ISSN 1725-2393

Den Europæiske Unions Tidende

C 109 E

56. årgang

Dansk udgave

Meddelelser og oplysninger

16. april 2013

DA

Meddelelse til læseren

Denne publikation indeholder forespørgsler til skriftlig besvarelse fra medlemmer af Europa-Parlamentet og svarene fra en EU-institution.

Den oprindelige sprogudgave af forespørgslen og svaret er anført før en eventuel oversættelse.

Det er muligt, at svaret i visse tilfælde er givet på et andet sprog end forespørgslen. Det afhænger af arbejdssproget i det udvalg, der er blevet anmodet om et svar.

Forespørgsler og svar offentliggøres i overensstemmelse med artikel 117 i Europa-Parlamentets forretningsorden.

Der er adgang til alle forespørgsler og svar gennem Europa-Parlamentets websted (Europarl) under overskriften parlamentariske spørgsmål og forespørgsler:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/da/parliamentary-questions.html

FORKORTELSER FOR DE POLITISKE GRUPPER

PPE	Det Europæiske Folkepartis Gruppe (Kristelige Demokrater)
S&D	Gruppen for Det Progressive Forbund af Socialdemokrater i Europa-Parlamentet
ALDE	Gruppen Alliancen af Liberale og Demokrater for Europa
Verts/ALE	Gruppen De Grønne/Den Europæiske Fri Alliance
ECR	De Europæiske Konservative og Reformister
GUE/NGL	Den Europæiske Venstrefløjs Fællesgruppe/Nordisk Grønne Venstre
EFD	Gruppen for Europæisk Frihed og Demokrati
NI	Løsgængere

DA

IV

(Oplysninger)

OPLYSNINGER FRA DEN EUROPÆISKE UNIONS INSTITUTIONER, ORGANER, KONTORER OG AGENTURER

EUROPA-PARLAMENTET

FORESPØRGSLER TIL SKRIFTLIG BESVARELSE

Forespørgsler til skriftlig besvarelse fra medlemmer af Europa-Parlamentet og svarene fra en EU-institution

(2013/C 109 E/01)

Indhold **Side**

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001816/12
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Compliance with Council Directive 2008/120/EC concerning the welfare of pigs

Paragraph 4 of Chapter I of Annex I to Council Directive 2008/120/EC ([1]) stipulates that pigs 'must have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities'. Paragraph 8 provides that, before carrying out tail docking, farmers must take other measures to prevent tail-biting and in particular must change 'inadequate environmental conditions or management systems'.

It appears from reports by the Food and Veterinary Office and investigations by animal welfare organisations that many EU pig farms are ignoring these requirements, and that a number of Member States are failing to enforce them properly. The legislative provisions are important for pig welfare. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has recommended that 'in order to provide for the need to root with the nose and manipulate destructible materials, each pig should have access to manipulable destructible material such as straw or other fibrous material'. A technical report submitted to the EFSA in 2011 states that 'an intact curly tail may well be the single most important animal-based welfare indicator for weaned, growing and finishing pigs (…). In addition, it stands for high-quality management and respect for the integrity of the pig'.

In 2009 and 2010 the Commission organised helpful conferences on how to achieve improved compliance with EU legislation on pig welfare. Despite these, there appears to be a continuing high level of non-compliance with the provisions on manipulable materials and tail docking. This is unacceptable given that it is nine years since these provisions came into force,

The EU Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals (2012-2015) helpfully highlights the need for improved enforcement of EU legislation.

What steps does the Commission plan to take to secure improved enforcement of, and compliance with, the provisions of Directive 2008/120/EC concerning manipulable materials and tail docking?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

The EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([2]) was adopted on 19 January 2012. The strategy aims at developing a holistic approach so that common underlying drivers for poor welfare in the EU will be addressed across species.

Better enforcement of the existing legislation will be at the forefront of Commission actions, including as regards Directive 2008/120/EC on the protection of pigs ([3]). In this regard, the strategy foresees targeted actions such as the adoption of EU guidelines on the protection of pigs in 2013. The guidelines will address the specific issues of enrichment material and tail-docking.

At the same time, the priority of the Commission is to work in improving the understanding of animal welfare among farmers through increased competence and technical assistance. For that purpose, the above-indicated animal welfare strategy envisages the possibility of proposing a new general legislative framework on animal welfare.

([1]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([2]) COM(2012) 6 final.
([3]) OJ L 47, 18.2.2009.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001819/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Stupro all'Aquila

Una ragazza di venti anni originaria di Tivoli è stata presumibilmente stuprata sabato 11 febbraio, fuori da una discoteca all'Aquila, città nella quale frequenta l'università. Il fatto è avvenuto attorno alle 3.30, mentre la serata all'interno del locale era in pieno svolgimento. Secondo le ricostruzioni delle forze dell'ordine c'erano ancora un'ottantina di clienti e sette addetti alla sicurezza.

A trovare la ragazza priva di sensi, seminuda, sotto choc e insanguinata è stato il titolare del locale, che ha subito chiamato la polizia. Nessuno risulta al momento indagato nel quadro dell'inchiesta.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

intende promuovere, in associazione con gli Stati membri, campagne di comunicazione sociale che sensibilizzino i cittadini europei sull'argomento e che possano prevenire azioni simili in futuro?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza del caso specifico segnalato dall'onorevole parlamentare.

La Commissione è impegnata a definire un'incisiva risposta strategica per contrastare qualsiasi forma di violenza contro le donne, compreso lo stupro, come dimostrano il Programma di Stoccolma e la Strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini (2010-2015).

La Commissione sostiene l'emancipazione femminile, la sensibilizzazione, la diffusione di buone pratiche e il miglioramento della raccolta di dati sulla violenza contro le donne. Il programma Daphne III fornisce un sostegno finanziario alla realizzazione di progetti transnazionali promossi da organizzazioni di base impegnate a combattere la violenza attraverso azioni di sensibilizzazione e volte a incoraggiare il cambiamento di mentalità.

La Commissione sta inoltre prendendo misure in materia di giustizia penale: nel maggio 2011 ha adottato la proposta di direttiva sui diritti delle vittime di reato che si basa sulla normativa UE esistente e rafforza i diritti delle vittime. La proposta sancisce il diritto delle vittime al rispetto e al riconoscimento della loro vulnerabilità, il diritto a fornire e ricevere informazioni e il diritto alla protezione. Essa intende altresì garantire che le necessità delle vittime siano valutate caso per caso e che quelle maggiormente vulnerabili, come le vittime di violenza sessuale, ricevano un'assistenza adeguata alle loro esigenze ([1]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0275:FIN:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001819/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Rape in L'Aquila

A 20-year-old girl from Tivoli was allegedly raped on Saturday 11 February outside a nightclub in L'Aquila, the city where she attends university. The events took place at around 3.30am, while inside the venue the night was in full swing. According to police reconstructions, there were still around 80 people and seven security personnel at the venue.

The owner of the venue found the girl unconscious, half-naked, in shock and covered in blood, and immediately called the police. At the moment no-one is under investigation as part of the inquiry.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend, in association with the other Member States, to promote social communication campaigns that raise awareness of the subject for European citizens and that can prevent similar events from occurring in future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the specific case reported by the Honourable Member.

The Commission is committed to developing a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women, including rape as confirmed in the Stockholm Programme and the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015).

The Commission works for the empowerment of women, awareness raising, the promotion of exchanges of good practices and the improvement of collection of data on violence against women. The Daphne III Programme provides financial support for the implementation of transnational projects to grass roots organisations working to prevent such practices by raising awareness and changing social attitudes.

The Commission is also taking measures in the criminal justice area. In May 2011, it has adopted the proposal for the directive on the rights of victims of crime that builds on existing EU legislation and strengthens the rights of victims. Proposal includes the right to respect and recognition, the right to provide and receive information, and right to protection. It also aims at ensuring that the needs of victims are individually assessed and that the most vulnerable e.g. victims of sexual violence receive specific treatment appropriate to their requirements ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001820/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili fondi per il Comune di Collepasso

Il maltempo continua a fare danni nel Salento. Il 9 febbraio u.s. è crollata parte di una palazzina a Collepasso, in provincia di Lecce. Al momento del crollo in casa c'era un'anziana donna, una vedova di 80 anni, che per fortuna è rimasta illesa. Solo un grande spavento per l'inquilina che ha sentito un grosso frastuono e nel giro di pochi minuti ha visto parte della sua casa distrutta.

Questo episodio, che si poteva concludere tragicamente, non è l'unico registratosi negli ultimi anni. Molte palazzine del centro storico del paese, soprattutto a causa del maltempo, sono a rischio crollo.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. ci sono fondi europei per i quali la città di Collepasso ha fatto richiesta e, in caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati sono stati portati a termine?

2. esistono altri Fondi strutturali cui il Comune può far richiesta ai fini del recupero del centro cittadino?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2012)

Conformemente alle informazioni fornite dall'autorità di gestione del programma operativo Puglia del FESR, il comune di Collepasso non ha ricevuto nessun finanziamento UE finalizzato al risanamento urbano.

Per quanto concerne la regione Puglia, il programma FESR prevede uno stanziamento di 260 milioni di euro per progetti integrati di risanamento urbano e rurale, voce nell'ambito della quale potrebbero essere finanziati i progetti menzionati dall'onorevole deputato.

Tuttavia, in linea con il principio di gestione condivisa utilizzato per l'amministrazione della politica di coesione, la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti ricade sotto la responsabilità delle autorità nazionali. Per ulteriori informazioni la Commissione suggerisce pertanto all'onorevole deputato di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia, Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 BARI
adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001820/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for the municipality of Collepasso (Italy)

The bad weather continues to do damage in the Salento area of Italy. On 9 February 2012, part of a building collapsed in Collepasso, in the province of Lecce. At the time of the collapse there was an elderly woman in the house, a widow aged 80, who fortunately remained unharmed. What did happen was a big fright for the occupant, who heard a loud noise and within a few minutes saw part of her house destroyed.

This episode, which could have ended tragically, is not the only one recorded in recent years. Many houses in the historic centre of the town are at risk of collapse, mostly because of the bad weather.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state whether:

1. there is any EU funding for which the town of Collepasso has applied, and, if so, what projects have had access to such funding, and with what results;

2. other possibilities exist under the Structural Funds which would enable the municipality to request support for purposes of restoring the town centre?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

According to information provided by the managing authority of the Puglia ERDF regional operational programme, the Municipality of Collepasso did not receive any EU funding related to urban regeneration.

Concerning the Puglia region, the ERDF programme provides for an allocation of EUR 260 million for 'integrated projects for urban and rural regeneration' under which projects as mentioned by the Honourable Member might be funded.

However, in line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. For more information, the Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authority directly:

Autorità di Gestione POR Puglia, Viale Japigia, n. 145, 70126 Bari
adgfesr@regione.puglia.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001821/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Scarsa competitività di alcuni Stati membri

Italia, Spagna, Ungheria e Cipro a partire dagli anni Novanta hanno subito squilibri macroeconomici dovuti al livello del debito pubblico e alla perdita di competitività. É quanto emerge dal rapporto della Commissione sul meccanismo di allerta per la prevenzione e la correzione degli squilibri macroeconomici.

Alla luce di questa tendenza le nuove regole di controllo e vigilanza dell'Unione europea permetteranno agli Stati membri in difficoltà di ritrovare una certa stabilità finanziaria, garantendo coordinamento e controllo incrociato tra le politiche economiche per sconfiggere la crisi del debito.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se esistono stime e proiezioni di dati, ovvero uno studio di impatto, sugli effetti che le nuove regole di controllo e vigilanza dell'UE apporteranno ai sistemi economici degli Stati membri che il citato rapporto considera a minor livello di competitività?

Risposta data da Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(20 aprile 2012)

Nel decennio che ha preceduto la crisi economica e finanziaria si è osservato l'accumularsi di notevoli squilibri esterni e interni, che ha contribuito altresì ad aggravare gli squilibri di bilancio. Sulla base di tali insegnamenti, si è proceduto, nell'ambito del pacchetto sulla governance economica (il cosiddetto «six-pack»), a rafforzare il patto di stabilità e crescita e ad istituire la nuova procedura per gli squilibri macroeconomici. Un aspetto di cui bisogna tenere conto è il fatto che la normativa adottata contempla, tra l'altro, strumenti preventivi che mirano a evitare gravi squilibri economici o di bilancio. I benefici potenziali delle nuove norme in materia di governance devono pertanto essere visti anche sotto il profilo della riduzione del rischio di crisi finanziarie ed economiche sistemiche in futuro. Tali benefici saranno probabilmente considerevoli, dati i costi molto elevati delle ultime crisi della produzione e dell'occupazione negli Stati membri più colpiti.

Nella sua recente relazione sul meccanismo di allerta, la Commissione ha indicato alcuni paesi per i quali sarebbe opportuno studiare più a fondo determinate questioni relative agli squilibri. Se corroborato da un esame approfondito, ciò rispecchierebbe quei casi in cui gli effetti di aggiustamenti e misure preventive efficaci potrebbero essere considerevoli.

In termini di stime, alcune indicazioni di massima mostrano i risultati che una riforma e un piano di adeguamento riusciti possono produrre prima sul piano generale e poi sul piano specifico per i paesi vulnerabili. Ad esempio, secondo le valutazioni della Commissione, riforme strutturali ambiziose permetterebbero, nel corso di questo decennio, di portare il potenziale di crescita medio al 2,2 %, rispetto all'1,5 % previsto nell'ipotesi di politiche invariate ([1]). Per quanto concerne il risanamento di bilancio, i modelli di rischio indicano che le probabilità di insolvenza di uno Stato aumentano non soltanto a causa del peggioramento della situazione di bilancio, ma anche a causa di una scarsa produttività.

([1]) Alexandr Hobza, Gilles Mourre, Commissione europea, «Quantifying the potential macroeconomic effects of the Europe 2020 strategy: stylised scenarios», European Economy. Economic Papers. n. 424, settembre 2010. Bruxelles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001821/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Poor competitiveness of certain Member States

According to the Commission's alert mechanism report aimed at preventing and correcting macroeconomic imbalances, Italy, Spain, Hungary and Cyprus have suffered macroeconomic imbalances since the 1990s owing to their levels of public debt and lack of competitiveness.

In the light of this trend, the new EU monitoring and surveillance rules will enable struggling Member States to regain a degree of financial stability, thereby ensuring the coordination and cross-checking of economic policies with a view to tackling the debt crisis.

In the light of the above, can the Commission say whether there are any estimates, data projections or impact assessments regarding the anticipated effects of the new EU monitoring and surveillance rules on the economic systems of those Member States identified in the abovementioned report as less competitive?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

The decade preceding the financial and economic crisis saw an accumulation of substantial external and internal imbalances which also contributed to the aggravation of fiscal imbalances. Drawing on these lessons, in the context of the '6-pack', the Stability and Growth Pact has been strengthened and the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure has been put in place. One aspect to keep in mind is that the legislation adopted includes preventive instruments aiming to avoid major macro economic or fiscal imbalances. Therefore, the potential benefits of the new governance rules should also be seen in terms of the reduced risk of future systemic financial and economic crises. Given the very high costs of the most recent crisis on output and employment in the most affected Member States, these gains are likely to be very substantial.

The Commission in its recent Alert Mechanism Report indicated a number of countries for which there are issues related to imbalances that should be studied more in depth. If corroborated by the in depth review, this reflects cases where the impact of successful adjustment and preventive action could be substantial.

In terms of estimations there are some broad indications of what a successful reform and adjustment agenda can yield in general and then in particular for vulnerable countries. For example, Commission assessments show that ambitious structural reforms could increase average potential growth to around 2.2 % over this decade, compared to 1.5 % in a no-policy-change scenario ([1]). As regards fiscal consolidation, risk models indicate that the probability of sovereign default rises not only with the worsening of fiscal condition but also in case of low productivity.

([1]) Alexandr Hobza, Gilles Mourre, European Commission 'Quantifying the potential macroeconomic effects of the Europe 2020 strategy: stylised scenarios', European Economy. Economic Papers. 424. September 2010. Brussels.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001822/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Piccole regioni amiche per il lavoro dei giovani

Marche, Valle d'Aosta, Umbria sono piccole regioni italiane, ma grandi «amiche» dei giovani con minori barriere all'ingresso nel mondo del lavoro, tassi di disoccupazione sotto la media, alti livelli d'istruzione e capacità imprenditoriali. L'indicatore «Youth friendly», elaborato dal Centro studi Datagiovani, misura il potenziale di attrattività del territorio per gli under 30 in base a cinque punti di forza: mercato del lavoro, imprenditoria, istruzione, demografia e dinamica della crisi. Tredici regioni si collocano sopra la media, le altre sono al di sotto. Ne emerge un quadro inedito dell'Italia, con le Marche sul gradino più alto del podio e le regioni più piccole spesso in vantaggio su quelle grandi. Nelle aree a dimensioni ridotte c'è un minore sfasamento tra formazione, aspirazioni professionali e sbocchi dei giovani, mentre in quelle con maggior peso economico il differenziale si allarga, nonostante ci siano più offerte di lavoro in valore assoluto. Le Marche primeggiano per istruzione, elevato numero di laureati residenti tra giovani tra i 30 e i 34 anni e scarsa disoccupazione tra quelli con meno di 30. Situazione analoga in Umbria, che si distingue anche per una bassa dispersione scolastica.

Ai primi posti della classifica anche il Molise (4°) che, pur ottenendo risultati non troppo soddisfacenti per quanto riguarda il mercato del lavoro primeggia sul terreno dell'imprenditoria. Solo undicesima la Lombardia, mentre nella parte bassa della classifica figurano Emilia Romagna e Veneto, che portano i segni pesanti della crisi dove i ragazzi hanno sempre avuto buone opportunità occupazionali, ma ora si trovano spiazzati dal taglio di offerte prodotto dalla recessione. Le grandi regioni del Mezzogiorno occupano gli ultimi posti della classifica a causa di un mercato del lavoro da sempre avaro di opportunità (disoccupazione oltre il 30 %), abbinato a una pesante dispersione scolastica (dal 23 % della Campania al 26 % della Sicilia).

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza delle opportunità lavorative dei giovani in Italia con il tasso occupazionale più alto nelle piccole regioni rispetto alle grandi;

2. intende promuovere iniziative o strategie per imitare la buona politica delle piccole regioni ed esportarla come esempio nelle altre regioni degli Stati membri dell'UE?

Risposta data da Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2012)

1. La Commissione è consapevole delle opportunità lavorative e della difficile situazione occupazionale cui si trovano confrontati i giovani in Italia. Per quanto concerne il tasso di occupazione i dati Eurostat e Istat ([1]) non confermano che questa sia più elevata nelle piccole regioni rispetto a quelle maggiori ([2]). Tuttavia, le informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato rivestono interesse nel quadro più generale dell'analisi comparativa dei risultati economici e occupazionali a livello regionale. In proposito, lo studio «EU Regional Competitiveness Index» ([3]) realizzato dal Centro comune di ricerca della Commissione europea fornisce un quadro multidimensionale della situazione delle 268 regioni UE appartenenti alla categoria NUTS 2.

2. I programmi operativi cofinanziati dal Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) nel periodo di programmazione 2007-2013 in Italia prevedono un asse prioritario specifico consacrato alle attività transnazionali e interregionali che può pertanto finanziare il trasferimento e l'adattamento di iniziative dimostratesi efficaci in una o più regioni verso altre regioni o altri Stati membri.

([1]) Ad esempio http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/16777 — "lavoro"
([2]) Quattro delle sei regioni che presentano i tassi più alti sono "grandi" regioni.
([3]) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/111111111/13666/1/rci_eur_report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001822/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Small regions prove youth work-friendly

Marche, Valle d'Aosta and Umbria are small Italian regions, but very 'youth work-friendly' for young people with fewer barriers to entering the world of work, with unemployment rates below average and high levels of education and business capability. The 'youth-friendly' indicator, developed by the Datagiovani research centre, measures the potential attractiveness of the area for the under-30s based on five factors: labour market, business, education, demographics and the crisis. Thirteen regions lie above the average, the others are below it. What emerges is a new picture of Italy, with Marche occupying the top spot in the rankings and the smaller regions often in a better position than the larger ones. In the smaller areas, there is less discrepancy between education, professional aspirations and openings for young people, while in those areas with more economic weight, the difference increases, despite the fact that there are more job offers in absolute terms. Marche leads the field in education, with higher numbers of young people between the ages of 30 and 34 being resident graduates and low unemployment among the under 30s. The situation is the same in Umbria, which also stands out for its low school dropout rate.

Also among the highest scorers is Molise (4th) which, although not achieving particularly good results in terms of the labour market, tops the table in the field of business. Lombardy only comes in eleventh place, while Emilia Romagna and Veneto feature in the lower section of the rankings; both being seriously affected by the crisis. These are regions where young people have always had good employment opportunities, but are now finding themselves shut out of the labour market as a result of the cuts made in response to the recession. The large regions of southern Italy occupy the bottom places in the rankings because of a labour market which has always had few openings (with unemployment at over 30 %) combined with a high school dropout rate (23 % in Campania and 26 % in Sicily).

In view of the above, can the Commission state if:

1. it is aware of work opportunities for young people in Italy, with the employment rate being higher in the smaller regions than the larger ones;

2. it intends to promote initiatives or strategies to imitate the good policies of the smaller regions and export them to other regions of EU Member States as examples?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

1. The Commission is aware of the work opportunities and of the difficult employment situation of young people in Italy. As for the employment rate, Eurostat and Istat ([1]) data do not confirm the statement that it is higher in smaller regions than in larger ones ([2]). However, the information provided by the Honourable Member is of interest in the wider picture of comparative analysis of economic and employment performances at regional level. In this respect, the study 'EU Regional Competitiveness Index' ([3]) by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission provides an overview under different dimensions of the situation of 268 EU NUTS 2 regions.

2. The European Social Fund (ESF) co-funded operational programmes of the 2007-2013 programming period in Italy foresee a specific priority axis dedicated to transnational and inter-regional activities and can then fund the transfer and adaptation of initiatives which proved to be successful in one or more regions to other regions or Member States.

([1]) For instance http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/16777 —"lavoro"
([2]) Four out of the six regions scoring the highest rates are "large "regions.
([3]) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/111111111/13666/1/rci_eur_report.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001823/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Export dei distretti italiani

Corre molto veloce l'export dei distretti italiani. La crescita è a due cifre trainata da commesse che da tutto il mondo arrivano alle PMI dei distretti di Treviso e Brescia (macchine industriali), Vicenza (elettronica e automazione), Bologna (meccanica e imballaggio). Sono le capitali del manifatturiero, territori dove l'iperspecializzazione e la capacità d'innovare rappresentano la regola e da cui partono container con beni o macchinari che raggiungono i paesi delle economie avanzate oppure quelli emergenti.

Un flusso di export che nei primi nove mesi del 2011 ha toccato i 51,5 miliardi di euro, con una crescita dell'11,5 % rispetto allo stesso periodo dell'anno precedente. Tra i 101 distretti monitorati dall'osservatorio spicca quello di Bologna, la capitale delle macchine per imballaggio. Un distretto dove l'export vale 1,4 miliardi, in crescita del 18 % rispetto all'anno precedente.

Altra roccaforte del made in Italy è Treviso, poco più di un miliardo di export e il miglior trend di crescita, + 62,6 %. Un altro caposaldo è il sistema del tessile, abbigliamento e pelletteria. Il polo fiorentino della pelletteria raggiunge quota 1,1 miliardi (+34,2 % sul 2010) grazie al ritorno delle commesse delle grandi firmr che tornano a produrre qui le collezioni alto di gamma. Guardando a Nord-Est verso la Valsesia (tessile e abbigliamento) ecco un'altra area in prima linea sui mercati mondiali.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è a conoscenza delle statistiche riguardanti l'alta percentuale di esportazioni dei distretti produttivi italiani,

2. è in grado di tracciare un quadro europeo generale dei distretti degli Stati membri in cui l'esportazione è maggiore?

Risposta data da Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(11 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei buoni risultati economici di diverse regioni europee. Sebbene la legislazione dell'UE non preveda una raccolta dei dati relativi alle esportazioni a livello regionale, sono disponibili ([1]) dati estremamente dettagliati a livello di prodotti per Stati membri comprendenti anche analisi regionali grazie alle statistiche ufficiali sugli scambi di beni pubblicate da Eurostat. La Commissione esprime il proprio compiacimento per il fatto che le regioni italiane menzionate dall'onorevole deputato abbiano una buona performance e incoraggia altre regioni a trarre insegnamenti da questi esempi positivi, in particolare dalle buone pratiche relative alla promozione dei sistemi di ricerca e innovazione, i cluster e la specializzazione intelligente.

La mancanza di dati sistematici sui principali distretti industriali d'esportazione degli Stati membri non consente raffronti diretti. La Commissione desidera però rinviare l'onorevole deputato all'European Cluster Observatory ([2]) e al Regional Innovation Monitor ([3]), che possono fornire un quadro nella dinamica delle varie iniziative regionali.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/.
([2]) http://www.europe-innova.eu/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=18090&name=DLFE-7803.pdf
([3]) http://www.rim-europa.eu.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001823/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Exports from Italian industrial areas

Exports from Italy's industrial areas are going strong, showing a double-digit increase driven by orders from all over the world arriving at SMEs in the industrial areas of Treviso and Brescia (industrial machines), Vicenza (electronics and automation) and Bologna (mechanical and packaging goods). These are Italy's manufacturing capitals, areas where hyperspecialisation and the ability to innovate are the norm and from where container trucks filled with goods or machinery leave on their way to economically developed and emerging countries.

Total exports in the first nine months of 2011 were worth EUR 51.5 billion, up 11.5 % compared with the same period in the previous year. Among the 101 industrial areas covered by the survey, Bologna, the packaging machine capital, stands out. Exports from this industrial area were worth EUR 1.4 billion, an 18 % rise on the previous year.

Another stronghold of Italian manufacturing is Treviso, with exports worth a little more than EUR 1 billion and the highest growth rate (62.6 %). Textile, clothing and leather goods are another flagship sector. The Florentine leather goods industry recorded exports of EUR 1.1 billion (up 34.2 % on 2010) thanks to a resumption of orders from the leading firms in the sector, which have gone back to manufacturing their high-end collections there. And to the north-east lies another area with a leading presence on global markets, the Valsesia (textiles and clothing).

1. Is the Commission familiar with the statistics showing the high percentage of exports from Italy's manufacturing areas?

2. Can it provide an overview of the biggest-exporting industrial areas in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the good performance of many European regions. Although the EU legislation foresees no collection of export data at regional level, very detailed data at product level by Member State are available ([1]) including for regional analysis thanks to the official statistics on trade in goods published by Eurostat. The Commission is pleased that the Italian regions mentioned by the Honourable Member are performing well and encourages other regions to learn from such successes, in particular from good practices concerning the promotion of research and innovation systems, clusters and smart specialisation.

The lack of systematic data about the biggest exporting industrial areas in the Member States prevents direct comparisons. However, the Commission would like to point to the European Cluster Observatory ([2]) and Regional Innovation Monitor ([3]), as these may provide some insights into the dynamic of various regional initiatives.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/newxtweb/.
([2]) http://www.europe-innova.eu/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=18090&name=DLFE-7803.pdf
([3]) http://www.rim-europa.eu.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001824/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Effetto liberalizzazioni in Italia

Secondo uno studio della Banca d'Italia l'impatto delle liberalizzazioni varate dal governo sulla crescita economica sarà decisivo nel risanamento dei conti del paese. Nel rapporto si legge, infatti, che le misure di apertura del mercato, dopo una lunga stagnazione, possono far salire la produttività del 15 % in dieci anni.

Oltre alle liberalizzazioni, la riforma delle pensioni — sempre secondo lo studio — avrà la capacità di far calare il debito di circa il 3 % del Pil ogni anno.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è informata dello studio della Banca d'Italia sull'impatto delle liberalizzazioni sulla crescita economica,

2. giudica positivamente il pacchetto di liberalizzazioni del governo italiano e se è in grado di stimare gli effetti economici indotti?

Risposta data da Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio della Banca d'Italia relativo all'impatto delle liberalizzazioni sulla crescita economica, nonché di altre stime dell'OCSE a riguardo.

2. La Commissione segue da vicino tutte le riforme strutturali attuate in Italia. Il pacchetto di liberalizzazioni mira giustamente a promuovere la concorrenza nei principali mercati di prodotti e servizi grazie alla riduzione delle barriere all'ingresso, a incoraggiare gli investimenti nelle infrastrutture e a migliorare le condizioni in cui operano le imprese. Se attuate correttamente, le misure previste contribuiranno a promuovere la competitività, a rimuovere elementi che da lungo tempo ostacolano la crescita e, in ultima analisi, a migliorare la capacità di adeguamento dell'economia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001824/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Effect of liberalisation measures in Italy

According to a study by the Banca d'Italia, the impact of the Italian Government's liberalisation measures on economic growth will play a decisive role in improving the position of the country's accounts. The report states that , after a long period of stagnation, measures to open up the market could make productivity rise by 15 % in 10 years.

In addition to the liberalisation measures, pension reforms can, according to the same study, reduce the deficit by around 3 % of GDP each year.

In light of the above, can the Commission state whether:

1. it is aware of the study by the Banca d'Italia on the impact of the liberalisation measures on economic growth,

2. it views the Italian Government's liberalisation package positively and whether it is able to estimate its economic effects?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

1. The Commission is well aware of the study by the Banca d'Italia on the impact of the liberalisation measures on economic growth, as well as other estimates made by the OECD.

2. The Commission monitors all structural reforms in Italy very closely. The liberalisation package rightly aims to promote competition in key product and service markets by relaxing existing entry barriers, encourage infrastructure investment and improve the business environment. If properly implemented, the measures will contribute to improving competitiveness, removing some long-standing obstacles to growth and, ultimately, increasing the adjustment capacity of the economy.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001826/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Sicurezza dell'aeroporto di Heathrow

Il 2 novembre scorso il principe d'Inghilterra e successore al trono William e sua moglie Kate Middleton d'Inghilterra sono scampati a un disastro aereo, come ha rivelato il giornale britannico People.

L'aereo sul quale viaggiavano insieme ad altre 160 persone di ritorno dalla Danimarca al momento dell'atterraggio all'aeroporto di Heathrow — quando si trovava a circa 60 metri di altezza — si stava per schiantare con un altro velivolo.

Solo per la bravura del pilota, che è riuscito a far riprendere quota all'aereo, è stata evitata la collisione sulla pista di atterraggio.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è informata sul fatto che il 2 novembre scorso è stata evitata per poco una collisione aerea nell'aeroporto più grande di Londra e se intende verificare i fatti di Heathrow, accertando che siano state rispettate tutte le norme e i comandi impartiti dalla torre di controllo,

2. esistono altre iniziative europee, oltre alla sua comunicazione del 24 gennaio 2007 dal titolo «Un piano d'azione per migliorare le capacità, l'efficienza e la sicurezza degli aeroporti in Europa» COM(2006)0819 ([1]) , volte a migliorare la sicurezza dei voli e degli aeroporti europei, considerato che la congestione in uno dei più grandi aeroporti d'Europa può avere effetti negativi come quello descritto e sull'ambiente e soprattutto sulla sicurezza?

Risposta data da Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(23 marzo 2012)

1. La Commissione è stata informata dalle autorità competenti del Regno Unito del fatto che l'aeromobile menzionato dall'onorevole parlamentare aveva effettuato una manovra standard di «go-around» a causa della ritardata uscita dalla pista di un aeromobile atterrato in precedenza. Tale manovra era quella prescritta in situazioni di questo tipo. Poiché non è emerso un rischio per la sicurezza, non è stata presentata una segnalazione di evento, in conformità della direttiva 2003/42/CE ([2]), né è stata avviata un'inchiesta a norma del regolamento (UE) n. 996/2010 ([3]). Nel caso di cui trattasi sono state applicate correttamente tutte le procedure e le precauzioni regolamentari e la Commissione non ritiene necessario approfondire ulteriormente la questione.

2. L'iniziativa Cielo Unico Europeo ([4]) dell'Unione europea ha definito obiettivi ambiziosi al fine di rafforzare il quadro per la regolamentazione e la gestione della sicurezza e garantire che il traffico aereo possa continuare a crescere senza che ciò comporti rischi per i viaggiatori e riducendo al minimo l'impatto sull'ambiente. L'iniziativa citata ha comportato un ampliamento delle competenze dell'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza aerea che includono ora aspetti relativi alla sicurezza della gestione del traffico aereo e degli aeroporti ([5]). L'opera di completamento del quadro regolamentare è in fase avanzata e prevede l'adozione da parte della Commissione di norme di esecuzione mediante la procedura di comitato.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006DC0819:IT:NOT.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:167:0023:0036:IT:PDF.
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0035:0050:IT:PDF.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/single_european_sky/single_european_sky_en.htm
([5]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1108/2009 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0051:0070:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001826/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Safety at Heathrow Airport

On 2 November 2011, Prince William, the heir to the British throne, and his wife Kate Middleton, narrowly escaped an air crash, according to the British newspaper *The People*.

The plane on which they were travelling, together with 160 other people returning from Denmark, was about to land at Heathrow Airport and was at an altitude of approximately 60 metres, when it very nearly crashed into another aircraft.

It was only through the skill of the pilot, who managed to regain altitude, that a collision was avoided on the landing runway.

In light of the above, can the Commission state whether:

1. it is aware of the fact that on 2 November last year, an air collision was narrowly avoided at London's largest airport and whether it intends to check what happened at Heathrow, to ensure that all safety regulations and orders from the control tower were complied with,

2. any other EU measures have been taken, in addition to the Commission's communication of 24 January 2007 entitled 'An action plan for airport capacity, efficiency and safety in Europe' COM(2006) 0819 ([1]), aimed at improving safety in the air and at European airports, given that congestion at one of Europe's largest airports can have a negative impact as described above, especially as regards safety, but also on the environment?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 March 2012)

1. The Commission has been informed by the competent authorities of the United Kingdom that the aircraft mentioned by the Honourable Member carried out a standard 'go-around' manoeuvre due to the late exit from the runway of a preceding landing aircraft. The go-around manoeuvre was a prescribed procedure. As no safety risk was identified, neither an occurrence report in accordance with Directive 2003/42/EC ([2]) was submitted, nor was an investigation in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 ([3]) initiated. In this case all regulatory procedures and safeguards were applied correctly and the Commission does not see any need for further inquiry into the matter.

