Calabria?

2. Quali sono le iniziative che potrebbe intraprendere per fare luce sulla questione? Potrebbe essere utile avvalersi di una task-force che, attraverso indagini accurate, definisca la situazione delle discariche calabresi?

3. Quali altre iniziative potrebbe adottare la Commissione, di comune accordo con l'ente Regione, per evitare che la situazione di crisi si ripercuota sulla salute dei cittadini e sull'ambiente?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza del problema segnalato dagli onorevoli deputati.

La Commissione chiederà alle autorità italiane informazioni sulla gestione dei rifiuti in Calabria e valuterà in seguito la necessità di ulteriori interventi per garantire il rispetto della normativa dell'UE sui rifiuti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002585/14
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Waste emergency in the region of Calabria

A serious environmental and public health emergency exists in the region of Calabria because of the poor functioning of the waste collection service.

Works at the Pianopoli landfill site have caused this situation, which is reaching alarming proportions.

Rubbish has not been collected in many towns and cities for the past two weeks. Estimates refer to tens of thousands of tonnes of rubbish left in streets, on pavements and near public institutions such as schools and hospitals.

The piles of rubbish make it difficult, if not impossible, for students to get into schools. Local authorities have been forced to prohibit weekly markets, because of the uncertain conditions of hygiene.

Mayors are restricting access to the civic amenity sites used by their small municipalities, to prevent lorryloads of rubbish coming in from other areas.

Calabria is the only region where waste for landfill disposal has increased in recent years, and this poses a significant problem. In some cases, landfill operators are at the mercy of organised crime and opportunist businesses, encouraged by the lack of proper security measures at these amenities.

With this background it is absurd that a temporary stoppage at the Pianopoli dump has created such a serious emergency in much of the region.

Other institutions need to mobilise to stop the emergency escalating in the coming months.

1. Is the Commission aware of the serious social inconvenience caused by Calabria's rubbish emergency?

2. What initiatives might it take to cast light on this issue? Might it be worth deploying a task force to conduct careful investigations to find out how matters stand at the landfill sites of Calabria?

3. What other initiatives could the Commission adopt, by agreement with the regional authority, to prevent the crisis having an impact on public health and on the environment?

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

The Commission is not aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Members.

The Commission will request from Italian authorities information on waste management in Calabria and will subsequently assess whether further action to ensure compliance with EU waste law is needed.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002586/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(6 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Dissesto idrogeologico in Liguria e il cosiddetto «patto di stabilità»

Negli ultimi mesi in diverse aree dell'Unione si sono verificati eventi alluvionali di carattere eccezionale.

In particolare la Regione Liguria ha subito molti danni: sia il Levante del Genovesato (Tigullio, Valle Sturla e Val Fontanabuona), sia la Provincia della Spezia (attraverso riattivazioni e nuovi cedimenti nei comuni già colpiti dall'evento alluvionale del 2011), sia il Ponente Ligure con ingenti danni nelle province di Savona e Imperia. Discorso analogo si potrebbe fare per Veneto ed Emilia-Romagna.

Gli enti locali coinvolti si sono immediatamente mobilitati e il governo italiano ha riconosciuto alla Liguria lo stato di calamità, predisponendo una quota di aiuti pari a 13 milioni di euro. Tale importo, però, è erogato solo per le spese di prima emergenza, non risultando tuttavia assolutamente sufficiente alla predisposizione degli interventi necessari al ripristino delle condizioni di sicurezza. Sul territorio ligure, infatti, gravano ancora situazioni di grave dissesto, come in Località San Bernardo a Sestri Levante e nel territorio del Comune di Castiglione Chiavarese, ma non solo.

La cosa più inaccettabile è che talvolta gli enti locali coinvolti avrebbero il denaro per poter disporre interventi di messa in sicurezza e di prevenzione, ma la loro volontà si scontra con le regole imposte a livello nazionale in applicazione del cosiddetto «patto di stabilità», secondo il quale in Italia neppure le risorse per interventi contro il dissesto idrogeologico possono derogare alla rigida disciplina imposta da Bruxelles. Anzi, sono proprio i sindaci più lungimiranti a subire le conseguenze peggiori: il denaro da loro risparmiato non può essere utilizzato a causa di limitazioni alla spesa assurde e dannose.

Questi vincoli, infatti, causano conseguenze molto negative per la competitività delle aziende situate nei territori colpiti da eventi alluvionali, che devono investire somme enormi per riprendere la loro attività.

È consapevole la Commissione che le norme introdotte per disciplinare la spesa pubblica stanno creando sempre più spesso, in Italia, conseguenze negative che incidono, non solo sulla sicurezza dei cittadini, ma anche sulla competitività economica dei territori con conseguenze sociali e lavorative?

Non ritiene opportuno individuare, con il governo e le regioni italiane, una via d'uscita dalla condizione assurda descritta che è sicuramente una delle tante cause che penalizzano la crescita e lo sviluppo economico di uno Stato membro dall'equilibrio idrogeologico assai precario come l'Italia?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(26 maggio 2014)

La Commissione applica le norme vigenti nell'ambito del patto di stabilità e crescita, il quale prevede che, nella valutazione della posizione di bilancio sottostante dello Stato membro, siano prese in considerazione le misure una tantum o temporanee in materia di spesa dovute a eventi eccezionali che sfuggono al controllo del paese, come le catastrofi naturali ([1]).

La disposizione, che permette ai governi di affrontare le conseguenze immediate di eventi naturali imprevisti senza compromettere la posizione di bilancio in termini strutturali, è già stata utilizzata in seguito ai terremoti che hanno colpito l'Italia nel 2009 e nel 2012. Essa non introduce tuttavia una deroga generale alle norme del patto di stabilità e crescita valida per tutte le spese connesse alla prevenzione e riparazione dei danni provocati dalle calamità naturali.

Inoltre, circa il 45 % dei costi rimborsati dei disastri naturali che hanno colpito l'Italia tra il 2002 e ottobre 2013 è stato sostenuto del Fondo di solidarietà dell'Unione europea. Fino a ottobre 2013 sono stati approvati aiuti a favore dell'Italia per 1,2 miliardi di EUR, che rappresentano un terzo del totale di 3,5 miliardi di EUR di aiuti approvati ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/coc/code_of_conduct_en.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_it.cfm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002586/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Hydrogeological imbalance in Liguria and the 'stability pact'

Exceptional flooding has occurred in parts of the EU in recent months.

The region of Liguria, in particular, has suffered widespread damage: in the Eastern Genoese area (Tigullio, Valle Sturla and Val Fontanabuona), La Spezia Province (recurrent flooding and new landslips in districts already hit by the floods of 2011) and Western Liguria (massive damage in the provinces of Savona and Imperia). The same could be said of Veneto and Emilia-Romagna.

The local authorities concerned mobilised at once. The Italian Government proclaimed a state of emergency in Liguria and made available an aid package of EUR 13 million. However, that amount has only been granted for initial, emergency spending. It is not nearly enough to arrange the work necessary to restore safe conditions. Serious imbalances continue to affect Liguria, e.g. in the San Bernardo district of Sestri Levante and within the municipal boundaries of Castiglione Chiavarese, and elsewhere.

Least acceptable of all, some of the affected local authorities would have the money to arrange safety-related and preventive works, but their willingness is contrary to the national rules imposed under the 'stability pact'. This ensures that, in Italy, even action against hydrogeological imbalance cannot deviate from the rigid rules imposed by Brussels. Actually, the most prudent mayors suffer the worst consequences. The money they have saved cannot be spent, because of absurd and harmful spending limits.

In fact, in flood-affected areas, these restrictions have highly negative consequences on the competitiveness of companies, which are having to invest huge sums to reopen for business.

Is the Commission aware that the rules introduced to discipline public spending are having increasingly negative consequences in Italy? The impact is not only on public safety but on the economic competitiveness of the areas, which has social and employment repercussions.

