(2002/C 147 E/002) WRITTEN QUESTION E-1026/01
by Professor Sir Neil MacCormick (Verts/ALE) to the Commission
(30 March 2001)

Subject: Off-piste skiing

In view of the frequency of accidents occurring to off-piste skiers, even those accompanied by tour guides, will the Commission consider the possibility of reviewing safety conditions at ski resorts and the potential desirability of a directive laying down framework safety standards in all the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Byrne on behalf of the Commission
(21 June 2001)

There is no Community legislation applicable to the safety of off-piste skiing.

The Commission does not plan to prepare a specific proposal for a directive laying down safety standards for off-piste skiing. Off-piste skiing is just one of the many sport and recreational activities involving potential risks. A proliferation of sectoral Community directives to deal with such risks would not represent a viable approach.

However, the Commission intends to present to the Parliament and the Council, by the end of 2001, a communication on the safety of services. This will assess the need for Community measures and propose a suitable approach for Community action. Tourist activities will be considered in this communication alongside other services. But the idea behind possible future Community initiatives on the safety of services is to set a framework piece of legislation, similar in its spirit to the Directive on General Product Safety, not to go into the specifics of particular activities. Moreover, subsidiarity considerations would probably preclude measures such as restricting or submitting to conditions the access to off-piste skiing activities.

(2002/C 147 E/003) WRITTEN QUESTION E-1330/01
by Chris Davies (ELDR) to the Commission
(3 May 2001)

Subject: Aircraft passengers and deep vein thrombosis

Further to the reply to my parliamentary question E-0191/01 (1) given by Commissioner Mrs de Palacio on 15 March 2001, which stated that the Commission had written to various bodies urging airlines to take various actions, including advising passengers once on board aircraft on what to do to lessen the chance of thrombosis, what response has the Commission received?

Has it evidence that airlines are now taking such action and, in particular, including such advice in pre-take-off information briefings?

Is it satisfied with the response to date?

The Commission refers to the reply it has given to Written Question E-1189/01 of Mr Juan Naranjo Escobar, setting out developments regarding the Commission’s involvement on this subject.

On the matter of action taken by the airlines, the Commission has since received replies from the Associations it had contacted and from a number of airlines regarding the specific actions they have taken. Such actions have included leaflets distributed to individual passengers, inserts in inflight magazines, inflight videos showing exercises passengers can do, etc. All will contribute to raise the level of information and awareness of passengers, and ultimately, to protect them.

In view of the relatively short timespan since the initiative was launched and of developments at international level, the Commission is at present quite satisfied with the serious approach to the problem, but will continue to monitor all initiatives.

Answer given by Mr Prodi on behalf of the Commission

(29 January 2002)

The Commission reaffirms its commitment to maintaining linguistic diversity in the Community as exemplified by the projects undertaken during the European Year of Languages in 2001.

Decisions and official documents relating to external aid, including the Manual of Instructions adopted by the Commission on 10 November 1999, are available in the eleven Community languages. Likewise, where at all possible, official documents relating to financing projects presented to the management committees, as is the case under the TACIS programme referred to by the Honourable Member.