2. The Single European Sky ([4]) initiative of the EU has defined ambitious goals to facilitate the reinforcement of the framework for safety regulation and safety management in order to ensure that air traffic can continue to grow without putting the travelling public at risk as well as to minimise the burden on environment. This initiative has led to the extension of the European Aviation Safety Agency's competencies to include safety aspects of air traffic management and airports ([5]). The work on completing the full regulatory framework is well advanced, and includes the adoption by the European Commission of implementing rules via comitology.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52006DC0819:EN:NOT
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:167:0023:0036:EN:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0035:0050:EN:PDF
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/single_european_sky/single_european_sky_en.htm
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 1108/2009, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:309:0051:0070:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001827/12
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Mancato utilizzo dei fondi comunitari

Le difficoltà delle regioni italiane, soprattutto meridionali, nell'usufruire correttamente dei fondi comunitari sono cosa nota. È stato recentemente calcolato che, su 28 miliardi di fondi provenienti da Bruxelles, solo 5 miliardi (il 18 %) sono stati utilizzati.

Questo mancato utilizzo ha varie cause e diverse spiegazioni, ma rappresenta un dato di fatto assolutamente intollerabile, sopratutto in considerazione della particolare congiuntura economica che stiamo attraversando. Proprio per questo motivo una maggiore attenzione da parte della Commissione potrebbe fungere non solo come monito, ma anche come stimolo tanto per le regioni italiane tradizionalmente inadempienti quanto per gli altri Stati membri che hanno incontrato difficoltà nell'utilizzazione dei fondi comunitari.

In riferimento a quanto premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. intende monitorare più regolarmente l'utilizzo dei fondi comunitari sia durante il periodo di attuazione dei progetti sia nella fase conclusiva e stilare un rendiconto delle problematiche riscontrate nei vari Stati membri alla fine del processo;

2. ha in programma iniziative per assistere gli Stati membri inadempienti;

3. ha previsto iniziative affinché i problemi riscontrati durante il periodo 2007-2013 non si ripetano nel periodo 2014-2020?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2012)

1. La Commissione monitora l'uso dei Fondi strutturali e l'attuazione dei programmi essenzialmente attraverso i comitati di monitoraggio, le relazioni annuali e le dichiarazioni di pagamento. La Commissione non riceve informazioni sistematiche a livello di progetto.

Gli Stati membri produrranno entro la fine del 2012 relazioni nazionali in merito all'uso da essi fatto dei fondi UE. La Commissione li ha sollecitati a focalizzare queste relazioni strategiche sugli output e i risultati ([1]) e produrrà nella primavera del 2013 una relazione di sintesi.

2. La Commissione discute con gli Stati membri la possibilità di modifiche dei programmi al fine di rispondere a nuove esigenze o di affrontare difficoltà sul piano dell'attuazione. Ciò avviene attualmente con l'Italia nell'ambito del piano d'azione per la coesione ([2]), che comprende misure volte ad accelerare la spesa e ad accrescere l'impatto. Inoltre, a partire dal 2009 la Commissione ha proposto e attuato diverse misure per incoraggiare l'efficace attuazione dei Fondi strutturali ad opera degli Stati membri alla luce della crisi finanziaria.

3. La Commissione, tenendo conto dell'esperienza di periodi precedenti, ha proposto misure volte a rafforzare la capacità amministrativa nel prossimo periodo. Le proposte per il nuovo periodo di programmazione prevedono che gli Stati membri valutino anticipatamente la necessità di rafforzare la capacità delle autorità che gestiscono i fondi e di ovviare ad eventuali strozzature. Un obiettivo tematico specifico intende accrescere la capacità istituzionale e un certo numero di condizioni ex ante assicurerà un contesto appropriato per un'attuazione efficace.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_annex1_en.pdf — page 21.
([2]) http://www.dps.tesoro.it/pac_2012.asp.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001827/12
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Failure to make use of EU funding

The difficulties experienced by Italian regions, especially in the south of the country, in making full and proper use of EU funding are well known. Recent figures show that only EUR 5 billion (18 %) of the EUR 28 billion available has been taken up.

Although there are various reasons for the low utilisation rate, this is an absolutely intolerable situation, especially in view of the current economic difficulties. It is precisely for this reason that closer monitoring by the Commission could serve as a wake-up call and also as an encouragement, both for the Italian regions that have repeatedly failed to meet the relevant requirements and for other Member States that have encountered difficulties in taking up EU funding.

Given the above, can the Commission say whether:

1. it intends to monitor the use of EU funds — both during the implementation of projects and when they are wound up — on a more regular basis, and to draw up a report on the problems encountered in the various Member States at the end of the process;

2. it plans to take steps to assist Member States which fail to meet the relevant requirements;

3. it intends to take action to prevent the problems encountered during the 2007-2013 period from occurring again during the 2014-2020 period?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

1. The Commission monitors the use of the Structural Funds and the implementation at programme level primarily through monitoring committees, annual reports and payment declarations. The Commission does not receive systematic information at project level.

The Member States will produce national reports on their use of the EU funds by end-2012. The Commission has called on them to focus these strategic reports on outputs and results ([1]) and will produce a synthesis report in spring 2013.

2. The Commission discusses with the Member States the possibility of programme modifications as a response to meet new needs or tackle difficulties in implementation. This is the case currently with Italy under the Cohesion Action Plan ([2]), which includes measures to accelerate expenditure and increase impact. Moreover, since 2009 the Commission has proposed and implemented a number of measures to support effective implementation of Structural Funds by the Member States in the light of the financial crisis.

3. The Commission, taking into account the experience from previous periods has proposed measures to strengthen administrative capacity in the next period. The proposals for the new period foresee that Member States should assess in advance the need to reinforce the capacity of the authorities managing the funds and to address bottlenecks. A specific thematic objective aims to enhance institutional capacity and a number of *ex-ante* conditionalities will ensure appropriate framework conditions for efficient implementation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_annex1_en.pdf — page 21
([2]) http://www.dps.tesoro.it/pac_2012.asp

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001828/12
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Prodotti d'importazione cinese

L'Europa è conosciuta nel mondo, tra le altre cose, per la qualità dei propri cibi e delle proprie vivande. Una qualità che è garantita anche da una legislazione molto severa in materia di sicurezza alimentare.

Purtroppo non si può dire la stessa cosa per altre parti del mondo. È notizia recente la comparsa sul mercato (per fortuna al momento solo cinese) di uova che, probabilmente a causa di una dose eccessiva di gossipolo nell'alimentazione della galline ovaiole, diventano, una volte cotte, così dure e gommose da poter rimbalzare.

Non occorre sforzarsi troppo per immaginare gli effetti nocivi che avrebbero su chi avesse la sfortuna di ingerirle.

In riferimento a quanto detto sopra, può la Commissione:

1. far sapere se era a conoscenza di questo fatto?

2. rassicurare i cittadini europei che dette uova non potranno circolare nel prossimo futuro anche sul territorio europeo?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2012)

La Commissione rimanda alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-001698/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001828/12
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Products imported from China

Europe is known across the world for, among other things, the quality of its food. Quality which is also guaranteed by very strict food safety legislation.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said of other parts of the world. It has recently been reported that the market (fortunately only in China at the moment) has seen the arrival of eggs, which, probably due to an excessive dose of gossypol in the food given to the hens, become so hard and rubbery when cooked that they bounce.

It is not hard to imagine the harmful effect it would have on someone who had the misfortune of ingesting one.

With reference to the above, can the Commission:

1. state whether it is aware of this fact;

2. reassure European citizens that these eggs will not be able to circulate within the EU in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

The Commission would refer to its answer to Written Question E-001698/2012 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001829/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(15 februari 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — De situatie in Azerbeidzjan in de aanloop naar het Eurovisiesongfestival

Op 26 mei organiseert Azerbeidzjan het jaarlijkse Eurovisiesongfestival in Bakoe. In de aanloop daar naartoe blijven berichten over mensenrechtenschendingen in het land opduiken. Zo werd begin februari, in het centrum van Bakoe, het huis van de bekende mensenrechtenactivist Leyla Yunus onaangekondigd en zonder schadeloosstelling afgebroken. Volgens berichten zouden in het land ook 20 000 andere personen in het voorbije jaar hun huis verloren hebben zien gaan. Ook voor de bouw van Crystal Hall, de zaal waar het Eurovisiesongfestival zal worden gehouden, moesten hele blokken huizen verdwijnen, vaak illegaal.

Yunus zet zich actief in tegen de corruptie en willekeur in haar land. Volgens haar en vele mensenrechtenorganisaties is er in Azerbeidzjan sprake van foltering, zijn er politieke gevangenen, ontbreekt het recht op vereniging en meningsuiting, persvrijheid etc. Ook de politieke toestand blijft ongewijzigd: de Aliyev-dynastie houdt de macht in handen, oppositie is niet toegelaten.

Erkent de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de problemen met de mensenrechten in Azerbeidzjan?

Azerbeidzjan neemt deel aan het Europees Nabuurschapsbeleid en het Oostelijk Partnerschap en is een oprichtend lid van Euronest. Democratie, eerbiediging van de mensenrechten en de rechtsstaat zijn kernwaarden van deze initiatieven.

Op welke manieren dringt de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger in dit kader er bij Azerbeidzjan op aan dat het de politieke en mensenrechtensituatie in het land verbetert? Ziet zij enige vooruitgang op dit terrein?

Het Europees Parlement heeft op 12 mei 2011 en op 15 december 2011 resoluties aangenomen over de situatie in Azerbeidzjan in het algemeen (P7_TA(2011)0243) en het geval van Rafik Tagi in het bijzonder (P7_TA(2011)0590).

Heeft de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger deze resoluties in de contacten met de Azerbeidzjaanse autoriteiten gebruikt en hen opmerkzaam gemaakt op de inhoud? Wat waren de reacties van de Azerbeidzjaanse autoriteiten? Met welke andere middelen probeert de Hoge Vertegenwoordiger de druk op de Azerbeidzjaanse autoriteiten op te voeren om de mensenrechten en politieke vrijheden te eerbiedigen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(10 mei 2012)

De hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter is zich bewust van deze golf van onteigeningen. Op 12 augustus 2011 is de sloop van een gebouw van niet-gouvernementele organisaties (ngo's) veroordeeld in een plaatselijke verklaring van de EU in Bakoe.

Rekening houdend met de resoluties van het Parlement heeft de EU herhaaldelijk de kwestie van de onteigeningen bij de autoriteiten ter sprake gebracht en verzocht om volledige transparantie van het proces en bescherming van de eigendomsrechten, onder meer tijdens de vergadering van het samenwerkingscomité EU-Azerbeidzjan in Bakoe in september 2011, alsook tijdens de bijeenkomst van de samenwerkingsraad EU-Azerbeidzjan in november 2011 en de vergadering van de subcommissie mensenrechten EU-Azerbeidzjan, ook in november 2011. Bovendien heeft de hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter informatie uit eerste hand kunnen verzamelen door tijdens haar bezoek aan Bakoe in november 2011 de kwestie van de onteigeningen van huizen te bespreken met Leila Yunus, een prominente mensenrechtenactiviste. De EU-delegatie in Bakoe heeft ook activisten uit het maatschappelijk middenveld ontmoet, onder wie Leila Yunus, en blijft de situatie ter plaatse op de voet volgen.

Mensenrechtenkwesties worden op elke vergadering ter sprake gebracht, zoals laatst door de commissaris die belast is met de uitbreiding en het Europees nabuurschapsbeleid tijdens zijn bezoek aan Bakoe op 2 april 2012. Hij sprak de toenemende bezorgdheid van de EU uit over de binnenlandse ontwikkelingen op het gebied van de mensenrechten, de rechtsstaat, de fundamentele vrijheden en de democratisering van het land.

Op 28 februari 2012 heeft de Raad van Ministers van Azerbeidzjan nieuwe regels voor het opstellen van plannen en instructies voor het verhuizen van personen aangenomen. Volgens deze regels zal het volledige hervestigingsproces transparanter worden en zullen de hervestigingsopties met de betrokkenen worden besproken. Op dit ogenblik kan de EU niet beoordelen hoe deze regels zullen worden uitgevoerd.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001829/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The situation in Azerbaijan in the run-up to the Eurovision Song Contest

On 26 May 2012, Azerbaijan is holding the annual Eurovision Song Contest in Baku. In the run-up to the event, reports continue to emerge on human rights violations in the country. Thus, the house of the well-known human rights activist, Leyla Yunus, located in the centre of Baku, was demolished at the beginning of February, without any prior notice or compensation. It has been reported that 20 000 other people have also lost their houses in Azerbaijan in the past year. Whole blocks of houses had to be demolished, often illegally, to make way for the construction of the Crystal Hall, an arena where the Eurovision Song Contest will be held.

Yunus actively exposes corruption and abuse of power in her country. According to her and many human rights organisations, the situation in Azerbaijan is marked by torture, political prisoners, lack of freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, press freedom etc. The political situation also remains unchanged: the Aliyev dynasty has all the power in its hands, opposition is not allowed.

Does the High Representative recognise that there are problems with human rights in Azerbaijan?

Azerbaijan is participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, and is a founding member of Euronest. Democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are core values of these initiatives.

How does the High Representative urge Azerbaijan in this connection to improve the political and human rights situation in the country? Can she see any progress in this area?

On 12 May and 15 December 2011 the European Parliament adopted resolutions on the situation in Azerbaijan in general (P7_TA(2011)0243) and the case of Rafik Tagi in particular (P7_TA(2011)0590).

Has the High Representative mentioned these resolutions in contacts with the Azeri authorities and drawn their attention to their content? What was the reaction of the Azeri authorities? What other means is the High Representative using in the attempt to exert pressure on the Azeri authorities to make them respect human rights and political freedoms?

Answer given by Vice-President/High Representative Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2012)

The HR/VP is fully aware of this wave of evictions. On 12 August 2011, a local statement of the EU in Baku condemned the demolition of a building belonging to non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Taking into account the resolutions of Parliament, the EU has repeatedly raised the issue of evictions with the authorities, calling for full transparency of the process and protection of property rights, including on the occasion of the EU-Azerbaijan Cooperation Committee meeting in September 2011 in Baku as well as the EU-Azerbaijan Cooperation Council meeting in November 2011 and the meeting of the EU-Azerbaijan Sub-Committee meeting on Human Rights, also in November 2011. Moreover, the HR/VP collected first-hand information in discussing the issue of house evictions with Leila Yunus, a prominent human rights activist, on her visit to Baku in November 2011. The EU Delegation in Baku has also met with civil society activists, including Leila Yunus, and continues to monitor the situation on the ground.

Human rights issues are raised at each meeting opportunity, last time by the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy during his visit to Baku on 2 April 2012. He expressed the EU's growing concerns as regards domestic developments on Human Rights, the Rule of Law, fundamental freedoms and the democratisation of the country.

On 28 February 2012 the Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan adopted new 'Rules for the preparation of plans and instructions to move people'. According to these rules, there will be more transparency in the whole process of resettlement and resettlement options will be discussed with those affected. At this point, the EU is not in a position to judge how these rules would be implemented.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001830/12
à Comissão
Ana Gomes (S&D) e Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(15 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Liberdade de expressão em Portugal

Em janeiro, a Direção de Informação da rádio pública portuguesa Antena 1 demitiu o cronista Pedro Rosa Mendes e outros quatro colegas na sequência da suspensão do programa de opinião «Este Tempo». Dias antes, Rosa Mendes criticara no programa as relações entre os Governos de Portugal e Angola e a emissão de um programa da televisão pública RTP 1, «Reencontro», de Luanda com dirigentes angolanos e o ministro-adjunto e dos Assuntos Parlamentares português, Miguel Relvas, que tutela a comunicação social. Segundo diversas fontes, terá sido dele a ideia da realização do programa. O jornalista denunciou o programa como propaganda política e económica promovida por uma entidade pública obrigada a preservar objetividade e independência informativa. Vários testemunhos indicam que o fim da crónica foi um ato de censura. O diretor-geral da RTP terá mesmo admitido, segundo o jornalista, «que não tinha gostado nada da sua crónica». O diretor de informação da rádio confirmou-o à Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social. A 2 de fevereiro, a Direção de Informação da rádio demitiu-se. O caso levanta sérias dúvidas sobre a liberdade de expressão em Portugal, tendo já havido problemas semelhantes em Itália e na Hungria.

1. Considera a Comissão que este caso consubstancia uma violação da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da UE, em especial o seu artigo 11.°, que garante o direito à liberdade de expressão? Se sim, o que pretende fazer?

2. Em 2007 a Comissão encomendou um estudo de 6 milhões de euros para desenvolver um instrumento de monitorização do pluralismo dos media na UE. O estudo foi realizado, mas este instrumento nunca chegou a ser implementado. Pretende a Comissão, à luz dos recentes casos acima referidos, passar a monitorizar o pluralismo dos media nos Estados-Membros? Se sim, quando?

Resposta dada por Neelie Kroes em nome da Comissão
(21 de março de 2012)

A liberdade de expressão e o pluralismo dos meios de comunicação social são bases fundamentais das sociedades democráticas, consagradas no artigo 11.°, n.° 1, da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais da UE. No âmbito das suas competências, a Comissão sempre procurou garantir o respeito por esses princípios. Contudo, a Comissão recorda que, de acordo com o artigo 51.°, n.° 1, da Carta dos Direitos Fundamentais, as suas disposições têm por destinatários os Estados-Membros apenas quando estes apliquem o direito da União. Como, no caso referido pelo Senhor Deputado, o Estado-Membro em causa não parece ter agido no âmbito de aplicação do direito da União, cabe às autoridades nacionais competentes assegurarem que os direitos fundamentais são plenamente respeitados.

A Comissão confirma que o instrumento de monitorização do pluralismo dos meios de comunicação social ([1]) está disponível para utilização pelos Estados-Membros e por terceiros.

([1]) (http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media_taskforce/pluralism/index_en.htm).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001830/12
to the Commission
Ana Gomes (S&D) and Rui Tavares (Verts/ALE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Freedom of expression in Portugal

In January, the News Department of the Portuguese state radio station Antena 1 sacked Pedro Rosa Mendes, a journalist, and four of his colleagues following the suspension of the comment programme *Este Tempo*. A few days earlier, on the programme, Mr Rosa Mendes had criticised the relationship between the governments of Portugal and Angola, and the broadcasting from Luanda of a programme called *Reencontro* on the state-owned television station RTP 1, with senior Angolan officials and the Portuguese Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Miguel Relvas, who is responsible for the media. According to various sources, the programme was his idea. The journalist denounced the programme as political and economic propaganda promoted by a public body obliged to preserve the objectivity and independence of the news. A number of witnesses suggest that the programme's cancellation was an act of censorship. According to Mr Rosa Mendes, the Director-General of RTP even admitted that he had not liked the journalist's report at all. The head of the radio station's News Department confirmed that version to the Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social (Regulatory Body for the Media). On 2 February, the management of the radio station's News Department resigned. This case raises serious doubts about freedom of expression in Portugal. (Italy and Hungary have already experienced similar problems).

1. Does the Commission consider this case to constitute a violation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, specifically Article 11, which guarantees the right to freedom of expression? If so, what does it intend to do?

2. In 2007, the Commission ordered a EUR 6 million study with a view to developing a system for monitoring media pluralism in the EU. The study was carried out, but the system has never been implemented. In light of the recent cases mentioned above, does the Commission intend to start monitoring media pluralism in Member States? If so, when?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2012)

Freedom of expression and media pluralism constitute essential foundations of democratic societies, enshrined in Article 11(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. Within its competences, the Commission has always sought to ensure respect for those principles. However, the Commission recalls that, according to Article 51 (1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, its provisions are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. As in the case described by the Honourable Member, the Member State concerned does not appear to have acted in the course of implementation of Union law, it is up to relevant national authorities to ensure that fundamental rights are fully respected.

The Commission confirms that the media pluralism monitoring tool ([1]) is available for use by Member States and third parties.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/media_taskforce/pluralism/study/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-001831/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(15 februari 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Rechten van homo's in Oeganda

Op dinsdag 14 februari 2012 organiseerden homoactivisten in een hotel in Entebbe, Oeganda, een workshop over de rechten van seksuele minderheden. De bijeenkomst was georganiseerd door Kasha N. Jacqueline Nabagasera, een prominente homorechtenactiviste. De politie bestormde het hotel en probeerde Kasha Jacqueline Nabagasera, die zich sindsdien schuilhoudt, te arresteren. De Oegandese minister voor Ethische zaken en Integriteit, Simon Lokodo, woonde de bestorming persoonlijk bij en beval de arrestatie van Jacqueline. Hij verklaarde dat de bijeenkomst „illegaal" was.

Deze bestorming komt enkele dagen nadat de Oegandese minister-president opnieuw kwam met een controversieel anti-homo wetsvoorstel dat de doodstraf oplegt aan mensen die „herhaaldelijk" deelnemen aan homoseksuele handelingen en de basisgevangenisstraf voor homoseksuele handelingen verhoogt van de huidige 14 jaar naar levenslang.

1. Heeft de VP/HR de Oegandese regering gevraagd om uitleg over deze bestorming en de aanwezigheid daarbij van minister Simon Lokodo?

2. Welke actie denkt de VP/HR te ondernemen om meer druk uit te oefenen op de Oegandese regering inzake het respecteren van de mensenrechten in dit land, en met name de rechten van Oegandese homo's en lesbiennes?

3. Is de VP/HR voornemens actie te ondernemen als de anti-homowet door het Oegandese parlement wordt aangenomen? Zo ja, welke acties?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(23 mei 2012)

De Europese Unie is zeer bezorgd over de sluiting van een workshop over de rechten van lesbische, homoseksuele, biseksuele en transseksuele mensen op 14 februari 2012 in Entebbe (Oeganda) en over de herintroductie van het anti-homo wetsvoorstel bij het Oegandese parlement.

Het standpunt van de EU inzake de rechten van lesbische, homoseksuele, biseksuele en transseksuele mensen is zeer duidelijk. Het strafbaar stellen van homoseksualiteit, zoals in het Oegandese wetsvoorstel is voorzien, is in strijd met de internationale normen inzake mensenrechten. Het wetsvoorstel is ook in tegenspraak met de door de EU gesteunde VN-verklaring inzake seksuele geaardheid en genderidentiteit van 18 december 2008.

De EU heeft deze kwestie bij diverse gelegenheden aan de orde gesteld bij de Oegandese regering, ook bij president Museveni.

De EU zal van elke passende gelegenheid gebruik maken om in haar contacten met de regering van Oeganda uitdrukking te blijven geven aan haar bezorgdheid over het anti-homo wetsvoorstel, alsook over andere maatregelen om lesbische, homoseksuele, biseksuele en transseksuele mensen te vervolgen. Bovendien zal de EU plaatselijke mensenrechtenorganisaties blijven steunen om tot een mentaliteitswijziging te komen in Oeganda.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001831/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Gay rights in Uganda

On Tuesday, 14 February 2012 gay activists held a workshop on the rights of sexual minorities in a hotel in Entebbe, Uganda. It was organised by a prominent gay rights activist, Kasha N. Jacqueline Nabagasera. The police raided the hotel and tried to arrest Kasha Jacqueline Nabagasera, who has since gone into hiding. The Ugandan Ethics and Integrity Minister, Simon Lokodo, personally attended this raid and ordered the arrest of Jacqueline. He stated that the gathering was 'illegal'.

This raid comes days after a Ugandan MP has reintroduced a controversial anti-homosexuality bill, which imposes the death penalty on those who participate in 'serial' homosexual acts, and increases the basic penalty for homosexual acts to life imprisonment from the current 14 years.

1. Has the Vice-President/High Representative asked the Ugandan government for an explanation of this raid and the presence of the minister Simon Lokodo?

2. What action will the Vice-President/High Representative take to put further pressure on the Ugandan government to respect human rights in the country, and especially the rights of gay and lesbian Ugandan citizens?

3. Does the Vice-President/High Representative plan to take action if the anti-homosexuality bill is passed by the Ugandan parliament? If so, what action?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2012)

The EU is very concerned about the closure of a workshop on LGBT rights in Entebbe, Uganda on 14 February 2012 and the re-introduction of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in the Ugandan Parliament.

The EU position on LGTB rights is very clear. The criminalisation of homosexuality, as foreseen in the draft Uganda bill, goes against international human rights standards. The draft bill also goes against the EU-supported UN declaration on sexual orientation and gender identity, of 18 December 2008.

The EU has raised this issue with the Ugandan Government on several occasions, including with President Museveni.

The EU intends to keep raising its concerns in relation to the draft 'Anti-Homosexuality Bill' as well as other actions to persecute LGBT people in Uganda on every suitable occasion in dialogue with the government. In addition the EU will continue to support local human rights organisations in their efforts to change attitudes in the country.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001833/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(15 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Manipulación cifras de déficit en España

Según una información publicada el 14 de febrero por Reuters ([1]), la Comisión Europea no compartiría la cifra de 8 % de déficit anunciada en diciembre 2011 por el Gobierno español, una desviación que achacó en gran medida a la falta de recortes presupuestarios y al incumplimiento de los objetivos en las comunidades autónomas. Este cálculo del déficit, que no es de carácter oficial, contrastaría, en caso de confirmarse, con el objetivo del 6 % comprometido con Bruselas. Sin embargo, las informaciones de Reuters, que citan desde el anonimato a altos cargos de la UE, el déficit real sería mucho menor. El Gobierno presidido por Mariano Rajoy buscaría así manipular la estadística para ensalzar los logros que podría conseguir en 2012, además de situar un escenario más propicio para avanzar en los recortes presupuestarios que proponen.

El portavoz de la Unión de Asuntos Económicos y Monetarios no quiso pronunciarse sobre la veracidad y se limitó a recordar que las cifras de déficit todavía no son oficiales. Sorprende que el Gobierno español siga calculando cifras, pero las hiciera públicas en diciembre sin ser definitivas.

El artículo 8 del Reglamento (UE) n° 1173/2011 ([2]) otorga a la Comisión la capacidad de iniciar una investigación cuando considere que hay indicios serios de tergiversación de datos relativos al déficit y podrá pedir al Estado miembro que facilite información, realizando inspecciones in situ y con acceso a las cuentas de todos los organismos públicos a nivel central, estatal, local y de la seguridad social.

1. ¿Tiene la Comisión indicios serios de que el déficit del Estado español es sensiblemente inferior al anunciado por el Presidente del Gobierno en diciembre de 2011?

2. En caso de que el gobierno español hubiera manipulado interesadamente las cifras y siguiendo el artículo 8 del citado Reglamento, ¿comenzará la Comisión la investigación pertinente? ¿A qué tipo de sanciones se podría enfrentar el Estado español?

3. ¿No cree la Comisión que la manipulación de las cuentas puede afectar al Informe sobre el Mecanismo de Alerta para reducir los desequilibrios macroeconómicos?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de abril de 2012)

El 27 de febrero de 2012, el Gobierno español anunció los primeros resultados de la ejecución del presupuesto de 2011, indicando que preveía que el déficit de las Administraciones Públicas en 2011 alcanzara, aproximadamente, el 8,5 % del PIB. La Comisión no dispone de ninguna información que lleve a pensar que el déficit público español en 2011 pueda ser sensiblemente inferior a la cifra anunciada por las autoridades del país.

El resultado presupuestario definitivo del ejercicio 2011 se conocerá una vez que España presente su notificación en el marco del procedimiento de déficit excesivo, a finales de marzo, y que Eurostat valide los datos, en la segunda mitad de abril. Basándose en él, la Comisión evaluará la desviación del déficit de 2011 y decidirá seguidamente si España ha tomado medidas efectivas para corregir la situación de déficit excesivo dentro del plazo acordado, esto es, 2013.

La Comisión adoptó el primer informe sobre el mecanismo de alerta, en el marco del procedimiento de desequilibrio macroeconómico, el 14 de febrero de 2012. A la luz de un cuadro de diez indicadores macroeconómicos, la Comisión identificó doce Estados miembros, entre ellos España, cuya situación macroeconómica ha de ser analizada con más detenimiento dentro de una evaluación en profundidad.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/02/14/economia/1329222113.html
([2]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1173/2011 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, sobre la ejecución efectiva de la supervisión presupuestaria en la zona del euro.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001833/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Manipulation of deficit figures in Spain

According to a report published on 14 February by Reuters ([1]), the Commission does not agree with the figure of an 8 % deficit announced in December 2011 by the Spanish Government, a difference that it blamed in large measure on the lack of budget cuts and the autonomous communities' failure to hit their targets. If this calculation of the deficit, which is not official, were confirmed, it would not match up with the target of 6 % agreed with Brussels. However, the information from Reuters, citing unnamed senior EU officials, is that the real deficit is much lower. Mariano Rajoy's government may be seeking, in this way, to manipulate the figures so as to glorify its possible achievements in 2012, as well as to find a scenario more favourable for pressing ahead with the budget cuts it is proposing.

The Union's spokesperson for Economic and Monetary Affairs did not want to give an opinion on the veracity of the deficit figures and merely gave a reminder that they are still not official. It is surprising that the Spanish Government is still calculating figures, and that it published them in December without their being definitive.

Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 ([2]) gives the Commission the ability to launch an investigation when it believes there are serious indicators that deficit figures have been distorted, and it will be able to demand that the Member State provide information, carrying out on-the-spot inspections and accessing the accounts of all central, regional and local government bodies, as well as those relating to social security.

1. Does the Commission have serious indications that the Spanish Government's deficit is appreciably lower than that announced by Mr Rajoy in December 2011?

2. If the Spanish Government had appreciably manipulated the figures, and pursuant to Article 8 of the abovementioned regulation, would the Commission launch an investigation? What type of penalties could the Spanish Government face?

3. Does the Commission not believe that the manipulation of calculations could affect the Alert Mechanism Report for reducing macroeconomic imbalances?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 April 2012)

On 27 February 2012, the Spanish Government announced first results for the 2011 budget execution, indicating that it expects the 2011 general deficit to have reached around 8.5 % of GDP. The Commission does not have any indications that Spain's 2011 government deficit would turn out appreciably lower than announced by the Spanish authorities.

The final budgetary outcome for 2011 will be known after the submission of the EDP notification by Spain at the end of March and the validation of the data by Eurostat in the second half of April. On this basis, the Commission will assess the 2011 deficit slippage to decide whether Spain has taken effective action to correct the excessive deficit situation by the agreed deadline of 2013.

The first Alert Mechanism Report in the framework of the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure was adopted by the Commission on 14 February 2012. Based on a scoreboard of 10 macroeconomic indicators, the Commission identified 12 Member States, including Spain, whose macroeconomic situation needs to be analysed further in an in-depth review.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/02/14/economia/1329222113.html
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1173/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council on the effective enforcement of budgetary surveillance in the euro area.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001834/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) και Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(15 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Κατάργηση γεωγραφικών διαφοροποιήσεων στον ΦΠΑ για τα ελληνικά νησιά

Στο πλαίσιο νέων επαχθών μέτρων φορολογικού χαρακτήρα, που απορρέουν από το νέο Μνημόνιο συνεργασίας για δημοσιονομική προσαρμογή και διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις μεταξύ της ελληνικής πλευράς και της Τρόικα, εντάσσεται και η κατάργηση των γεωγραφικών διαφοροποιήσεων στον ΦΠΑ για τα ελληνικά νησιά στην περιοχή του Αιγαίου. Σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις της κοινοτικής Οδηγίας 92/77/ΕΟΚ, που θεσπίζει το αναγκαίο νομικό πλαίσιο για την εφαρμογή του σχετικού ευνοϊκού καθεστώτος, οι γεωγραφικές διαφοροποιήσεις στον ΦΠΑ εξασφαλίζουν για τις εν λόγω νησιωτικές περιοχές μειωμένο συντελεστή ΦΠΑ κατά 30 % σε σύγκριση με αυτούς που εφαρμόζονται στην υπόλοιπη ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα. Επιπλέον, η Συνθήκη της Λισαβόνας επιβεβαιώνει τις ευνοϊκές αυτές ρυθμίζεις, καθώς επίσης και τις ειδικές πολιτικές για τα νησιά που παραχωρήθηκαν στην Ελλάδα με τη Συνθήκη του Άμστερνταμ.

Δεδομένου ότι ο μειωμένος συντελεστής του ΦΠΑ:

— ενισχύει την ανταγωνιστικότητα του νησιωτικού τουρισμού,

— αποτελεί σημαντικό αντιστάθμισμα ως προς το αυξημένο κόστος της μεταφοράς εμπορευμάτων στα νησιά καθώς και πολύτιμο εργαλείο τόσο για την οικονομική ανάπτυξη των εν λόγω περιοχών και την παραμονή των κατοίκων σε αυτές,

— συμβάλλει στο να μένουν ανταγωνιστικές οι νησιωτικές περιοχές ενός κράτους-μέλους οι οποίες λόγω άμεσης γεωγραφικής γειτνίασης αντιμετωπίζουν την έντονη ανταγωνιστική πίεση από τον χαμηλού κόστους τουρισμό που αναπτύσσεται σε γειτονικές τρίτες χώρες,

ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Σε ποια άλλα κράτη μέλη ισχύουν παρόμοιες γεωγραφικές διαφοροποιήσεις στον ΦΠΑ; Έχει απεμπολήσει κάποιο κράτος μέλος μέχρι σήμερα αντίστοιχο δικαίωμα σε ευνοϊκές ρυθμίσεις στον τομέα του ΦΠΑ;

— Ποιος αναμένεται να είναι, σύμφωνα με την Επιτροπή, ο αντίκτυπος της συγκεκριμένης κατάργησης της γεωγραφικής διαφοροποίησης του ΦΠΑ στην ανταγωνιστικότητα του συνολικού τουριστικού προϊόντος της χώρας; Θα οδηγήσει σε όξυνση της ήδη υπάρχουσας σοβαρής οικονομικής ύφεσης στις εν λόγω νησιωτικές περιοχές της Ελλάδας προς όφελος άλλων, εκτός ΕΕ, τουριστικών προορισμών;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Μαρτίου 2012)

Προκειμένου να ληφθεί υπόψη η γεωγραφική ιδιαιτερότητά τους (νησιωτικές ή απομεμακρυσμένες περιοχές), στην Πορτογαλία και την Αυστρία έχουν χορηγηθεί παρεκκλίσεις ανάλογες με τις ελληνικές ([1]). Η Πορτογαλία μπορεί να εφαρμόζει συντελεστές χαμηλότερους από εκείνους που εφαρμόζονται στην ηπειρωτική χώρα για τις συναλλαγές που πραγματοποιούνται στις αυτόνομες περιοχές των Αζορών και της Μαδέρας και η Αυστρία μπορεί να εφαρμόζει στις κοινότητες Jungholz και Mittelberg (Kleines Walsertal) έναν δεύτερο σταθερό συντελεστή, χαμηλότερο από τον αντίστοιχο συντελεστή που εφαρμόζεται στην υπόλοιπη Αυστρία, αλλά όχι μικρότερο από 15 %. Μέχρι σήμερα, τα κράτη μέλη αυτά δεν κατήργησαν την παρέκκλιση τους.