Does it consider it worth cooperating with the Italian central government and regions to find a get-out from the absurd rule described, which is certainly one of the many restraints on growth and economic development in a Member State where the hydrogeological balance is quite fragile, such as Italy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The Commission applies the existing rules under the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), which foresees that in the assessment of the underlying budgetary position of the Member State, one-off or temporary expenditure measures due to exceptional events outside the control of the State, such as in the case of natural disasters, are taken into account ([1]).

This provision, which allows governments to face the immediate consequences of unforeseen natural events without affecting their budgetary position in structural terms, has already been used in the wake of the earthquakes that struck Italy in 2009 and 2012. It does not, however, introduce a general derogation from the rules of the SGP for all expenditure linked to the prevention or repair of the damages caused by natural disasters.

Moreover, about 45% of the reposted cost of natural disasters in Italy between 2002 and October 2013 has been borne by the EU Solidarity Fund. Until October 2013, EUR 1.2 billion of aid to Italy has been approved, which is one third out of the total of EUR 3.5 billion of approved aid ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economic_governance/sgp/pdf/coc/code_of_conduct_en.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_en.cfm#8

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-002587/14
a Bizottság számára
Bauer Edit (PPE), Mészáros Alajos (PPE), Sógor Csaba (PPE) és Winkler Gyula (PPE)
(2014. március 6.)

Tárgy: Támogatja-e az Európai Bizottság az Euronews magyar nyelvű adásának sugárzását Románia és Szlovákia területén?

Az Európai Bizottság Kommunikációs Főigazgatósága (DG COMM) pályázati úton támogatja az Euronews magyar nyelvű változatának működését. Üdvözöljük ezt a kezdeményezést.

Mivel az Euronews az egyedüli olyan magyar nyelvű TV csatorna, amely kiemelt figyelmet szentel az európai ügyeknek, fontosnak tartjuk, hogy adásai a Magyarországgal szomszédos országokban élő magyar ajkú polgárok által is foghatóak legyenek.

Romániában 1,3 millió magyar ajkú EU polgár él, amely hozzávetőleg megegyezik Észtország összlakosságával, illetve nagyobb, mint egyes tagállamok lakossága (Ciprus, Luxemburg és Málta). Szlovákiában ugyancsak mintegy 0,5 millió magyar él.

A Romániában és Szlovákiában élő nagy lélekszámú magyar ajkú közösséget megilleti a más európai uniós közösségekkel azonos szintű és minőségű tájékoztatás. Mivel az Euronews magyar nyelvű változata már létezik, adásainak sugárzása Románia és Szlovákia területére is olyan – lényegében már adott – lehetőség, amelyet indokolatlan lenne mellőzni.

A romániai és a szlovákiai magyar közösségek európai parlamenti képviselőiként kérdezzük az Európai Bizottságot szándékában áll-e vizsgálni az Euronews magyar nyelvű változatának sugárzását Romániában és Szlovákiában is?

Johannes Hahn válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. április 24.)

Az Euronews magyar nyelvű változatának működéséhez a Bizottság egy, a 2010 végén aláírt partnerségi megállapodás keretében nyújtott támogatáson keresztül járul hozzá.

A Bizottságnak azonban nem tartozik a hatáskörébe az elosztás, amely a televízióállomások és a hálózatüzemeltetők kétoldalú kereskedelmi megállapodásainak függvénye. A televízióállomások és a hálózatüzemeltetők nem kötelezhetők az Euronews EU-beli sugárzására. A Bizottság előírja azonban, hogy a technológia és a költségvetés szabta határokon belül a lehető legszélesebb körű műszaki elérhetőségre kell törekedni.

Az Euronews által szolgáltatott legfrissebb információk alapján a magyar szolgáltatás műszaki elérhetősége Romániában és Szlovákiában a következő:

— Romániában a szolgáltatás elindítása óta a magyar változat 415 000 háztartásban érhető el a HotBird 6 műholdról érkező, szabadon fogható adás formájában. A leggyakrabban használt vételi technológia ugyanakkor továbbra is az analóg kábeles vétel. Amíg a digitális átállás nem fejeződött be, a legtöbb üzemeltető csak egyetlen nyelvet tud felajánlani, és ez általában az angol. A legfontosabb üzemeltetőkkel folyamatban vannak olyan megbeszélések, amelyek a műszaki elérhetőség javítását célozzák, mihelyst a műszaki feltételek teljesülnek.

— A szlovákiai piacot a digitális műholdas technológiák uralják. Körülbelül 810 000 háztartás képes az Euronews adásait magyarul fogni, legtöbb esetben műholdvevő segítségével, 261 000 közülük a HotBird 6 műholdról érkező, szabadon fogható adás formájában.

Az Euronews magyar nyelvű adásai világszerte hozzáférhetők továbbá számítógépen, okostelefonon és táblagépen keresztül is.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002587/14
to the Commission
Edit Bauer (PPE), Alajos Mészáros (PPE), Csaba Sógor (PPE) and Iuliu Winkler (PPE)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Commission support for Hungarian-language broadcasting of the Euronews channel in the territory of Romania and Slovakia

The Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM) of the Commission supports the operation of the Hungarian version of the Euronews channel by means of tenders. This initiative is welcome.

As Euronews is the sole Hungarian-language television channel that focuses particularly on European matters, we feel it is important that this channel should also be available for the Hungarian-speaking citizens of Hungary's neighbouring countries.

1.3 million Hungarian-speaking EU citizens live in Romania — a population that is approximately equal to that of Estonia and greater than the population of certain Member States, such as Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta. About 0.5 million Hungarians live in Slovakia as well.

The large Hungarian-speaking communities of Romania and Slovakia are entitled to the same level and quality of information as other communities in Europe. As the Hungarian-language version of Euronews is already available, its broadcasting to the territory of Romania and Slovakia is a possibility that effectively already exists and which it would be unjustifiable to disregard.

As European Parliament representatives of the Hungarian communities of Romania and Slovakia, we hereby ask the Commission if it intends to examine the question of broadcasting the Hungarian-language version of Euronews in Romania and Slovakia.

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

The production of Euronews in Hungarian is funded by the Commission via an action grant in the framework of the partnership agreement signed at the end of 2010.

The Commission has no competence, though, as regards distribution, which depends on bilateral commercial agreements between TV stations and network operators. These have no obligation to carry Euronews in the EU. However, the Commission requests that maximum technical reach is aimed at within the limits of technology and budget.

Based on the latest information provided by Euronews, the state of technical reach of the Hungarian service in Romania and Slovakia is as follows:

— In Romania, the Hungarian version has been available to 415 000 households via free-to-air satellite on HotBird 6 since the launch of the service. However, analogue cable is still the most important platform for reception. As long as the transition to digital is not completed, most operators can only propose one language, English being the preferred one. Discussions are on-going with the main operators so that technical reach can be improved as soon as technical conditions are met.

— The Slovak market is dominated by digital satellite platforms. Around 810 000 households can receive Euronews in Hungarian, mostly via satellite, with 261 000 of them doing so as free-to-air from HotBird 6.

Euronews is also available worldwide in Hungarian via computer, smartphone and tablet.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002589/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Programa Estratégico «Parque de Ciência e Inovação II»

Em dezembro de 2009, a Comissão Diretiva do Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (PORCentro) aprovou o Programa Estratégico «Parque de Ciência e Inovação» (PCI), infraestrutura a construir nos concelhos de Aveiro e Ílhavo, com um investimento superior a 28 milhões de euros e uma comparticipação prevista do FEDER de 15 milhões de euros.

