Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission

(15 April 2002)

Greece has a large number of works to collect run-off water, some of which were part-financed by the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund over the first ten years in order to meet the needs of agriculture and cope with the lack of drinking water. Projects assisted by the Community include the large dam on the Evinos to supply water to Athens, the Votion dam at Kozani, and those at Lefkoia and Kirgia in the Prefecture of Drama, at Agia Paraskevi in Kalabaka, the Goumenissa reservoir at Kilkis and a whole series of artificial lakes and water catchment schemes, particularly on the islands.

According to information from the Greek authorities, the following major projects have begun or are at an advanced stage of planning: the Piros and Parapiros dams for Patras, the Aposselemis and Potamon dams in Crete, the Gadouras dam on Rhodes, the Agioneri and Panagiotiko dams in Thessaly, the Vrachos dam in Kastoria, the Grevena dam and the Achiron dam in Etoloakarnania, the Seta-Manikia dam in Sterea Ellada, water supply on Corfu, the Arzan-Amatovo dam at Kilkis and restoration of part of the former lake of Karla in Thessaly.

The Commission would remind the Honourable Member that neither water collection nor estimates of a possible water shortage are matters for which it is responsible. However it should be noted that, under Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (1), the Member States are required to provide data on water management. This Directive must be transposed into national law no later than 22 December 2003.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-0373/02
by Armando Cossutta (GUE/NGL) to the Commission

(14 February 2002)

Subject: Public contracts, the Mafia and the Commission

It is worrying that the Commission evades the issue in its answers to previous written questions E-2663/01 (1) and E-3366/01 (2) on the infringement of Community law in the sphere of public contracts in Italy, following the statement made by the Italian Minister Mr Lunardi about the need to 'live with the Mafia'.

1. Does the Commission not consider Italy's 'living with the Mafia' to be an infringement of Community law on public contracts?

2. With regard to the public statements made by Mr Lunardi concerning the need — in connection with public contracts, for which his office is responsible — to 'live with the Mafia', what steps has the Commission taken to ensure respect for the law in the Union?

3. Why has the Commission not taken any official action vis-à-vis the Italian Government regarding the blatant infringement of Community law which the Italian Minister's statements imply?

(2) See page 29.

Answer given by Mr Bolkestein on behalf of the Commission

(22 March 2002)

1. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's answers to his Written Questions E-2663/01 (1) and E-3366/01 (2).
The Commission has in fact pointed out that, in Article 46(1) of its proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to the coordination of procedures for the award of public supply, public service and public works contracts, it introduced an obligation aimed at excluding from participation in the invitation to tender any tenderer who has been the subject of a definitive judgment for participation in a criminal organisation, for corruption or for financial fraud against the European Communities. This provision has already been approved by the Parliament at the first reading under the co-decision legislative procedure.

The Commission has also noted that, in this context, the Italian Government has always demonstrated its full commitment to achieving the objectives of this proposal. In this respect, the Commission reiterates that the Italian Government has up to now agreed with and supported the proposals which the Commission has made concerning the above-mentioned aspect, during the discussions on the aforementioned proposal for a Directive.

2. The Commission then pointed out that the procedures laid down by the Community Directives currently in force, and the transparency which these bring, are also intended to combat corruption and fraud in public contracts. The monitoring of compliance with these procedures, particularly by the Commission but also by the national courts, plays a part in the battle against these practices. The Commission is convinced that its new measure, once approved and in force, will help tighten up the checks on procedures for awarding public contracts, by making it compulsory for awarding authorities to exclude tenderers guilty of the aforementioned offences, rather than simply giving them this option, as at present.

3. Finally, with regard to the alleged infringement of Community law on public contracts which might be implied in the statements made by the Italian Minister, Mr Lunardi, the Commission feels that these statements do not, in themselves, constitute an infringement of the Community Directives in the field of public contracts.

However, should the Honourable Member have any knowledge of award procedures for public contracts during which the Italian authorities may have favoured entrepreneurs linked to a criminal organisation, he is free to inform the Commission of this. If he did so, the Commission would certainly examine the information received and request any necessary clarification from the Italian authorities, in order to check whether there would be any reason to initiate infringement proceedings under Article 226 of the EC Treaty.

(2) See page 29.

(2002/C 205 E/136) WRITTEN QUESTION E-0375/02
by Hartmut Nassauer (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(19 February 2002)


2. To what extent are waste incineration capacities in Europe currently being utilised, excluding hazardous chemical products?

3. To what extent are incineration capacities currently being utilised in Europe:

(a) for thermal treatment in the context of waste management, and

(b) for energy recovery?