Η Επιτροπή σημειώνει ότι, με στόχο την προώθηση του τουρισμού στα νησιά και αλλού, και την αποφυγή του αρνητικού αντίκτυπου της αύξησης των έμμεσων φόρων στην ανταγωνιστικότητα της τουριστικής βιομηχανίας, οι συντελεστές ΦΠΑ για διαμονή σε ξενοδοχείο έχουν μειωθεί σημαντικά από το 2011, σε 6,5 τοις εκατό.

Για τα άλλα ερωτήματα, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση που έδωσε στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-012627/2011 ([2]).

([1]) Άρθρα 104 και 105 της οδηγίας 2006/112/ΕC του Συμβουλίου, της 28ης Νοεμβρίου 2006, σχετικά με το κοινό σύστημα φόρου προστιθέμενης αξίας — ΕΕ L 347 της 11.12.2006, σ. 1.

([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001834/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE) and Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Abolition of geographic differentiations regarding VAT for the Greek islands

Among the new harsh taxation measures deriving from the new Memorandum of collaboration in fiscal adaptation and structural reforms between Greece and the Troika are measures for abolishing geographical differentiations regarding VAT for Greek islands in the Aegean area. Under the provisions of Council Directive 92/77/EEC, which establishes the requisite legal framework for according favourable treatment, geographic differentiations for the insular regions in question result in VAT levels 30 % lower than those applicable in mainland Greece. Moreover, the Treaty of Lisbon confirms these favourable arrangements, as well as the special treatment of the islands that were accorded to Greece under the Treaty of Amsterdam.

Given that the lower VAT coefficient:

— strengthens the competitiveness of island tourism,

— represents a significant counterbalancing factor to the increased cost of transporting goods to the islands and a valuable tool both for the economic development of the regions in question and for encouraging inhabitants to remain in them,

— contributes to maintaining the competitiveness of the insular regions of a Member State which, on account of their direct geographical propinquity, face intense competitive pressure from low-cost tourism developing in neighbouring countries,

Will the Commission say:

— in which other Member States are analogous geographical differentiations being applied regarding VAT? Has any Member State to date abrogated its equivalent right to favourable VAT arrangements?

— what does the Commission expect will be the specific impact of the abolition of geographical differentiation regarding VAT on the competitiveness of the Greek tourist industry in general? Will it lead to aggravation of the existing serious economic recession in the Greek island areas concerned in favour of third-country tourist destinations?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

In order to take account of their particular geographical situation (insular nature or remoteness), Portugal and Austria have been granted derogations analogous to the Greek ones ([1]). Portugal may apply rates lower than those applying on the mainland on transactions carried out in the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira and Austria may apply a second standard rate which is lower than the corresponding rate applied in the rest of Austria but not less than 15 % in the communes of Jungholz and Mittelberg (Kleines Walsertal). To date, these Member State did not abrogate their derogation.

The Commission understands that, with the objective of promoting tourism in the islands and elsewhere, and avoid the negative impact of an increase in indirect taxes on competiveness of the tourism industry, the VAT rates for hotel accommodation has been substantially reduced since 2011 to 6.5 %.

For the other questions, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-012627/2011 ([2]).

([1]) Articles 104 and 105 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax — OJ L 347, 11.12.2006, p. 1.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001841/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Impianti mammari difettosi

Lo scorso mese di gennaio, la polizia ha arrestato il fondatore della società francese divenuta tristemente nota per la vendita di protesi mammarie al silicone difettose. Il rischio insito nelle protesi difettose è che il gel in esse contenuto, in caso di rottura, potrebbe avere conseguenze cangerogene.

Le protesi in oggetto sono state prodotte con materiale scadente non omologato, molto più economico rispetto all'originale, per permettere di risparmiare sulla materia prima ed ottenere un margine di guadagno elevato.

In tutto il mondo lo scandalo sanitario ha messo in allarme tra le 400 e 500mila donne, a cui sono state impiantate le protesi mammarie al silicone. Per comprendere l'entità e la gravità della situazione si consideri che la sanità francese ha raccomandato alle 30mila donne interessate di farsi asportare la protesi. In Italia gli interventi hanno riguardato 4 300 donne.

Preso atto della situazione più sopra esposta, può la Commissione far sapere se non ritiene:

1. che questo scandalo possa rappresentare un'opportunità per rivedere le regole sui controlli delle protesi e renderle più severe?

2. che, di fronte a situazioni simili, sia necessario un rafforzamento della cooperazione europea ed internazionale, considerato che più di 500mila persone, principalmente al di fuori dei confini dell'Unione europea, avrebbero utilizzato gli impianti in silicone dell'azienda francese in questione?

3. opportuno prendere in considerazione la possibilità di introdurre l'identificazione unica per ogni protesi prodotta, al fine di migliorare il sistema di tracciabilità degli impianti?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

Una revisione della legislazione sui dispositivi medici, che copre tra l'altro le protesi mammarie, era già prevista nel programma di lavoro della Commissione per il 2012 ([1]). Gli obiettivi principali della revisione sono migliorare la vigilanza e la sorveglianza del mercato in relazione a tutti i dispositivi medici, migliorare gli aspetti della designazione, del monitoraggio e del funzionamento degli organismi notificati e assicurare che i dispositivi medici siano debitamente valutati prima di essere immessi sul mercato europeo, nonché accrescere la tracciabilità dei dispositivi medici grazie a un sistema unico di identificazione dei dispositivi basato sul rischio. Il recente caso delle protesi PIP conferma che la Commissione aveva ragione di contemplare una revisione approfondita dell'attuale legislazione in tema di dispositivi medici. La Commissione sta analizzando attentamente il caso per assicurare che tutte le modifiche necessarie vengano incluse nelle proposte.

La Commissione ha anche preparato un elenco di misure che si potrebbero prendere immediatamente in forza della legislazione esistente al fine di rafforzare il sistema, in particolare per quanto concerne gli audit non preannunciati, le verifiche a campione e una migliore condivisione dei dati a livello europeo ma anche a livello mondiale con i nostri principali partner commerciali.

([1]) COM(2011)777 definitivo del 15.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001841/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Faulty breast implants

In January, the police arrested the founder of the French company which is now notorious for its sale of faulty silicone breast prostheses. The inherent risk of the faulty prostheses is that the gel they contain may cause cancer if the implants rupture.

These prostheses were manufactured with unapproved, sub-standard material, much cheaper than the original, so as to make savings on raw materials and obtain a higher profit margin.

The health scandal has been a cause of alarm for 400 000 to 500 000 women worldwide who have received silicone breast implants. In order to understand the extent and seriousness of the situation, it is to be noted that the French health service has advised 30 000 women to have their prostheses removed. In Italy, 4 300 women have been given the implants.

In light of the above, can the Commission explain whether it deems:

1. that this scandal provides an opportunity to review the regulations on the control of prosthesis and make them more stringent?

2. that it is necessary, faced with similar cases, to strengthen European and international cooperation, given that over 500 000 people, mainly outside the European Union, are believed to have used silicone implants from the French company in question?

3. that consideration should be given to introducing a unique identification for each manufactured prosthesis, in order to improve the traceability of implants?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

A revision of the legislation on medical devices, which covers among others breast implants, was already foreseen in the 2012 Commission Work Programme ([1]). The main objectives of this revision are to improve vigilance and market surveillance for all medical devices, strengthen the designation, monitoring and functioning of Notified Bodies to ensure that medical devices are appropriately assessed before their placing on the European market, and reinforce the traceability of medical devices by means of a risk-based Unique Device Identification system. The recent PIP case confirms that the Commission was right in envisaging a thorough revision of the current medical device legislation. The Commission is carefully analysing the case in order to ensure that all necessary changes are included in the proposals.

The Commission has also prepared a list of measures that could be taken immediately under existing legislation to reinforce the system, in particular with regard to unannounced audits, sample testing and better data sharing at European level but also at global level with our major trading partners.

([1]) COM(2011) 777 final, 15.11.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001842/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Violenza inaudita sui bambini in Siria

Secondo le recenti informazioni diffuse dall'Unicef, oltre 400 bambini sono stati uccisi in Siria durante gli intensi bombardamenti sui quartieri civili della città Homs da parte delle forze governative.

Inoltre, secondo le organizzazioni dei diritti umani locali, dallo scoppio delle violenze da marzo a fine gennaio, ci sono testimonianze di bambini e minori arrestati arbitrariamente, torturati e sessualmente abusati durante la detenzione.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

— se essa non ritenga opportuno seguire con la massima attenzione gli sviluppi della gravissima crisi in atto nel paese al fine di intervenire nelle sedi opportune?

— quali azioni ha già messo in campo e/o intende attuare per difendere i diritti inviolabili dei minori coinvolti nelle inaudite violenze di cui sopra?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2012)

L'UE ha ripetutamente condannato i brutali attacchi e le diffuse violazioni dei diritti umani commessi dal regime siriano nei confronti della sua popolazione, anche contro minori. Nelle sue dichiarazioni del 10 febbraio e dell'11 gennaio 2012, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha fatto esplicito riferimento alla violenta repressione in corso a Homs.

L'UE ha chiesto alle autorità siriane di rilasciare immediatamente tutte le persone arrestate o detenute illegalmente e di astenersi da qualsiasi atto di crudeltà, comprese le torture e le violenze sessuali. L'Unione ha invitato a fare pienamente chiarezza sulle conclusioni della commissione internazionale indipendente d'inchiesta, che hanno segnalato crimini contro l'umanità, e ha affermato che i responsabili di tali crimini devono essere assicurati alla giustizia.

Per aumentare la pressione sul regime siriano affinché ponga fine alle violenze e garantisca libero accesso agli aiuti umanitari, l'UE ha prorogato per 14 volte, dal maggio 2011, le misure restrittive adottate. Continua inoltre a insistere perché l'ONU intervenga in modo incisivo in Siria e accoglie con favore la dichiarazione rilasciata il 21 marzo 2012 dal presidente del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite a sostegno di Kofi Annan, inviato speciale dell'ONU e della Lega araba, e del suo piano in sei punti per la soluzione della crisi. Inoltre l'UE partecipa attivamente al gruppo «Amici del popolo siriano» che mira a ottenere un consenso internazionale per una soluzione pacifica della crisi.

In generale, la tutela e la promozione dei diritti dei minori rappresentano un principio fondamentale della politica estera ed interna dell'UE. In particolare, l'UE dà la massima priorità all'aiuto dei bambini coinvolti nei conflitti armati. Gli Orientamenti sui bambini e i conflitti armati impegnano l'Unione ad affrontare la questione in maniera globale e i capi missione dell'UE controllano e riferiscono al riguardo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001842/12
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Unprecedented abuse of children in Syria

According to information recently released by Unicef, more than 400 children have been killed in Syria during the intense bombing by government forces of civilian neighbourhoods in the city of Homs.

Furthermore, according to local human rights organisations, since the eruption of the violence in March 2011 to the end of January, there have been reports of children being arbitrarily arrested, tortured and sexually abused while in detention.

In light of the above:

— Is the Commission following developments in this very serious crisis in Syria with the utmost attention, so as to take action in the appropriate fora?

— What actions has it already implemented and/or does it intend to introduce, to defend the inviolable rights of the children suffering the aforementioned unprecedented abuse?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2012)

The EU has consistently condemned the brutal attacks and widespread human rights violations inflicted by the Syrian regime on its population, including children. In her statements of 10 February and 11 January 2012 the High Representative/Vice-President made explicit reference to the crackdown on Homs.

The EU has called on the Syrian authorities to immediately release all those illegally arrested or detained and to refrain from all acts of barbarism, including torture and sexual abuse. It called for a full investigation of the findings of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, which pointed to crimes against humanity, and affirmed that the perpetrators of such alleged crimes must be brought to justice.

To increase pressure on the Syrian regime to end the violence and grant unimpeded humanitarian access, the EU extended its restrictive measures 14 times since May 2011. It continues to press for strong UN action on Syria, welcoming the UN Security Council's Presidential Statement of 21 March 2012, backing the Joint UN-Arab League Envoy, Mr Kofi Annan, and his six point plan for a political solution to the crisis. Moreover, the EU is actively involved in the Friends of the Syrian People Group, which seeks to establish international consensus on a peaceful settlement to the crisis.

In general, the protection and promotion of the rights of the child is an overarching objective in the EU's external and internal policies. In particular, the EU accords a high priority to helping children facing armed conflicts. The EU Guidelines on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts commit the EU to addressing this issue in a comprehensive manner. The EU Heads of Missions monitor and report on children affected by armed conflicts.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001843/12
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Richiesta di blocco di conferimento di nuovi rifiuti nella discarica di Pescantina (VR), già causa di inquinamento della falda acquifera

La discarica Ca' Filissine, nel comune di Pescantina (VR), fin dal 1987 ha smaltito rifiuti solidi urbani, ma dal 2006 è stata posta sotto sequestro preventivo dalla magistratura per sospetta contaminazione della falda acquifera.

Le analisi effettuate dall'Agenzia Regionale per l'Ambiente del Veneto (ARPAV) nell'ottobre del 2011 hanno confermato che la qualità delle acque di falda è seriamente compromessa, essendo stata riscontrata la presenza di ammoniaca, cloruri, sodio, manganese, ferro, cromo, potassio.

Per ottenere il dissequestro della discarica, il comune di Pescantina ha presentato alla Regione Veneto un progetto di bonifica del sito che, al contempo, prevede un aumento della capacità totale netta della stessa, con modifica della sua destinazione da discarica per rifiuti solidi urbani a discarica per rifiuti speciali, e la gestione della discarica da pubblica a privata.

Questo importante progetto è stato direttamente affidato dal comune di Pescantina alla Daneco S.p.A., la ditta privata che attualmente ha in carico la gestione della discarica, senza bando di gara. L'8 febbraio 2012 il Consiglio Regionale del Veneto ha tuttavia approvato un ordine del giorno nel quale invita la giunta regionale a bloccare quest'opera di bonifica che, in realtà, rimette in esercizio la discarica e chiede alla Regione Veneto di attivarsi per reperire le eventuali risorse necessarie a realizzare il progetto di bonifica e messa in sicurezza del sito, d'intesa con la provincia di Verona e il comune di Pescantina.

— Ritiene la Commissione che affidare un progetto di tale portata direttamente a una singola azienda, senza sottoporlo alle garanzie previste nel quadro di un regolare bando pubblico, sia compatibile con la normativa comunitaria in materia di appalti pubblici (direttiva 2004/18/CE)?

— Non ritiene essa che i tempi, all'evidenza ancora incerti, per procedere all'effettiva bonifica del sito, possano ulteriormente compromettere lo stato già precario delle falde acquifere della zona, come già denunciato dall'ARPAV?

— Ritiene che la possibilità di conferire nuovamente rifiuti in un'area dove la falda acquifera risulta evidentemente contaminata sia coerente con le direttive 2000/60/CE (Acque), 2008/98/CE (Rifiuti) e 1999/31/CE (Discariche)?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2012)

In linea generale, gli obblighi previsti dalle direttive UE sugli appalti pubblici si applicano ogni qual volta le amministrazioni aggiudicatrici concludano con un'altra persona giuridica un contratto a titolo oneroso per lavori, servizi o forniture, i cui importi rispettino le soglie stabilite dalle direttive menzionate. Ciononostante, secondo la giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia, gli obblighi in materia di appalti pubblici non si applicano in caso di relazione «interna» (in house) tra un'amministrazione aggiudicatrice e un altro soggetto quando vengono rispettate determinate condizioni specifiche ([1]).

Per il caso cui si fa riferimento nell'interrogazione scritta, la Commissione non è in possesso di informazioni che evidenzierebbero una violazione delle norme UE in materia di appalti pubblici. Se l'onorevole parlamentare è in possesso di informazioni precise che dimostrino una violazione di dette norme, la Commissione sarà lieta di esaminarle.

Dalle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole parlamentare nell'interrogazione, sembra che le autorità competenti abbiano individuato il problema e intrapreso azioni correttive. Condividiamo l'opinione dell'onorevole parlamentare riguardo al fatto che qualsiasi azione correttiva debba essere intrapresa senza ulteriori ritardi e che le misure adottate debbano impedire ulteriori danni all'ambiente.

([1]) Cfr. ad es. la sentenza della Corte di giustizia, causa C-107/98, Teckal. Per un'analisi dettagliata del concetto di relazione «interna» (in-house) si rinvia al documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione SEC(2011)1169 def., disponibile al seguente indirizzo internet: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/docs/public_public_cooperation/sec2011_1169_it.pdf

La decontaminazione di una discarica e la successiva protezione sono processi specifici a un determinato sito e l'individuazione della soluzione migliore richiede l'opinione di esperti del sito in questione. La direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti ([2]) stabilisce disposizioni generali per quanto riguarda il funzionamento e la chiusura delle discariche e la direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti ([3]) e che abroga alcuna direttive, stabilisce disposizioni generali per la gestione sicura dei rifiuti. Tuttavia, le decisioni riguardo alla soluzione tecnica più appropriata per una determinata discarica devono essere prese dalle autorità nazionali competenti caso per caso, in linea con le normative dell'Unione e nazionali.

([2]) Direttiva 1999/31/CE relativa alle discariche di rifiuti, GU L 182 del 16.7.1999.
([3]) Direttiva 2008/98/CE relativa ai rifiuti, GU L 312 del 22.11.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001843/12
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Request to prohibit further disposal of waste at the Pescantina (Verona) waste disposal site, which is already polluting the water table

The Ca' Filissine rubbish dump, in the Municipality of Pescantina (Verona), has been used for the disposal of solid urban waste since 1987, but it has been placed under preventive seizure by the courts since 2006 for suspected contamination of the water table.

Analysis carried out by the Agenzia Regionale per l'Ambiente del Veneto (ARPAV) [Regional Environmental Agency for the Veneto] in October 2011 confirmed that the water quality was seriously compromised with the presence of ammonia, chlorides, sodium, manganese, iron, chromium and potassium.

In order to have the dump released from seizure, the Municipality of Pescantina has submitted a decontamination project for the site to the Regional Authority of Veneto, which also encompasses an increase in the total net capacity of the site, the modification of its status as a dump for solid urban waste to a site for special waste and a move from public to private management.

This important project was entrusted directly by the Municipality of Pescantina to Daneco S.p.A, the private company that is currently responsible for managing the dump, without any call for tenders. On 8 February 2012, the Veneto Regional Council approved an agenda, in which it invited the regional executive committee to block the decontamination project which, in effect, would bring the dump back into operation. It requested that the Veneto Regional Authority seek the necessary funding to enable it to carry out the decontamination project and make the site safe; this was in agreement with the Province of Verona and the Municipality of Pescantina.

— Does the Commission believe that entrusting a project of this importance directly to an individual company, without subjecting it to the guarantees inherent within the framework of a formal public call for tenders, is compatible with Community legislation concerning public tenders (Directive 2004/18/EC)?

— Does the Commission not believe that the time required, which is still unclear, to proceed with the proper decontamination of the site may further compromise the already precarious state of the water tables in the area, as already reported by ARPAV?

— Does the Commission believe that the possibility of once again disposing of waste in an area where the water table is clearly contaminated is in keeping with Directives 2000/60/EC (Water), 2008/98/EC (Waste) and 1999/31/EC (Waste Disposal Sites)?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

In general terms, the obligations of EU Public Procurement Directives apply whenever contracting authorities conclude with a different legal entity a contract for pecuniary interest for works, services or supplies whose value meet the specific thresholds of the directives. However, according to the ECJ case law, the public procurement obligations do not apply, in case of 'in house relationship' between a contracting authority and another entity, where specific conditions are met ([1]).

In this specific case, the Commission does not possess information that would highlight a violation of EU public procurement rules. If the Honourable Member has specific information showing that there is currently a violation of public procurement law, the Commission will be glad to assess this information.

According to information entailed in the question of the Honourable Member it appears that competent authorities have identified the problem and started corrective actions. We share the view of the Honourable Member that any corrective actions should be conducted without unnecessary delays and the measures taken should prevent further damage to the environment.

([1]) See for ex. ECJ judgment in Case C-107/98, *Teckal*. *An analysis of in-house concept is available in the Commission Staff Working Paper, SEC(2011) 1169 final, available on: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/docs/public_public_cooperation/sec2011_1169_en.pdf*

The decontamination and further protection of a waste dumping site is a very site-specific process and the choice of the best solution usually requires a site-specific expert opinion. The Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC ([2]) provides general requirements for the operation and closure of landfills, Directive 2008/98/EC on waste ([3]) sets out general requirements for safe waste management, but the decision as regards the most relevant technical solution for a particular landfill needs to be taken by the responsible national authorities on a case-by-case basis, in line with the EU and national legislation.

([2]) Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, OJ L 182, 16.7.1999.
([3]) Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001844/12
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Informazioni sull'applicazione della direttiva Servizi

In merito all'applicazione in ciascuno dei 27 Stati membri dell'Unione della direttiva 2006/123/CE, è possibile conoscere la situazione relativa alle autorizzazioni (articoli 11, 12 e 13 della direttiva)?

È possibile, in particolare, conoscere lo stato dell'applicazione della direttiva Servizi nei diversi Stati membri per quanto concerne le autorizzazioni per gli stabilimenti balneari e i venditori ambulanti su suolo pubblico?

È altresì possibile conoscere le soluzioni adottate in Germania, Francia e Spagna?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(20 aprile 2012)

Gli articoli 11-13 della direttiva 2006/123/CE (la «direttiva» ([1])), relativi alle autorizzazioni, sono stati oggetto di numerose risposte a interrogazioni scritte, che descrivono il contesto giuridico e l'impostazione della Commissione in materia di concessioni balneari (ad es. E-1282/2012) e venditori ambulanti (ad es. E-3916/2010).

Informazioni pertinenti sull'attuazione della direttiva in tutti gli Stati membri possono essere reperite nel documento della Commissione ([2]) che riassume i risultati della valutazione reciproca. Tale documento concerne tanto le autorizzazioni quanto la questione dei servizi e delle vendite ambulanti nel settore del turismo.

Attualmente non è in corso alcun procedimento di infrazione nei confronti degli Stati membri ai sensi degli articoli 11-13 della direttiva. Il procedimento di infrazione n. 4908/2008 relativo alle concessioni balneari in Italia è stato archiviato il 27 febbraio 2012, poiché le disposizioni nazionali rilevanti in tale caso, che prevedevano il rinnovo automatico delle concessioni, sono state abolite.

In Germania, diversi comuni hanno modificato le ordinanze relative ai mercati locali per introdurre gare d'appalto pubbliche e limiti di tempo per l'assegnazione delle postazioni per i banchi di vendita ai mercati locali.

In Francia, le concessioni balneari, ampiamente regolamentate a livello nazionale, possono interessare solo il 20 % del litorale e avere una durata massima di 12 anni.

([1]) Direttiva 2006/123/CE relativa ai servizi nel mercato interno.
([2]) COM(2011)20 definitivo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001844/12
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Information on the implementation of the Services Directive

With regard to the implementation of Directive 2006/123/EC in each of the 27 EU Member States, what is the situation concerning authorisations (Articles 11, 12 and 13 of the directive)?

In particular, what steps have been taken to date to implement the Services Directive in the Member States as regards authorisations for bathing establishments and street traders on public land?

What solutions have been adopted in Germany, France and Spain?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

Articles 11-13 of Directive 2006/123/EC (the 'directive' ([1])) concerning authorisations have been the subject of many answers to written questions, describing the legal background and the Commission's approach, in the area of beach concessions (e.g. E-1282/2012) and street traders (e.g. E-3916/2010).

Relevant information on the implementation of the directive in all Member States can be found in the Commission staff working paper ([2]) summarising the results of the mutual evaluation. It covers authorisations, as well as the sector of ambulant sales and services in the tourism sector.

There are currently no ongoing infringement procedures against Member States on the basis of Articles 11-13 of the directive. The infringement procedure No 4908/2008 regarding beach concessions in Italy has been closed on 27.2.2012 because the national provisions at stake, providing for the automatic renewal of those concessions, had been abolished.

In Germany, various municipalities have changed their local market ordinances to introduce open tendering procedures and time limitations for places for market stalls at local markets.

In France, beach concessions are extensively regulated at national level, they can only concern 20 % of the seaside and may last maximum 12 years.

([1]) Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market.
([2]) COM(2011) 20 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001845/12
aan de Commissie
Barry Madlener (NI)
(15 februari 2012)

Betreft: Myanmar krijgt 150 miljoen euro van EU

De Republiek van de Unie van Myanmar, het vroegere Birma, krijgt 150 miljoen aan ontwikkelingshulp van de Europese Unie. Eurocommissaris Piebalgs heeft bovendien gepleit voor beëindiging van de sancties tegen Myanmar als de „hervormingen" doorgaan.

Hervormingen? Amnesty International meldt in zijn jaarrapport 2011 dat in Myanmar de mensenrechten nog altijd aan de lopende band worden geschonden.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „EU geeft 150 miljoen euro steun aan Birma" en het jaarrapport 2011 van Amnesty International?

2. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat aan een land waar mensenrechten worden geschonden, zoals Myanmar, geen ontwikkelingshulp gegeven dient te worden? Zo neen, waarom niet?

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven op welke concrete hervormingen — verbeteringen in Myanmar Eurocommissaris Piebalgs zich baseert als hij stelt dat de sancties tegen Myanmar beëindigd zouden moeten worden, aangezien uit het jaarrapport 2011 van Amnesty International blijkt dat in Myanmar de vrijheid van meningsuiting nog altijd ver te zoeken is, hele dorpen door de autoriteiten worden geconfisceerd en etnische minderheden zwaar worden onderdrukt, waarbij regelmatig doden vallen?

Antwoord van de heer Piebalgs namens de Commissie
(23 april 2012)

De Europees commissaris voor Ontwikkeling heeft Myanmar bezocht na de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken van 23 januari 2012. Uit de conclusies van de Raad bleek dat de lidstaten positief stonden tegenover de politieke hervormingen door de regering en het parlement van Myanmar. Deze positieve veranderingen zijn met name: de stabilisering van de betrekkingen met de oppositie, de wijzigingen van de grondwet en ook van de wet op de inschrijving van politieke partijen, waardoor de NLD ([1]) de tussentijdse verkiezingen van 1 april 2012 kon betwisten, de vrijlating van een groot aantal politieke gevangenen, de oprichting van een nationale mensenrechtencommissie, de opstelling van nieuwe wetten inzake vakbonden en het recht van vrije vergadering, en grote inspanningen om etnische conflicten op te lossen.

De EU zal haar beperkende maatregelen — ook die op het gebied van ontwikkelingssamenwerking — herzien in april 2012. Om deze maatregelen te versoepelen of op te heffen is eenparige overeenstemming van de lidstaten vereist. Hierbij zal rekening worden gehouden met verschillende factoren, zoals het verloop van de tussentijdse verkiezingen van 1 april 2012, de vrijlating van politieke gevangenen, en de inspanningen inzake etnische conflicten.

De EU steunt de bevolking van Myanmar sinds 1996. De fondsen worden niet beheerd door de regering van Myanmar en de steun van de EU is vooral gericht op het verbeteren van de resultaten op het gebied van gezondheid en onderwijs, alsook op levensonderhoud. De EU-programma's bevorderen de rechten van de mens, helpen een groot aantal mensen die zijn ontheemd door conflicten, en versterken het maatschappelijk middenveld. Het pakket van 150 miljoen euro dat de commissaris voor Ontwikkeling onlangs heeft aangekondigd, zal deze programma's versterken. Meer dan de helft van dit bedrag bestaat uit extra financiering.

De Europese Unie volgt de situatie van de rechten van de mens op de voet, onder meer via programma's in het kader van het Europees instrument voor democratie en mensenrechten (EIDHR). Er wordt nu een voorstel voorbereid om de onlangs opgerichte nationale mensenrechtencommissie te ondersteunen.

([1]) NLD = de Nationale Liga voor Democratie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001845/12
to the Commission
Barry Madlener (NI)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Myanmar receives EUR 150 million from EU

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, formerly Burma, receives EUR 150 million from the European Union in development aid. European Commissioner Piebalgs has also called for the lifting of sanctions against Myanmar if 'reforms' continue.

Reforms? According to Amnesty International's 2011 Report, the violation of human rights is still widespread in Myanmar.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the report,'EU gives EUR 150 million in aid to Burma' and Amnesty International's 2011 Report?

2. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that no development aid should be given to a country where human rights are violated, such as Myanmar? If not, why not?

3. Can the Commission specify which concrete reforms/improvements in Myanmar European Commissioner Piebalgs means when he says that the sanctions against Myanmar should be lifted, while it appears from Amnesty International's 2011 Report that freedom of expression is still hard to find in Myanmar, the authorities confiscate land from whole villages and ethnic minorities suffer heavy suppression, which involves frequent killings?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

The Commissioner responsible for Development visited Myanmar after the Foreign Affairs Council of 23 January 2012. In the Council's conclusions, Member States welcomed the political reforms undertaken by the Myanmar Government and Parliament. The positive changes include the engagement with the opposition; amendments to the Constitution and the Party Registration Law allowing the NLD ([1]) to contest the by-elections on 1 April 2012; the release of many political prisoners; the creation of a National Human Rights Commission; new laws on trade unions and free assemby; and major efforts to resolve conflicts in ethnic areas.

EU restrictive measures, including on development cooperation, will be reviewed in April 2012. Unanimous agreement of Member States is required to ease or lift them. Factors that will be taken into consideration are the conduct of the 1 April 2012 by-elections , the release of political prisoners, and efforts to settle ethnic conflicts.

The EU has been supporting the people of Myanmar since 1996. Funds do not pass through the government and EU assistance focuses on improving health and education outcomes, as well as support to livelihoods. EU programmes promote the respect for human rights; help numerous people displaced as a result of conflict; and work to strengthen civil society. The EUR 150 million package recently announced by the Commissioner responsible for Development, over half of which is additional funding, will reinforce these programmes.

The EU follows the human rights situation very closely, including through programmes under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). A proposal is being prepared to support the newly created national Human Rights Commission.

([1]) NLD = National League for Democracy.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001846/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(15 februari 2012)

Betreft: Malmström: „Migranten nodig voor werkloosheid"

Op 6.2.2012 gaf Eurocommissaris Malmström namens de Commissie antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-011186/2011. Naar aanleiding daarvan de volgende vragen:

1. Zijn er momenteel restricties voor lidstaten op het verstrekken van werkvergunningen aan personen uit derde landen? Zo neen, wat is dan de toegevoegde waarde van de Commissie om een oordeel resp. strategie in dezen te hebben? Immers, in dat geval kunnen lidstaten ook zélf besluiten over aanvulling van hun, deels werkloze, beroepsbevolking met geselecteerde migranten.

2. Is de Commissie op grond van het bovenstaande en het subsidiariteitsbeginsel ertoe bereid haar rol op dit gebied te beëindigen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

In haar antwoord schrijft Malmström: „Migranten nemen vaak werk aan dat nationale onderdanen niet willen doen of vullen vacatures in waarvoor de binnenlandse beroepsbevolking de vaardigheden en kwalificaties niet bezit."

3. Kan de Commissie aangeven op welke feiten resp. statistieken zij zich baseert, wanneer zij stelt dat migranten vaak werk aan zouden nemen dat nationale onderdanen niet zouden willen doen? Hoe verhoudt zich dit tot de groter wordende werkloosheid en schooluitval onder niet-westerse allochtonen van de 1ste, 2de en 3de generatie?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(30 maart 2012)

Volgens het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de EU heeft de Unie onder andere tot taak een gemeenschappelijk immigratiebeleid te ontwikkelen. De lidstaten bepalen zelf hoeveel economische migranten zij toelaten.

De bijdrage van migranten kan door verschillende bronnen gestaafd worden. Zo heeft het „National Institute of Economic and Social Research" in het Verenigd Koninkrijk geen enkel verband gevonden tussen immigratie en werkloosheid ([1]). Uit recent Spaans onderzoek is gebleken dat 30 % van de groei van het bbp in de laatste 15 jaar te danken is aan migranten ([2]). Een Italiaans onderzoek bevond dat twee op drie nieuwe ondernemingen van de afgelopen tien jaar niet zouden bestaan zonder de input van niet-Europese werknemers ([3]).

In 2010 was 46,4 % van de onderdanen van derde landen tussen 20 en 64 jaar overgekwalificeerd voor hun arbeidsplaatsen, tegenover 21,2 % van de totale bevolking. 19,4 % van de onderdanen van derde landen in diezelfde leeftijdsgroep waren werkloos, tegenover 9,3 % van de totale bevolking. Het percentage voortijdige schoolverlaters onder de onderdanen van derde landen tussen 18 en 24 jaar was 33 %, tegenover 14,1 % van de totale bevolking in diezelfde leeftijdsgroep ([4]).

De hoge recente en huidige werkloosheidscijfers van de EU zijn te verklaren, niet enkel door een gebrek aan banen, maar ook door een gebrek aan overeenstemming tussen het werkaanbod en de kwalificaties van de werknemers. Het Europees centrum voor de ontwikkeling van de beroepsopleiding (Cedefop) voorspelt de evolutie van Europese kwalificaties om de risico's van het verschil tussen vraag en aanbod beter in te schatten ([5]). Tegen 2015 zullen er in de EU-economie naar schatting tussen 384 000 en 700 000 IT- specialisten te weinig zijn, en tegen 2020 tussen één en twee miljoen gezondheidswerkers te weinig ([6]). Migratie kan dit soort arbeidstekorten helpen te compenseren ([7]).