A sua localização é rejeitada pela população local que se organizou numa comissão (Cidihc). A polémica envolve igualmente uma associação ambientalista (Quercus) e as autoridades locais e regionais. A implantação implica a destruição de cerca de 35 hectares de terrenos agrícolas com elevada produtividade e atinge parte da Zona de Proteção Especial (ZPE) da Ria de Aveiro (Rede Natura 2000) e áreas situadas na Reserva Ecológica Nacional (REN) e na Reserva Agrícola Nacional (RAN). Foram apresentadas à Comissão Europeia várias queixas, designadamente da referida associação ambientalista.

A sociedade promotora, a PCI-SA, e as autoridades portuguesas argumentam que o PCI tem de se localizar obrigatoriamente junto à Universidade de Aveiro. Existem outros locais disponíveis, já infraestruturados, próximo da universidade, que não foram considerados.

Em 2013, uma providência cautelar aceite e julgada pelo Tribunal Administrativo e Fiscal de Aveiro determinou que alguns dos terrenos não poderiam ser ocupados na construção do PCI. Há outras ações a decorrer, nomeadamente uma que visa anular a Declaração de Utilidade Pública dos terrenos onde se implantará o PCI, e que aguardam decisão judicial.

Neste mesmo mês, os promotores do projeto assinaram com o PORCentro o contrato de financiamento. As obras estão anunciadas para breve.

1. Que estudos ou fundamentos apresentaram as autoridades portuguesas ou os promotores do projeto para justificar essa localização atípica (vasta zona de REN, RAN e ZPE) e, mais importante, onde está o estudo de localização alternativa?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002590/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Programa Estratégico «Parque de Ciência e Inovação III»

Em Dezembro de 2009, a Comissão Diretiva do Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (PORCentro) aprovou o Programa Estratégico «Parque de Ciência e Inovação» (PCI), infraestrutura a construir nos concelhos de Aveiro e Ílhavo, com um investimento superior a 28 milhões de euros e uma comparticipação prevista do FEDER de 15 milhões de euros.

A sua localização é rejeitada pela população local que se organizou numa comissão (Cidihc). A polémica envolve igualmente uma associação ambientalista (Quercus) e as autoridades locais e regionais. A implantação implica a destruição de cerca de 35 hectares de terrenos agrícolas com elevada produtividade, atinge parte da Zona de Proteção Especial (ZPE) da Ria de Aveiro (Rede Natura 2000), áreas situadas na Reserva Ecológica Nacional (REN) e Reserva Agrícola Nacional (RAN). Foram apresentadas à Comissão Europeia várias queixas, designadamente da referida associação ambientalista.

A sociedade promotora, a PCI-SA, e as autoridades portuguesas argumentam que o PCI tem de se localizar obrigatoriamente junto à Universidade de Aveiro. Existem outros locais disponíveis, já infraestruturados, próximo da universidade, que não foram considerados.

Em 2013, uma providência cautelar aceite e julgada pelo Tribunal Administrativo e Fiscal de Aveiro, determinou que alguns dos terrenos não poderiam ser ocupados na construção do PCI. Há outras ações a decorrer, nomeadamente uma que visa anular a Declaração de Utilidade Pública dos terrenos onde se implantará o PCI, e que aguardam decisão judicial.

Neste mesmo mês, os promotores do projeto assinaram com o PORCentro o contrato de financiamento. As obras estão anunciadas para breve.

1. Como encara a Comissão a intenção de se construir uma nova infraestrutura de raiz, numa zona verde, numa zona de classe A em termos de produção agrícola, tendo em conta a existência de áreas já infraestruturadas e com centenas de hectares disponíveis nas proximidades (a menos de 15 Km em autoestradas com excelentes acessos) do local de implantação pretendido?

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002591/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Programa Estratégico «Parque de Ciência e Inovação IV»

Em dezembro de 2009, a Comissão Diretiva do Programa Operacional Regional do Centro (PORCentro) aprovou o Programa Estratégico «Parque de Ciência e Inovação» (PCI), infraestrutura a construir nos concelhos de Aveiro e Ílhavo, com um investimento superior a 28 milhões de euros e uma comparticipação prevista do FEDER de 15 milhões de euros.

A sua localização é rejeitada pela população local que se organizou numa comissão (Cidihc). A polémica envolve igualmente uma associação ambientalista (Quercus) e as autoridades locais e regionais. A implantação implica a destruição de cerca de 35 hectares de terrenos agrícolas com elevada produtividade e atinge parte da Zona de Proteção Especial (ZPE) da Ria de Aveiro (Rede Natura 2000) e áreas situadas na Reserva Ecológica Nacional (REN) e na Reserva Agrícola Nacional (RAN). Foram apresentadas à Comissão Europeia várias queixas, designadamente da referida associação ambientalista.

1. Que apreciações faz relativamente às referidas queixas?

2. Que diligências fez ou vai fazer na sequência das mesmas?

Resposta conjunta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(10 de maio de 2014)

A Comissão analisou os factos denunciados pelos autores da queixa e a informação recebida das autoridades portuguesas. A informação recolhida até à data indica que o projeto «Parque da Ciência e Tecnologia», nos municípios de Ílhavo e Aveiro, foi objeto de um procedimento de avaliação de impacto ambiental. A avaliação não identificou quaisquer efeitos significativos prováveis no sítio Natura 2000 em causa. O projeto obteve pareceres favoráveis da Administração da Região Hidrográfica do Centro, da Direção Regional de Agricultura e Pescas da Região Centro e do Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas.

Uma vez analisadas as informações disponíveis, a Comissão não detetou, no caso em apreço, qualquer violação da legislação da UE em matéria de ambiente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002589/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Creative Science Park strategic programme II

In December 2009, the Management Committee of the Central Portugal Regional Operational Programme (PORCentro) approved the strategic programme for a Creative Science Park (Parque de Ciência e Inovação — PCI), an infrastructure which it proposes to build in the municipal districts of Aveiro and Ílhavo, with an investment of over EUR 28 million, out of which EUR 15 million is to be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The local population rejects the siting of the project and has formed a committee (CIDIHC) The polemic also involves an environmental association (Quercus) and the local and regional authorities. Construction of the project will destroy around 35 hectares of highly productive agricultural land and affect part of the Ria de Aveiro Special Protection Area (SPA), which forms part of the Natura 2000 network, as well as areas within the National Ecological Reserve (REN) and the National Agricultural Reserve (RAN). A number of complaints have been made to the Commission, particularly be the aforementioned environmental association.

The construction company, PCI-SA, and the Portuguese authorities argue that the project has to be located close to Aveiro University. Other sites, with existing infrastructure, are available in the vicinity of the university but were not considered.

In 2013, the Aveiro administrative and fiscal court agreed to impose an injunction preventing some of the land in question from being used for construction of the PCI. Other actions, in particular one seeking to revoke the declaration of public utility of the land where the project is to be built, are still awaiting a decision from the courts.

The project developers signed the funding contract with PORCentro this month and it has been announced that construction work will soon begin.

1. What studies or arguments have the Portuguese authorities or the project's developers put forward to justify its atypical location in an extensive REN, RAN and SPA designated area? More importantly, where is the alternative site study?

Question for written answer E-002590/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Creative Science Park strategic programme III

In December 2009, the Management Committee of the Central Portugal Regional Operational Programme (PORCentro) approved the strategic programme for a Creative Science Park (Parque de Ciência e Inovação — PCI), an infrastructure which it proposes to build in the municipal districts of Aveiro and Ílhavo, with an investment of over EUR 28 million, out of which EUR 15 million is to be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The local population rejects the siting of the project and has formed a committee (CIDIHC) The polemic also involves an environmental association (Quercus) and the local and regional authorities. Construction of the project will destroy around 35 hectares of highly productive agricultural land and affect part of the Ria de Aveiro Special Protection Area (SPA), which forms part of the Natura 2000 network, as well as areas within the National Ecological Reserve (REN) and the National Agricultural Reserve (RAN). A number of complaints have been made to the Commission, particularly be the aforementioned environmental association.

