WRITTEN QUESTION E-4054/03
by Elspeth Attwooll (ELDR) to the Commission
(13 January 2004)

Subject: National waters within the EU’s EEZ

In response to Written Question P-3011/03 (1), Commissioner Fischler explained on 24 October 2003 that the Member States are responsible for defining their exclusive economic zones and the boundaries between sea areas where such a definition is necessary. The Commission gave the impression that it did not have the information requested readily available. In its Communication towards uniform and effective implementation of the CFP (2), however, it states on page 8 that more than half of the catches of northern hake are taken in ‘Irish waters’. Furthermore, on page 10 it makes reference to ‘the northern part of Dutch waters’.

In the light of these statements relating to national waters rather than to ICES zones, can the Commission confirm that it does in fact have the information requested in question P-3011/03 which concerned national boundaries within particular ICES zones, and can it now provide this information? If it does not have this information, can it on the other hand explain on what basis its assertions in COM(2003) 130 final were based?


Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2004)

For the purpose of the Common Fisheries Policy, the term ‘Community waters’ is defined as the waters under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Member States with the exception of waters adjacent to non-Community territories mentioned in Annex to the EC Treaty. Therefore, as stated in response to the Honourable Member’s Written Question P-3011/03, Member States are responsible for the delimitation of the waters under their sovereignty or jurisdiction.

The Commission has no precise information on the delimitations of the waters which have been defined by Member States as waters under their sovereignty or jurisdiction.

The statements in the Communication: ‘Towards uniform and effective implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy’ (1) as referred to in the written question are based on the following information: the statement ‘more than half of the catches of northern hake are taken in Irish waters’ is based on an approximative aggregation of catch statistics by statistical rectangles presumably lying in waters defined by Ireland as waters under its sovereignty or jurisdiction whilst the reference to ‘the northern part of Dutch waters’ is based on information received from the Netherlands.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-4065/03
by Glyn Ford (PSE) to the Commission
(14 January 2004)

Subject: European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)

As an MEP I am gravely concerned about the legitimacy of the ICG’s reported intention to replace the EUMC by an agency with a larger remit during the summit of 12/13 December without consulting the European Parliament. Why has Parliament not been consulted on this very important issue?
Answer given by Mr Vitorino on behalf of the Commission

(18 February 2004)

The conclusions of the representatives of Member States meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government in Brussels on 13 December 2003 stated that, building upon the existing European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, its mandate should be extended to become a Human Rights Agency. The Commission has indicated its intention to submit a proposal to amend Council Regulation (EC) No 1035/97 of 2 June 1997 (1) in that respect. However, before tabling its proposal, the Commission intends to launch a widespread consultation exercise on the basis of a consultation document which will be published in the summer 2004. The contribution of the Parliament will, of course, be vital and adequate time will be given to allow the new Parliament to present its views. Following this widespread consultation, the Commission intends to bring forward a proposal amending the founding Regulation of the Monitoring Centre early in 2005. It should be borne in mind, in this context, that the Parliament had called for the establishment of such an Agency in its 2001 report on fundamental rights.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-4078/03
by Chris Davies (ELDR) to the Commission

(14 January 2004)

Subject: Galileo

Newspaper reports (The Guardian, 8 December 2003) allege that ‘European negotiators have bowed to US pressure over plans to develop the rival system, in a move that will ensure GPS retains advantages over the European system.’

It is claimed that European officials have agreed to change the signal in such a way that the US will be able to jam Galileo without interfering with its own GPS signals.

It is further claimed that Galileo’s performance will now be markedly reduced ‘potentially making the service only accurate to within eight miles’. This compares, it is said, to a GPS signal accuracy of around three miles and the one mile accuracy originally envisaged for Galileo.

Will the Commission comment on these reports, and estimate the likely effect of such changes upon the marketing of Galileo services and the possible loss of significant financial opportunities?

Answer given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission

(25 March 2004)

Satellite navigation systems transmit signals which are open to all users (known as the Open Service in the case of Galileo) and secure signals (the Public Regulated Service in the case of Galileo). It is technically possible to jam non-military signals locally across a conflict zone, whether they are generated by the global positioning system (GPS) or by Galileo, while at the same time ensuring that they remain available outside that zone.

Jamming is carried out on the ground by the military forces themselves and does not interfere with the performance of the signals outside the conflict zone.

Regarding the performance of the Galileo open signals, discussions have been held to determine what the most effective standard would be for the open signals of both Galileo and the future GPS III with a view to providing the best service to users. These discussions were intended to ensure full interoperability between the two systems and will, de facto, lead to a global standard for satellite navigation. Furthermore, the