([1]) http://www.niesr.ac.uk/index.html
([2]) http://mpg-info.posterous.com/study-documents-migrants-contribution-to-spai
([3]) http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2011/01/07/news/senza_gli_stranieri_negli_ultimi_dieci_anni_ci_sarebbero_il_62_di_imprese_in_meno-10943825/
([4]) Bron: Eurostat, arbeidskrachtenenquête.
([5]) Skills Supply & Demand in Europe, medium term forecast up to 2020, Cedefop 2010.
([6]) COM(2010) 682 definitief, "Een agenda voor nieuwe vaardigheden en banen: een Europese bijdrage aan volledige werkgelegenheid"
([7]) Verslag van het Europees migratienetwerk "Voldoende arbeidskrachten dankzij migratie", van juni 2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001846/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Malmström: 'Migrants are needed to solve unemployment'

On 6 February 2012, European Commissioner Malmström gave an answer on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-011186/2011. Please answer the following questions in this connection.

1. Are there currently any restrictions for Member States on the issuing of work permits to persons from third countries? If not, what added value does the Commission's opinion have on Member States' strategy? After all, in that case, Member States can also decide themselves how to supplement their partially unemployed workforce with selected migrants.

2. Is the Commission prepared, on the basis of the above and the principle of subsidiarity, to terminate its role in this area? If not, why not?

Malmström writes in her answer: 'Migrants often do jobs which nationals do not want to do or fill vacancies where the domestic workforce does not have the skills and qualifications needed.'

3. Can the Commission specify the facts or statistics on which it bases its statement that migrants often take jobs that nationals do not want to do? How does this relate to the increasing unemployment and incidence of dropping out of school among non-Western immigrant populations of the first, second and third generation?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

Under the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, one of the tasks of the Union is to develop a common immigration policy. In this context, Member States are responsible for the number of economic migrants they admit.

Evidence of the contribution of migrants comes from various sources. For example, research by the UK's National Institute of Economic and Social Research found no link between immigration and unemployment ([1]). Recent Spanish research found that 30 % of GDP growth in the last 15 years was generated by migrants ([2]). An Italian study found that in the last 10 years two new enterprises out of three would not exist without the input from non-European workers ([3]).

In 2010, 46.4 % of third-country nationals aged 20-64 were overqualified for their jobs, compared to 21.2 % of the total population. 19.4 % of third-country nationals in the same age group were unemployed, compared to 9.3 % of the total population. The rate of early school leaving among third-country nationals aged 18-24 was 33.0 %, compared to 14.1 % of the total population in the same age group ([4]).

The EU's recent and current high unemployment rates are not only due to the absence of jobs, but also due to a serious mismatch between the jobs on offer and the skills people have. Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) provides European skill forecasts to better understand the risks of mismatches between supply and demand ([5]). It is estimated that by 2015 the EU economy could lack between 384 000 and 700 000 IT workers and by 2020, between one and two million health-sector professionals ([6]). Migration can play a role in dealing with these sorts of labour shortages ([7]).

([1]) http://www.niesr.ac.uk/index.html
([2]) http://mpg-info.posterous.com/study-documents-migrants-contribution-to-spai.
([3]) http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2011/01/07/news/senza_gli_stranieri_negli_ultimi_dieci_anni_ci_sarebbero_il_62_di_imprese_in_meno-10943825/.
([4]) *Source:* Eurostat, Labour Force Survey.
([5]) Skills Supply & Demand in Europe, medium term forecast up to 2020, Cedefop 2010.
([6]) COM(2010) 682 final, Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment.
([7]) Study from the European Migration Network on 'Satisfying Labour Demand through Migration', June 2011.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001847/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(15 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja humanitarna w Afganistanie

Według danych UNICEFu, około 20 % Afgańczyków umiera nim ukończy pięć lat. Czytać i pisać potrafi tylko 49 % Afgańczyków między 15 a 24 rokiem życia i 18 % Afganek z tej samej grupy wiekowej. Afganistan to kraj, który jest usytuowany najniżej we wszystkich rankingach gospodarczych państw na świecie. Śmiertelność dzieci jest większa niż w Afryce. Brakuje podstawowej opieki medycznej, brakuje szkół.

W 2011 r. w wyniku suszy ucierpiało około 3 mln mieszkańców tego kraju. Społeczność jest dodatkowo osłabiona przez konflikty i niedostateczny rozwój kraju. W zeszłym roku KE przekazała na rzecz pomocy humanitarnej w Afganistanie 33 mln euro. Są jednak obawy, że kwota ta może być niewystarczająca ze względu na tegoroczną surową zimę.

W związku z tym zwracam się z zapytaniem:

— Czy Komisja zamierza w tym roku zwiększyć pomoc humanitarną dla Afganistanu?

— Jakie są długofalowe działania mające na celu walkę z analfabetyzmem w Afganistanie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Kristalinę Georgijewą w imieniu Komisji
(16 kwietnia 2012 r.)

W 2011 r. wzrosło zapotrzebowanie na pomoc humanitarną w Afganistanie – głównie ze względu na skutki trwającego konfliktu. Klęski żywiołowe (susze, powodzie i trzęsienia ziemi) dodatkowo potęgują ubóstwo ludności afgańskiej i jej podatność na zagrożenia. Wiele społeczności wyczerpało już możliwości, jakie dają tradycyjne mechanizmy obronne, co zwiększa ich wrażliwość na wszelkie dodatkowe wstrząsy.

W 2011 r. z unijnego budżetu sfinansowano pomoc humanitarną o wartości 34,5 mln euro – była to pomoc na rzecz ludności dotkniętej konfliktami lub katastrofami naturalnymi, jak również na rzecz osób powracających. Komisja podjęła działania po ogłoszeniu prognoz klastra ds. bezpieczeństwa żywności i rolnictwa, przewidujących potencjalną suszę. Przeprowadziła również ocenę potrzeb w ramach trzech specjalnych misji na wyżynie centralnej i na północy Afganistanu. W rezultacie budżet na działania w Afganistanie został zwiększony o 1,5 mln euro. W związku z suszą przyznano 4,5 mln euro na pomoc humanitarną.

Komisja jest również zaangażowana w działania z zakresu pomocy humanitarnej na rzecz wewnętrznych przesiedleńców, których liczba wciąż wzrasta, w tym osób żyjących w nieformalnych osiedlach powstałych wokół Kabulu, oczekujących na pomoc ze strony władz lokalnych w znalezieniu trwałego rozwiązania.

Pierwotny budżet na 2012 r. na pomoc humanitarną UE w Afganistanie wynosi 30 mln euro. Konsekwencje suszy, jaka miała miejsce w 2011 r., są na bieżąco monitorowane przez partnerów zaangażowanych w działania humanitarne. Prowadzone są również rozmowy z darczyńcami pomocy rozwojowej w celu powiązania pomocy doraźnej z długoterminowym i gwarantującym trwały rozwój podejściem do problemu okresowych suszy.

Walka z analfabetyzmem stanowi poważny problem: Afganistan ma jeden z najwyższych wskaźników analfabetyzmu w świecie, zwłaszcza na obszarach wiejskich i wśród kobiet. Kilka państw członkowskich w ramach odnośnych programów dwustronnych podejmuje działania w zakresie szkolnictwa, nadając im charakter priorytetowy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001847/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Humanitarian situation in Afghanistan

According to Unicef data, around 20 % of children in Afghanistan die before reaching their fifth birthday. Only 49 % of males and 18 % of females aged 15 to 24 in Afghanistan can read and write. Afghanistan is ranked lowest in all world economic rankings. Child mortality is higher than in Africa. There is a lack of basic medical care and schools.

The 2011 drought caused suffering for around three million people in the country. The people are further weakened by conflicts and the country's lack of development. Last year, the European Commission funded a EUR 33 million humanitarian aid package for Afghanistan. However, there are fears that this sum may be insufficient in view of this year's harsh winter.

In connection with the above, I should like to ask the following:

— Is the Commission intending to increase its humanitarian aid package for Afghanistan this year?

— What long-term measures are in place to combat illiteracy in Afghanistan?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

Humanitarian needs increased in 2011 in Afghanistan mainly due to the consequences of the ongoing conflict. Also, poverty and vulnerability across Afghanistan are compounded by natural disasters (droughts, floods and earthquakes). Many communities have exhausted their traditional coping mechanisms and are thus more vulnerable to any additional shock.

In 2011, the European Union budget funded a EUR 34.5 million humanitarian aid package to assist conflict and disaster affected populations as well as new returnees. The Commission was active after the announcement of a potential drought in the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster and through needs assessments in three specific missions in the central highlands and northern Afghanistan. Following this, the budget for Afghanistan was increased by EUR 1.5 million. In total EUR 4.5 million in humanitarian assistance was allocated in response to the drought.

The Commission is also involved in humanitarian assistance delivery to the growing number of Internally Displaced People including people living in informal settlements around Kabul and who are awaiting assistance from local authorities in finding a sustainable solution.

The initial EU humanitarian aid budget for Afghanistan in 2012 is EUR 30 million. The consequences of the 2011 drought are monitored by humanitarian partners. Discussions are held with development donors to ensure a link between relief and a sustainable development approach to the problems of recurrent droughts.

Fighting illiteracy is a serious challenge as Afghanistan has one of the highest rates of illiteracy in the world, particularly in rural areas and among women. Several Member States are addressing the education sector as a priority in their bilateral programmes.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001848/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(15 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Tratado sobre o Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade (MEE)

— A ajuda proveniente do Fundo Europeu de Estabilização Financeira (FEEF) e do Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI) consiste na abertura de uma linha de financiamento especial, cujo montante terá em conta as necessidades brutas de refinanciamento público e privado e deverá contemplar cenários de erosão de depósitos;

— Trata-se de um programa de intervenção que, a curto prazo, irá procurar robustecer os níveis de confiança dos investidores externos, promover a sustentabilidade das finanças públicas e a estabilidade do sistema financeiro, por forma a assegurar o normal funcionamento da economia;

— Segundo os valores apurados, o FEEF já disponibilizou quase 200 mil milhões de euros para apoiar Grécia, Irlanda e Portugal, representando um compromisso de aproximadamente 45 % do valor global do FEEF, que é de 440 mil milhões de euros;

— No entanto, o FEEF não tem capacidade para financiar grandes Estados-Membros com problemas económicos e financeiros, dado que a dívida pública de Espanha é praticamente equivalente à dívida agregada de Portugal, Grécia e Irlanda (780 mil milhões de euros), e a dívida de Itália é superior ao somatório da dívida destes quatro países juntos (1 900 mil milhões de euros);

— Neste sentido, em outubro de 2011, os Estados-Membros decidiram aumentar o FEEF de 440 mil milhões para 1 bilião de euros, mas esta iniciativa nunca chegou a ser concretizada;

— No Conselho Europeu de janeiro de 2012, foi aprovado o novo Tratado sobre o Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade (MEE) que, durante a fase transitória, terá uma dotação combinada com o FEEF de 500 mil milhões de euros. No entanto, o artigo 8.° refere que o capital autorizado é de 700 mil milhões de euros;

— A 13 de fevereiro de 2012, o Presidente da República de Portugal, Professor Doutor Aníbal Cavaco Silva, referiu que seria bom dotar o MEE com mais 200 mil milhões de euros;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Qual o valor com que efetivamente o MEE estará dotado para apoiar os Estados-Membros em dificuldades económicas e financeiras? Qual a diferença entre a capacidade de financiamento (500 mil milhões de euros) e o capital autorizado (700 mil milhões de euros)?

2. Estando a Itália e Espanha com dificuldades em se financiarem nos mercados internacionais e podendo ser necessário ativar instrumentos financeiros de apoio, considera o valor do MEE suficiente?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2012)

1. O artigo 39.° do Tratado que cria o MEE ([1]) especifica que a capacidade de financiamento conjunta do MEE e do FEEF ([2]) não pode exceder 500 000 milhões de euros. Na prática, tal significa que o MEE deve possuir uma capacidade de financiamento de cerca de 300 000 milhões de euros, tendo em conta que cerca de 200 000 milhões já foram disponibilizados pelo FEEF. No entanto, a adequação da capacidade máxima de financiamento conjunta do MEE e do FEEF será reavaliada antes da entrada em vigor do Tratado.

O capital do MEE foi fixado em 700 000 milhões de euros, dos quais 80 000 milhões de euros serão efetivamente realizados de forma gradual pelos Estados-Membros. Este montante foi determinado com o objetivo de eventualmente atingir autonomamente uma capacidade de financiamento efetiva de 500 000 milhões de euros e ao mesmo tempo obter as devidas notações de qualidade das agências de notação de risco.

2. A Comissão é favorável a um reforço do Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade.

([1]) Tratado que cria o Mecanismo Europeu de Estabilidade.
([2]) Fundo Europeu de Estabilização Financeira.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001848/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Treaty on the European Stability Mechanism

— Aid from the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) and the International Monetary Fund consists of opening a special line of credit for a sum that will take into account the gross public and private refinancing needs and should make provision for deposit-erosion scenarios;

— This is an intervention programme that will seek, in the short term, to shore up the confidence of foreign investors, and to promote the sustainability of public finances and the stability of the financial system, so as to ensure that the economy functions normally;

— According to the figures that have been calculated, the EFSF has already made some EUR 200 billion available to support Greece, Ireland and Portugal, which represents a commitment of approximately 45 % of the EFSF's total of EUR 440 billion;

— However, the EFSF does not have the capacity to finance large Member States with economic and financial problems, since Spain's public debt is almost the same as the combined debts of Portugal, Greece and Ireland (EUR 780 billion), and Italy's debt is larger than the combined debt of all four of these countries (EUR 1.9 trillion);

— As such, in October 2011, the Member States decided to increase the EFSF from EUR 440 billion to EUR 1 trillion, but this initiative has not come into force;

— At the January 2012 European Council, the new treaty on the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) was adopted which, during its transitional stage and combined with the EFSF, will have an allocation of EUR 500 billion. However, Article 8 states that the authorised capital stock is EUR 700 billion;

— On 13 February 2012, the Portuguese President , Professor Aníbal Cavaco Silva, said that it would be a good idea to allocate a further EUR 200 million to the ESM;

Can the Commission:

1. indicate the real amount that will be allocated to the ESM to support Member States in economic and financial difficulties, and specify the difference between the funding capacity (EUR 500 billion) and the authorised capital (EUR 700 million);

2. state, since Italy and Spain are finding it difficult to finance themselves on the international markets and it could be necessary to activate financial support instruments, whether it considers the ESM allocation to be sufficient?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

1. Article 39 of the ESM ([1]) Treaty specifies that the consolidated ESM and EFSF ([2]) lending shall not exceed EUR 500 billion. In practice, this means the ESM should have a lending capacity of around EUR 300 billion, considering that around EUR 200 billion will have been already committed by the EFSF. However, the adequacy of the consolidated ESM and EFSF maximum lending volume will be reassessed prior to the entry into force of the Treaty.

The capital of the ESM has been set at EUR 700 billion, out of which EUR 80 billion will effectively be paid in by Member States progressively. This amount has been determined with the objective of potentially reaching autonomously an effective lending capacity of EUR 500 billion while obtaining the appropriate high-quality ratings from credit rating agencies.

2. The Commission favours a reinforcement of the ESM.

([1]) Treaty Establishing the European Stability Mechanism.
([2]) European Financial Stability Facility.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001849/12
à Comissão
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(15 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Nova taxa de carbono a aplicar pela Comissão

Tendo em conta que:

— A Comissão Europeia aprovou uma nova diretiva destinada à proteção do ambiente, nomeadamente uma taxa de carbono que entrou em vigor a 1 de janeiro de 2012. A título de exemplo, a Europa pretendia que todas as companhias aéreas pagassem o equivalente a 15 por cento das suas emissões de CO_2, cerca de 32 milhões de toneladas, para lutar contra o aquecimento global;

— No dia 6 de fevereiro de 2012, o Congresso dos Estados Unidos da América condenou a legislação europeia sobre as emissões de carbono dos aviões e pediu ao Governo americano para fazer tudo o que for possível para combater a taxa de carbono europeia;

— As autoridades chinesas proibiram as companhias aéreas do país de pagarem as taxas sobre as emissões poluentes impostas pela União Europeia;

— A China, os Estados Unidos, a Rússia e outros 23 dos 36 membros da Organização Internacional da Aviação Civil rejeitam os argumentos europeus;

— O presidente da Airbus, Tom Enders, manifestou-se «verdadeiramente preocupado» com as consequências da cobrança de uma taxa de carbono às companhias aéreas a operar na União Europeia;

— Em Portugal, a adoção da presente diretiva no setor refinador irá implicar um investimento de 40 milhões de euros por ano nas refinarias de Sines e de Matosinhos;

Pergunta-se à Comissão:

1. Considera apropriado manter a taxa de carbono em vigor, quando os mais prejudicados serão as empresas europeias?

2. Não considera que a taxa de carbono irá criar uma descriminação negativa das empresas europeias face às suas congéneres internacionais, provocando uma diminuição da competitividade da Europa?

3. Quais as futuras medidas a adotar pela Comissão com vista a solucionar este problema?

Resposta dada por Connie Hedegaard em nome da Comissão
(28 de março de 2012)

A UE incluiu a aviação no seu regime de comércio de licenças de emissão. A legislação vigente não é uma nova Diretiva da Comissão. Trata-se de uma Diretiva do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, que foi adotada em 2008 pelo procedimento de codecisão por uma maioria esmagadora no Parlamento e com o apoio de todos os Estados-Membros.

O regime de comércio de licenças de emissão da UE não é um imposto ou uma taxa aplicada ao carbono. Trata-se de um mecanismo que fixa um limite máximo de emissões e é flexível no modo como este pode ser respeitado. A inclusão das emissões da aviação internacional em sistemas nacionais/regionais de comércio de licenças de emissão foi a via expressamente preferida e subscrita pela ICAO (Organização da Aviação Civil Internacional, no âmbito da ONU) em 2004.

O referido regime da UE aplica-se sem distinção de nacionalidades, respeitando assim o princípio da não-discriminação. As companhias aéreas europeias também consideraram este aspeto importante quando a diretiva foi elaborada. A maior parte — 85 % em 2012 e 82 % a partir de 2013 — das licenças destinadas à aviação serão atribuídas gratuitamente às companhias aéreas. O restante será leiloado pelos Estados-Membros. Prevê-se, portanto, que o custo suplementar que o regime da UE implicará por passageiro seja muito baixo. Em princípio, os operadores que conseguirem reduzir as suas emissões para níveis inferiores ao correspondente às licenças que receberem gratuitamente não terão de pagar nada.

A Comissão mantém-se firme na sua posição de que os operadores de outros países que voem de e para a União Europeia terão de respeitar a legislação da UE e o primado do Direito.

A Comissão tem conhecimento das reservas levantadas por alguns países terceiros à inclusão da aviação no seu regime de comércio de licenças de emissão e tem vindo a tomar iniciativas com vista ao debate da matéria bilateralmente e ao nível da ICAO, a fim de superar tais preocupações. Está, além disso, firmemente empenhada em colaborar com os outros países no âmbito da ICAO com vista à consecução do objetivo de medidas a nível mundial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001849/12
to the Commission
Nuno Teixeira (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: New carbon tax to be implemented by the Commission

The Commission has adopted a new directive aimed at environmental protection and introducing a carbon tax, which came into force on 1 January 2012. For example, Europe envisages that all airlines will pay the equivalent of 15 % of the cost of their CO_2 emissions (around 32 million tonnes) to combat global warming.

On 6 February 2012, the United States Congress condemned the European legislation on carbon emissions from aircraft and called on the US Government to do everything possible to fight the European carbon tax.

The Chinese authorities have banned the country's airlines from paying the taxes on pollutant emissions imposed by the European Union.

China, the US, Russia and another 23 of the 36 members of the International Civil Aviation Organisation have rejected the EU's arguments.

The Chief Executive of Airbus, Tom Enders, has said he is 'really worried' about the consequences of levying a carbon tax on the airlines operating in the European Union.

In Portugal, the adoption of this directive in the refinery sector will involve an annual investment of EUR 40 million in the refineries of Sines and Matosinhos.

In view of the above, the Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. Does it consider it appropriate to keep the carbon tax in place when those hit hardest will be European companies?

2. Does it not believe that the carbon tax will create negative discrimination against European companies compared to their international counterparts, causing Europe to be less competitive?

3. What measures does the Commission plan to adopt in future to solve this problem?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The EU has included aviation in its emissions trading scheme (EU ETS). The legislation is not a new Commission Directive but a directive of the European Parliament and the Council adopted through co-decision by an overwhelming majority in the Parliament and with support of all Member States in 2008.

The EU ETS is not a carbon tax or charge. It is a mechanism that sets an emissions ceiling and provides flexibility in terms of meeting that ceiling. The inclusion of international aviation emissions in national/regional emissions trading systems is an approach which was expressly preferred and endorsed by the UN's International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in 2004.

The EU ETS applies without distinction as to nationality and thus respects the principle of non-discrimination. This was an important point also for the European airlines when the law was made. The majority of the allowances for aviation, *85 % in 2012 and 82 % starting from 2013, will be distributed to airlines free of charge. The remainder will be auctioned by Member States. The extra cost of the EU ETS per passenger is therefore expected to be very low. In principle an operator need not pay anything if he can manage to reduce his emissions to below the level of free allocations received.*

The Commission remains firm in its position that operators from other States who choose to fly to and from the EU must respect EU legislation and the rule of law.

The Commission is aware of the concerns about the inclusion of aviation in the EU ETS expressed by some third countries, and is engaging actively in discussions both bilaterally and in ICAO in order to address these concerns. The Commission remains fully committed to working collaboratively with other states in ICAO towards the objective of global action.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-001850/12
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(15. februar 2012)

Om: Udenlandsk arbejdskraft ansættes på falske forudsætninger på fynske gartnerier

Et dansk, regionalt medie (P4 Fyn) har de seneste dage sat fokus på forholdene på fynske gartnerier. Her bliver der ofte brugt udenlandsk arbejdskraft, fordi det er billigere. Mange af udlændingene er lokket til gartnerierne på falske forudsætninger om at tjene langt mere og bo langt bedre, end tilfældet er. Disse mennesker udnyttes groft af arbejdsgiverne samtidig med, at de skubber lokal arbejdskraft væk. Desuden har der i danske medier været en række historier om unge danskere, der er taget til sydeuropæiske ferieområder for at arbejde under falske forudsætninger. De europæiske arbejdstagere skal kunne stole på de løfter, som de får om arbejdsforhold.

Jeg er bekendt med, at Kommissionen i marts vil fremlægge et direktiv til bedre håndhævelse af reglerne i udstationeringsdirektivet. Mit spørgsmål er:

Vil Kommissionen tage initiativer til at sanktionere arbejdsgivere, der ikke lever op til de løfter, de har givet den vandrende arbejdskraft vedrørende løn og boligforhold?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(4. april 2012)

I overensstemmelse med akten for det indre marked ([1]) vedtog Kommissionen den 21. marts 2012 to lovgivningsmæssige forslag om en ændring af lovrammen for udstationering af arbejdstagere i forbindelse med tjenesteydelser. Et af forslagene, det såkaldte håndhævelsesdirektiv ([2]), sigter på at forbedre og styrke gennemførelsen, anvendelsen og håndhævelsen i praksis af direktiv 96/71/EF om udstationering af arbejdstagere som led i udveksling af tjenesteydelser, herunder foranstaltninger med henblik på at forebygge og straffe ethvert misbrug eller omgåelse af de gældende regler.

For at øge beskyttelsen af vandrende arbejdstagere fremlagde Kommissionen endvidere i 2010 et forslag til et direktiv om tredjelandsstatsborgeres sæsonarbejde ([3]), hvis mål er at regulere betingelserne for indrejse, ophold og rettigheder for vandrende arbejdstagere fra tredjelande. Forslaget er i øjeblikket ved at blive forhandlet i Europa-Parlamentet og Rådet, og når det engang er vedtaget, bør det kunne forebygge udnyttelse af vandrende arbejdstagere fra tredjelande. Det skal dog tilføjes, at Danmark ikke medvirker i vedtagelsen af dette direktiv, og direktivet er derfor ikke bindende for og finder ikke anvendelse i Danmark.

([1]) Meddelelse fra Kommissionen af 13. april 2011 — Akten for det indre marked — Tolv løftestænger til at skabe vækst og øget tillid — »Sammen om fornyet vækst«, KOM(2011)0206 endelig.

([2]) Forslag til Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets direktiv om håndhævelse af direktiv 96/71/EF om udstationering af arbejdstagere som led i udveksling af tjenesteydelser, KOM(2012)0131 endelig.

([3]) KOM(2010)0379 endelig.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001850/12
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Foreign labour employed on false pretences on horticultural farms on the island of Funen

A Danish regional media outlet (P4 Fyn) has recently been focusing on conditions on horticultural farms on Funen. Foreign labour is often used on those farms because it is cheaper. Many foreign workers are lured to such farms under false pretences on the understanding that they will earn much more and live much better than is actually the case. They are grossly exploited by employers and at the same time push the local labour force out. There have also been a number of reports in the Danish media about young Danes taken to southern European holiday areas to work under false pretences. European workers must be able to have faith in what they are promised with regard to working conditions.

I am aware that, in March, the Commission will submit a directive to improve application of the rules under the Posted Workers Directive.

Will the Commission act to penalise employers who fail to deliver on the promises they have made to migrant workers with regard to pay and living conditions?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

In line with the single market Act ([1]), the Commission adopted on 21 March 2012 two legislative proposals concerning the revision of the legislative framework on the posting of workers in the context of the provision of services. One of the proposals, the so-called enforcement Directive ([2]), aims at improving and reinforcing the transposition, implementation and enforcement in practice of Directive 96/71/EC on the posting of workers in the context of the provision of services, including measures to prevent and sanction any abuse and circumvention of the applicable rules.

Furthermore, in order to increase the protection of migrant workers, in 2010, the Commission presented the proposal for a directive on seasonal employment of third-country migrants ([3]) which aims to regulate the entry and residence conditions, and rights of third-country nationals. The proposal is currently being negotiated by the Parliament and the Council and, once adopted, it should be instrumental in preventing exploitation of third-country migrants. However, it needs to be added, that Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this directive, and it will not be bound by it or subject to its application.

([1]) Communication from the Commission of 13 April 2011, Single Market Act — Twelve levers to boost growth and strengthen confidence, 'Working together to create new growth', COM(2011) 206 final.

([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services, COM(2012) 131 final.

([3]) COM(2010) 379 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001851/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Discrimination based on nationality — internal market rules and Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights

A recent newspaper article in London's *Daily Mail* has suggested that Disneyland Paris is discriminating against visitors to the theme park who are not resident in France. The article interviews UK residents who have not been able to secure discounted tickets to the park as they were only available to those with a billing address in France. The offer allows French residents to buy one-day tickets for entry to the park for EUR 44 for adults. UK residents have to pay GBP 50 (EUR 59) for adults.

Would the Commission confirm whether or not Disneyland Paris is entitled to offer discounted tickets on the basis of residency, and would it not agree that, according to internal market rules and Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, natural persons in the European Union may not be discriminated against on grounds of nationality?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

This practice is dealt with by Article 20 § 2 of Directive 2006/123/EC on Services in the internal market. According to this provision 'Member States shall ensure that the general conditions of access to a service, which are made available to the public at large by the provider, do not contain discriminatory provisions relating to the nationality or place of residence of the recipient (…)'.

However, differences in the conditions of access are allowed 'where those differences are directly justified by objective criteria'. As clarified in Recital 95 of the Services Directive, objective justifications for a different treatment could include different market conditions, such as demand influenced by seasonality or different vacation periods and pricing by different competitors.

The European Commission is aware of this issue with Disneyland Paris. The operators of Disneyland Paris have responded to a previous similar complaint raised by the Luxembourg European Consumer Centre (ECC) that they do pursue different pricing policies in different EU countries, but that if a customer wishes to avail of a price on offer to customers on another country version of their website, they will be facilitated if they phone the customer service department at the number on the reservations page. The Commission was not aware of further problems arising from the billing address.

Article 20(2) of the Services Directive is implemented in the law of each Member State. It is therefore up to the relevant French authorities to enforce this provision upon service providers established in France. United Kingdom citizens can obtain assistance with this issue through the European Consumer Centre for Services (www.ukecc-services.net).

The Commission will be issuing guidance to Member States to help them with the enforcement of this provision.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001852/12
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Technical Assistance Information Exchange Office (TAIEX) missions and substantial financial assistance to Turkish-occupied Cyprus

One of the main objectives of the substantial financial assistance provided by the Commission to Turkish-occupied Cyprus is to 'help the Turkish Cypriot community to be ready to implement EU rules (*acquis communautaire*) in case of a comprehensive settlement'.

Given that the Commission is spending millions of euros on TAIEX missions to the northern part of Cyprus, the main objective of which is to provide assistance in the preparation of legal texts aligned with the *acquis communautaire*, would the Commission consider an urgent TAIEX mission to Cyprus to assist the authorities in the north with amending Chapter 154 of the Criminal Code?

The amendments in question would repeal the north's ban on homosexuality, which is both outdated and outrageous. I have entreated Turkish Cypriot leader Dr Eroğlu to repeal the north's gay ban on a number of occasions. He has promised to do so, but the ban remains on the statute books, and arrests continue to take place. I am certain that a TAIEX mission would help speed up the process of amendment. I understand that TAIEX missions are usually 'demand-driven' on the part of the recipient partner, but I believe in this case that the Commission should intervene to make this a priority ahead of all other TAIEX missions.

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 March 2012)

The Commission has expressed its readiness to the Turkish Cypriot community to assist it, through the TAIEX instrument, in drafting an amendment aiming at decriminalising homosexual relations in the northern part of Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot community responded positively to the Commission's proposal and work on the amendment is ongoing.

The Commission will continue to monitor developments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001853/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Credit checks in the recruitment process

In the current economic climate, financial institutions, as part of their recruitment process, are seeking credit checks on potential employees. This is now becoming an issue for many jobseekers who find themselves failing such credit checks as a result of a poor credit rating.

However, in some cases the reason for this failure is simply that these potential recruits have never used credit and therefore have not built up any credit history to be examined.

Therefore, I wish to ask the Commission if there are any mechanisms in place to ensure that such citizens do not find themselves at a disadvantage in the job market as a result of not using any form of credit?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

There is no specific EU legislation regulating the conditions under which employers may check the credit rating of potential employees as part of the recruitment process. Member States remain competent to establish conditions that would govern this checking.

The processing of personal data that a credit checking of potential employees implies is subject to Directive 95/46/EC ([1]). The directive requires that personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully, they must be adequate, relevant and not excessive and for specified and legitimate purposes. Moreover a decision solely based on automated processing of personal data intended to evaluate creditworthiness, performance at work, reliability of a person must be subject to suitable safeguards to protect that person's legitimate interests and allowing him/her to put his/her point of view. This can be the case where a decision is taken on the basis of the absence or existence of a credit record history. Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation, including the processing of personal data in the context of employment by employers, falls under the competence of national authorities, in particular data protection supervisory authorities. The Commission has no competence to monitor the compliance by data controllers, investigate possible cases of non-compliance, or to impose penalties.

([1]) OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001854/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Bovine TB

In relation to controlling the spread of bovine TB, what measures does each Member State have in place to deal with the spread of TB between wildlife and farm animals?

What measures, for example targeted culling of wildlife, do Member States have in place to reduce/control the level of TB in wildlife?

Under the EU TB Eradication Programme, which Member States have provision for targeted culling of infected wildlife, and does this limit their ability to export animals or products within the EU or globally?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission follows the TB situation in the Member States and provides them with financial support. The Commission is aware of the ongoing consideration of how best to tackle wildlife involvement in the disease. However, this is a very specific problem for which no EU harmonised legislation is in place and it is therefore in the first instance for the Member States authorities concerned to identify which the most suitable approach to address the problem may be. The approved EU co-financed TB eradication programme implemented in Ireland, for example, provides for an interim wildlife strategy which involves the capture and removal of badgers associated with bovine tuberculosis breakdowns and a Government funded Wildlife research Programme to establish the efficacy and to quantify the effects of vaccinating badgers, in support of the eradication of tuberculosis from the bovine population.

Intra EU trade rules on bovine animals are laid down in Directive 64/432/EEC ([1]) of 26 June 1964 on animal health problems affecting intra-Community trade in bovine animals and swine and international standards as regards bovine tuberculosis are set by the terrestrial code of the World Organisation for Animal health (OIE). Both sets of rules are aligned to and based on the same principles.

([1]) OJ L 121, 29.7.1964.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001856/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(15. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Budgetzuweisung Horizon 2020 im Bereich Gesundheitsforschung

Bezug nehmend auf das aktuelle Rahmenprogramm Horizon 2020 der Kommission wurden hier lediglich 10 % für die Gesundheitsforschung vorgesehen, während im vorherigen Rahmenprogramm 12 % der Geldmittel für die Gesundheitsforschung vorgesehen wurden. Dies geschieht trotz der deutlichen Herausforderungen, vor denen die EU und ihre Mitgliedstaaten im Gesundheitsbereich stehen.

1. Welche wirtschaftliche Förderung wird im Bereich der Gesundheitsforschung zur Verfügung stehen, um Innovation und Wachstum zu gewährleisten, und wie kann die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit Europas im Bereich der Gesundheitsforschung durch das Horizon-2020-Rahmenprogramm gewahrt werden?

2. Glaubt die Kommission an eine europäische Initiative, die die biomedizinische und klinische Forschung zentralisiert und koordiniert und einen bedeutenden Mehrwert schafft, indem sie sich der derzeitigen zersplitterten Forschungslandschaft in Europa widmet, und unterstützt sie diese?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(21. März 2012)

Obwohl die Frau Abgeordnete Recht hat mit ihrer Aussage, dass im Vorschlag von „Horizont 2020“ das Budget für Forschung im Bereich Gesundheit, demographischer Wandel und Alterung proportional gesehen kleiner ist als im Siebten Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und technologische Entwicklung (RP7, 2007-2013), liegt der betreffende Betrag absolut gesehen jedoch höher und zwar um 33 Prozent. Außerdem kann die Gesundheitsforschung auch vom Europäischen Forschungsrat oder durch die Marie-Curie-Maßnahmen in „Horizont 2020“ gefördert werden, wobei die Budgets dieser beiden Programme, in absoluten Zahlen, ebenfalls gestiegen sind. „Horizont 2020“ soll verstärkt Innovationen unterstützen, und der Inhalt des oben erwähnten Vorschlags spiegelt dies wider.