The construction company, PCI-SA, and the Portuguese authorities argue that the project has to be located close to Aveiro University. Other sites, with existing infrastructure, are available in the vicinity of the university but were not considered.

In 2013, the Aveiro administrative and fiscal court agreed to impose an injunction preventing some of the land in question from being used for construction of the PCI. Other actions, in particular one seeking to revoke the declaration of public utility of the land where the project is to be built, are still awaiting a decision from the courts.

The project developers signed the funding contract with PORCentro this month and it has been announced that construction work will soon begin.

How does the Commission view this proposal to build a brand new infrastructure in a green zone of prime agricultural farmland, when other sites with already existing infrastructure and hundreds of hectares of land are available at a distance of less than 15 km from the proposed location and perfectly accessible by motorway?

Question for written answer E-002591/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Creative Science Park strategic programme IV

In December 2009, the Management Committee of the Central Portugal Regional Operational Programme (PORCentro) approved the strategic programme for a Creative Science Park (Parque de Ciência e Inovação — PCI), an infrastructure which it proposes to build in the municipal districts of Aveiro and Ílhavo, with an investment of over EUR 28 million, out of which EUR 15 million is to be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The local population rejects the siting of the project and has formed a committee (CIDIHC) The polemic also involves an environmental association (Quercus) and the local and regional authorities. Construction of the project will destroy around 35 hectares of highly productive agricultural land and affect part of the Ria de Aveiro Special Protection Area (SPA), which forms part of the Natura 2000 network, as well as areas within the National Ecological Reserve (REN) and the National Agricultural Reserve (RAN). A number of complaints have been made to the Commission, particularly be the aforementioned environmental association.

1. How does the Commission view the abovementioned complaints?

2. What action has it taken or does it intend to take in response to them?

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

The Commission has assessed the facts raised by the complainants and the information received from the Portuguese authorities. The information gathered so far indicates that the project 'Science and Technology Park in the municipalities of Ílhavo and Aveiro' has been made subject to an environmental impact assessment procedure. This assessment has not identified any likely significant effect on the concerned Natura 2000 site. Favourable opinions have been issued by the Hydrographical Administration of the Centro Region, by the Regional Directorate for Agriculture and Fisheries of the Centro Region, as well as by the Institute of Conservation of Nature and Forests.

After assessment of the available information, the Commission is unable to identify a breach of EU environmental law in this case.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002592/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Problemas na OCM da pesca — inexistência de preços de retirada

Numa reunião recente com Organizações de Produtores do sector das pescas fui alertado para a inexistência, desde o final do ano de 2013, de qualquer medida referente ao preço mínimo/apoio à retirada de pescado.

De acordo com as Organizações de Produtores, este é um instrumento fundamental de intervenção no mercado e especialmente importante no caso da pesca do cerco, tipicamente caracterizada pela imprevisibilidade das capturas e pela volatilidade dos preços.

Neste momento, e desde o final do ano de 2013, não existe nenhum instrumento a este nível. O programa antigo cessou e não há ainda nada que o substitua — designadamente os chamados «preços de desencadeamento», previstos na nova OCM. As consequências deste facto são muito negativas para os produtores.

Em face do exposto, solicitamos à Comissão que informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Está a par desta situação e dos prejuízos que a mesma tem causado às Organizações de Produtores e à estabilidade do mercado? Que avaliação faz da mesma?

2. O que podem as Organizações de Produtores esperar relativamente ao futuro? Quando estará novamente disponível um instrumento como os preços de retirada ou similar?

Resposta dada pela Comissária Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(29 de abril de 2014)

O Regulamento (UE) n.° 1379/2013 ([1]), relativo à organização comum dos mercados (OCM), simplificou e racionalizou substancialmente os instrumentos de intervenção à disposição das organizações de produtores (OP) até ao final de 2013 no âmbito da anterior OCM, estabelecida pelo Regulamento (CE) n.° 104/2000 ([2]). A partir de 1 de janeiro de 2014, os seis mecanismos de intervenção no âmbito da anterior OCM foram substituídos por um único mecanismo de armazenagem. Neste contexto, as OP não poderão contar, no futuro, com qualquer apoio financeiro à retirada.

As OP podem receber apoio financeiro para a armazenagem dos produtos da pesca desde que respeitem o disposto no artigo 30.° do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1379/2013.

A armazenagem é despoletada por um sistema de preços determinados pelas autoridades dos Estados-Membros em consulta com as OP. Este mecanismo é adaptado às situações específicas dos mercados nacionais.

O Regulamento (UE) n.° 1379/2013 prevê um novo instrumento de mercado de caráter obrigatório. Os planos de produção e de comercialização conferem às OP poderes para adaptar melhor a oferta à procura, obtendo desse modo melhores preços para a sua produção.

O Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas será adotado nos próximos meses. O Fundo prevê apoios financeiros para a armazenagem e para os planos de produção e comercialização em conformidade com a OCM. As ajudas serão disponibilizadas a partir de 2014, na condição de que os Estados-Membros as incluam nos seus programas operacionais nacionais. Por conseguinte, não haverá interrupção do apoio financeiro à política de mercados, apesar da mudança de instrumentos.

([1]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1379/2013 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 11 de dezembro de 2013, que estabelece a organização comum dos mercados dos produtos da pesca e da aquicultura, altera os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 1184/2006 e (CE) n.° 1224/2009 do Conselho e revoga o Regulamento (CE) n.° 104/2000 do Conselho; JO L 354 de 28.12.2013.

([2]) Regulamento (CE) n.° 104/2000 do Conselho, de 17 de dezembro de 1999, que estabelece a organização comum de mercado no setor dos produtos da pesca e da aquicultura; JO L 17 de 21.1.2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002592/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Problems with the CMO for fisheries: lack of withdrawal prices

At a recent meeting with producers' organisations from the fisheries sector, I was informed that since the end of 2013 there has been no measure of any sort relating to minimum prices/support for fish withdrawal.

According to producers' organisations, this is a key market intervention tool of particular importance to seine fishing, which is typified by the unpredictability of catches and volatility of prices.

At present, there has been no instrument in this respect since the end of 2013. The previous programme came to an end and has not yet been replaced by the so-called 'trigger prices' provided for under the new CMO. The result is highly prejudicial to producers.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of this situation and its negative impact on producers' organisations and market stability? How does the Commission view the situation?

2. What should producers' organisations expect in the future? When will an instrument addressing withdrawal prices, or something similar, be available again?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2014)

Regulation 1379/2013 ([1]) on the common organisation of the markets (CMO) has substantially simplified and rationalised the intervention instruments available for producer organisations (POs) until the end of 2013 under the previous CMO laid down in Regulation 104/2000 ([2]). From 1 January 2014, the six intervention mechanisms under the previous CMO are replaced by one single storage mechanism. In this context, the POs cannot expect in the future any financial support for withdrawal.

POs may receive financial support for storage of fishery products provided that provisions of art. 30 of Regulation No1379/2013 are respected.

Storage is triggered by a system of prices determined by the Member State's authorities in consultation with POs. This mechanism is tailored to the specific situations of the national markets.

Regulation No 1379/2013 provides a new and compulsory market instrument. The production and marketing plans empower the POs to better match supply with demand and thus get better prices from their production.

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund will be adopted in the coming months. The Fund provides for financial support for storage and production and marketing plans in conformity with the CMO. The aids will be available from 2014 on condition that the Member States include them in their national operational programmes. Accordingly, there will be no interruption of the financial support for market policy despite the change of instruments.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1184/2006 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000; OJ L 354, 28.12.2013.

([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000 of 17 December 1999 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products; OJ L 17, 21.1.2000.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002593/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Ponto de situação do Programa «Polis Litoral Ria Formosa»

O Programa «Polis Litoral Ria Formosa», uma operação integrada de requalificação e valorização da orla costeira, previa um conjunto de estudos e de intervenções de âmbito diversificado nos cinco municípios da área geográfica da Ria Formosa. Temos, contudo, informação de que o nível de execução do Programa se encontra bastante abaixo do previsto.

Perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento de quais os montantes até à data executados e de que verbas do Programa estão neste momento por executar?

2. Até quando poderão ser gastas as verbas ainda não executadas, sob pena de se perderem?

3. De entre o conjunto de ações inicialmente previsto, tem conhecimento de quais foram e de quais não foram desenvolvidas?

4. Discutiu com o governo português alguma alteração aos fins e ações inerentes a este Programa?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(25 de abril de 2014)

O Programa Operacional Regional do Algarve 2007-2013 do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional (FEDER) apoia projetos individuais que são apresentados para financiamento. O programa enquanto tal não financia diretamente outros programas regionais nacionais como o «Polis Litoral Ria Formosa».

Por conseguinte, a Comissão não recebe informações pormenorizadas sobre a execução geral do «Polis Litoral Ria Formosa», embora alguns dos seus projetos individuais possam ser apresentados ao Programa Regional do Algarve e ser financiados pelo FEDER.

Devido ao princípio da gestão partilhada, a Comissão sugere que o Senhor Deputado contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão do programa para informações mais pormenorizadas sobre o programa «Polis Litoral Ria Formosa»:

CCDR-Algarve
Praça da Liberdade, 2
8100-164 FARO
Telefone: +351 289 895 200
Fax: +351.289.807.623
geral@ccdr-alg.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002593/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the 'Polis Litoral Ria Formosa' programme

The 'Polis Litoral Ria Formosa' programme is an integrated operation to rehabilitate and regenerate this coastal area, which provides for a range of studies and initiatives in various fields in the five municipalities making up the Ria Formosa geographical area. However, we have been informed that the level of implementation of the programme is significantly below expectations.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it know how much has been spent so far and which amounts budgeted for in the programme have yet to be disbursed?

2. What is the deadline for spending the amounts not yet disbursed, before they are lost?

3. Out of all the actions originally planned, does the Commission know which ones were developed and which were not?

4. Has it discussed with the Portuguese Government any changes to the programme's inherent aims and actions?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The 2007-2013 Algarve European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme provides support individual projects which are presented for financing to the programme. The programme as such does not provide direct support to other national regional programmes such as the 'Polis Litoral Ria Formosa' programme.

Therefore the Commission does not receive detailed information regarding the overall implementation of the 'Polis Litoral Ria Formosa' programme, although some of its individual projects might be submitted to the Algarve regional programme and be funded by the ERDF.

Due to the shared management principle, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the programme managing authority directly for detailed information on the 'Polis Litoral Ria Formosa' programme:

CCDR-Algarve
Praça da Liberdade 2
8100-164 FARO
phone: +351 289 895 200
fax: +351.289.807.623
geral@ccdr-alg.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002594/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Controlo sanitário de produtos importados destinados à aquacultura

Pode a Comissão informar sobre as medidas de controlo sanitário que estão a ser aplicadas relativamente aos produtos importados destinados à aquacultura, nomeadamente no que diz respeito aos juvenis?

Que avaliação faz do funcionamento do sistema de controlo?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(10 de abril de 2014)

Os requisitos de saúde animal em relação a animais de aquicultura a importar para a União a partir de países terceiros estão estabelecidos na Diretiva 2006/88/CE do Conselho ([1]). Esta legislação exige um processo rigoroso realizado pela Comissão para enumerar os países a partir dos quais são autorizadas importações para a União, bem como um certificado sanitário muito pormenorizado que acompanha todos os animais vivos de aquicultura na altura da importação. Estão disponíveis mais informações sobre os requisitos de saúde animal em relação a animais de aquicultura, de acordo com a Diretiva 2006/88/CE do Conselho, num documento de orientação em linha ([2]).

Todas as remessas de animais vivos provenientes de países terceiros devem, em conformidade com a Diretiva 91/496/CEE do Conselho, ser controladas aquando da entrada na União, incluindo um exame físico, um documento e um controlo de identidade. As remessas que não satisfaçam estes requisitos devem ser rejeitadas.

As inspeções e os controlo nas fronteiras de animais importados são da responsabilidade do Estado-Membro no ponto de entrada. As auditorias do Serviço Alimentar e Veterinário da Direção-Geral da Saúde e dos Consumidores servem para avaliar o bom funcionamento das unidades de controlo das fronteiras nos Estados-Membros. Além disso, a maior parte das remessas provenientes de países terceiros de animais aquáticos destinados à aquicultura consistem em ovos para incubação que, em geral, são produtos de baixo risco.

Com base no que precede, a Comissão está confiante que a legislação e o sistema de controlo vigentes fornecem as garantias necessárias para impedir que essas importações possam introduzir na União as doenças infeciosas conhecidas.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:328:0014:0056:pt:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/SANCO-4788rev3.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002594/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Health checks on imported products for use in aquaculture

Can the Commission provide information on the health checks carried out on imported products for use in aquaculture, particularly juvenile fish?

What is its assessment of the current inspection system?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2014)

Animal health requirements for aquaculture animals to be imported into the Union from third countries are laid down in Council Directive 2006/88/EC ([1]). This legislation requires both a strict process performed by the Commission for listing countries from which imports into the Union are permitted, and a very detailed health certificate following all live aquaculture animals when imported. Further details on health requirements for aquaculture animals according to Council Directive 2006/88/EC are available in a guidance document online ([2]).

All consignments of live animals from third countries shall in accordance with Council Directive 91/496/EEC be controlled when entering into the Union including physical examination, document and identity control. Consignments not fulfilling these requirements are to be rejected.

Border inspections and controls of imported animals are the responsibility of the Member State at the point of entry. Audits of the Food and Veterinary Office of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General show that the border control units in the Member States are well functioning bodies. In addition, most consignments from third countries of aquatic animals intended for aquaculture consist of hatching eggs which in general are products of low risk.

Based on this, the Commission is confident that the current legislation and inspection system provides the necessary assurance for not introducing listed infectious diseases in to the Union by such imports.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:328:0014:0056:en:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/SANCO-4788rev3.pdf

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002595/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Financiamento de redes de abastecimento e de saneamento em baixa e em alta

Pode a Comissão indicar que fundos, programas e medidas do novo quadro financeiro plurianual (2014-2020) poderão financiar investimentos em redes de abastecimento e de saneamento de água, quer em baixa quer em alta, e informar sobre as respetivas condições de financiamento?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(15 de maio de 2014)

As redes de abastecimento e de saneamento da água poderiam, em princípio, ser elegíveis no âmbito do Fundo Europeu de Desenvolvimento Regional e do Fundo de Coesão para o período de 2014-2020. No entanto, estes projetos devem também estar em conformidade com as regras nacionais de elegibilidade, satisfazer os critérios de seleção e contribuir para os objetivos dos programas operacionais em causa.

A Comissão está atualmente a negociar com os Estados-Membros a estratégia para os Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento europeus para o período 2014-2020. Por conseguinte, não é possível indicar, nesta fase, que programas e medidas poderão ser utilizados para financiar investimentos em redes de abastecimento e de saneamento da água.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002595/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Financing of upstream and downstream water supply and treatment networks

Can the Commission say what funds, programmes and measures under the new multiannual financial framework (2014-2020) could be used to fund investment in water supply and treatment networks, whether upstream or downstream, and provide information about their respective funding requirements?

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

Water supply and treatment networks could, in principle, be eligible under both the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund for the 2014-2020 period. However, such projects should also be in line with the national eligibility rules and fulfil the selection criteria and contribute to the objectives of the operational programmes concerned.

The Commission is currently negotiating with Member States the strategy for the European Structural and Investment Funds for the 2014-2020 period. At this stage it is therefore not possible to say what programmes and measures could be used to fund investment in water supply and treatment networks.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002596/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Novo FEAMP — Apoio às paragens biológicas

Relativamente ao novo Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas, solicito à Comissão que informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Qual o ponto da situação das negociações com os Estados-Membros, tendo em vista o estabelecimento da respetiva programação nacional? Existe algum calendário previsto?

