Joint answer
to Written Questions E-1530/00, E-1531/00, E-1532/00, E-1533/00, E-1534/00, E-1535/00, E-1536/00 and E-1537/00
given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2000)

The Commission is collecting the information it needs to answer the question. It will communicate its findings as soon as possible.

(2001/C 26 E/214)
WRITTEN QUESTION P-1581/00
by Glenys Kinnock (PSE) to the Commission
(12 May 2000)
Subject: European City of Culture

How would the Commission respond to a request from up to three towns wishing to be European City of Culture?

Would it be permissible under the current criteria, and would such regional applications be considered?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2000)

All decisions concerning the designation of the European capital of culture until 2004 have already been taken on an intergovernmental basis by the ministers for culture meeting within the Council. The procedure governing the designation of such cities from 2005 until 2019 is laid down by Decision 1419/1999/EC of the Parliament and the Council of 25 May 1999 establishing a Community action for the European capital of culture event for the years 2005 to 2019 (1).

Article 2.1 of this Decision states that ‘…. The nomination or nominations shall be notified to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions by the Member State concerned ….’ As there is no restriction on the number of cities to be proposed by each Member State it would be possible for any number of nominations to be notified. Article 2.2 of the same Decision sets out the procedures that will be used to assess the nominations and Annex II of the Decision sets out the criteria that could be used to this end.

Given that Article 2.1 states that ‘one city shall be designated as European Capital of Culture in turn ....’ there would not appear to be any scope for a regional application.

(1) OJ L 166, 1.7.1999.

(2001/C 26 E/215)
WRITTEN QUESTION E-1636/00
by Pedro Marset Campos (GUE/NGL) to the Commission
(29 May 2000)
Subject: Lack of job security and industrial accidents in Spain and in the region of Murcia

At the Lisbon Summit a commitment was made to pursue full and high quality employment within the EU. While the French Government pointed to the experience of the reduction of working hours as a means of creating stable high quality jobs, it is the formula pursued by the Spanish and British Governments of
further deregulating employment conditions in order to increase employment which has gained acceptance. The Spanish experience over the last four years has shown that jobs are indeed created this way but that job insecurity is high and casual employment frequent, with a high incidence of industrial accidents, Murcia being the region with the highest industrial accident rate in Spain.

In 1999, there were a total of 1,671,000 industrial accidents in Spain (12.44% more than in the previous year), resulting in 930,151 workers having to take sick leave and in 1,572 fatalities, most of them at the workplace. In the Region of Murcia, there were 68,587 industrial accidents last year, resulting in 29 deaths at the workplace. The region has seen the death of 17 workers at the workplace in the first quarter of the year 2000 alone.

This is the result of the working conditions which prevail, and in particular of the extreme lack of job security and the high incidence of casual employment. In Spain, 92% of employment contracts signed each day are of a temporary nature and over 32% of workers have no fixed contract. As yet, the Region of Murcia does not have a significantly higher level of temporary employment and lower job security than average.

Does the Commission not consider that the conditions under which jobs are being created in the various countries and regions in the EU need to be monitored in order to ensure that such job creation is not at the cost of the stability and dignity of workers, and notably of young people entering the labour market for the first time?

Does the Commission consider that it would be appropriate to analyse the conditions and consequences of job creation in the Murcia region where it leads to a greater lack of job security and a higher incidence of industrial accidents?

Answer given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission

(20 June 2000)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the reply it gave to his oral question H-0419/00 during question time at Parliament's May II 2000 part-session (1).

(1) Debates of the Parliament (May II 2000).

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1668/00
by Christoph Konrad (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(29 May 2000)

Subject: Discriminatory ‘entry tax’ in Greek waters

1. Is the Commission aware that the Greek Government has decided as from January 2000 to charge an ‘entry tax’ on leisure boats over seven metres long which are not permanently anchored in Greek waters?

2. What is the Commission's view of the fact that this entry tax (GRD 15,000) is more than seven times the normal entry price for tourist boats (GRD 2000)?

3. What does the Commission intend to do to counter discrimination against non-Greek shipowners, who are the main victims of this decision?

Answer given by Mr Bolkestein on behalf of the Commission

(16 June 2000)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written E-1062/00 by Mr von Wogau (1).

(1) See page 150.