Die Kommission unterstützt jegliche Initiative, die unsere gemeinsame Fähigkeit verbessert, jenen gesellschaftlichen Herausforderungen, die im „Horizont 2020“-Vorschlag zu Gesundheit, demographischer Wandel und Alterung beschrieben werden, gerecht zu werden, und möchte festhalten, dass dazu nicht unbedingt eine Zentralisierung der Maßnahmen notwendig ist.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001856/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Horizon 2020 budget allocation in the area of health research

With reference to the Commission's recent Horizon 2020 Framework Programme; while 12 % of the budget was allocated to health research under the previous framework programme, just 10 % has been allocated under Horizon 2020. This is in spite of the clear health challenges that the EU and its Member States are facing.

1. What economic support will be available in the area of health research in order to ensure innovation and growth, and how can the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme maintain Europe's research competitiveness?

2. Does the Commission believe in and support a European initiative that would centralise and coordinate biomedical and clinical research, and which would provide significant added value by addressing the current fragmented research landscape in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2012)

Though the Honourable Member is correct that proportionally, the proposal for research addressing the challenge of health, demographic change and ageing in Horizon 2020 appears smaller than in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013), the amount devoted to health research is greater in absolute terms, an increase of 33 %. Similarly, health research may also be supported through the European Research Council and Marie Curie schemes in Horizon 2020, each of which has also seen an increase in their absolute terms budgets. A greater focus is placed on supporting innovation in Horizon 2020 and this is reflected in the content of the abovementioned proposal.

The Commission supports any initiative that improves our collective ability to respond to the societal challenges described in the health, demographic change and ageing theme of the Horizon 2020 proposal and notes that these do not necessarily need to imply centralisation.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001858/12
do Komisji
Sławomir Witold Nitras (PPE)
(15 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Sposób badania opinii na temat negocjacji z ACTA

Osobą odpowiedzialną za prowadzenie prac związanych z umową handlową dotyczącą zwalczania obrotu towarami podrabianymi (ACTA) był komisarz Unii Europejskiej Karel De Gucht odpowiedzialny za handel międzynarodowy. Istnieje obawa, że traktat ACTA poza handlem międzynarodowym ingeruje również w kwestie poszanowania szeroko pojętych praw człowieka. Internauci w Polsce obawiają się, iż ich prawo do wolności myśli, słowa oraz wolności głoszenia poglądów w sieci po wprowadzeniu traktatu zostanie naruszone.

— W związku z opisaną sytuacją pragnę zapytać, dlaczego konsultacje w sprawie ACTA nie były prowadzone z komisarzem ds. sprawiedliwości?

— Dodatkowo chciałbym się dowiedzieć, czy Komisja przekaże komisarz Viviane Reding do konsultacji i analizy traktat ACTA w kontekście łamania praw wolności słowa w Internecie i szeroko rozumianych praw obywatelskich? Jeśli tak, to w jakim terminie nastąpiłoby to działanie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Karela De Guchta w imieniu Komisji
(12 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Na przestrzeni lat Unia Europejska opracowała kompleksowy system ochrony własności intelektualnej. W unijnym prawodawstwie określono prawa, które mogą podlegać ochronie, i sposoby jej egzekwowania. Zawiera ono także gwarancje praw obywateli w zakresie wolności słowa, swobodnego dostępu do informacji oraz ochrony danych.

Umowa ACTA pozwoli rozszerzyć korzyści płynące z tego systemu poza granice UE. Stanowi ona niewielki, ale znaczący krok w walce z podrabianiem towarów i piractwem w skali globalnej – przemysłem, którego wartość szacowana jest na ponad 200 mld EUR rocznie. Dlatego też negocjacje prowadzone były przez Dyrekcję Generalną ds. Handlu, we współpracy z wszelkimi innymi odpowiednimi służbami Komisji oraz odpowiednimi ministerstwami państw członkowskich UE.

ACTA nie daje mandatu do monitorowania osób, poczty elektronicznej lub blogów. Nie powierzy ona prywatnym dostawcom usług internetowych wypełniania zadań policji. Nie będzie też dawać funkcjonariuszom celnym mandatu do kontrolowania laptopów lub odtwarzaczy MP3. Zdaniem Komisji ACTA nie narusza podstawowych praw i wolności zagwarantowanych w traktacie lizbońskim.

W odpowiedzi na obawy wyrażane przez zainteresowane strony Komisja postanowiła jednak zwrócić się do Trybunału Sprawiedliwości Unii Europejskiej, aby ocenił, czy ACTA jest w jakikolwiek sposób niezgodna z prawami podstawowymi UE.

Te konsultacje, a także zaangażowanie Komisji w otwarte debaty w Parlamencie Europejskim i w parlamentach narodowych, mają na celu ułatwienie konkretnej i opartej na faktach dyskusji oraz umożliwiają podjęcie, zarówno w Parlamencie Europejskim, jak i w parlamentach narodowych, w pełni świadomej decyzji uwzględniającej rzeczywiste skutki ACTA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001858/12
to the Commission
Sławomir Witold Nitras (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Gauging opinion on ACTA negotiations

The person responsible for carrying out work relating to the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) was Commissioner Karel De Gucht, who is responsible for international trade. There is concern that ACTA, besides affecting international trade, may have a negative impact on respect for human rights in their broadest sense. Internet users in Poland are concerned that their right to freedom of thought and expression, as well as their freedom to express their views over the Internet, will be violated after the introduction of the treaty.

— Why have no consultations been held regarding ACTA with the Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship?

— Will the Commission forward ACTA to Commissioner Viviane Reding for consultation and analysis with regard to the violation of the right to freedom of expression over the Internet and of wider civil rights? If so, when would this occur?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

Over the years, the European Union has built up a comprehensive system to protect intellectual property. EU legislation has outlined the rights that can be protected and the means to enforce them. It also contains safeguards for the rights of citizens to free speech and free access to information and data protection.

ACTA is a means to extend the benefits of this system beyond the EU's borders. It represents a small but significant step towards stamping out the global counterfeiting and piracy industry — an industry that is estimated to be worth over EUR 200 billion a year. This is why the negotiations were led by Directorate-General Trade, in coordination with all other relevant Commission services as well as with the relevant Ministries of EU Member States.

ACTA will not mandate monitoring of individuals' e-mails or blogs. It will not subcontract the functions of the police to private Internet service providers. It will not mandate the inspection of laptops or MP3 players by customs officials. The Commission believes that ACTA does not undermine fundamental rights and freedoms as guaranteed by the Treaty of Lisbon.

However, in order to respond to concerns voiced by different stakeholders, the Commission has decided to ask the European Court of Justice to assess whether ACTA is in any way incompatible with the EU's fundamental rights.

This consultation, as well as the engagement of the Commission in open debates at the European Parliament and in national Parliaments, are intended to facilitate a concrete and fact based discussion and allow for a fully informed decision about the real effect of ACTA, both in the European and national Parliaments.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001859/12
an die Kommission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(15. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Europäische Schulen in Brüssel — geografische Kriterien — Berkendael

1. Ist der Standort Berkendael den Europäischen Schulen so lange überlassen worden, wie er benötigt wird, und könnte er somit auch über das Schuljahr 2011/2012 hinaus zur Verfügung stehen?

2. Wie hoch sind konkret — ohne Verweis auf die allgemeine Haushaltslinie — die Kosten für die Schulbusse der Europäischen Schulen für den Unionshaushalt insgesamt und pro den Schulbus in Anspruch nehmenden Schüler?

3. Die Kommission verantwortet die für die Europäischen Schulen getätigten Ausgaben ebenso wie die Schulbuskosten, die über die Erziehungszulage erstattet werden — gleichzeitig hat sie sich selbst strenge Umweltschutzauflagen gemacht (vgl. C(2009)6873). Wie kann sich die Kommission dann auf den Standpunkt stellen, dass sie eine Einschreibepolitik nicht ändern kann, die dazu führt, dass täglich 200 Busse mehrere Tausend Kinder nicht an die nächstgelegene Europäische Schule mit der entsprechenden Sprachsektion in Brüssel transportieren?

4. Wie kann die Kommission davon ausgehen, dass die Eltern geografische Kriterien bei der Wahl der bevorzugten Schule „weitgehend berücksichtigen" können, wenn die Einschreibepolitik 2012 für Brüssel für eine Einschreibung ohne Prioritätskriterium (Geschwisterkind o. Ä.) in die Sprachsektionen EN, DE, IT und NL überhaupt keine Möglichkeit vorsieht, eine andere Schule als Laeken auszuwählen?

5. Kann die Kommission, um ihre Antwort zu belegen, dass Eltern zumindest in der Vergangenheit bei der Schulwahl geografische Kriterien berücksichtigen konnten, Statistiken über den Prozentsatz der Einschreibeanträge ohne Prioritätskriterium (Geschwisterkind o. Ä.) für die Sprachsektionen EN, FR, DE, IT und NL in den Jahren 2009, 2010 und 2011 vorlegen, die tatsächlich der Schule der 1. Wahl zugewiesen worden sind?

6. Was wird die Kommission jetzt, wo Belgien eine ständige Regierung hat, unternehmen, um bis September 2012 eine Lösung für die mehreren Hundert Schüler zu finden, die auch im Schuljahr 2012/2013 gern weiter am Standort Berkendael zur Schule gehen möchten?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(11. April 2012)

Die Kommission ist dabei, die zur Beantwortung der Frage benötigten Informationen zusammenzutragen. Sie wird die Ergebnisse so bald wie möglich mitteilen.

Ergänzende Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(7. Mai 2012)

1. Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf den ersten Absatz ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-10334/2011 ([1]).

Die Régie des Bâtiments (RdB) ([2]) hat bestätigt, dass die Schule Berkendael ab September 2012 zur vorübergehenden Unterbringung von Schülern der Europäischen Schule I (Brüssel) genutzt werden kann, solange dies während der Renovierungsarbeiten an dem Gebäude „Reine Fabiola" erforderlich ist.

2. Im Schuljahr 2010/2011 hat das Amt für die Feststellung und Abwicklung individueller Ansprüche (PMO) 4 472 313 EUR für den Transport zu den Europäischen Schulen ausgegeben. Zur Frage der Beförderungskosten je Schüler verweist die Kommission auf die Antwort zur schriftlichen Anfrage E-10841/2011 ([3]).

3. Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-10841/2011, Punkt 4. Zudem weist sie auf das grundsätzliche Problem der Überbelegung hin (im Falle der Schulen Brüssel II und III mehrere Hundert Schüler), die der Aufnahmekapazität dieser Schulen bedauerlicherweise physische Grenzen setzt.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.
([2]) Die föderale belgische Liegenschaftsverwaltung.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/.

4. Die vom Obersten Rat der Europäischen Schulen beschlossenen Aufnahmeleitlinien für das Schuljahr 2012/2013 enthalten die folgende Anweisung: „Die neuen Ressourcen am Standort Laeken sollen genutzt werden, um die Schule Brüssel IV weiter aufzufüllen und die Überbelegung an den anderen Schulen so weit wie möglich zu reduzieren“ ([4]). Deswegen wird die Einschreibung in Sprachsektionen, die in der Schule Brüssel IV angeboten werden, sehr restriktiv gehandhabt.

5. Ein Anhang mit einer Auflistung der Prozentsätze der Einschreibeanträge ohne Prioritätskriterien, bei denen dem Erstwunsch bei der Schulwahl entsprochen wurde ([5]), geht dem Herrn Abgeordneten und dem Sekretariat des Parlaments direkt zu.

6. Die Kommission hat den Obersten Rat im Dezember 2011 und im April 2012 von dem Wunsch einiger Eltern aus Berkendael unterrichtet, ihre Kinder auch im Schuljahr 2012/2013 in Berkendael zu lassen. In beiden Fällen hat der Rat dem Ansinnen der Kommission nicht entsprochen.

([4]) Dokument 2011-09-D-75-en-1.

([5]) Die Statistiken hat die Kommission am 7.3.2012 vom Generalsekretariat der Europäischen Schulen erhalten. Der Anteil der Schüler, deren Erstwunsch erfüllt werden konnte, lag 2009 bei 90,4 %, 2010 bei 80 % und 2011 bei 74 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001859/12
to the Commission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: European Schools in Brussels — geographical criteria — Berkendael

1. Has the Berkendael site been handed over to the European Schools for as long as it is needed, so that it could continue to be available beyond the 2011/2012 academic year?

2. Without reference to the general budget line — what are the precise costs to the EU budget as a whole of the school buses for the European Schools and for each schoolchild using the school bus service?

3. The Commission is responsible for expenditure on the European Schools and for the school bus costs, which are reimbursed through the education allowance. At the same time it has set itself strict environmental protection standards (cf. C(2009)6873). How can the Commission argue that it is unable to alter an enrolment policy that means that 200 buses carrying several thousand children each day do not transport their charges to the nearest European School with the appropriate language section in Brussels?

4. How can the Commission assume that parents can 'largely take geographical criteria into account' when choosing their preferred school, when the 2012 enrolment policy for Brussels does not provide for enrolment without priority criteria (siblings, etc.) in the EN, DE, IT and NL language sections in any school other than Laeken?

5. In order to back up its claim that parents were able to take geographical criteria into account when choosing schools in the past at least, can the Commission provide statistics regarding the percentage of enrolment applications without priority criteria (siblings, etc.) for the EN, FR, DE, IT and NL language sections in 2009, 2010 and 2011 that were actually allocated to the school of first choice?

6. Now that Belgium has a permanent government, what will the Commission do to find a solution by September 2012 for the several hundred schoolchildren who wish to continue to attend school in Berkendael in the 2012/13 academic year?

Preliminary answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

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

Supplementary answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

1. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to his Written Question P-10334/2011 ([1]), first paragraph.

The Régie des Bâtiments (RdB) ([2]), has confirmed the possibility to use the Berkendael school to temporarily house pupils from the European School of Brussels I from September 2012 and as long as necessary during the renovation works of the Reine Fabiola building.

2. In 2010/2011, the Office for Administration and Payment of individual entitlements (PMO) paid EUR 4 472 313 for school transport to the European Schools. Concerning the price per pupil, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to his Written Question E-10841/2011 ([3]).

3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-10841/2011, point 4. Furthermore, the Commission points to the fundamental problem of the existing overcrowding (several hundreds of children in the case of Brussels II and III) which regrettably puts a physical limit on the intake in these schools.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/
([2]) The Belgian federal buildings Agency.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/

4. The guidelines for the enrolments for the school year 2012/2013 as decided by the Board of Governors (BoG) contain the following instructions: 'Use the new resources on the Laeken site to continue to fill the Brussels IV School and to lessen the overcrowding of the other schools as much as possible' ([4]). Consequently, a very restrictive enrolment policy is in force for the language sections open in Brussels IV.

5. An Annex regarding the percentage of enrolments without priority criteria obtaining school of first choice ([5]) is sent directly to the Honourable Member and to Parliament's Secretariat.

6. The Commission presented the request from some parents in Berkendael to have the possibility to stay in the School in 2012/2013 to the BoG in December 2011, as well as in April 2012. In both cases BoG did not approve the Commission's request.

([4]) Document 2011-09-D-75-en-1.

([5]) Statistics obtained from the Secretary General of the European Schools 7/3/2012. The overall proportion of applications being attributed the school of first choice was in 2009: 90.4 %, in 2010: 80% and in 2011: 74%.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001860/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(15 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προβλήματα δανειοδότησης επιχειρήσεων και νοικοκυριών στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση

Σύμφωνα με τις δύο πιο πρόσφατες έρευνες τραπεζικών χορηγήσεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας (Οκτώβριος 2011 και Ιανουάριος 2012) τα χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα μείωσαν τις πιστώσεις σε επιχειρήσεις και νοικοκυριά τόσο το τρίτο όσο και το τέταρτο τρίμηνο του 2011. Μάλιστα οι τράπεζες της ευρωζώνης προβλέπουν περαιτέρω αυστηροποίηση των πιστωτικών κριτηρίων όσον αφορά τα δάνεια προς μη χρηματοπιστωτικούς οργανισμούς κατά τη διάρκεια του πρώτου τριμήνου του 2012 (συνολικά κατά 25 %), λόγω των αρνητικών οικονομικών προοπτικών και της κρίσης χρέους της ευρωζώνης που υπονομεύουν την οικονομική κατάσταση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα ([1]). Παράλληλα, σύμφωνα με την Capital Economics, οι αφερέγγυες επιχειρήσεις, που έχουν περισσότερα χρέη από περιουσιακά στοιχεία και ροές κεφαλαίων, αναμένεται να αυξηθούν κατά 12 % φέτος, ενώ στις ΗΠΑ ο αντίστοιχος ρυθμός υποχωρεί. Οι μεγαλύτερες αυξήσεις αναμένονται σε χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα, η Ισπανία και η Ιταλία.

Βάσει των μελετών της ΕΚΤ η στενότητα χρηματοδότησης δείχνει να παγιώνεται μεσοπρόθεσμα για την πλειονότητα των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ πέραν της Γερμανίας.

Πώς αντιμετωπίζει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή τις προβλέψεις αυτές δεδομένης της αύξησης του αριθμού των επιχειρήσεων που χαρακτηρίζονται αφερέγγυες, τις δυσχέρειες χρηματοδότησης του κλάδου αλλά και της περαιτέρω διεύρυνσης των ανισορροπιών εντός της ευρωζώνης και της εσωτερικής αγοράς σε όρους ενίσχυσης της επιχειρηματικότητας εντός της ΕΕ (ανάπτυξη των υπαρχουσών και δημιουργία νέων);

Απάντηση του κ. Tajani εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή έχει επίγνωση των δυσκολιών που αντιμετωπίζουν ορισμένες ευρωπαϊκές επιχειρήσεις όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση στη δανειοδότηση. Ενώ οι πράξεις μακροπρόθεσμης αναχρηματοδότησης της ΕΚΤ ([2]) ενδέχεται να οδηγήσουν σε βελτίωση των όρων δανεισμού για τις επιχειρήσεις, η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει τη δανειοδότηση μικρών και μεσαίων επιχειρήσεων (ΜΜΕ) μέσω του μηχανισμού εγγύησης δανείων του προγράμματος-πλαισίου ανταγωνιστικότητας και καινοτομίας (ΠΑΚ): μέχρι το Σεπτέμβριο του 2011 είχαν κινητοποιηθεί εγγυήσεις άνω των 5 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ, που αναμένεται να υποστηρίξουν δάνεια άνω των 11 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ. 155 000 ΜΜΕ επωφελήθηκαν από το ΠΑΚ, ενώ μέχρι το τέλος του προγράμματος, ο αριθμός των δικαιούχων αναμένεται να υπερβεί τους 300 000.

Μετά το ΠΑΚ θα ακολουθήσει το πρόγραμμα για την ανταγωνιστικότητα των επιχειρήσεων και των ΜΜΕ ([3]) (COSME), το οποίο προτείνεται να παρέχει κεφαλαιακή και δανειακή διευκόλυνση ύψους 1,4 δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ σε συνδυασμό με το πρόγραμμα Ορίζοντας 2020 ([4]). Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή ενέκρινε ένα σχέδιο δράσης ([5]) με μέτρα για τη βελτίωση της πρόσβασης των ΜΜΕ σε χρηματοδότηση. Οι ενέργειες που υποστηρίζουν την πρόσβαση στη δανειοδότηση περιλαμβάνουν την προώθηση ποιοτικών αξιολογήσεων και την πιστωτική διαμεσολάβηση. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή θα εξετάσει τα κατάλληλα μέτρα για την αντιμετώπιση της στάθμισης κινδύνου των ΜΜΕ στο πλαίσιο της οδηγίας για τις κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις ([6]), βάσει ανάλυσης από την Ευρωπαϊκή Αρχή Τραπεζών.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/stats/money/surveys/lend/html/index.en.html

([2]) Οι πρόσφατες πράξεις μακροπρόθεσμης αναχρηματοδότησης της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας παρέσχαν σημαντική επιπλέον ρευστότητα στον τραπεζικό τομέα, ο οποίος θα πρέπει επίσης να υποστηρίξει τον δανεισμό του εταιρικού τομέα.

([3]) COM(2011)834 τελικό, πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση προγράμματος για την ανταγωνιστικότητα των επιχειρήσεων και τις μικρομεσαίες επιχειρήσεις (2014-2020), 30/11/2011.

([4]) COM(2011)809 τελικό, πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου για τη θέσπιση του προγράμματος πλαισίου για την έρευνα και την καινοτομία «Ορίζοντας 2020» (2014-2020), 30/11/2011.

([5]) Ανακοίνωση COM(2011)870 τελικό, 7/12/2011.

([6]) Η πρόταση οδηγίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου COM(2011)453 τελικό και η πρόταση κανονισμού του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου COM(2011)452, που αντικαθιστούν τις τρέχουσες οδηγίες για τις κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις (οδηγίες 2006/48 και 2006/49), επιβάλλουν μεγαλύτερες και καλύτερης ποιότητας κεφαλαιακές απαιτήσεις για τις τράπεζες και ενίσχυση των κανόνων για τη διαχείριση του κινδύνου ρευστότητας. Όλες αυτές οι πρωτοβουλίες είναι συγκεντρωμένες στην ανακοίνωση του 2008 ανακοίνωση «Προτεραιότητα στις μικρές επιχειρήσεις — Μια Small Business Act για την Ευρώπη» [COM(2008)394 τελικό], η οποία στη συνέχεια συμπληρώθηκε από την ανακοίνωση του 2011 «Ανασκόπηση της πρωτοβουλίας "Small Business Act" για την Ευρώπη» [COM(2011)78 τελικό].

Η Επιτροπή έχει προτείνει διάφορες πρωτοβουλίες για την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας. Οι περισσότερες από αυτές υιοθετήθηκαν από το Συμβούλιο Ανταγωνιστικότητας του Μαΐου 2011, το οποίο έθεσε συγκεκριμένους στόχους και δράσεις για την Επιτροπή και τα κράτη μέλη ([7]). Η παρακολούθηση αυτών των δεσμεύσεων έχει ενισχυθεί με τη δημιουργία το 2011 του δικτύου των εθνικών απεσταλμένων των ΜΜΕ ([8]). Το ΠΑΚ ήδη χρηματοδοτεί δραστηριότητες για την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας όπως η κινητικότητα για τους επιχειρηματίες, ένα πρόγραμμα καθοδήγησης για τις γυναίκες επιχειρηματίες, καθώς και δραστηριότητες για την εκπαίδευση σχετικά με την επιχειρηματικότητα, που θα συνεχιστούν από το 2014, μέσω του COSME.

([7]) Έγγραφο 10975/11 του Συμβουλίου.
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/sme-envoy/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001860/12
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Problems of loan provisioning for businesses and households in the European Union

According to two recent European Central Bank (ECB) studies on bank lending (October 2011 and January 2012) financial institutions reduced credit provisioning to businesses and households in both the third and fourth quarters of 2011. Banks in the euro one in fact predict a further tightening of credit criteria for loans to non-financial bodies in the first quarter of 2012 (by 25 % overall) given the unfavourable economic prospects and the credit crisis of the eurozone which are sapping the economic strength of the financial sector ([1]). At the same time, according to Capital Economics, there is expected to be a 12 % increase this year in the number of insolvent businesses, which have more debts than assets and capital inflows, whereas in the USA the numbers are declining. The greatest increases are expected in countries such as Greece, Spain and Italy.

On the basis of the ECB studies, funding is likely to remain scarce in the medium term for the majority of EU Member States aside from Germany.

Faced with these predictions and given the increase in the number of businesses being declared insolvent, the difficulties encountered in sectoral financing and the spreading imbalance within the eurozone and the internal market, what steps does the European Commission propose to take in terms of strengthening entrepreneurial initiative inside the EU (developing existing enterprises and establishing new ones)?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the difficulties some European businesses are facing regarding access to credit. While the long-term refinancing operations of the ECB ([2]) might translate into improved credit conditions for businesses, the Commission, is supporting lending to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through the loan guarantee facility of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP): by September 2011 more than EUR 5 billion of guarantees had been mobilised which should support over 11 billion EUR of loans; 155 000 SMEs have benefited from CIP, with over 300 000 beneficiaries expected by the end of the programme.

The CIP will be followed by the Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs ([3]) (COSME), which is proposed to contribute 1.4 billion EUR to a debt and an equity instrument implemented in conjunction with Horizon 2020 ([4]). Moreover, the Commission adopted an Action Plan ([5]) with measures to improve access to finance for SMEs. Actions supporting access to credit include the promotion of qualitative ratings and credit mediation. The Commission will also consider appropriate measures addressing the SME risk weightings in the context of the Capital Requirements Directive ([6]), based on an analysis by the European Banking Authority.

The Commission has put forward several initiatives to promote entrepreneurship. Most of these were taken up by the May 2011 Competitiveness Council which set specific actions and targets for the Commission and Member States ([7]). Follow-up of these commitments has been reinforced through the creation in 2011 of the network of National SME Envoys ([8]). The CIP already funds activities to promote entrepreneurship such as mobility for entrepreneurs, a mentoring scheme for female entrepreneurs and activities in entrepreneurship education, which will be continued as of 2014 by COSME.

([1]) http://www.ecb.int/stats/money/surveys/lend/html/index.en.html
([2]) The recent long-term refinancing operations of the European Central Bank provided significant additional liquidity to the banking sector, which should also support lending to the corporate sector.
([3]) COM(2011) 834 final, proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (2014-2020), 30.11.2011.
([4]) COM(2011) 809 final, proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), 30.11.2011.
([5]) Communication COM(2011) 870 final, 7.12.2011.
([6]) The proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council COM(2011) 453 final and the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council COM(2011)452, replacing the current Capital Requirements Directives (2006/48 and 2006/49), impose higher and better quality capital charges for banks and enhanced rules on managing liquidity risk. All these initiatives are collected under the 2008 communication 'A Small Business Act for Europe' (COM(2008) 394 final) which was then complemented by the 2011 communication 'A Review of the Small Business Act for Europe' (COM(2011) 78 final).
([7]) Council document 10975/11.
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/small-business-act/sme-envoy/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001861/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Violence in Iraqi Kurdistan

On 2 December 2011 several towns in Iraqi Kurdistan witnessed rioting, and dozens of bars and hotels were vandalised. In the rioting, the headquarters of a political party, the Kurdish Islamic Union, was also attacked.

— Can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify and confirm the events of that day?

— In the light of the partnership and cooperation agreement with Iraq, what is the Commission doing to ensure stability and political freedom in Iraqi Kurdistan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2012)

The EU follows the situation in Iraq very closely and is concerned by the continuing acts of violence across the country as well as in the area of the Iraqi Kurdistan region referred to in the question. As to the specific events of 2 December 2011, to which the Honorable Member refers, High Representative/Vice-President Ashton is not in a position to make any official comment as the information available to the EU stems only from third party accounts. However, the HR/VP has repeatedly called on all Iraqi political groups to continue engaging in an inclusive and genuine dialogue, as an essential step for peacefully addressing political differences. Ensuring that the Government in Iraq is both effective and inclusive is the best way to defy the continuing violence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001863/12
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Tutela della biosfera in Equador

Il parco Yasuni in Equador si compone di 982 mila ettari di foresta amazzonica. È il concentrato della biodiversità del pianeta (150 specie di anfibi, 600 di uccelli, 120 di rettili, 4000 di piante): un ettaro contiene più specie di piante native di quante ne contengano gli Stati Uniti e il Canada insieme. Dal 1989 è tra le riserve mondiali della biosfera stabilite dall'Unesco. Yasuni è un «centro di ricchezza quadrupla» in cui si ha, cioè, il massimo di biodiversità per piante, mammiferi, anfibi e uccelli. Inoltre, confina con la riserva degli Waorani, una popolazione che si è ritirata in un angolo della foresta e chiederebbe solo di poter continuare a vivere come ha fatto per migliaia di anni.

Gli scienziati affermano che i Waorani hanno caratteri unici nel Dna, dovuti allo storico isolamento. Sarebbe un paradiso se nel sottosuolo, non ci fosse un inferno di greggio (846 milioni di barili) calcolato per un valore di 7 miliardi di dollari, che le compagnie petrolifere vorrebbero sfruttare. Il presidente dell'Equador Rafael Correa è disposto a non sfruttare il giacimento in cambio di 3,6 miliardi di dollari (la metà del suo valore) versati in 13 anni dai Paesi industrializzati. Il fondo è gestito dalle Nazioni Unite, considerato l'elevato grado di corruzione del paese. Se entro la fine del 2011 l'Equador non avrà incassato un acconto di 100 milioni di dollari, il patto con il resto del mondo salterà.

La Germania ha garantito 50 milioni di dollari per dieci anni; l'Italia avrebbe cancellato i 51 milioni di debito che le sono dovuti dall'Equador; artisti di Hollywood, Al Gore, governi nazionali e locali, organizzazioni non governative, privati, imprese hanno cominciato a versare donazioni, che sono arrivate alla cifra di 116 milioni di dollari; quanto basta per non aprire i pozzi. Ora Correa chiede 291 milioni di dollari nei prossimi due anni, in caso contrario il giacimento sarebbe dato in concessione. Ma il petrolio non ha fruttato la ricchezza che era stata promessa fin dal 1972 quando fu estratto il primo barile. L'Equador è rimasto povero e la ricchezza è andata a chi il petrolio l'ha trasformato, ma fuori dal paese.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. come valuta l'esistenza di Yasuni e la ricchezza unica della sua biodiversità;

2. se considera indispensabile in una visione geopolitica conservare questo concentrato della biosfera;

3. se ha mai considerato l'opportunità di effettuare una donazione all'Equador, al fine di favorire il perdurare di questa foresta amazzonica;

4. se ha mai valutato altre proposte per salvaguardare la popolazione Waorani e impedire lo sfruttamento del giacimento?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

Il parco nazionale Yasuni è certamente un ecosistema unico per la biodiversità. Ritenendo essenziale tutelare le zone vitali di questo tipo, la Commissione accoglie con favore le iniziative intese ad affrontare il problema posto dalla conservazione della biodiversità e dai cambiamenti climatici, nonché a tutelare gli interessi delle popolazioni autoctone.

Nel bilancio dell'UE non figurano disposizioni in materia di assistenza finanziaria intesa ad evitare l'estrazione petrolifera. Tuttavia, l'UE ha messo a disposizione fondi per sostenere opportune misure di gestione volte a combattere la deforestazione e il degrado delle foreste (REDD+) nonché la creazione e la gestione sostenibile delle zone protette. Nell'ambito del programma di cooperazione UE-Ecuador e del programma regionale dell'UE, la Commissione è impegnata in diversi progetti a sostegno della popolazione autoctona e della tutela ambientale, tra cui la conservazione delle foreste tropicali, la rigenerazione delle foreste aride, la lotta contro la desertificazione e la gestione sostenibile delle risorse naturali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001863/12
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: Protection of the biosphere in Ecuador

Yasuni National Park in Ecuador comprises 982 000 hectares of Amazon rainforest. It is the most biodiverse places on the planet (150 amphibian species, 600 bird species, 120 reptile species and 4 000 plant species). One hectare contains more native plant species than the United States and Canada combined. In 1989, it was made a world biosphere reserve by Unesco. Yasuni is a 'quadruple richness centre'; or, in other words, has the maximum biodiversity of plants, mammals, amphibians and birds. In addition, it borders the Waorani Ethnic Reserve, a population which has shut itself off in a corner of the forest and asks only to be able to continue to live as it has done for thousands of years.

Scientists maintain that the Waorani people have unique DNA characteristics, due to their historical isolation. It would be a paradise, were it not the case that in the subsoil there lies a vast amount of crude oil (846 million barrels) with an estimated value of USD 7 billion, which oil companies would like to exploit. The President of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, has agreed not to exploit the oil reserves in return for USD 3.6 billion (half of the value of the reserves) to be paid over 13 years by the industrialised countries. Given the high level of corruption in the country, the fund is managed by the United Nations. If, by the end of 2011, Ecuador had not received USD 100 million, the agreement made with the rest of the world would be cancelled.

Germany has guaranteed USD 50 million for 10 years, Italy has agreed to cancel the USD 51 million debt owed by Ecuador, and Hollywood artists, Al Gore, national and local governments, NGOs, private organisations and businesses have begun making donations. The figure has reached USD 116 million, enough to stop wells from being opened up. Correa is now requesting USD 291 million over the next two years, otherwise the reservoir will be given under concession. But oil has not yielded the wealth that was promised in 1972 when the first barrel was extracted. Ecuador has remained poor and the wealth has gone to those who refined the oil outside the country.

Can the Commission state:

1. How it views the existence of Yasuni and the unique richness of its biodiversity?

2. Whether as part of its geopolitical outlook it considers conserving this quintessential biosphere reserve to be vital?

3. Whether it has ever considered making a donation to Ecuador, in order to encourage the preservation of the Amazon rainforest?

4. Whether it has ever considered other proposals to safeguard the Waorani population and prevent exploitation of the oil reserves?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Yasuni National Park is certainly a uniquely biologically diverse ecosystem and the Commission considers the protection of such vital areas as crucial. The Commission welcomes initiatives to address the challenge of biodiversity conservation and climate change, as well as to protect the interests of indigenous peoples.

There are no provisions in the EU budget to provide financial support for preventing oil extraction. The EU has, however, made funds available to support positive management measures to address deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) and the establishment and sustainable management of protected areas. Within the EU-Ecuador cooperation programme and EU regional programme, the Commission is engaged in several projects supporting indigenous people as well as environmental protection such as conservation of tropical forests, regeneration of dry forest, fight against desertification and sustainable management of natural resources.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001864/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(15 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Diritto alla salute degli oppositori politici in Siria

L'articolo 35 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea recita: «Ogni individuo ha diritto di accedere alla prevenzione sanitaria e di ottenere cure mediche. (..). Nella definizione e nell'attuazione di tutte le politiche ed attività dell'Unione è garantito un livello elevato di protezione della salute umana».

La politica di vicinato dell'Unione europea si basa sulla responsabilità reciproca e su un impegno comune a favore dei diritti umani. Attraverso gli strumenti di finanziamento previsti per l'aiuto umanitario nei paesi terzi e avvalendosi del braccio operativo della DG aiuto umanitario (ECHO) appositamente costituito, l'Unione europea riesce ogni anno ad aiutare milioni di persone in più di 70 paesi in maniera diretta, ma anche collaborando con più di 200 partner tra ONG, Croce rossa internazionale e agenzie delle Nazioni Unite.

Come già evidenziato dalla risoluzione del Parlamento europeo sulla situazione in Siria del 12 settembre 2011, nonostante l'ampia condanna internazionale, proseguono e sono in aumento le violente repressioni da parte delle forze di sicurezza governative contro i manifestanti in Siria. Inoltre il governo siriano continua a rendere inaccessibile il paese alle organizzazioni umanitarie internazionali, impedendo di fatto il diritto all'accesso alle cure agli oppositori politici.