2. Tendo em conta o resultado das negociações entre o Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho, está a Comissão em condições de confirmar em que moldes poderá ser mobilizado o apoio do FEAMP para a realização de períodos de defeso biológico?

Resposta dada pela Comissária Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(29 de abril de 2014)

Até à data, 12 Estados-Membros já apresentaram oficialmente os seus Acordos de Parceria, que definem o quadro de aplicação dos Fundos EEI em cada Estado-Membro, incluindo os respetivos Programas Operacionais. A Comissão está atualmente a avaliar esses Acordos de Parceria em conjunto com os Estados-Membros. Estão também em curso discussões informais com outros Estados-Membros. A Comissão assegurar-se-á de que, não obstante os atrasos na adoção do Fundo Europeu dos Assuntos Marítimos e das Pescas (FEAMP), as questões relacionadas com a pesca, a aquicultura e os setores marítimos sejam tidas em conta e incluídas nos AP.

Os Programas Operacionais ao abrigo do FEAMP só poderão ser formalmente apresentados após a entrada em vigor do Regulamento FEAMP. A Comissão forneceu aos Estados-Membros orientações e modelos de apresentação para todos os aspetos relacionados com o exercício de programação no quadro de reuniões do grupo de peritos que se ocupa dos atos delegados e atos de execução.

O FEAMP pode contribuir para o financiamento de medidas de ajuda à cessação temporária das atividades de pesca em caso de aplicação das medidas de conservação referidas no artigo 7.° do regulamento relativo à política comum das pescas ([1]), incluindo períodos de defeso biológico.

([1]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1380/2013 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 11 de dezembro de 2013, relativo à política comum das pescas, que altera os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 1954/2003 e (CE) n.° 1224/2009 do Conselho e revoga os Regulamentos (CE) n.° 2371/2002 e (CE) n.° 639/2004 do Conselho e a Decisão 2004/585/CE do Conselho.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002596/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: New EMFF — support for biological rest periods

Could the Commission provide the following information concerning the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF):

1. What stage has been reached in negotiations with the Member States on the establishment of country-specific programming? Has any timetable been drawn up?

2. Bearing in mind the outcome of the negotiations between the European Parliament and Council, is the Commission able to say what structures will be used to mobilise EMFF support for biological rest periods?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2014)

To date, 12 Member States have officially submitted their Partnership Agreements (PA), which provide the framework for implementation of the ESI Funds in each Member State, including the Operational Programmes. The Commission is currently assessing these Partnership Agreements with the Member States. Informal discussions are on-going with other Member States. The Commission will ensure that despite the delays in the adoption of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), issues related to the fisheries, aquaculture and maritime sectors are taken into consideration and included into the PAs.

Operational Programmes under the EMFF can formally be submitted only after the entry into force of the EMFF Regulation. The Commission has provided guidance and templates to Member States on all aspects of the programming exercise in the framework of the meetings of the expert group on delegated and implementing acts.

The EMFF may contribute to the financing of measures for the temporary cessation of fishing activities in case of conservation measures referred to in Article 7 of the common fisheries policy Regulation ([1]), including biological recovery periods.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common fisheries policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-002597/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Intervenções na Lagoa de Óbidos tendo em vista a sua conservação

A Lagoa de Óbidos é um sistema lagunar da maior importância em termos ambientais, sociais, económicos e culturais. Tendo em conta a sua dinâmica natural de progressão para o assoreamento, a manutenção deste sistema exige um conjunto de intervenções (nalguns casos, periódicas), que assegurem o seu bom estado de conservação. Numa reunião recente com autarcas e com organizações não governamentais com intervenção pública em defesa da Lagoa, foram-nos transmitidas preocupações relativamente à progressiva degradação do sistema lagunar, sem que avancem algumas das intervenções que permitiriam inverter esta situação. Entre outras, é referida a necessidade de dragagens no Braço da Barrosa e no Braço do Bom Sucesso, a par de algumas intervenções ligeiras ao nível da embocadura, para proteção de casas e infraestruturas.

Solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Que fundos, programas e medidas do novo quadro financeiro plurianual (2014-2020) poderão apoiar intervenções de conservação da Lagoa de Óbidos, como as supramencionadas? Quais as condições de financiamento?

2. Que fundos, programas e medidas do quadro financeiro plurianual cessante (2007-2013) podem ainda apoiar a realização de ações de conservação da Lagoa de Óbidos, como as supramencionadas? Quais as condições de financiamento?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(24 de abril de 2014)

1. A Comissão está atualmente a negociar com Portugal a estratégia para o Fundo Estrutural e de Investimento Europeu no período de 2014-2020. Por conseguinte, não é possível dizer, nesta fase, que programas e medidas poderão ser usados para financiar investimentos em redes de abastecimento e de saneamento da água.

2. Para os programas de 2007-2013, a gestão de programas é descentralizada nas autoridades nacionais e regionais nos Estados-Membros, no âmbito da gestão partilhada. Para informações pormenorizadas sobre critérios de seleção e sobre a apresentação de projetos, a Comissão sugere ao Senhor Deputado que contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão.

Mais Centro — Programa Operacional Regional do Centro
Rua Bernardim Ribeiro, 80
3000-069 Coimbra
Tel: +351 239 863 505
Fax: +351 239 863 510
maiscentro@ccdrc.pt
http://www.maiscentro.qren.pt/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002597/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Action to preserve the Lagoa de Óbidos

The Lagoa de Óbidos is a lagoon system of major environmental, social, economic and cultural importance. As it has a natural tendency to silt up, maintenance of the lagoon calls for a range of actions, some of them periodic, for it to be kept in a good state of conservation. At a recent meeting with local people and nongovernmental organisations working on public initiatives to protect the lake, we heard their concerns about the gradual degradation of the lagoon system and the lack of progress on action which could remedy the situation. One such action is the need for dredging in the Barrosa and Bom Sucesso branches of the lagoon, as well as some small-scale intervention at the lagoon mouth to protect houses and infrastructure.

Could the Commission provide the following information:

1. What funds, programmes and measures within the new multiannual financial framework (2014-2020) could be used to support the abovementioned conservation work in the Lagoa de Óbidos? What are the funding requirements?

2. What funds, programmes and measures under the last multiannual financial framework (2007-2013) could still be used to support the abovementioned conservation work in the Lagoa de Óbidos? What are the funding requirements?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

1. The Commission is currently negotiating with Portugal the strategy for the European Structural and Investment Fund for 2014-2020. At this stage, it is therefore not possible to say what programmes and measures could be used to fund investment in water supply and treatment networks.

2. For the 2007-2013 programmes, the management of programmes is decentralised to national and regional authorities in the Member States, in the framework of the shared management. For detailed information on selection criteria and project submission, the Commission suggests the Honourable Member to contact directly the managing authority.

MAIS CENTRO — Programa Operacional Regional do Centro
Rua Bernardim Ribeiro, 80
3000-069 Coimbra
Tel: +351 239 863 505
Fax: +351 239 863 510
maiscentro@ccdrc.pt
http://www.maiscentro.qren.pt/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002598/14
an die Kommission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE) und Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(6. März 2014)

Betrifft: EU-Förderung und Erhalt von Schulen im ländlichen Raum

Die Europäische Union hat mit dem Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) und dem Europäischen Landwirtschaftsfonds für regionale Entwicklung (ELER) hat Programme entwickelt, die der Förderung des ländlichen Raumes und damit der Zukunft dieser Regionen dienen sollen. In der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (im Land Sachsen-Anhalt) wird das Programm Stark III zu großen Teilen aus diesen Töpfen gefördert.

