As a percentage of GNI, how does the UK’s national budget for overseas development aid compare to that of the other 14 Member States and of the 10 accession states?

Answer given by Mr Nielson on behalf of the Commission

(10 March 2004)

In 2002, the EU total contribution for official development aid was USD 29 949 million, equal to 0,365% of Gross National Income (GNI). The USA total contribution for official aid was USD 13 290 million, equal to 0,13% of GNI. Those two ratios are respectively above and below the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Cooperation Directorate (OECD/DAC) average which is at 0,23% of GNI (with an exchange rate EUR/USD of 1,28).

The budget managed by the European Community accounted for EUR 6 962 million in 2002 and was included by the Member States in their statistics on the basis of their contribution keys for the budget and the European Development Fund.

The ranking of the Member States in % of GNI for 2002 was:
1. Denmark 0,96 %;
2. Sweden 0,83 %;
3. Netherlands 0,81 %;
4. Luxemburg 0,77 %;
5. Belgium 0,43 %;
6. Ireland 0,40 %;
7. France 0,38 %;
8. Finland 0,35 %;
9. United Kingdom 0,31 %;
10. Germany 0,27 %;
10. Portugal 0,27 %;
12. Austria 0,26 %;
12. Spain 0,26 %;
14. Greece 0,21 %;
15. Italy 0,20 %.

The ten Acceding countries have collectively an average ratio of official development assistance (ODA) / GNI at about 0,03 % of their GNI.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0401/04
by Concepció Ferrer (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(16 February 2004)

Subject: River Ebro water transfer

In view of the recent news that Brussels confirms that Spain has not correctly applied the Directive demanding that the environmental impact of specific projects be assessed before they are approved, by
guaranteeing prior consultation, and given that the Commission has brought the relevant charges before the EU Court of Justice in connection with this incorrect application, in the case of a regulation implemented in processing the Ebro water transfer as part of the Spanish National Hydrological Plan, will the Commission tell me to what extent the Spanish Government's failure to meet the requirements could affect the implementation of the National Hydrological Plan, since Spanish Environment Ministry sources have stated that 'even if the court were to say that we have to change this aspect of the law, this would not invalidate the decisions taken?'

Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission

(23 March 2004)


However, it should be noted that this decision was taken within the context of infringement proceedings initiated by the Commission to examine the conformity of Spanish legislation transposing Directive 97/11/EC. These are general proceedings unrelated to any specific case, such as the one mentioned by the Honourable Member. The decision stems from complaints that the transitional arrangements provided for in Directive 97/11/CE and the obligations arising from Articles 3 and 9 were not being met and had not been clearly incorporated into Spanish law.

The infringement proceedings do not necessarily mean that the Directive on environmental impact assessment is still being applied incorrectly in Spain. Any consequences for specific projects would have to be determined through a case-by-case examination of the procedure followed.


WRITTEN QUESTION P-0409/04
by Carlos Coelho (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(6 February 2004)

Subject: Rights inherent in European citizenship

The Treaty of Amsterdam further rounded out the definition of European citizenship, by adding that it did not replace but supplement national citizenship; at the same time, the Treaty consolidated the rights arising form European citizenship.

Consequently, with the Charter of Fundamental Rights promulgated in Nice in 2000, a single text brought together all the personal, civic and political rights, as well as the economic and social rights, which European citizens are guaranteed to enjoy.

Amongst these is the right to vote or stand in elections to the EP, or in local elections in one's country of residence within the EU.

I was therefore extremely surprised to learn, from a letter sent by the International Secretary of the Maltese Nationalist Party, Dr Jason Azzopardi, of the worrying fact that hundreds of Maltese citizens are having their rights infringed, by being refused the right of voting in the forthcoming June elections to the European Parliament, because they are temporarily residing outside their own country, for purposes of work, training or study.