È necessario distinguere tra politica sanitaria e attività politica, così come è necessario salvaguardare la riservatezza medica con un divieto rigoroso di segnalazione da parte degli operatori alle autorità, unico modo questo per garantire parità d'accesso alla sanità anche per gli oppositori politici.

Quali iniziative concrete intende avviare il Vicepresidente / Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione europea per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza per tutelate il diritto alla salute degli oppositori politici in Siria?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2012)

L'UE ha espresso costantemente, anche nelle conclusioni del Consiglio «Affari Esteri» del 23 marzo 2012, la propria preoccupazione per il crescente deterioramento della situazione umanitaria in cui versa la popolazione siriana. L'Unione ha esortato il regime a concedere immediatamente alle organizzazioni umanitarie libero accesso a tutte le aree del paese, permettendo loro di fornire assistenza umanitaria e cure mediche.

Attraverso le dichiarazioni e le conclusioni del Consiglio, l'Unione ha chiesto ripetutamente al governo siriano di rispettare l'imparzialità e l'indipendenza degli operatori e degli organismi umanitari. L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha condannato in particolare gli attacchi illegali ai danni del personale medico e delle strutture recanti il simbolo della Mezzaluna Rossa e ha chiesto al regime di proteggere tutte le strutture mediche, il personale e i volontari. Il governo siriano deve garantire e facilitare l'accesso sicuro alle cure mediche a tutti coloro che ne hanno bisogno senza alcuna discriminazione.

Allo stesso tempo, l'UE sostiene gli impegni a livello internazionale volti ad assicurare una risposta umanitaria alla crisi coordinata, rapida ed efficace. Al riguardo, l'Unione ha accolto con favore l'esito del secondo forum umanitario siriano tenutosi a Ginevra il 20 aprile 2012, in cui sono stati richiesti un maggiore accesso e un aumento progressivo delle capacità umanitarie per soddisfare le esigenze riscontrate. Il totale degli aiuti umanitari forniti dall'UE ammonta a 32 milioni di EUR, di cui 2,2 milioni destinati all'assistenza sanitaria d'emergenza fornita dal Comitato internazionale della Croce Rossa e dalla Federazione internazionale delle società nazionali della Croce Rossa e della Mezzaluna Rossa. Alla luce dei crescenti bisogni, l'UE e gli Stati membri hanno incrementato il loro sostegno finanziario a favore delle organizzazioni umanitarie e continueranno a mobilitare la necessaria assistenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001864/12
to the Commissionb(Vice-President/High Representative)
Marco Scurria (PPE)
(15 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Right to health of political opponents in Syria

Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states: 'Everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare and the right to benefit from medical treatment (…). A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities.'

The European Neighbourhood Policy is based on mutual responsibility and a common commitment to human rights. Every year, the EU is able to help millions of people in over 70 countries, both directly and in collaboration with over 200 partners, including NGOs, the International Red Cross and UN agencies, using financing instruments for humanitarian aid to third countries and the operational arm of the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), which was set up for such a purpose.

As already stated in the European Parliament resolution of 12 September 2011 on the situation in Syria, despite widespread international condemnation, the violent suppression of demonstrators by government security forces in Syria still continues and is even on the increase. In addition, the Syrian government continues to make the country inaccessible to international humanitarian aid organisations, preventing the right of access to healthcare for political opponents.

A distinction needs to be made between health policy and political activities, and medical confidentiality needs to be safeguarded by means of a strict ban on reporting to the authorities by health workers; this is the only way that equal access to healthcare can be ensured for political opponents too.

What concrete measures does the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy intend to take to protect the right to health of political opponents in Syria?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

The EU has consistently — and again in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 23 March 2012 — expressed its concern at the increasingly worsening humanitarian plight of the Syrian population. It has urged the regime to grant immediate, unimpeded and full access of humanitarian organisations to all areas of Syria in order to allow them to deliver humanitarian assistance and medical care.

The EU has continuously through statements and Council conclusions called on the Syrian government to fully respect the impartiality and independence of humanitarian workers and organisations. The HR/VP has, in particular, condemned the illegal attacks against medical staff and installations carrying the symbols of the Red Crescent and requested the regime to protect all medical facilities, professionals and volunteers. The Syrian government needs to guarantee and facilitate safe access to medical treatment for all those in need without any discrimination.

At the same time, the EU fully supports international efforts to ensure a coordinated, rapid and effective humanitarian response to the crisis. In this respect, it welcomed the outcome of the second Syria Humanitarian Forum held on 20 April 2012 in Geneva, calling for increased access and scaling up of humanitarian capacities to meet the identified humanitarian needs. The total EU humanitarian assistance amounts to EUR 32 million, out of which EUR 2.2 million are for emergency medical care implemented by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. In the light of growing needs, the EU and Member States have increased their financial support to humanitarian organisations and will continue to mobilise the necessary assistance.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-001869/12
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(16 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Acțiunile Comisiei pentru depășirea blocajului creat de Olanda în procesul de extindere a Spațiului Schengen

În urma Summitului UE din 9 decembrie 2011, s-a desprins concluzia că singurul guvern care se mai opune intrării României şi Bulgariei în Zona Schengen este cel olandez.

Este elocvent pentru atitudinea cabinetului de la Haga refuzul din această săptămână de a condamna site-ul jignitor şi anti-european al partidului de extremă dreaptă de care depinde actuala coaliție guvernamentală. Prin acest site se incită la discriminarea lucrătorilor din noile state membre ale UE şi se încearcă acreditarea unui statut de inferioritate pentru est-europeni.

Cum consideră Comisia că poate fi depăşit blocajul creat de această poziție injustă, nefondată şi contrară rezoluției Parlamentului European din 13 octombrie 2011, care solicită Consiliului European să ia măsurile necesare accederii celor două state în Spațiul Schengen?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(23 martie 2012)

În ceea ce privește aderarea României și Bulgariei la spațiul Schengen, după cum distinsul membru este la curent, Consiliul ia, după consultarea cu Parlamentul European, orice decizie cu privire la extinderea spațiului Schengen prin care este desființat controlul la frontierele interne. Parlamentul European a adoptat rezoluția sa legislativă aprobând aderarea României și Bulgariei prin vot majoritar la 8 iunie 2011, fiind reamintit și în rezoluția sa din 13 octombrie 2011. Consiliul Justiție și Afaceri Interne din 9 iunie 2011 a concluzionat că atât România cât și Bulgaria îndeplinesc așa-numitele criterii de aderare la spațiul Schengen. Nu s-a ajuns încă la unanimitatea necesară în Consiliu pentru o decizie privind eliminarea controlului la frontierele interne. Cu toate acestea, Consiliul European din 1 și 2 martie 2012 „solicită Consiliului să revină asupra acestei chestiuni pentru a adopta decizia sa cu ocazia reuniunii Consiliului JAI din septembrie 2012".

La rândul său, Comisia a precizat în repetate rânduri că sprijină pe deplin aderarea României și Bulgariei la spațiul Schengen, precum și eforturile președinției poloneze în această direcție. Poziția Comisiei este neschimbată.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001869/12
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Action by the Commission to break the deadlock generated by the Netherlands in the process of Schengen Zone enlargement

Following the EU Summit on 9 December 2011, it emerged that the Dutch government is the only one still opposing the entry of Romania and Bulgaria into the Schengen Zone.

This week's refusal to condemn the offensive and anti-European website of the extreme right-wing party on which the ruling coalition depends, speaks volumes about the attitude of the Government in The Hague. This website represents incitement to discrimination against workers from the new EU Member States and an attempt to confer an inferior status on Eastern Europeans

How does the Commission envisage being able to move beyond the impasse created by this position, which is unjust, unfounded and contrary to the European Parliament resolution of 13 October 2011, which calls on the European Council to take the necessary steps for the accession of both countries into the Schengen Zone?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 March 2012)

As for the membership of Romania and Bulgaria in the Schengen area, as the Honourable Member is aware, any decision on the extension of the Schengen area through which internal border control is lifted is taken by the Council, after consultation of the European Parliament. The European Parliament adopted its legislative resolution approving the accession of Romania and Bulgaria by a large majority on 8 June 2011, which was recalled in its resolution of 13 October 2011. The Justice and Home Affairs Council of 9 June 2011 concluded that both Romania and Bulgaria fulfil the so-called Schengen criteria. The necessary unanimity in Council for a decision on the lifting of internal border control has not yet been reached. However, the European Council of 1 and 2 March 2012 'asks the Council to revert to this issue in order to adopt its decision at the meeting of the JHA Council in September 2012'.

For its part, the Commission has repeatedly made clear that it fully supports Romanian and Bulgarian accession to Schengen as well as the Presidencies' efforts in this direction. Its position is unchanged.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001873/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Posición Común de la UE sobre Birmania

En enero de 2012 se produjeron numerosos acontecimientos en Birmania que llevaron al desarrollo de un sistema político democrático. Entre otras cosas, el Presidente U Thein Sein hizo pública una declaración en la que se autorizaba la liberación de 651 presos el 13 de enero de 2012. Entre los liberados en virtud de esta amnistía había 272 presos políticos. Además, el Gobierno civil está esforzándose por lograr acuerdos de alto el fuego con grupos étnicos a fin de poner fin a los continuos conflictos que tienen lugar sobre todo en las zonas fronterizas. En el contexto de las próximas elecciones parciales, el principal partido de la oposición, la Liga Nacional para la Democracia, ha podido registrarse para optar a los 48 escaños en la Cámara Baja del Parlamento. A raíz de estos sucesos, el Consejo de Asuntos Exteriores de la Unión Europea ha decidido suavizar las sanciones. En concreto, el Consejo ha adoptado conclusiones sobre la situación actual en Birmania, que incluyen una suspensión de la prohibición de visado para el Presidente, los vicepresidentes y miembros del Gobierno y los presidentes de las dos cámaras del Parlamento.

Por desgracia, esta suavización de las sanciones de la UE es bastante prematura, puesto que en Birmania siguen produciéndose problemas y abusos de los derechos humanos. La adopción formal de indicadores de la UE sería la prueba definitiva del compromiso del Gobierno con la reforma y el proceso de democratización. Los indicadores abordarían ámbitos como la liberación incondicional de todos los presos políticos, un alto el fuego nacional con todas las minorías étnicas y la revisión o derogación de todas las leyes opresivas. En el contexto de la próxima revisión de la Posición Común de la Unión Europea sobre Birmania, quisiera pedir a la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante que aclarase los siguientes puntos:

1. ¿Cuál es la posición oficial de la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante sobre la Posición Común de la UE/las sanciones de la UE hacia Birmania, que deben presentarse en abril de este año?

2. ¿Cuáles son las posiciones de los Estados miembros sobre la Posición Común de la UE/las sanciones de la UE?

3. ¿Cuál es la posición de la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante sobre la adopción formal de indicadores de la UE (descritos anteriormente), que ayudarían a medir los avances reales en Birmania?

4. ¿Qué contramedidas tomaría la UE con respecto al Gobierno de Birmania si dicho Gobierno no cumpliera sus compromisos en cuanto a reformas democráticas, especialmente en relación con los presos políticos, los continuos conflictos étnicos y la derogación de leyes opresivas?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de abril de 2012)

Los cambios que se están produciendo en Myanmar (Birmania) habrían sido inimaginables hace tan solo un año, pero la transición hacia un sistema de gobierno más responsable no se ha completado aún.

La UE ha enviado al Gobierno de Myanmar (véanse las Conclusiones del Consejo, de 23 de enero) sus expectativas en este sentido en tres ámbitos:

a) Un diálogo integrador entre el Gobierno y la oposición, representada más contundentemente en el Parlamento. La gestión de las elecciones parciales del 1 de abril permitirá evaluar si este proceso está avanzando.

b) La liberación de los presos políticos restantes; la mayor parte de esos presos, al parecer, han sido liberados ya. La cuestión de la identificación de los presos políticos restantes (la LND está dialogando intensivamente con el Gobierno sobre este punto) requiere aclaraciones adicionales y el Gobierno se ha comprometido a resolver estos casos.

c) El Gobierno hizo repetidos esfuerzos por lograr un alto el fuego y otros acuerdos con antiguos grupos étnicos insurgentes armados con el fin de hallar una solución pacífica y duradera.

En esta fase, la UE ha de responder activamente a los cambios positivos. Por lo tanto, además de la aportación actual a la reducción de la pobreza, la UE apoyará los trabajos de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos y está estudiando la mejor forma de contribuir a la estabilización de la paz en las zonas con problemas étnicos. En este contexto, la adopción de criterios de referencia formales parece un planteamiento menos productivo que entablar con el Gobierno un diálogo constructivo y orientado hacia los resultados. La Decisión de la UE por la que se imponen medidas restrictivas expira a finales de abril de 2012 y será reconsiderada por el Consejo durante ese mes teniendo en cuenta la evolución de la situación en Myanmar hasta la fecha.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001873/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — EU Common Position on Burma

In January 2012 many events occurred in Burma leading towards the development of a democratic political system. Among other things, President U Thein Sein issued a declaration authorising the release of 651 prisoners on 13 January 2012. Of those released under this amnesty announcement, 272 were political prisoners. In addition, the civilian government is making efforts to reach ceasefire agreements with ethnic groups in order to end the ongoing conflicts taking place mainly in border areas. In the context of the upcoming by-elections, the main opposition party, the National League for Democracy, has been able to register to run for 48 seats in the Lower Chamber of the Parliament. As a consequence of these events, the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union has decided to relax sanctions. More specifically, the Council has adopted conclusions on the current situation in Burma, which include a suspension of the visa ban for the President, Vice-Presidents and cabinet members and the chairmen of the both chambers of the Parliament.

Unfortunately, this relaxation of EU sanctions is rather premature, as ongoing problems and human rights abuses continue in Burma. Formal adoption of EU benchmarks would be definitive proof of the government's commitment to reform and the democratisation process. The benchmarks should address areas such as the unconditional release of all political prisoners, a national ceasefire with all ethnic minorities and the revision or repeal of all oppressive laws. In the context of the European Union's upcoming revised Common Position on Burma, I would ask the Vice-President/High Representative to clarify the following points:

1. What is the official position of the Vice-President/High Representative on the EU Common Position/EU sanctions towards Burma, which is due to be tabled in April this year?

2. What are the Member States' positions on the EU Common Position/EU sanctions?

3. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative on the formal adoption of EU benchmarks (as described above), which would help to measure real progress in Burma?

4. What counter-measures would the EU take vis-à-vis the Government of Burma if the government did not fulfil its commitments in terms of democratic reforms, especially regarding political prisoners, ongoing ethnic conflicts and repeal of oppressive laws?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

The changes occurring in Myanmar (Burma) would have been unimaginable only a year ago, but this transition to a more accountable system of Government is not yet complete.

The EU has conveyed to the Myanmar Government — see the Council conclusions of 23 January — its expectations in that regard in three areas:

(a) An inclusive dialogue between Government and opposition represented more strongly in Parliament. The handling of the by-elections on 1 April will allow an assessment whether this process is evolving.

(b) The release of remaining political detainees; their majority has apparently been released already. The question of identifying remaining political detainees — the NLD is in intensive dialogue with the Government on this — needs further clarification, and the Government has made a commitment to contribute to resolving these cases.

(c) Government showed sustained efforts in agreeing ceasefire and other arrangements with former armed ethnic insurgencies, in order to find a peaceful and durable solution.

At this juncture, the EU is called to respond actively to positive change. Therefore, in addition to ongoing contributions to poverty reduction, the EU will support the work of the national Human Rights Commission and is considering how best to help stabilise peace in ethnic areas. Against this background the adoption of formal benchmarks seems a less productive approach than engaging the Government in a constructive, result-oriented dialogue. The EU Decision imposing restrictive measures expires at the end of April 2012 and will be reviewed by the Council during that month in the light of developments to-date in Myanmar.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001874/12
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(16 februari 2012)

Betreft: De website van de PVV

Op woensdag 8 februari 2012 heeft de Nederlandse Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV) een website ([1]) gelanceerd waar burgers hun ervaringen met de werkprestaties van Midden- en Oost-Europeanen in Nederland kunnen melden.

Er is een relatief groot, dagelijks toenemend aantal mensen uit Midden- en Oost-Europese landen die arbeid verrichten in Nederland, wat mogelijk is gemaakt door het door artikel 45 van het VWEU gewaarborgde vrije verkeer van werknemers.

Met de introductie van haar nieuwe website oefent de PVV het recht uit om het publiek naar zijn bezorgdheid over bepaalde sociale aspecten te vragen en nuttige informatie over de behoeften en problemen van burgers te verzamelen.

Viviane Reding, het commissielid voor Justitie, Grondrechten en Burgerschap, heeft alle burgers van Nederland opgeroepen om de website van de PVV te negeren en daarop de boodschap achter te laten dat Europa een plek van vrijheid is.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de website van de PVV en van het persbericht „Europese Commissie roept op: negeer PVV-meldpunt" ([2])?

2. Wat is de mening van de Commissie over de plicht van politieke partijen om de standpunten van burgers inzake sociale aspecten op de voet te volgen, en niet alleen tijdens verkiezingscampagnes?

3. Is de Commissie voornemens richtsnoeren op te stellen voor de manier waarop politieke meningen in de EU bij voorkeur moeten worden geuit?

4. Op welk artikel van de Verdragen baseert de Commissie haar recht om individuele burgers op te roepen om zich op een bepaalde manier te gedragen?

5. Hoe verhoudt de oproep van de Commissie aan Nederlandse burgers zich naar haar eigen mening tot het door het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie gewaarborgde recht op vrije meningsuiting?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(12 april 2012)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar de verklaring in het plenaire debat op 13 maart 2012 ([3]). De Commissie staat volledig achter de gezamenlijke resolutie die goedgekeurd is door het Europees Parlement op 15 maart 2012 ([4]).

([1]) www.meldpuntmiddenenoosteuropeanen.nl.
([2]) http://www.elsevier.nl/web/Nieuws/Politiek/330301/Europese-Commissie-roept-op-negeer-PVVmeldpunt.htm
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20120313&secondRef=ITEM-012&language=NL.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0087+0+DOC+XML+V0//NL.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001874/12
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: PVV's website

On Wednesday, 8 February 2012, the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) launched a website ([1]) where citizens can report their experiences on the work performance of central and eastern Europeans in the Netherlands.

There is a relatively large number, increasing daily, of people from central and eastern European countries employed in the Netherlands, which was made possible by the freedom of movement of workers guaranteed by Article 45 TFEU.

By introducing its new website, the PVV is exercising the right to ask the public about its worries relating to certain social issues and to collect useful information on the needs and problems of citizens.

Viviane Reding, the Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, has called on all citizens of the Netherlands to ignore the website and to state on the PVV's website that Europe is a place of freedom.

1. Is the Commission aware of the PVV's website and the report entitled 'Europese Commissie roept op: negeer PVV-meldpunt' ([2]) (European Commission urges people to ignore PVV's website)?

2. What is the Commission's view on the duty of political parties to monitor citizens' positions on social issues, and not just at election time?

3. Is the Commission planning to draw up guidelines on the preferred way of expressing political opinions in the EU?

4. On which article of the Treaties does the Commission base its right to call on individual citizens to behave in a certain way?

5. In the opinion of the Commission, how does its call to Dutch citizens relate to the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the statement made in the plenary debate on 13 March 2012 ([3]). The Commission fully supports the joint resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 15 March 2012 ([4]).

([1]) www.meldpuntmiddenenoosteuropeanen.nl.
([2]) http://www.elsevier.nl/web/Nieuws/Politiek/330301/Europese-Commissie-roept-op-negeer-PVVmeldpunt.htm
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=CRE&reference=20120313&secondRef=ITEM-012&language=EN.
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0087+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001875/12
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 février 2012)

Objet: Enquête sur les prix dans les grandes surfaces belges et européennes

Le ministère belge de l'économie vient de publier un rapport sur le «niveau des prix dans les supermarchés». Les conclusions mettent notamment en évidence des écarts de prix très importants entre la Belgique et les pays voisins, qui ne peuvent s'expliquer que par des demandes à la Commission sur le manque de concurrence et/ou le mauvais fonctionnement du marché unique.

La Commission peut-elle préciser:

1. Pourquoi ne consacre-t-elle pas le budget énorme affecté aux «tableaux de bord de la consommation», qui publient des milliers d'informations sans aucun intérêt, ni pour les consommateurs, ni pour les gouvernements, à collecter des données statistiques sur les niveaux de prix, leurs écarts et les causes de ces écarts?

2. Pourquoi ne consacre-t-elle pas une partie de son budget à diffuser les informations concrètes et utiles sur les écarts de prix, aussi bien à l'intérieur des États membres que par rapport aux États membres voisins, en utilisant le cas échéant les organisations de consommateurs expérimentées en la matière?

3. Comment entend-elle développer sa politique d'information sur les prix des biens de consommation, en particulier pour les consommateurs les plus vulnérables et les plus affectés par la crise?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(28 mars 2012)

1. La Commission partage l'avis de l'Honorable Parlementaire que les niveaux et écarts de prix et les causes de ces disparités doivent être suivis de près. Les tableaux de bord des marchés de la consommation, publiés par la Commission, suivent les divergences de prix entre les pays de l'UE pour plus d'une centaine de biens et de services, et les mettent en concordance avec les niveaux de pouvoir d'achat dans chaque pays. Cette publication inclut les données sur les prix fournies par Eurostat (dans le cadre d'un projet de recherche mené avec les offices statistiques nationaux) et d'autres sources. En outre, les études de marché conduites dans le cadre du suivi des tableaux de bord collectent des données sur les prix dans des secteurs spécifiques. La Commission encourage l'élargissement de la collecte de données sur les prix jusqu'à couvrir tous les grands marchés de consommation et tous les États membres.

2. Toutes les données de la Commission concernant les prix se trouvent déjà à la disposition du public sur son site internet. La Commission communique activement les conclusions et les données pertinentes aux organisations de consommateurs et à d'autres parties prenantes importantes dans les États membres, en vue d'une exploitation et d'une diffusion ultérieures.

3. La Commission estime que la transparence et la comparabilité des prix sont d'une importance cruciale pour que les consommateurs soient en mesure de prendre des décisions averties. Dans sa récente communication sur le commerce électronique ([1]), la Commission s'est engagée à promouvoir le développement de sites transparents et transfrontaliers, permettant de comparer les prix et la qualité, à travers un dialogue avec des intermédiaires d'information. Dans le cadre du suivi de l'étude sur le fonctionnement des marchés de détail de l'électricité pour les consommateurs ([2]), des guides de bonnes pratiques en matière de comparaison des tarifs et de changement de fournisseur ont été élaborés par les régulateurs et la Commission a créé un groupe multipartite sur la simplification tarifaire dans le domaine de l'énergie.

([1]) COM(2011) 942.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/market_studies/docs/retail_electricity_full_study_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001875/12
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Investigation into prices in large Belgian and European supermarkets

The Belgian Ministry of the Economy has just published a report on 'price levels in supermarkets'. The results reveal, in particular, significant price differences between Belgium and neighbouring countries. The only way of securing an explanation for these differences is to put questions to the Commission concerning the lack of competition and/or the poor functioning of the single market.

Can the Commission specify:

1. Why it does not use the enormous budget set aside for the 'Consumer Market Scoreboard', which publishes thousands of items of information which are of no interest whatsoever to consumers or governments, to collect statistics on price levels, price disparities and the reasons for those disparities?

2. Why it does not use part of its budget to disseminate practical and useful information on price disparities both within individual Member States and between neighbouring Member States, drawing, where appropriate, on assistance from consumer organisations with the relevant expertise?

3. How does it intend to improve its information policy on the prices of consumer goods, particularly for the most vulnerable consumers and those most affected by the crisis?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

1. The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that price levels, price disparities and the reasons for those disparities need to be carefully monitored. The Commission's annual Consumer Market Scoreboards track price divergences between EU countries for over 100 goods and services and juxtapose them with the levels of purchasing power in each country. The publication includes prices provided by Eurostat (as part of a research project carried out with national statistical offices) and other sources. In addition, the market studies carried out as a follow-up to the Scoreboards collect price data for specific sectors. The Commission encourages a broader collection of price data that would cover all major consumer markets and all Member States.

2. All the Commission's price data are already publicly available on its website. The Commission actively communicates the relevant findings and data to consumer organisations and other key stakeholders in the Member States for further use and dissemination.

3. The Commission believes that the transparency and comparability of prices is of key importance for consumers to be able to make informed decisions. In its recent Communication on e-commerce ([1]), the Commission committed to encouraging the development of transparent cross-border, price and quality comparison sites through dialogue with information intermediaries. As a follow-up to the study on the functioning of retail electricity market for consumers ([2]), guidelines of good practice for price comparison and the switching process were developed by the regulators and the Commission set up a multi-stakeholder group on tariff simplification in energy.

([1]) COM(2011) 942.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/market_studies/docs/retail_electricity_full_study_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001877/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Programmi per fondi diretti, città di Avellino

Gli enti territoriali, quali Comuni e Province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei Fondi diretti programmati ed erogati da parte delle direzioni generali della Commissione Europea. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio: il programma cultura, il programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà sociale «Progress», il programma per la cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», quello per l'ambiente «Life +», quello per gestire i flussi migratori «Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori», quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e tanti altri.

In merito a questo e ad altri programmi disponibili, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Avellino ha fatto richiesta?

2. in caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati suddetti programmi sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta data da Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

Nel 2007 la Città di Avellino ha fatto richiesta, con esito negativo, per il programma «Cultura», settore «Azioni di cooperazione».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001877/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programmes for the town of Avellino

Local government bodies, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the first possible beneficiaries of the direct funding programmed and allocated by the European Commission's Directorates-General. Among the funds available are, for example: the 'Culture' programme; the 'Progress' programme for employment and social solidarity; the citizenship programme, 'Europe for Citizens'; the 'Life+' programme for the environment, the programme for the management of migration flows, 'Solidarity and the Management of Migration Flows'; the programme on human resources, 'Investing in people'; and many more.

With regard to these and other available programmes, could the Commission clarify:

1. whether the town of Avellino has applied for any programmes;

2. if so, which projects received EU funding and what were the results of these programmes upon completion?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The town of Avellino unsuccessfully applied for the Culture Programme, in 2007, under 'Cooperation Measures'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001878/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Efficienza energetica in Europa

È stato presentato a Roma il rapporto «L'efficienza energetica come contributo alla sostenibilità economica», redatto dal centro studi SAFE (Sostenibilità ambientale fonti energetiche), alla presenza del ministro italiano dell'Ambiente.

Secondo lo studio l'efficienza energetica costa circa quindici volte in meno rispetto alle fonti di energia rinnovabili. Ad esempio un intervento medio in efficienza energetica costa circa 2 100 euro/tep, mentre per produrre lo stesso tep usando la tecnologia eolica occorrono circa 29 mila euro/tep.

Tuttavia l'Italia, come del resto l'Unione europea, ha privilegiato nell'elargizione degli incentivi le fonti di energia rinnovabili, snobbando invece gli interventi volti all'efficienza energetica.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è venuta a conoscenza del rapporto sopracitato «L'efficienza energetica come contributo alla sostenibilità economica»;

2. se può fornire dati europei sull'efficienza energetica e sulle differenze, anche a livello di costo, con le fonti di energia rinnovabili;

3. quali politiche intende perseguire circa l'efficienza energetica e se intende elargire incentivi a suo favore?

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2012)

1) La Commissione non è a conoscenza della relazione cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento. Tuttavia, saremmo lieti di riceverne una copia per analizzarne il contenuto.

2) Non è purtroppo possibile fornire una risposta precisa all'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare, poiché solitamente il calcolo dei costi e dei benefici è specifico per paese e progetto e dipende da fattori molteplici, quali il prezzo dell'energia, il costo del lavoro, la svalutazione, il livello impositivo e la tecnologia/soluzione scelta.

3) Per sostenere il mercato dei servizi energetici e del miglioramento dell'efficienza energetica, la Commissione ha proposto, nel giugno 2010, una nuova direttiva sull'efficienza energetica (COM(2011)370), che prevede una serie di misure concrete a riguardo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001878/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Energy efficiency in Europe

The report entitled 'Energy efficiency as a contributor to economic sustainability', drawn up by the SAFE (Energy Resources and Environmental Sustainability) research centre, has been submitted to the Italian Minister of the Environment in Rome.

According to the study, energy efficiency costs approximately 15 times less than renewable energy sources. For example, the average energy efficiency measure costs roughly EUR 2 100/toe, whereas the same amount of energy would cost about EUR 29 000/toe to produce using wind technology.

However, Italy, like the rest of the European Union, has favoured generous incentives for renewable energy sources, ignoring energy efficiency measures.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above report on 'Energy efficiency as a contributor to economic sustainability'?

2. Can it provide European figures on energy efficiency and on the differences, not least in terms of costs, compared with renewable energy sources?

3. What policies will it implement on energy efficiency and will it offer incentives to encourage it?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

1. The Commission is not aware of the report mentioned by the Honourable Member. However, we shall be pleased to receive the report for analysis.

2. It is unfortunately not possible to provide an exact answer to the question of the Honourable Member, since calculation of costs and benefits is usually country- and project-specific and influenced by many factors such as energy prices, labour costs, depreciation, taxes and technology/solution chosen.

3. To support the market of energy services and of energy efficiency improvements the Commission proposed a new Energy Efficiency Directive (COM(2011) 370) in June 2010 which contains a number of concrete policy measures in this regard.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001881/12
à Comissão
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(16 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Pescas

Considerando:

— O respeito pela subsidiariedade, no âmbito de uma abordagem por ecossistemas, imposto pela Diretiva-Quadro «Estratégia Marinha», de 17 de junho de 2008;

— O facto dessa mesma diretiva ter adotado a existência de uma região biogeográfica marinha específica para a Macaronésia, contemplando as águas dos Açores, da Madeira e da Macaronésia, pelas suas características próprias e específicas;

— Que o critério de divisão de regiões biogeográficas utilizado é fundamental e deve ser adotado pela Política Comum de Pescas;

— Que a Comissão Europeia tem a intenção de promover uma efetiva e eficaz descentralização e regionalização, como está preconizado na proposta de regulamento de 13 de julho de 2011;

Está a Comissão disponível para constituir um conselho consultivo regional com poder decisório que abranja o conjunto das regiões ultraperiféricas, integrando três subdivisões consultivas: Macaronésia (Açores, Madeira e Canárias), Antilhas/América do Sul (Guadalupe, Martinica e Guiana Francesa) e Índico (Ilha Reunião)?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(3 de abril de 2012)

Os conselhos consultivos regionais (a seguir designados por CCR) foram criados com o objetivo de obter a opinião das partes interessadas sobre as propostas de medidas de gestão das pescas que se apliquem a uma dada região ou, como no caso do CCR para as espécies pelágicas e do CCR para a frota de pesca longínqua, a um conjunto de pescarias com características comuns.

As partes interessadas das regiões ultraperiféricas da Macaronésia (Açores, Madeira e ilhas Canárias) fazem parte do CCR para as águas ocidentais sul, dado que uma grande parte das atividades de pesca nesta zona é exercida por estas ilhas e pelos países do sudoeste da UE.

No que respeita às regiões ultraperiféricas francesas (Martinica, Guadalupe, Guiana francesa e ilha da Reunião), muito poucas medidas de gestão da pesca são adotadas a nível da UE; a sua ação limita-se a regras de gestão no contexto das organizações regionais de gestão das pescas (ORGP) e dos acordos de parceria no domínio da pesca, para os quais o quadro de consulta adequado é o CCR para a frota de pesca longínqua.

Nas circunstâncias atuais, a Comissão considera que não se justifica criar um CCR específico para as regiões ultraperiféricas. O custo de manter um CCR com uma estrutura administrativa permanente também deve ser um elemento a ter em conta neste contexto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001881/12
to the Commission
Luís Paulo Alves (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Fisheries

Respect for subsidiarity, as part of an ecosystem-based approach, is required by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive of 17 June 2008.

Under that directive a specific marine biogeographic region has been established for Macaronesia, covering the waters of the Azores, Madeira and Macaronesia, taking into account their specific characteristics.

The dividing criterion for biogeographic regions is of crucial importance and should be adopted under the common fisheries policy.

The Commission intends to promote effective and efficient decentralisation and regionalisation, as advocated in the proposal for a regulation of 13 July 2011.

Is the Commission prepared to establish a regional advisory council with decision-making powers, covering all the outermost regions and comprising three consultative subdivisions: Macaronesia (the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands), the Antilles/South America (Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guiana) and the Indian Ocean (Réunion)?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

Regional Advisory Councils (hereinafter RACs) were created with the purpose of obtaining the opinion of stakeholders on proposals for fishery management measures, where these apply to a given region or, as in the case of the Pelagic RAC and the Long-Distance RAC, to a set of fisheries having characteristics in common.

The stakeholders from the outermost regions of the Macaronesian area (Azores, Madeira and Canary Islands) are part of the South Western Waters RAC, as many of the fisheries of this area are shared between these isles and the south-western countries of the EU.

For French outermost regions (Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guyana and Reunion Island), very few fishery management measures are adopted at EU level; EU action is limited to management rules in the context of regional fishery management organisations (RFMOs) and fishery partnership agreements (FPAs), for which the appropriate consultation framework is the Long-Distance RAC.

In the present circumstances, the Commission believes that it would not be justified to create a specific RAC for outermost regions. The cost of maintaining a RAC with its permanent administrative structure should also be considered in this context.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001882/12
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(16 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Implicarea Comisiei în acțiuni umanitare în Siria

Consider de bun augur inițiativa franceză a creării unui fond de urgență umanitară pentru Siria. Are în vedere Comisia Europeană susținerea acestui proiect și implicarea în acțiuni de protecție umanitară a cetățenilor victime ale represiunii regimului de la Damasc, care a făcut până în prezent peste 6 000 de victime?

Având în vedere actualul context sirian și internațional, consideră Comisia că e posibilă o „a treia cale", de acțiune umanitară și diplomatică, astfel încât să fie evitate cele două variante extreme de până acum: pe de o parte, ineficiența presiunii externe și blocajul din cadrul Consiliului de Securitate al Națiunilor Unite, iar pe de altă parte posibila intervenție militară externă, care ar putea arunca în aer fragilul echilibru rămas în Orientul Mijlociu?