Welchen Rahmenvorgaben für das Stark III-Programm hat die EU, welche hat das Land Sachsen-Anhalt gesetzt?

Welcher Finanzrahmen steht für das Stark III-Programm in Sachsen-Anhalt zur Verfügung; wie ist die anteilige Finanzierung?

Welche Ziele verbindet die EU mit der Stark III-Förderung? Wie wird die Zielverwirklichung überprüft?

Der Demographiecheck ist eine Bedingung des Stark III-Programms. Inwiefern war die Kommission an der Festlegung einer Mindestschülerzahl von 100 Schülerinnen und Schüler als Untergrenze für bestandsfähige Schulen beteiligt?

Inwiefern dienen europäische Förderprogramme dem Erhalt von Schulen im ländlichen Raum? Kann sie eine tabellarische Aufstellung nach EU-Staaten vorlegen.

Warum legen die GD AGRI und die GD REGIO der Kommission fest, dass Kindertagesstätten und Schulen in freier Trägerschaft von der Förderung durch das Programm ausgeschlossen werden, obwohl das Land Sachsen-Anhalt das Programm nicht nur fortsetzen, sondern erheblich ausbauen wird und in den operationellen Programmen des Landes für den EFRE im Bereich energetische Sanierung auch kirchliche und sonstige freie Träger von Schulen und Kindertagesstätten als Zuwendungsempfänger in Betracht kommen?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(12. Mai 2014)

1. Stark III ist ein regionales Investitionsprogramm für die Sanierung und Modernisierung von Schulen und Kindertagesstätten. ([1]) Die EU war an der Konzeption des Programms nicht beteiligt.

2. Ein Teil von Stark III wurde aus dem EFRE ([2]) kofinanziert: Pilotprojekte (9 Mio. EUR) und Investitionen in die Energieeffizienz von Schulen und Kindertagesstätten (30 Mio. EUR).

3./4. Die Ziele umfassen innovative Beispiele für bewährte Verfahren und die Verringerung des Energieverbrauchs in öffentlichen Gebäuden. Eine allgemeine Gebäudesanierung ist mit der EFRE-Unterstützung nicht möglich. Im Rahmen des Programms werden Kontrollindikatoren festgelegt, mit denen die Ergebnisse in den Jahres- und Abschlussberichten überwacht werden.

5. Die Kommission war nicht an der Festlegung der Untergrenze für förderfähige Schulen beteiligt.

6./7. Es gibt keine speziellen EU-Förderprogramme für den Erhalt von Schulen im ländlichen Raum.

8. Im Programmplanungszeitraum 2007-2013 werden aus dem ELER ([3]) Investitionen in die Bildungsinfrastruktur in ländlichen Gebieten mit weniger als 10 000 Einwohnern und in Primarschulen mit weniger als 350 Schülern unterstützt. Hierfür wird die Maßnahme „Dienstleistungseinrichtungen zur Grundversorgung für die ländliche Wirtschaft und Bevölkerung" des Programms 2007-2013 für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums herangezogen.

Sachsen-Anhalt hat noch keine Programme für den Zeitraum 2014-2020 eingereicht. Allem Anschein nach beabsichtigen die Behörden jedoch, eine ähnliche ELER-Maßnahme wie die vorstehend genannte zu nutzen: „Basisdienstleistungen und Dorferneuerung in ländlichen Gebieten", unter die auch Investitionen in erneuerbare Energie und Energieeinsparungen fallen können.

Aus dem EFRE ([4]) kann die Energieeffizienz in der öffentlichen Infrastruktur, einschließlich öffentlichen Gebäuden, und im Wohnungsbau gefördert werden. „Öffentliche Gebäude" in diesem Sinne sind nicht für Wohnzwecke bestimmte Gebäude, die entweder öffentlichen Behörden oder nicht auf Gewinn ausgerichteten Organisationen gehören, sofern diese dem Gemeinwohl dienende Ziele verfolgen.

([1]) www.starkiii.de
([2]) Europäischer Fonds für regionale Entwicklung.
([3]) Europäischer Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums.
([4]) Artikel 5 Absatz 4 Buchstabe c der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1301/2013 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Dezember 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002598/14
to the Commission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE) and Horst Schnellhardt (PPE)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: EU funding and maintenance of schools in rural areas

By means of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the European Union has developed programmes that should serve to fund rural areas and thus serve the future of these regions. In the Federal Republic of Germany (in the Federal Land of Saxony-Anhalt), the Stark III Programme is largely funded by these sources.

What framework has been set out for the Stark III Programme by the EU on the one hand, and the Federal Land of Saxony-Anhalt on the other?

What financial framework is available for the Stark III Programme in Saxony-Anhalt, and how is the financing being apportioned?

What aims does the EU associate with the Stark III funding? How is the realisation of the aims being monitored?

Demographical assessment is one of the conditions for the Stark III Programme. To what extent was the Commission involved in determining that a minimum number of 100 pupils was to be the lower limit for eligible schools?

To what extent do European funding programmes serve to maintain schools in rural areas? Can it provide a table listing this information for each of the EU States?

Why have the DG AGRI and the DG REGIO stipulated to the Commission that independent nurseries and schools are excluded from the funding provided by the programme, even though the Federal Land of Saxony-Anhalt will not only continue with the programme but will expand it considerably, and, as beneficiaries, church-run organisations and other independent organisations that support schools and nurseries are also involved in the Federal Land's operational programmes for the ERDF in the area of improving energy efficiency in buildings?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

1. Stark III is a regional investment programme for renovating and modernising schools and nurseries ([1]). The EU was not involved in its set up.

2. Part of Stark III has been co-financed by the ERDF ([2]), ie pilot projects (EUR 9 million) and investment in energy efficiency of schools and nurseries (EUR 30 million).

3-4. The aims are to set innovative best practice examples and to reduce the energy consumption of public buildings. General renovation of buildings with support from the ERDF is excluded. Monitoring indicators are set in the programme, which monitors results via its annual and final reports.

5. The Commission was not involved in determining the lower limit for eligible schools.

6-7. There are no European funding programmes designed specifically to support schools in rural areas.

8. For 2007-13, the EAFRD ([3]) supports investment in education infrastructure in rural areas with less than 10 000 inhabitants and for primary schools with less than 350 pupils. The measure 'service facilities for basic services for the rural economy and population' is used to that effect in the 2007-13 rural development programme.

Saxony-Anhalt has not yet submitted any programmes for 2014-20. However, it seems that the authorities intend to use an EAFRD measure similar to the one mentioned above: 'Basic services and village renewal in rural areas', which may include investment in renewable energy and energy saving.

The ERDF ([4]) can support energy efficiency in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector. In this context, 'public buildings' means non-residential buildings owned by either public authorities or by non-profit organisations, provided that such bodies pursue objectives of general public interest.