Răspuns dat de dna Georgieva în numele Comisiei
(10 mai 2012)

Comisia salută inițiativa Franței și ține permanent legătura cu statele membre, făcând periodic schimb de informații cu privire la situația umanitară de pe teren. Accesul la persoanele care au nevoie de atenție imediată rămâne fundamental. Până în prezent, pentru criza siriană a fost alocată o sumă de 10 milioane EUR de la bugetul UE și au fost acordate din partea statelor membre, în mod bilateral, sume în valoare de 16 milioane EUR, ceea ce reprezintă un total de 26 de milioane EUR. Suma de 10 milioane EUR de la bugetul UE destinat asistenței umanitare acoperă primul ajutor acordat răniților sau celor care au fost obligați să își părăsească locuințele din cauza violențelor actuale.

În Siria, asistența UE constă în furnizarea de expertiză medicală, servicii și resurse (inclusiv achiziționarea de ambulanțe) pentru instalațiile medicale, precum și protecția deținuților, sub rezerva consimțământului autorităților siriene. În țările vecine, finanțarea garantează că persoanele care părăsesc Siria beneficiază de asistență de urgență, cum ar fi adăposturi, truse de igienă și îmbrăcăminte.

Oficiul pentru coordonarea afacerilor umanitare (OCHA) din cadrul ONU a convocat prima reuniune a „Forumului umanitar pentru Siria", care a avut loc la 8 martie 2012 la Geneva și printre ai cărei organizatori s-a numărat și Comisia. Această inițiativă se concentrează asupra unui „traseu umanitar" menit să îmbunătățească accesul la asistența umanitară și furnizarea acesteia. Siria, Rusia și China au participat la reuniune, iar statele membre ale ONU au fost invitate să trimită reprezentanți care își desfășoară activitatea în domeniul umanitar. Rezultatele au fost pozitive și concrete.

Valerie Amos, coordonator pentru situații de urgență, a anunțat negocierile privind accesul la sprijinul umanitar și coordonează un plan de intervenție de 90 de zile, care va fi în curând prezentat de OCHA și va furniza sprijin imediat persoanelor afectate de conflicte. OCHA a anunțat, de asemenea, că un fond de urgență pentru asistența umanitară destinată Siriei va fi creat pe baza experiențelor anterioare ale organizației.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001882/12
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Commission involvement in humanitarian actions in Syria

I consider the French initiative for the creation of a humanitarian emergency fund for Syria to be auspicious. Does the Commission envisage supporting this project and becoming involved in humanitarian protection actions for the citizens who are victims of the repressive regime in Damascus, which up till now has created over 6 000 such victims?

Taking into account the current Syrian and international context, does the Commission consider it possible to adopt a 'third way' based on humanitarian actions and diplomacy, so that the two extremes operating till now can be avoided: on the one hand, the inefficient approach of external pressure and blocking from within the UN Security Council, and on the other hand, the threat of an external military intervention that could explode the fragile stability remaining in the Middle East?

Answer given by Mrs Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2012)

The Commission welcomes the French initiative and maintains constant contact with Member States, regularly sharing information about the humanitarian situation on the ground. Access to those in immediate need remains fundamental. At this stage, EUR 10 million has been allocated from the EU budget for the Syrian crisis and EUR 16 million bilaterally from EU Member States making a total of EUR 26 million. The EUR 10 million from the EU humanitarian budget covers life-saving support to those who have been wounded or forced to flee due to the ongoing violence.

In Syria, EU assistance consists of the provision of medical expertise, services, and stocks (including the purchase of ambulances) to medical facilities, as well as protection of detainees, subject to Syrian authorities' consent. In the neighbouring countries, the funding ensures that people fleeing Syria receive emergency assistance such as shelter, hygiene kits, clothes.

The UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) convened its first meeting of the 'Syria Humanitarian Forum' in Geneva on 8 March 2012, co-facilitated, among others, by the Commission. This initiative focuses on a 'humanitarian track' to improve humanitarian access and delivery. UN Member States were invited to send humanitarian representatives and Syria, Russia and China participated. The outcome was positive and concrete.

Valerie Amos, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, announced access negotiations and is leading a 90-Day Response Plan that will be shortly presented by OCHA in order to provide immediate relief to people impacted by fighting. OCHA also announced that a humanitarian emergency fund for Syria would be created based on the organisation's previous experiences.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001883/12
adresată Comisiei
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(16 februarie 2012)

Subiect: Protestele anti-ACTA

Prevederile ACTA reprezintă o gravă încălcare a drepturilor omului. Sub masca protejării dreptului de autor, este îngustată libertatea informației, care a adus atâtea beneficii societății în ultimii ani. Circulația liberă a informației prin Internet reprezintă atât o modalitate de emancipare a publicului larg, cât și o armă eficace împotriva cenzurii. ACTA dorește să oficializeze un abuz, prin crearea unui Big Brother menit a verifica utilizatorii suspecți de așa-zisele încălcări ale prevederilor sale.

— Deși par norme cu intenții onorabile, acestea deschid o cutie a Pandorei, făcând loc unor grave atentate la libertatea și intimitatea personale. Consideră Comisia că în numele unor asemenea reglementări poate fi sacrificată libertatea Internetului, una dintre marile cuceriri ale progresului tehnic?

— Cum înțelege Comisia să răspundă protestelor cetățenilor și experților pe această temă?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(10 aprilie 2012)

Comisia a decis să solicite Curții Europene de Justiție să evalueze dacă Acordul comercial împotriva contrafacerii (ACTA) este în vreun mod incompatibil cu principiile fundamentale ale UE și cu protecția drepturilor omului. Înainte de prezentarea lor în fața Parlamentului, această decizie, precum și avantajele ACTA au fost explicate în cadrul Comitetului INTA ([1]) din 29 februarie 2012 și în cadrul unui atelier la 1 martie 2012.

Această consultare, precum și angajarea Comisiei în dezbaterile deschise din Parlamentul European și din parlamentele naționale, sunt menite să asigure situarea discuției la un nivel mai concret și mai factual și să permită o decizie în deplină cunoștință de cauză cu privire la efectele reale ale ACTA.

Comisia împărtășește îngrijorarea privind libertatea internetului și salută dezbaterea care ridică semne de întrebare cu privire la orice amenințare eventuală la adresa acestuia. Cu toate acestea, Comisia este de părere că ACTA are foarte puțin de a face cu o serie dintre aceste presupuse amenințări.

ACTA nu va cenzura internetul. El nu va mandata monitorizarea e-mailurilor sau blogurilor personale. Nu va subcontracta activități polițienești furnizorilor privați de servicii de internet. Nu va mandata inspectarea laptopurilor sau playerelor MP3 de către autoritățile vamale. Acest acord nu aduce atingere drepturilor și libertăților fundamentale astfel cum sunt ele garantate prin tratatele europene.

([1]) INTA = Comitetul pentru comerț internațional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001883/12
to the Commission
Corina Crețu (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Anti-ACTA protests

The provisions of ACTA are a serious breach of human rights. Behind the mask of copyright protection, the freedom of information that has brought so many benefits to society in recent years is being restricted. The free circulation of information via the Internet represents both a means of emancipation for the wider public and an effective weapon against censorship. ACTA aims to formalise an abuse through the creation of a 'Big Brother' for the purposes of verifying users suspected of so-called breaches of its provisions.

— Although these laws appear to have honourable intentions, they open up a Pandora's box, representing serious attacks on personal freedom and privacy. Does the Commission consider that the freedom of the Internet, one of the greatest successes of technological progress, can be sacrificed in the name of such regulations?

— How does the Commission respond to the protests by citizens and experts on this theme?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

The Commission decided to ask the European Court of Justice to assess whether the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) is in any way incompatible with the EU's fundamental principles and the protection of human rights. This decision, as well as the benefits of ACTA, were explained before Parliament on 29 February 2012 at the INTA ([1]) Committee and on 1 March 2012 at a Workshop.

This consultation, as well as the engagement of the Commission in open debates at Parliament and in national parliaments, are intended to bring the discussion onto more concrete and fact-based levels and allow for a fully informed decision about the real effects of ACTA.

The Commission shares the concern for freedom of the Internet and welcomes debate that questions any potential threat to it. However, it is the Commission's position that ACTA has very little to do with a number of these supposed threats.

ACTA will not censor the Internet. It will not mandate monitoring of individuals' e-mails or blogs. It will not subcontract the functions of the police to private Internet service providers. It will not mandate the inspection of laptops or MP3 players by customs officials. This agreement does not undermine fundamental rights and freedoms as guaranteed by the European treaties.

([1]) INTA = International Trade Committee.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001885/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(16. februára 2012)

Vec: Čerpanie eurofondov

K 31. decembru 2011 predstavovalo priemerné čerpanie všetkých troch fondov Európskej únie, t. j. Európskeho fondu regionálneho rozvoja, Európskeho sociálneho fondu a Kohézneho fondu, v 27 členských štátoch 33,4 % z prostriedkov alokovaných na obdobie 2007 – 2013. Najvyšší medziročný nárast zaznamenal Európsky fond regionálneho rozvoja.

Na konci roku 2010 bol vyčerpaný na 22,3 %, kým na konci roku 2011 už na 34,3 %. Podobne je na tom Európsky sociálny fond. Z 23,5 % v roku 2010 sa čerpanie zvýšilo na 35,43 % v roku 2011. Jednotlivé členské štáty však finančné prostriedky z fondov nečerpajú rovnomerne, existujú medzi nimi výrazné rozdiely. Najlepšie čerpá eurofondy Írsko (48,27 %), Litva (47,98 %) a Švédsko (46,52 %), naopak najhoršie Bulharsko (23,55 %), Taliansko (21,72 %) a Rumunsko (16,51 %).

— Plánuje Komisia menej úspešným členským štátom asistovať pri dobiehaní priemeru čerpania európskych fondov?

Odpoveď pána Hahna v mene Komisie
(29. marca 2012)

Komisia úzko spolupracuje so všetkými členskými štátmi s cieľom umožniť bezproblémovú realizáciu programov politiky súdržnosti. Pokiaľ ide o mieru čerpania fondov, tá závisí od finančného profilu každého členského štátu. Pritom sa môže zdať, že členské štáty, ktoré väčšinu prostriedkov využívajú na začiatku programového obdobia, čerpajú fondy vo vyššej miere než štáty, ktoré ich čerpajú ku koncu programového obdobia. V tých prípadoch, kde je miera čerpania fondov nízka pre problémy s realizáciou programov, Komisia ponúka dotknutým členským štátom poradenstvo a usmernenie, ktorými sa snaží pomôcť odstrániť prekážky a urýchliť proces čerpania fondov.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001885/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Drawing of EU funds

As of 31 December 2011, the average absorption of all three European Union funds, i.e., the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, in the 27 Member States stood at 33.4 % of the funds allocated for the period 2007-2013. The greatest year-on-year increase was recorded by the European Regional Development Fund.

By the end of 2010, 22.3 % of the fund had been drawn on, while this figure had already reached 34.3 % by the end of 2011. The situation of the European Social Fund is similar. Absorption increased from 23 % in 2010 to 35.43 % in 2011. However, the individual Member States do not draw on the funds equally, with significant differences existing between them. The countries most successful in drawing on EU funds are Ireland (48.27 %), Lithuania (47.98 %) and Sweden (46.52 %), while the least successful are Bulgaria (23.55 %), Italy (21.72 %) and Romania (16.51 %).

— Does the Commission intend to help the less successful Member States to bring their absorption of European funds into line with the average?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(29 March 2012)

The Commission is working closely with all Member States with a view to facilitate the smooth implementation of cohesion policy programmes. In relation to absorption rates, these depend on the financial profile of each Member State. Those with a front-loaded financial profile might appear to have higher absorption rates than those with a back-loaded financial profile. In those cases where absorption rates are low due to implementation problems, the Commission is offering advice and guidance to the Member States concerned with a view to removing bottlenecks and speeding up absorption.

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001886/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(16. februára 2012)

Vec: Európska občianska iniciatíva

Európska občianska iniciatíva, ktorú zaviedla Lisabonská zmluva, umožňuje občanom Európskej únie predložiť Komisii vlastný legislatívny návrh. Organizátori kampane musia získať do jedného roka jeden milión podpisov v minimálne siedmych krajinách EÚ. Podpredseda Európskej komisie vyhlásil, že Európska občianska iniciatíva predstavuje pre občanov priamy nástroj na vypočutie ich hlasov v Bruseli a súčasne posilní cezhraničnú diskusiu o rôznych otázkach.

Európska komisia spustila 26. januára internetovú stránku, kde detailne popisuje procedúru prijatia Európskej občianskej iniciatívy. Aj vďaka sociálnym médiám sa Komisia neobáva, že by získanie potrebného počtu podpisov bolo problematické . Využívanie sociálnych sietí by mohlo iniciatívy zdemokratizovať, celý proces výrazne zjednodušiť a európskym občanom pomôcť lepšie sa presadiť. V tomto smere je však potrebné zamerať sa na európskych občanov, ktorí nie sú dostatočne internetovo zdatní a nie sú teda schopní zapojiť sa do diskusie takýmto spôsobom.

— Myslí Komisia aj na takýchto občanov?

— Má v tejto súvislosti pripravený nejaký náhradný plán, ako internetovo menej zdatných občanov, najmä starších, zapojí do diskusie o významných európskych otázkach?

Odpoveď pána Šefčoviča v mene Komisie
(14. marca 2012)

V nariadení (EÚ) č. 211/2011 o iniciatíve občanov ([1]) sa nestanovuje len elektronické zbieranie vyhlásení o podpore, ale stanovuje sa v ňom možnosť zbierať tieto vyhlásenia v papierovej forme a elektronicky (článok 5 ods. 2), čo umožňuje aj menej skúseným používateľom internetu vyjadriť podporu každej navrhovanej iniciatíve občanov.

Preto je úlohou organizátorov navrhovanej iniciatívy občanov podporovať túto iniciatívu mimo internetu a viesť kampaň na zbieranie vyhlásení o podpore v papierovej forme, ak si to želajú.

([1]) Nariadenie Európskeho parlamentu a Rady (EÚ) č. 211/2011 zo 16. februára 2011 o iniciatíve občanov (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:065:0001:0022:SK:PDF).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001886/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: European Citizens' Initiative

The European Citizens' Initiative, which was introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon, enables EU citizens to submit their own legislative proposals to the Commission. The organisers of a campaign must obtain one million signatures in at least seven EU countries within one year. The Vice-President of the European Commission declared that the European Citizens' Initiative was a direct tool for citizens to make their voices heard in Brussels, while also fostering increased cross-border debate on various issues.

On 26 January 2012, the Commission launched a website in which it sets out in detail the acceptance procedure of the European Citizens' Initiative. Social media have assuaged the Commission's concerns that obtaining the required number of signatures would be difficult. The use of social networks could make the initiative more democratic, significantly simplify the whole process and help European citizens to assert themselves better. In this instance, however, it is necessary to focus on European citizens who are not sufficiently proficient in the use of Internet and who are not therefore able to participate in a discussion in that way.

— Is the Commission also taking those citizens into consideration?

— In this context, has it prepared an alternative plan for involving less proficient Internet users, especially older ones, in major European issues?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(14 March 2012)

Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 on the citizens' initiative ([1]) does not only provide for the collection of statements of support online, it provides for the possibility to collect both in paper form and electronically (Article 5.2), which allows less proficient Internet users to give their support to any proposed citizens' initiative.

It is therefore the responsibility of the organisers of a proposed citizens' initiative to promote their initiative outside Internet and campaign to collect statements of support in paper form, if they wish so.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:065:0001:0022:EN:PDF).

(Slovenské znenie)

Otázka na písomné zodpovedanie E-001888/12
Komisii
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(16. februára 2012)

Vec: Globálna udržateľnosť

V auguste 2010 vznikol na podnet generálneho tajomníka OSN Panel OSN na vysokej úrovni pre globálnu udržateľnosť. Panel nedávno predstavil nový plán udržateľného rozvoja a nízkouhlíkovej prosperity. Správa obsahuje 56 odporúčaní, ako čo najrýchlejšie uviesť udržateľný rozvoj do praxe a do hlavného prúdu hospodárskej politiky. V správe je napríklad zdôraznená nevyhnutnosť integrácie sociálnych a environmentálnych nákladov do svetových cien meraní ekonomických aktivít, ako cenu vypustených emisií uhlíka alebo použitých prírodných zdrojov, a to buď formou zdanenia, regulácie či schém pre obchodovanie s emisiami. Správa ďalej vyzýva na odstránenie verejných dotácií pre fosílne palivá. Hlavným hospodárskym indikátorom by nemal byť len tradičný hrubý domáci produkt, ale aj indikátor udržateľnosti hospodárstva jednotlivých krajín. Označenie výrobkov by malo obsahovať aj informácie o ich environmentálnych či sociálnych dopadoch, čo by mohlo ovplyvniť rozhodnutie spotrebiteľov, či si predmetný výrobok kúpia alebo nie.

— Ktoré z predmetných odporúčaní mieni Európska komisia považovať za reálnu výzvu, ktorou sa bude zaoberať?

Odpoveď pani Hedegaardovej v mene Komisie
(19. apríla 2012)

Európska komisia je náležite informovaná o pôsobení skupiny na vysokej úrovni OSN zaoberajúcej sa celosvetovou udržateľnosťou a jej príslušných odporúčaniach. Členka Komisie pani Hedegaardová sa osobne zúčastnila na jej zasadaní.

Odporúčania tejto skupiny sa v Európskej únii premietli do viacerých politík. Stratégia Európa 2020 sa osobitne zameriava na hlbšie začlenenie cieľov udržateľného vývoja do politík Únie.

Okrem toho sa niektoré kľúčové odporúčania týkajú využívania trhových nástrojov, internacionalizácie environmentálnych nákladov, dosiahnutia ekologickejšieho hospodárstva a nasmerovania spotrebiteľského výberu a investičných rozhodnutí v podnikaní k udržateľnému rozvoju. Tento prístup sa zavádza v schéme obchodovania s emisnými kvótami Európskej únie, ktorá umožňuje nákladovo efektívne znižovanie emisií. Ročný prieskum rastu sa zasadzuje za prechod na koncepciu zdaňovania zdrojov namiesto zdaňovania práce. Zdôraznilo sa to aj na zasadaní Európskej rady 1. – 2. marca 2012.

Sú tu aj ďalšie relevantné právne predpisy EÚ v oblasti životného prostredia, ku ktorým patrí označovanie výrobkov umožňujúce spotrebiteľom robiť pri výbere udržateľnejšie rozhodnutia, alebo stanovenie spoločných noriem napríklad pre kvalitu vody a vzduchu, ktoré zlepšujú kvalitu života.

Zámerom Európskej komisie je venovať sa niektorým z týchto otázok aj na celosvetovej úrovni, predovšetkým v rámci samitu Spojených národov o udržateľnom rozvoji (Rio+20), ktorý sa bude konať 20. až 22. júna v Rio de Janeiro. Európska únia predložila 1. novembra 2011 OSN návrh s načrtnutými konkrétnymi oblasťami, o ktorých by sa malo diskutovať. Mnohé z nich zodpovedajú odporúčaniam spomínanej skupiny OSN, o ktorých sa teraz vedú medzinárodné prípravné rokovania samitu v Rio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001888/12
to the Commission
Monika Flašíková Beňová (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Global sustainability

In August 2010, the UN High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability was established at the initiative of the Secretary-General of the UN. The panel recently presented a new plan for sustainable development and low-carbon prosperity. The report contains 56 recommendations on how to put sustainable development into practice and integrate it into mainstream economic policy as rapidly as possible. The report highlights, for example, the need to integrate the social and environmental costs into world prices for measuring economic activity, such as the price of carbon emissions released or of natural resources used. This will be achieved through taxation, regulation or emissions trading schemes. The report also calls for the elimination of public subsidies for fossil fuels. The main economic indicator should not be traditional gross domestic product alone. Account should also be taken of the sustainability indicators of individual countries' economies. Product labelling should also contain information on environmental and social impacts, which would influence consumers' decisions on whether or not to buy a product.

— Which of these recommendations does the Commission consider to be the real challenge that it should focus on?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

The European Commission is well aware of the UN High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability as well as its pertinent recommendations. Commissioner Hedegaard has participated in the Panel in her personal capacity.

The Panel's recommendations are being addressed in the European Union through several policies. The Europe 2020 strategy aims in particular at integrating the objectives of sustainable development further into the policies of the Union.

Furthermore, some of the key recommendations relate to the use of market based instruments, the internalisation of environmental costs, to green the economy and to steer consumers' choices and investment decisions in business towards sustainable development. The European Emissions Trading Scheme is implementing this approach while enabling cost-efficient emission reductions. The Annual Growth Survey encourages tax shifts away from labour to e.g. resources. This was further emphasised by the European Council, 1-2 March 2012.

In addition, there are a number of other relevant pieces of EU environmental legislation, such as product labelling to empower consumers to make more sustainable choices or the definition of common standards such as on air and water quality which enhance the quality of life.

The European Commission also aims to address a number of these issues at global level, in particular in the context of the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), that will take place June 20-22 in Rio de Janeiro. The European Union submitted a proposal to the United Nations on 1st November 2011, outlining a number of specific areas that should be considered. Many of these are along the lines of the recommendations of the Panel now subject to the international negotiations preparing the Rio summit.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001891/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(16 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Μνημόνιο οικονομικής και χρηματοπιστωτικής πολιτικής

Στις 12.2.2012 η ελληνική Βουλή ψήφισε το ν. 4046/2012 «Έγκριση των Σχεδίων Συμβάσεων Χρηματοδοτικής Διευκόλυνσης μεταξύ του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (Κ.Τ.Λ.), της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας και της Τράπεζας της Ελλάδος, του Σχεδίου του Μνημονίου Συνεννόησης μεταξύ της Ελληνικής Δημοκρατίας, της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής και της Τράπεζας της Ελλάδος και άλλες επείγουσες διατάξεις για τη μείωση του δημοσίου χρέους και τη διάσωση της εθνικής οικονομίας». Μεταξύ των παραρτημάτων του εν λόγω νόμου συμπεριλαμβάνεται και το Μνημόνιο οικονομικής και χρηματοπιστωτικής πολιτικής, στο οποίο περιγράφονται αναλυτικά οι επιμέρους δεσμεύσεις της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης για την πρόοδο του προγράμματος. Με δεδομένο ότι η Επιτροπή συμμετέχει στην τρόικα, με την οποία διεξάγονται οι διαπραγματεύσεις της κυβέρνησης, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Βάσει ποιων στοιχείων έχει συνταχθεί το εν λόγω μνημόνιο, ποιος τα εισέφερε στη διαδικασία διαπραγμάτευσης (τρόικα ή ελληνική κυβέρνηση) και με ποιον τρόπο επιβεβαιώθηκε η αξιοπιστία των εν λόγω στοιχείων;

2. Δεδομένης της εκτεταμένης φιλολογίας περί των απαιτήσεων της τρόικα σχετικά με τα μέτρα που εισάγονται στο Μνημόνιο, ποιες είναι οι πηγές πληροφόρησης της Επιτροπής σχετικά με τις ισχύουσες στην Ελλάδα νομικές ρυθμίσεις αλλά και τις πραγματικές συνθήκες σε όλους του επίμαχους τομείς που καλύπτονται από το Μνημόνιο;

3. Κατά τη διάρκεια των συναντήσεων της τρόικα με τους αρμόδιους υπουργούς για τη διαμόρφωση του Μνημονίου, τηρήθηκαν πρακτικά και, εάν ναι, ποιο το περιεχόμενό τους;

4. Ποιος έχει την ευθύνη διαμόρφωσης των τελικών κειμένων που επισυνάπτονται ως παραρτήματα στο ν. 4046/2012;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(26 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή, η ΕΚΤ, το ΔΝΤ και οι ελληνικές αρχές καταβάλλουν κάθε δυνατή προσπάθεια να χρησιμοποιούν τις βέλτιστες διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες που δημοσιεύονται από την EUROSTAT, την EL.ESTAT, την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδας καθώς και τις προγνώσεις του ελληνικού Υπουργείου Οικονομικών και της Επιτροπής/ΕΚΤ/ΔΝΤ. Η Επιτροπή λαμβάνει επίσης υπόψη τις προγνώσεις που παρέχονται από άλλους φορείς, όπως το ΚΕΠΕ, το ΙΟΒΕ καθώς και από τις εμπορικές τράπεζες.

Κατά τις συνεδριάσεις της Επιτροπής/ΕΚΤ/ΔΝΤ και των ελληνικών αρχών δεν συντάσσονται επίσημα πρακτικά. Ωστόσο, οι εκθέσεις που εκδίδουν η Επιτροπή (και το ΔΝΤ) στο τέλος κάθε εξέτασης δημοσιεύονται στις ιστοσελίδες της Επιτροπής και του ΔΝΤ, αντίστοιχα, και αφορούν τις οικονομικές εξελίξεις στην Ελλάδα και τις συζητήσεις που διεξήχθησαν με τις ελληνικές αρχές.

Ο νόμος 4046/2012 έχει συνταχθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές. Η Επιτροπή κατανοεί ότι τα παραρτήματα στα οποία αναφέρεται το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου είναι το Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης και το ΜΟΧΠ. Τα έγγραφα αυτά έχουν συνταχθεί από τις ελληνικές αρχές σε συνεργασία με την τρόικα και αναθεωρούνται κάθε τρίμηνο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001891/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Memorandum of economic and financial polices

On 12 February 2012 the Greek Parliament passed Decree 4046/2012 'Approval of the Plans for Credit Facilitation Agreements between the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF), the Hellenic Republic and the Bank of Greece, the Draft Memorandum of Understanding between the Hellenic Republic, the European Commission and the Bank of Greece and other urgent provisions for reduction of public debt and recovery of the national economy.' Among the annexes of the Decree in question is the Memorandum of economic and financial policies, containing a detailed description of the individual commitments undertaken by the Greek Government for the sake of moving the programme forward. Given that the Commission participates in the Troika, through which it conducts negotiations with the Government, will the Commission answer the following:

1. On the basis of what figures has the Memorandum in question been compiled, who introduced them into the negotiation process (the Troika or the Greek Government) and how has the reliability of the figures in question been verified?

2. Given the extensive debate surrounding the Troika's demands for measures included in the Memorandum, what are the Commission's sources of information on the legal controls in force in Greece and also on the real conditions in all the controversial sectors covered by the Memorandum?

3. During the meetings of the Troika with ministers responsible for elaborating the Memorandum, were minutes taken and, if so, what was their content?

4. Who is responsible for preparing the final texts attached as annexes to Decree 4046/2012?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission, the ECB, the IMF and the Greek authorities always endeavour to use the best available information published by Eurostat, EL.ESTAT, the Bank of Greece as well as the forecast of the Greek Ministry of Finance and of the Commission/ECB/IMF. The Commission also takes into account forecasts provided by other entities, like KEPE, IOBE as well as by commercial banks.

During the meetings of Commission/ECB/IMF and the Greek authorities no formal minutes are taken. However, the reports that the Commission (and the IMF) issue at the end of each review are published at the Commission and IMF websites, respectively, and elaborate on the economic developments in Greece and the discussions that took place with the Greek authorities.

Law 4046/2012 has been drafted by the Greek authorities. The Commission understands that the annexes that the Honourable Member of the Parliament refers to are the memorandum of understanding and the MEFP. These documents have been prepared by the Greek authorities in cooperation with the troika and are revised each quarter.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001892/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(16 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Καθεστώς προσυνταξιοδοτικής διαθεσιμότητας

Στα πλαίσια του Μεσοπρόθεσμου σχεδίου δημοσιονομικής πολιτικής, η Ελλάδα υιοθέτησε το Νοέμβριο του 2011 το ν. 4042/2011 σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 33 του οποίου υπάλληλοι του Δημοσίου που είχαν συμπληρώσει 33 έτη υπηρεσίας και το 53ο έτος της ηλικίας τους εντάσσονται σε καθεστώς προσυνταξιοδοτικής διαθεσιμότητας, με καταβολή του 50 % των βασικών αποδοχών τους, και απομακρύνονται από την εργασία τους. Με δεδομένο ότι η οδηγία 2000/78/ΕΚ για τη διαμόρφωση γενικού πλαισίου για την ίση μεταχείριση στην απασχόληση και στην εργασία, απαγορεύει διακρίσεις λόγω ηλικίας, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Η ανωτέρω εθνική νομοθεσία θεωρείται συμβατή με το κοινοτικό δίκαιο;

2. Ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει για την εξασφάλιση της συμμόρφωσης του κράτους μέλους προς την ανωτέρω οδηγία;

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(29 Μαρτίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το Αξιότιμο Μέλος του Κοινοβουλίου στην απάντηση που εδόθη στην ερώτηση P-11751/2011 ([1]) σχετικά με την ελληνική νομοθεσία για την υποχρεωτική προσυνταξιοδοτική διαθεσιμότητα των δημοσίων υπαλλήλων.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001892/12
to the Commission
Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Pre-retirement suspension arrangements

In November 2011, within the framework of the medium term fiscal policy plan, Greece adopted Law 4042/2011, of which Article 33 states that public sector employees who have completed 33 years of service are at the age of 53 covered by pre-retirement suspension arrangements and will be suspended from duty with 50% of their basic pay. Given that directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation prohibits age discrimination:

1. Can the Commission say whether the above national legislation is compatible with Community law?

2. What measures does it intend to take to ensure compliance by the Member States with the above Directive?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(29 March 2012)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question P-11751/2011 ([1]) concerning the Greek law on the mandatory early retirement of civil servants.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp .

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001893/12
an die Kommission
Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE)
(16. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Finanzanlagen im kohlenstoffintensiven Sektor

Die Märkte werden häufig von Unternehmen dominiert, die kohlenstoffreiche Reserven wie etwa Kohle und Öl besitzen. Ein Beispiel dafür ist der FT-SE-100, bei dem fünf der zehn besten Unternehmen, die 25 % des Börsenkurswertes des Indexes ausmachen, fast ausschließlich Geschäfte mit kohlenstoffreichen Rohstoffen machen. Ein kürzlich verfasstes Schreiben an den Gouverneur der Bank von England, Mervyn King, das von einer Reihe bedeutender Politiker, Wissenschaftler und Investoren unterzeichnet wurde, hebt hervor, dass diese kohlenstoffreichen Reserven im Besitz von Unternehmen Subprime-Vermögenswerte sind, die ein systemisches Risiko für die wirtschaftliche Stabilität darstellen können, da sie angesichts der notwendigen Reduzierung von CO_2-Emissionen schnell an Wert verlieren könnten, was zu erheblichen Verlusten bei Pensionsfonds und anderen institutionellen Investoren führen kann.

In diesem Zusammenhang möchte ich die folgenden Fragen stellen:

1. In welchem Umfang überwacht die Kommission oder der ESRB die Konzentration von kohlenstoffintensiven Investitionen im Finanzsystem?

2. Sieht die Kommission ein systemisches Risiko in einer hohen Konzentration von kohlenstoffintensiven Anlagen an den wichtigen europäischen Börsen?

3. Welche konkreten politischen Maßnahmen können ergriffen werden, um einem solchen systemischen Risiko entgegenzuwirken?

4. Koordinieren GD ECFIN und GD MARKT ihre Aktivitäten in diesem Bereich im Rahmen ihrer Arbeit zur wirtschaftlichen und finanziellen Stabilität, und in welchem Maß beziehen GD Climate und GD Energy diese Dimension in ihre Arbeit mit ein?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(2. Mai 2012)

Die Kommission ist sich bewusst, dass Rohstoffpreisschwankungen (auch bei kohlenstoffhaltigen Rohstoffen) für den Finanzsektor immer mit einem Risiko behaftet sind. Auch wenn unbestrittenermaßen die Notwendigkeit besteht, den Kohlenstoffausstoß zu reduzieren, ist das Risiko kurzfristig eher im Ansteigen der Rohstoffpreise zu sehen, auch bei den Rohstoffen, die einen besonders hohen Kohlenstoffausstoß verursachen, wie etwa Öl. Die nachgewiesenen Vorkommen der meisten Rohstoffe sind in der Tat begrenzt und somit bereits im Begriff abzunehmen, während die Nachfrage, insbesondere in einigen großen Schwellenländern, schnell ansteigt. Außer im Falle einer starken globalen Rezession scheint daher ein plötzlicher und deutlicher Preisabfall bei diesen Rohstoffen, und damit auch ein Wertverlust von kohlenstoffintensiven Unternehmen, eher unwahrscheinlich.

Auch sollte eine Form der falschen Preisbildung wie sie hier angesprochen wurde kaum in der Lage sein, Anpassungen der Aktienkurse auszulösen, die zu einer systemischen Finanzkrise führen könnten. Ein solches Risiko wäre dann gegeben, wenn Bewertungsverluste das Kapital von systemrelevanten Finanzinstituten aufzehren würden. Die Aufsichtsbehörden beobachten zurzeit sorgfältig die Eigenkapitalposition der großen Finanzinstitute. Banken, bei denen Kapitallücken festgestellt wurden, haben den Aufsichtsbehörden und der Europäischen Bankenaufsichtsbehörde (EBA) Pläne zur Verbesserung ihrer Eigenkapitalposition vorgelegt. Zusätzlich wird die derzeitige Reform der Eigenkapitalvorschriften für Banken und Versicherungsunternehmen (CRD) die Fähigkeit der Finanzinstitute, Verluste zu absorbieren, weiter verbessern.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001893/12
to the Commission
Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: High-carbon financial assets

Markets are often dominated by companies holding high-carbon reserves such as coal and oil. One example is the FTSE 100, where five of the top ten companies, which account for 25 % of the index's market capitalisation, are almost exclusively high-carbon. A recent letter to the Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, signed by a number of eminent politicians, scientists and investors, highlights that these high-carbon reserves held by companies are sub-prime assets that can pose a systemic risk to economic stability as, given the need to reduce carbon emissions, they could quickly fall in value, resulting in significant losses for pension funds and other institutional investors.

In this context, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. To what extent does the Commission or the ESRB monitor the concentration of high-carbon investments in the financial system?

2. Does the Commission see a systemic risk in a high concentration of high-carbon assets in major European stock exchanges?