([1]) www.starkiii.de
([2]) European Regional Development Fund.
([3]) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.
([4]) Article 5(4)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002599/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Πρόταση του ΟΟΣΑ για τα φαρμακεία και τα μη συνταγογραφούμενα φάρμακα στην Ελλάδα

Ακολουθώντας τις συστάσεις του ΟΟΣΑ (OECD Competition Assessment Reviews: Greece, 2013), η τρόικα — μέλος της οποίας είναι η Επιτροπή — ζητά από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, μεταξύ άλλων, να υιοθετήσει μέτρο, με το οποίο θα επιτρέπεται η ίδρυση φαρμακείων από μη πτυχιούχους φαρμακοποιούς. Επιπλέον, ζητά την πλήρη απελευθέρωση των τιμών των μη συνταγογραφούμενων φαρμάκων, με παράλληλη δυνατότητα πώλησής τους και από καταστήματα εκτός των φαρμακείων (π.χ. σούπερ μάρκετ).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Υπάρχουν χώρες της Ένωσης, εκτός από την Ελλάδα, στις οποίες η ίδρυση φαρμακείων μπορεί να γίνεται μόνο από φαρμακοποιούς; Ποιες είναι αυτές;

Υπάρχουν κράτη μέλη στα οποία δεν έχουν απελευθερωθεί πλήρως οι τιμές των μη συνταγογραφούμενων φαρμάκων και στις οποίες δεν επιτρέπεται η πώλησή τους εκτός φαρμακείων; Ποιες είναι αυτές;

Έχει ζητήσει, ή προτίθεται να ζητήσει, η Επιτροπή από τις κυβερνήσεις των χωρών αυτών την άρση των ρυθμίσεων αυτών; Εάν ναι, βάσει ποιας νομοθεσίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση έχει αρχίσει να εφαρμόζει από τον Απρίλιο του 2014 τις συστάσεις της μελέτης του Οργανισμού Οικονομικής Συνεργασίας και Ανάπτυξης (ΟΟΣΑ) στον τομέα του ανταγωνισμού, που εκπονήθηκε σε στενή συνεργασία μεταξύ του ΟΟΣΑ, της ελληνικής Επιτροπής Ανταγωνισμού, και της δημόσιας διοίκησης. Αντικείμενο της μελέτης ήταν η νομοθεσία και οι πρακτικές στους βασικούς τομείς του τουρισμού, του λιανικού εμπορίου, της επεξεργασίας τροφίμων και των υλικών κατασκευής, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της σύστασης που αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής. Όσον αφορά τη διεθνή εμπειρία στον τομέα αυτό, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στη σχετική ενότητα της έκθεσης του ΟΟΣΑ (Κεφάλαιο 2, Τμήματα 4 και 5) ([1]).

Όσον αφορά τις ρυθμίσεις σχετικά με το ιδιοκτησιακό καθεστώς των φαρμακείων, υφίστανται διαφορετικά κανονιστικά πρότυπα στα κράτη μέλη. Ωστόσο, η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει επικαιροποιημένες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη ρυθμιστική προσέγγιση που έχει υιοθετήσει κάθε κράτος μέλος. Μια γενική μελέτη εκπονήθηκε το 2007, καλύπτει όμως μόνο 25 κράτη μέλη. Ο κ. βουλευτής μπορεί να συμβουλευτεί τη μελέτη στο δικτυακό τόπο της Επιτροπής ([2]).

Επί του παρόντος, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει δρομολογήσει κάποιο οριζόντιο έργο που να αποσκοπεί στην εξάλειψη των εμποδίων στην ελευθερία εγκατάστασης και στην ελεύθερη παροχή υπηρεσιών από τα φαρμακεία σε όλα τα κράτη μέλη.

([1]) OECD Competition Assessment Reviews, σ. 112-113
http://www.oecd.org/daf/competition/Greece-Competition-Assessment-2013.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/docs/pharmacy/report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002599/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: OECD proposal on pharmacies and non-prescription drugs in Greece

At the proposal of the OECD (OECD Competition Assessment Reviews: Greece, 2013), the Troika (of which the Commission is a member) has requested, *inter alia*, that the Greek Government adopt a measure allowing pharmacies to be established by persons other than qualified pharmacists. Furthermore, it has requested full liberalisation of pricing on non-prescription drugs, with an option to sell them in shops other than pharmacies (supermarkets etc.).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Are there countries within the Union, other than Greece, in which pharmacies can only be established by pharmacists? If so, which countries are they?

Are there Member States in which prices of non-prescription drugs have not been fully liberalised and in which non-prescription drugs are sold in shops other than pharmacies? If so, which countries are they?

Has the Commission asked or does it intend to ask these States to abolish these regulations? If so, pursuant to what legislation?

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

The Greek Government has begun to implement since April 2014 the recommendations of the OECD competition study, developed in close partnership between the OECD, the Hellenic Competition Commission, and the public administration. They concern legislation and practices in the key sectors of tourism, retail trade, food processing and construction materials, including the recommendation mentioned by the Honourable Member. As far as the international experience in this field, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the relevant section of the OECD report (Chapter 2, Sections 4 and 5) ([1]).

As regards rules on pharmacy ownership, there are different regulatory models in the Member States. However, the Commission does not have updated information about the regulatory approach taken by each Member State. A general study was prepared in 2007, but it only covered 25 Member States. The Honourable Member can consult that study on the Commission's website ([2]).

At present, the Commission does not have any on-going horizontal project aimed at tackling barriers to freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services by pharmacies in all Member States.

([1]) OECD Competition Assessment Reviews, pp. 112-113 http://www.oecd.org/daf/competition/Greece-Competition-Assessment-2013.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/services/docs/pharmacy/report_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-002600/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Διαιτητική απόφαση περί ΦΠΑ αερολιμένα Ελ. Βενιζέλος

Στην ερώτησή μου E-013579/2013, που αφορά στην Απόφαση του London Court of International Arbitration για τον ΦΠΑ του αεροδρομίου Ελ. Βενιζέλος, η Επιτροπή μού απάντησε μεταξύ άλλων ότι «Όσον αφορά το κατά πόσον η ανωτέρω απόφαση διαιτησίας είναι συμβατή με την οδηγία ΦΠΑ, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί προφανώς να λάβει θέση χωρίς να έχει εξετάσει την απόφαση» αλλά και ότι «ένα κράτος μέλος δεν μπορεί να απαλλαγεί μέσω συμφωνίας ή διαιτησίας από την υποχρέωση τήρησης των εφαρμοστέων ενωσιακών κανόνων».

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, και τα επίμονα δημοσιεύματα ότι η απόφαση του ανωτέρω διαιτητικού δικαστηρίου παραβιάζει το κοινοτικό δίκαιο περί ΦΠΑ, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Ποια είναι η απόφαση στην οποία κατέληξε το ανωτέρω διαιτητικό δικαστήριο;

2. Προτίθεται να εξετάσει αν είναι σύμφωνη με την κοινοτική νομοθεσία περί ΦΠΑ;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(6 Μαΐου 2014)

Όπως αναφέρθηκε στην προηγούμενη απάντηση της Επιτροπής, τα κράτη μέλη είναι ελεύθερα να προσφεύγουν σε διαδικασίες διαιτησίας ή στο εθνικό δίκαιο. Η Επιτροπή δεν έχει επί του παρόντος αντίγραφο της διαιτητικής απόφασης και συνεπώς δεν μπορεί να περιγράψει τα βασικά σημεία της.

Ως εκ τούτου, στο παρόν στάδιο, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να καταλήξει σε συμπέρασμα σχετικά με τη συμβατότητα της εν προκειμένω διαιτητικής απόφασης με την ευρωπαϊκή νομοθεσία και ειδικότερα με τους κανόνες ΦΠΑ και τους κανόνες περί κρατικών ενισχύσεων.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002600/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(6 March 2014)

Subject: Arbitration award on VAT payable by Eleftherios Venizelos airport

In response to my Question E-013579/2013 on the award by the London Court of International Arbitration on VAT payable by Eleftherios Venizelos airport, the Commission replied, *inter alia*, that 'With respect to the question whether the above arbitration award is compatible with the VAT Directive, the Commission can obviously not take a position without having examined the ruling' and that 'a Member State cannot free itself by an agreement or by arbitration from the respect of the applicable EU rules'

In view of the above and of current reports that the award by the aforementioned arbitration court is in breach of Community VAT legislation, will the Commission say:

1. What was the final ruling handed down by the above arbitration court?

2. Does it intend to investigate whether it is in line with Community VAT legislation?

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

As mentioned in the Commission's previous reply, Member States are free to resort to arbitration procedures or to national law. The Commission has for the moment no copy of the arbitration award and therefore cannot describe the basic points thereof.

Therefore, at this stage, the Commission cannot reach a conclusion concerning the compatibility of the arbitration award at stake with European law and in particular with the VAT rules and state aid rules.