3. What concrete policy measures could be taken to address this type of systemic risk?

4. Are DG ECFIN and DG MARKT coordinating on this issue as part of their work on economic and financial stability, and to what extent do DG Climate and DG Energy include this dimension in their work?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2012)

The Commission is aware of the inherent risk of any commodity price movements, including carbon-based commodities, for the financial sector. Although there is a clear need to reduce carbon emissions, the risk in the short term seems more tilted towards a rise in commodity prices, including for those commodities involving high carbon emissions like oil. Indeed, most commodities' proven reserves are limited and about to decline, while demand, particularly by some large emerging countries is rising rapidly. Barring a major global recession, a sharp and sudden collapse of these commodities, and therewith a drop in the value of carbon-intensive companies seems therefore rather unlikely.

Moreover, the claimed kind of mispricing should hardly be able to cause adjustments on stock prices that could trigger a systemic financial crisis. Such a risk could be material if valuation losses eroded the capital of systemically-important financial institutions. Financial supervisors are currently closely monitoring the capital position of large financial institutions. Banks with an identified capital shortfall submitted plans to supervisors and EBA indicating how they will improve their capital position. Moreover, the ongoing work to reform capital requirements for banks and insurance companies (CRD) will further improve the loss-absorbance capacity of financial institutions.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001894/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(16 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Προστασία των κητωδών μέσω του πλαισίου τεχνικών μέτρων

Στο πλαίσιο του εργαστηρίου «Προστασία των κητωδών στην ΕΕ: γεφυρώνοντας το χάσμα μεταξύ της επιστήμης, της πολιτικής που χαράσσεται και της εφαρμογής της», που διοργανώθηκε με δική μου πρωτοβουλία στις 21 Σεπτεμβρίου 2011 στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, η Επίτροπος Μαρία Δαμανάκη παρουσίασε το όραμά της για μια ολοκληρωμένη και συστημική προσέγγιση της προστασίας όλων των στοιχείων του θαλάσσιου οικοσυστήματος που πλήττονται από την αλιεία, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των κητωδών. Μέρος του οράματός της είναι να διασφαλιστεί ότι το νέο πλαίσιο τεχνικών μέτρων θα περιλαμβάνει πιο αποτελεσματικά μέτρα άμβλυνσης των επιπτώσεων.

Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να αναφέρει λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με το χρονοδιάγραμμα του πλαισίου τεχνικών μέτρων;

Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να διευκρινίσει ποιοι βασικοί μηχανισμοί προβλέπονται στο νέο πλαίσιο τεχνικών μέτρων με σκοπό την εξάλειψη, ή τουλάχιστον τον περιορισμό, των επιπτώσεων της αλιείας στα κητώδη και σε άλλα προστατευόμενα είδη;

Απάντηση της κας Δαμανάκη εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Μαρτίου 2012)

Δεδομένου ότι τα τεχνικά μέτρα συνδέονται αδιάρρηκτα με την περιφερειοποίηση και με την υποχρέωση εκφόρτωσης, που συνιστούν καίρια στοιχεία της νέας Κοινής Αλιευτικής Πολιτικής (ΚΑΛΠ), το χρονοδιάγραμμα για ένα νέο πλαίσιο εξαρτάται σε μεγάλο βαθμό από το πότε θα επιτευχθεί συναίνεση σχετικά με τη δέσμη μεταρρυθμίσεων. Έως τότε θα εξακολουθήσουν να ισχύουν τα υφιστάμενα μέτρα για την προστασία των κητοειδών δυνάμει του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 812/2004 ([1]).

Στόχος της μεταρρύθμισης της ΚΑΛΠ είναι η αποφυγή της μικροδιαχείρισης μέσω λεπτομερών κανόνων σχετικά με τεχνικά μέτρα τα οποία καθορίζονται σε κεντρικό επίπεδο. Όσον αφορά τα κητοειδή και άλλα ευαίσθητα από βιολογικής πλευράς είδη, αυτό σημαίνει τον καθορισμό ορίων παρεμπιπτόντων αλιευμάτων που θα κρούουν τον κώδωνα του κινδύνου ως προς την ύπαρξη απειλής για ορισμένους πληθυσμούς κητοειδών και θα έχουν ως αποτέλεσμα την εφαρμογή μέτρων διαχείρισης.

Σε περιφερειακό επίπεδο τα κράτη μέλη, σε διαβούλευση με τους αλιείς, με τους ενδιαφερόμενους φορείς και με τα γνωμοδοτικά συμβούλια θα έχουν τη δυνατότητα να αναπτύξουν περιφερειακά προσαρμοσμένα μέτρα περιορισμού του κινδύνου (π.χ. μέσω της χρήσης pingers, ακουστικών αποτρεπτικών συσκευών και απαγορεύσεων της αλιείας ανά περιοχή ή ανά εποχή). Έτσι, το βάρος της απόδειξης και με υψηλό βαθμό βεβαιότητας, θα βαραίνει τα κράτη μέλη ως προς τον χαμηλό αντίκτυπο στα οικεία είδη μέσω των κατάλληλων επιπέδων παρακολούθησης. Στο μέτρο του δυνατού, η παρακολούθηση αυτή πρέπει να ενσωματωθεί στο νέο Πλαίσιο Συλλογής Δεδομένων, ώστε να συνάδει με τη μεταστροφή προς μια ευρύτερη προσέγγιση της παρακολούθησης της αλιείας με βάση το οικοσύστημα και να είναι συμπληρωματική με διατάξεις ως προς την υποβολή αναφορών σύμφωνα με την οδηγία περί ενδιαιτημάτων.

([1]) ΕΕ L 150.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001894/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Protecting cetaceans within the technical measures framework

During the workshop 'Protecting Cetaceans in the EU: Bridging the Gap Between Research, Policy and Implementation' which I organised in the European Parliament on 21 September 2011, Commissioner Maria Damanaki presented her vision of an integrated and systemic approach to the protection of all marine ecosystem components that are affected by fisheries, including cetaceans. Part of her vision included ensuring that more effective mitigation measures are incorporated under the new technical measures framework.

Can the Commission provide details of its timetable for the technical measures framework?

Can the Commission specify what key mechanisms are envisaged within the new technical measures framework in order to ensure that the impact from fisheries on cetaceans and other protected species is eliminated or at least minimised?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(21 March 2012)

As technical measures are inextricably linked with regionalisation and the landing obligation, which are key elements of the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the timeframe for a new framework is very much dependent on when agreement is reached on the reform package. Until then existing measures to protect cetaceans under Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 ([1]) will continue to apply.

The objective of the reform of the CFP is to avoid micromanagement through detailed rules on technical measures set centrally. For cetaceans and other biological sensitive species this would equate to setting bycatch limits that indicate a threat to specific cetacean populations and trigger management intervention.

Regionally, Member States in consultation with fishermen, stakeholders and the Advisory Councils would have the possibility to develop regionally adapted mitigation measures (e.g. the use of pingers, area or seasonal closures). The onus would then be on Member States to demonstrate low impact on the species involved with a high degree of certainty through appropriate levels of monitoring. As far as practically possible, this monitoring should be incorporated into the new Data Collection Framework in line with a move to a wider ecosystem approach to fisheries monitoring and be complementary to reporting requirements under the Habitats Directive.

([1]) OJ L 150.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001895/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Autismo nuove linee guida

L'autismo è una sindrome comportamentale causata da un disordine dello sviluppo, biologicamente determinato, con esordio nei primi 3 anni di vita.

Considerata la complessità e la gravità dei disturbi dello spettro autistico, che coinvolgono proprio le componenti psichiche che guidano lo sviluppo della dimensione relazionale e sociale cosi caratteristica della specie umana, è necessario che la gestione della patologia tenga conto dei vari elementi che concorrono alla complessità del quadro clinico: è auspicabile quindi che interventi specifici, competenze cliniche e interventi abilitativi e di supporto per il paziente e per la sua famiglia siano costruiti su buone prassi, in linea con i principi della prova scientifica.

Sono state elaborate da un gruppo di esperti delle linee guida sull'autismo, volte a riconoscere solo l'Applied Behaviour Intervention quale metodo idoneo a curare la malattia. È vero che questo permette una valutazione scientifica, ma esistono altre terapie, dall'ausilio di strumenti di comunicazione alla musicoterapia, in grado di dare risultati efficaci.

— Visto l'impegno europeo in materia di disabilità con la Strategia decennale, sono a chiedere alla Commissione se intenda implementare tale strategia riconoscendo l'autismo e investire in mezzi di studio e ricerca a sostegno dei ragazzi affetti da questa malattia e delle loro famiglie, garantendo loro dignità, libertà, autonomia e autodeterminazione.

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2012)

Con la firma e la ratifica della Convenzione sui diritti delle persone con disabilità (UNCRPD), l'Unione europea e gli Stati membri si sono impegnati a fornire servizi destinati a ridurre al minimo e a prevenire ulteriori disabilità e a organizzare, rafforzare e sviluppare servizi e programmi globali di abilitazione e riabilitazione. La Strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020 ([1]), principale quadro politico dell'UE per l'applicazione della convenzione, si impegna a sostenere la ricerca sull'assistenza sanitaria a donne e uomini con disabilità tramite programmi di lavoro in materia di salute nell'ambito del 7° programma quadro e programmi successivi.

Tramite il programma PROGRESS, la Commissione europea versa ogni anno una sovvenzione di funzionamento all'associazione «Autism Europe» e, nell'ambito dell'invito a presentare proposte VP/2010/017 ([2]), fornisce attualmente sostegno diretto a una serie di progetti pilota intesi a offrire maggiori opportunità lavorative alle persone affette da disturbi dello spettro autistico.

Quanto alle forme specifiche di intervento, riabilitazione e sostegno per i pazienti e i loro familiari, non compete alla Commissione esprimersi in favore di determinati tipi di interventi terapeutici.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:IT:PDF.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=5063&langId=en.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001895/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: New guidelines for autism

Autism is a behavioural syndrome that is caused by a biologically determined development impairment which initially manifests itself during the first three years of a child's life.

Given the complexity and severity of the range of autism-related disorders, which affect the psychical components that guide the development of the social and relational aspects that are so typical of the human species, management of the disease must take into account the various factors that contribute to the complexity of the clinical profile. Specific intervention, clinical skills and rehabilitation and support for patients and their families should therefore be based on good practice, in line with the principles of scientific evidence.

A group of experts has developed a set of autism guidelines which recognise only Applied Behaviour Intervention as a suitable method for treating the disease. While it is true that this enables scientific assessments to be made, there are also other therapies, ranging from the use of communication tools to music therapy, that are able to produce effective results.

— Given the EU's commitment towards disability, as demonstrated by its ten-year strategy, can the Commission say whether it intends to implement this strategy by recognising autism and to invest in study and research to support children suffering from this disease and their families, to ensure their dignity, freedom, independence and self-determination?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

By signing and ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), EU Member States and the European Union made a commitment to 'provide services designed to minimise and prevent further disabilities' and to 'organise, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes'. The EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) provides the main EU policy framework for the implementation of the UNCRPD. It undertakes to support research on healthcare provision to women and men with disabilities through health work programmes in FP7 and its successor programme.

Under the PROGRESS program the European Commission provides an annual operating grant to Autism Europe. In addition, the Commission currently manages direct support to a number of pilot projects aimed at increasing the employment possibilities for people with Autism Spector Disorder, under the Call for Proposals VP/2010/017 ([2]).

As to the details of specific forms of intervention, rehabilitation and support for patients and their families, the Commission does not have the competence to express a preference for particular forms of therapy.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52010DC0636:EN:NOT.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=5063&langId=en.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001896/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Energia rinnovabile: piantagioni a rischio

Le multinazionali presenti in alcuni paesi europei hanno pensato a un modo alternativo per riuscire ad ottenere energia dalla biomassa. Questo, infatti, è un obiettivo importante affermato dalla direttiva europea che punta ad aumentare l'utilizzo di fonti alternative tra cui, appunto, la biomassa. Lo scopo può essere perseguito attraverso la costruzione di centrali da biomassa agroforestale. Un istituto di ricerca britannico ha studiato le implicazioni di questo progetto che prevede l'acquisto di alcuni terreni nei paesi del sud del mondo e dell'Africa nei quali vengono piantati gli alberi.

Essi sono trasportati in un secondo momento nel paese di origine e utilizzati nelle industrie di biomassa per produrre energia. Tutto questo avviene per fronteggiare la crescente domanda internazionale di legname che i paesi del nord del mondo non riescono più a soddisfare. I vantaggi derivanti da questo processo nel medio termine sono la riduzione dell'emissione di anidride carbonica e, nel lungo termine, la riduzione delle tariffe dopo aver ammortizzato i costi del meccanismo.

I dubbi sollevati a proposito di questo sistema riguardano gli squilibri che potrebbero essere provocati alle diverse popolazioni. Esse, infatti, occupano il suolo nazionale, anche se non ne sono i proprietari e, quindi, potrebbero essere costrette a spostarsi nel caso in cui i governi decidessero di vendere i terreni.

Considerato che tale processo, fortemente richiesto da alcuni paesi, potrebbe sconvolgere la vita di intere popolazioni che non hanno gli strumenti necessari per fronteggiare tale situazione, può la Commissione far sapere se intende emanare specifici regolamenti al fine di tutelare le popolazioni indigene dallo sfruttamento del suolo?

Risposta data da Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(30 marzo 2012)

La Commissione prende atto delle preoccupazioni espresse dall'onorevole parlamentare ma desidera sottolineare che la cosiddetta questione dell'appropriazione dei terreni è molto più ampia e non riguarda solo le bioenergie, ma è relativa in generale ai diversi usi dei terreni nei paesi in via di sviluppo. La Commissione sostiene gli sforzi della comunità internazionale per affrontare la questione in modo adeguato.

Essa continuerà a prestare un'attenzione particolare all'impatto delle politiche dell'UE nei paesi in via di sviluppo, in ottemperanza degli obblighi derivanti dai trattati, al fine di assicurare la coerenza politica in materia di sviluppo ([1]). Come previsto dagli articoli 17 e 23 della direttiva sulle energie rinnovabili, a decorrere dal 2012, la Commissione attuerà un monitoraggio all'impatto della politica dell'UE sui biocarburanti nell'Unione europea e nei paesi terzi e presenterà ogni due anni una relazione pertinente. Inoltre, la Commissione sta attualmente valutando l'efficacia delle sue raccomandazioni agli Stati membri sui criteri di sostenibilità, relativamente all'uso di fonti da biomassa solida e gassosa per l'elettricità, il riscaldamento e il raffreddamento stabilite nella relazione COM(2010)11 e comunicherà a breve i risultati di tale valutazione in merito alla necessità e all'opportunità di ulteriori misure a livello UE, compresi criteri UE vincolanti.

([1]) Articolo 21 del trattato sull'Unione europea e articolo 208 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea. Si veda anche «Relazione dell'UE sulla coerenza delle politiche per lo sviluppo 2011», del 15.12.2011, SEC(2011)1627.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001896/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Renewable energy: plantations at risk

Multinational companies operating in certain European countries have come up with an alternative way to obtain energy from biomass. This is, in fact, an important objective set out in the EU directive that seeks to increase the use of alternative sources, including biomass. This aim can be pursued by building power stations fuelled by agricultural and forest biomass. A British research institute has studied the implications of this project, which entails the purchase of areas of land in countries in the global south and in Africa, where trees will be planted.

They will subsequently be transported to the country of origin and used in the biomass industries to generate energy. All this is in order to meet the growing international demand for timber, which countries in the global north can no longer satisfy. The advantages of this process are, in the medium term, fewer carbon dioxide emissions, and, in the long term, lower tariffs once the costs of the mechanism have been amortised.

The doubts raised over this system concern the disruption that various populations could suffer. They occupy national soil, even if they do not own it, and could therefore be forced to move in the event that the governments decide to sell the land.

Considering that this process, strongly called for by certain countries, could devastate the lives of entire populations that do not have the necessary resources to deal with such a situation, can the Commission state whether it intends to issue specific regulations in order to protect indigenous populations from exploitation of the land?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

The Commission takes note of the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member but it would like to highlight that the so-called land grabbing issue is much broader than bioenergy and it is more generally related to the various land uses in developing countries. The Commission supports the efforts of the international community to address this issue adequately.

The Commission will continue to pay close attention to the impacts of EU policies in developing countries pursuant to its Treaty obligations to ensure policy coherence for development ([1]). As required by Articles 17 and 23 of the Renewable Energy Directive, the Commission will monitor and report biennially from 2012 on the impacts of the EU biofuels policy in the EU and third countries. Furthermore, the Commission is currently assessing the effectiveness of its recommendations to Member States concerning the sustainability requirements for the use of solid and gaseous biomass sources in electricity, heating and cooling laid down in Report COM(2010) 11. It will report shortly on whether additional EU measures would be necessary and appropriate, including EU binding criteria.

([1]) Article 21 of the Treaty on the EU and Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. See also 'EU 2011 Report on Policy Coherence for Development', 15.12.2011, SEC(2011) 1627.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001897/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Fusione Nucleare: promozione FAST all'interno del PQ — FP8

Nell'ambito delle politiche comunitarie ed internazionali, la ricerca sulla fusione nucleare in Italia sta svolgendo un ruolo d'eccellenza. La costruzione di ITER, il primo impianto a fusione di dimensioni paragonabili a quelle di una centrale elettrica convenzionale, iniziato nel 2007 in Francia nel sito di Cadarache, costituisce un passo decisivo verso la dimostrazione della fattibilità scientifica e tecnologica della produzione di energia da fusione termonucleare controllata.

La proposta scientifica riguardante l'esperimento FAST— Fusion Advanced Studies Torus realizzato in Italia, accompagnerà ITER nella sua fase operativa e per questo è considerato come suo «satellite». FAST può essere vista come una sorta di galleria del vento per i collaudi aerodinamici. Infatti, esso consentirà di provare materiali avanzati, tecniche innovative e modalità operative prima che queste vengano utilizzate in ITER, il quale potrà raggiungere gli obiettivi prefissati più rapidamente e con maggior sicurezza.

Considerando che:

— FAST avrà importanti ricadute economiche sull'industria e sullo sviluppo delle nuove tecnologie, come risulta da una revisione del programma europeo fatta da un Panel internazionale nel 2008 (nonché dall'accordo sull'istituzione della Organizzazione internazionale dell'energia da fusione ITER),

— le attività vengono svolte nel quadro del programma EURATOM per la fusione, previsto dalla direttiva 2009/71/Euratom del Consiglio del 25.6.2009,

può la Commissione far sapere come intende promuovere le iniziative di integrazione e condivisione di FAST nel nuovo Programma Quadro 2014-2018 (PQ FP8) sui finanziamenti per gli impianti sperimentali esistenti o in fase di costruzione come pure se intende definire gli indirizzi per sostenere la fusione nucleare come una delle opzioni utili per garantire una fonte di energia di larga scala, sostenibile, sicura e praticamente inesauribile, senza emissioni nocive né di gas serra?

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-006630/2012 ([1]).

Nel corso degli anni l'Italia ha svolto un ruolo cruciale nel settore della fusione nucleare, tanto in Europa quanto a livello mondiale. Notevole è il contributo apportato dalla ricerca e dall'industria italiane alla costruzione di ITER, ad oggi il principale progetto mondiale nel campo dello sviluppo dell'energia da fusione.

Alla fine del dicembre 2011 è stato formalmente adottato il programma quadro Euratom 2012-2013, con il relativo bilancio, e il 30 novembre 2011 la Commissione ha pubblicato la sua proposta per il programma Euratom 2014-2018 nell'ambito del pacchetto legislativo «Orizzonte 2020». I principali obiettivi perseguiti nel quadro di tali programmi consistono nel portare a termine la costruzione di ITER e nel gettare le basi delle prossime tappe necessarie affinché l'energia da fusione diventi una fonte energetica valida, sicura e sostenibile. In tale contesto, è fondamentale utilizzare nel modo più efficiente ed efficace possibile le risorse disponibili: la Commissione, in collaborazione con gli attori del settore, sta pertanto elaborando una tabella di marcia più dettagliata delle attività di ricerca, in linea con la dotazione di bilancio proposta. Le strutture di ricerca necessarie per condurre tali attività, anche a livello mondiale, potranno quindi essere facilmente individuate e FAST potrebbe essere incluso nel processo.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-000630&language=IT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001897/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Nuclear fusion: promotion of FAST within FP8

In the context of EU and international policies, research into nuclear fusion in Italy constitutes an area of excellence. The construction of ITER, the first fusion power station of a size comparable to that of a conventional power station, which began in 2007 at the Cadarache site in France, marks a decisive step towards demonstrating the scientific and technological feasibility of generating energy using controlled thermonuclear fusion.

The scientific proposal relating to the FAST (Fusion Advanced Studies Torus) experiment carried out in Italy will accompany ITER during its operational phase, and FAST is therefore considered to be an ITER satellite. FAST can be regarded as a type of wind tunnel for aerodynamic testing. It will enable the testing of advanced materials, innovative techniques and operating procedures before they are used in ITER, which will be able to meet its objectives more quickly and more safely.

Considering that:

— FAST will have a significant economic impact on industry and on the development of new technologies, as indicated by a review of the European programme carried out by an international panel in 2008 (and by the Agreement on the Establishment of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organisation);

— the activities are carried out within the framework of the Euratom fusion programme, under Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25 June 2009,

can the Commission say how it intends to promote initiatives to integrate and share FAST within the new Framework Programme 2014-2018 (FP8) on the funding of existing experimental facilities or those that are under construction? Can it also say whether it intends to establish guidelines to support nuclear fusion as one of the options for ensuring a large-scale, sustainable, safe and practically inexhaustible source of energy that does not produce harmful or greenhouse gas emissions?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-00630/2012 ([1]).

Italy has played over the years a crucial role in fusion in Europe and in the wider international context. Notable is the contribution, both of the Italian research sector and industry, in the construction of ITER, which is currently the major global endeavour in the development of fusion energy.

In late December 2011, the Euratom Framework Programme 2012-13 and associated budget was formally adopted and on 30 November 2011 the Commission published its proposal for the Euratom Programme 2014-18 as part of the Horizon 2020 package. The principal objectives of these programmes are the successful construction of ITER and laying the foundations for the next steps needed to achieve the goal of fusion energy as a viable, safe and sustainable source of energy. In this context, it is crucial to make the most efficient and effective use of the available resources and the Commission, in collaboration with the fusion stakeholders, is developing a more detailed roadmap of research activities in line with the proposed budget. The research facilities needed to carry out these activities, including in the global context, can then be more readily identified, and FAST should be evaluated as part of this process.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-000630&language=IT.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001898/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Gas radioattivi, nuovi metodi per la bonifica

I rifiuti radioattivi provengono dalle pregresse attività di esercizio degli impianti nucleari, dalle operazioni di bonifica e dall'impiego di radionuclidi in campo medico-ospedaliero, industriale e della ricerca scientifica. La gestione e messa in sicurezza dei rifiuti radioattivi si realizza attraverso le attività di trattamento e condizionamento dei rifiuti. Uno dei grandi problemi per la dismissione e la bonifica delle centrali nucleari e per la gestione delle scorie radioattive e del combustibile atomico spento è la rimozione dei gas radioattivi prodotti dal decadimento nucleare.

Con un recente studio è stata ideata una nuova tecnologia basata sulle strutture metallo-organiche in grado di favorire la bonifica. Tale struttura, chiamata Zif-8, è composta da una polvere che può essere raggrumata e che ingloba al suo interno lo ionio radioattivo. Questa polvere può essere incorporata nelle scorie vetrificate per uno stoccaggio di lungo periodo, senza il pericolo di fuga di gas radioattivi, fatale per i tessuti viventi.

— Tutto ciò premesso, sono a chiedere alla Commissione se intenda impiegare i fondi destinati alla ricerca e all'innovazione al fine di implementare gli studi esistenti in materia di bonifica dei siti radioattivi, tutelando i cittadini e garantendo loro di vivere in ambienti non contaminati.

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

Il programma quadro Euratom per le attività di ricerca e formazione nel settore nucleare è volto a promuovere la ricerca nell'ambito delle filiere di reattori e della relativa sicurezza, della gestione a lungo termine sicura dei rifiuti radioattivi e dei rischi per la salute legati all'esposizione a dosi ridotte di radiazioni. Per il periodo 2012-2013 l'obiettivo della gestione del settore dei rifiuti radioattivi finali verte sulle «attività di ricerca orientate alle soluzioni pratiche in riferimento ai rimanenti aspetti chiave del deposito geologico profondo del combustibile esaurito e ai rifiuti radioattivi a lunga vita». Il Centro comune di ricerca della Commissione svolge ulteriori attività di ricerca sulla gestione del combustibile esaurito e dei rifiuti nucleari ad alta attività, compresi il trattamento, il condizionamento, il trasporto, lo stoccaggio e lo smaltimento geologico.

L'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento al trattamento e al condizionamento dei rifiuti nonché alla bonifica dei siti radioattivi. Il coordinamento delle ricerche sul trattamento dei rifiuti, con particolare riferimento alla zeolite, rientrava nei precedenti programmi Euratom con un sostegno alle reti fino al 2006 ma da allora è stato interrotto; il che non esclude che questo settore sia inserito nei futuri programmi Euratom laddove se ne dimostrasse il potenziale in soluzioni innovative finora sconosciute, che risulterebbero assai preziose per tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE interessati ([1]).

([1]) Collegamenti alle reti di operatori nella ricerca e nell'applicazione dei risultati della ricerca e dell'innovazione nella gestione dei rifiuti e nelle attività di smantellamento: Rete di coordinamento sullo smantellamento degli impianti nucleari: http://ec-cnd.net/ Pagina web europea sullo smantellamento degli impianti nucleari (EU-DECOM): http://www.sckcen.be/en/OurResearch/Research-projects/EU-projects-FP6-FP7/EU-DECOM. Nuclear Gen II & III Association (NUGENIA): http://nugenia.org/index.php?art=Purpose piattaforma tecnologica per lo smaltimento geologico (Implementing Geological Disposal Technology Platform, IGDTP): http://www.igdtp.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001898/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: New clean-up methods for radioactive gases

Radioactive waste comes from past nuclear plant operations, reclamation operations and the use of radionuclides in the medical, industrial and scientific sectors. Radioactive waste is managed and made safe by treatment and conditioning. One of the greatest problems in the decommissioning and clean-up of nuclear plants and the management of radioactive waste and of spent nuclear fuel is the removal of gases produced by nuclear decay.

A recent study has helped develop a new technology based on metal-organic frameworks that can aid such clean-ups. One of these frameworks, called Zif-8, is composed of a powder that can be thickened and contains radioactive ions. This powder can be added to vitrified waste for long-term storage so as to avoid leakage of radioactive gases, which are fatal to living tissue.

— With regard to the above, can the Commission say whether it intends to use the funds for research and innovation to implement existing studies regarding the clean-up of radioactive sites, so as to protect citizens and ensure that they live in uncontaminated areas?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Euratom Framework Programme (FP) for nuclear research and training activities aims at promoting research in the field of reactor systems and related safety, long-term safe management of radioactive waste and the risks from exposure to low doses of radiation. For the period 2012-2013, the scope of the activity area management of ultimate radioactive waste is focused on 'implementation-oriented research on remaining key aspects of deep geological disposal of spent fuel and long-lived radioactive waste'. Further research is carried out at the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) on the management of spent fuel and nuclear high-level waste, including their processing, conditioning, transport, interim storage and geological disposal.

The Honourable Member highlights the case of waste treatment and conditioning as well as remediation of radioactive sites. Coordination of research on waste treatment, notably on zeolite frameworks, was included in earlier Euratom programmes with support to networks up to 2006 but has been discontinued since then. This does not exclude that future Euratom programmes could include this area again should there be evidence of so far unknown and innovative promising solutions, which could be of high value for all EU Member States concerned ([1]).

([1]) Links to networks of actors in research and implementation of research and innovation developments in waste management and dismantling activities: Coordination Network on Decommissioning of Nuclear Installations (CND): http://ec-cnd.net/; European website on Decommissioning of Nuclear Installations (EU-DECOM): http://www.sckcen.be/en/OurResearch/Research-projects/EU-projects-FP6-FP7/EU-DECOM; Nuclear Gen II & III Association (NUGENIA): http://nugenia.org/index.php?art=Purpose; Implementing Geological Disposal-Technology platform (IGD-TP): http://www.igdtp.eu/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001899/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: I «mirror site», una soluzione per aggirare la censura

Per aggirare la censura e i blocchi governativi di molti siti web, Reporter senza frontiere (Rsf) ha promosso una nuova iniziativa che consente la creazione di pagine Internet speculari a quelle originali. Dal momento che i censori utilizzano molte tecniche per oscurare o sferrare cyber attacchi a siti d'informazione online, blog, pagine web di attivisti e di oppositori, ecc., l'associazione fornisce assistenza tecnica per garantire il diritto d'informazione e la libertà di espressione nei paesi in cui la censura governativa è ancora presente.

I cosiddetti «mirror site» sono copie dei siti Internet a rischio censura. Le pagine web duplicate sono costantemente e automaticamente aggiornate, proprio come copie identiche ai siti originali. In tal modo, in caso di un cyber attacco, gli utenti della rete saranno comunque in grado di accedere alle informazioni contenute sul sito oscurato attraverso la sua copia.

I primi siti Internet a essere stati duplicati sono quelli della rivista ceca Dosh e del quotidiano dello Sri Lanka e-news. Il «sito specchio» del quotidiano menzionato sarà ad esempio lankaenews.rsf.org, ospitato su un altro server e con un dominio diverso da quello originale sottoposto a censura.

— Considerato che la libertà di espressione e d'informazione, che include la libertà dei media e il loro pluralismo, è sancita nell'articolo 11 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione Europea, può la Commissione dire qual è la sua opinione in merito ai «mirror site» e se intende appoggiare questa iniziativa di Reporter senza frontiere?

Risposta data da Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(26 marzo 2012)

Nella comunicazione congiunta della Commissione europea e del SEAE «Diritti umani e democrazia al centro dell'azione esterna dell'Unione europea: Verso un approccio più efficace» viene ribadito il grandissimo potenziale delle tecnologie di informazione e comunicazione per la promozione dei diritti umani.

Le disposizioni della Carta dei diritti fondamentali si applicano agli Stati membri esclusivamente nell'attuazione del diritto dell'Unione. La Carta non estende l'ambito di applicazione del diritto dell'Unione al di là delle competenze della stessa UE.

Lo scorso dicembre la Vicepresidente Neelie Kroes ha lanciato la strategia «No Disconnect» ([1]), volta a promuovere un accesso senza restrizioni a internet e alle altre tecnologie di comunicazione elettroniche. Tale strategia, che rientra nel piano di azione per il Mediterraneo meridionale adottato dalla Commissione e dall'Alto Rappresentante dell'Unione per gli affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza ([2]), mira in particolar modo ad assistere le ONG e i singoli cittadini soggetti a regimi autoritari a aggirare restrizioni arbitrarie delle comunicazioni elettroniche e di internet. La strategia è incentrata su quattro settori chiave: tecnologia, istruzione, servizi di informazione e cooperazione.

L'iniziativa di Reporter senza frontiere (Rsf) ha ricevuto l'appoggio dell'EIDHR, lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani, nell'ambito del quale si sta già attuando un'ampia parte della strategia «No Disconnect». Dato il loro carattere, sui contenuti del progetto vige il massimo riserbo.

Inoltre, l'EIDHR sostiene e sviluppa progetti simili con altre organizzazioni. La direzione generale dello Sviluppo e cooperazione — EuropeAid della Commissione lancerà un invito specifico a presentare proposte nel maggio 2012.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1525.
([2]) COM(2011)200 dell'8.3.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001899/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: 'Mirror sites', a solution for circumventing censorship

To get around the government censorship and blocking to which many websites are subjected, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has launched a new initiative enabling Internet sites which mirror original sites to be created. Since the censors use a wide variety of techniques to block or launch cyber attacks on online news sites, blogs and websites run by activists, opposition groups and others, the association is offering technical assistance with a view to upholding the right to information and freedom of expression in countries where government censorship is still present.

Internet sites at risk of censorship can be 'mirrored' to create duplicate sites which are constantly and automatically updated and thus remain identical copies of the original sites. This means that, in the event of cyber attack, Internet users will still be able to access the information contained on a blocked site via the duplicate site.

The first Internet sites to have been duplicated are those of the Chechen magazine *Dosh* and the Sri Lankan newspaper *Lanka-e-news*. The mirror sites are hosted on different servers and have different domain names from those of the original sites that are being censored. The newspaper's mirror site is thus lankanews.rsf.org.

— Given that freedom of expression and information, which also covers freedom of the media and media pluralism, is guaranteed by Article 11 of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights, can the Commission say what view it takes of mirror sites and whether it intends to support this Reporters Without Borders initiative?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

The enormous potential of information and communication technology to promote human rights has been highlighted in the Joint Communication of the European Commission and the EEAS 'Human rights and democracy at the heart of EU external action — towards a more effective approach'.

The provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. It does not extend the field of application of Union law beyond the powers of the Union.

Vice-President Neelie Kroes launched last December the No Disconnect Strategy ([1]), to promote unhindered access to Internet and other electronic communication technologies. It is part of the action plan on the Southern Mediterranean adopted by the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy ([2]) and primarily aims at assisting NGOs and individual citizens living under authoritarian regimes in circumventing arbitrary disruption to electronic and Internet communications. It focuses on four key areas: technology, education, intelligence and cooperation.

The reporters Without Borders (RSF) initiative has been supported by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) which is already implementing a large part of the No-Disconnect Strategy. Due to their sensitivity the content of this project is confidential.

Similar projects with other organisations are also being supported and developed by the EIDHR. A dedicated call for proposal will be launched by the European Commission Europe Aid Development and Cooperation Office in May 2012.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1525.
([2]) COM(2011) 200 of 8.3.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001900/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Musica digitale in crescita contro la pirateria

Crescono nel mondo i ricavi generati dalla musica digitale (4,6 miliardi di dollari), anche se non riescono a colmare l'andamento negativo dei prodotti tradizionali colpiti dalla pirateria. Con l'avvento del formato di compressione MP3, internet e la rete sono diventati il principale nodo di diffusione di musica illegale. Le nuove tecnologie consentono di distribuire e scaricare canzoni in pochi minuti senza aver bisogno di particolari competenze o attrezzature eccessivamente sofisticate.

La comparsa in rete di programmi di file-sharing come Napster, Kazaa e affini ha reso il tutto ancora più semplice e ha consentito una diffusione capillare della pirateria digitale. Non bisogna pensare che questa nuova forma di pirateria sia ad esclusivo uso individuale, in quanto anche le organizzazioni criminali si stanno indirizzando verso la rete e i suoi facili guadagni abbandonando in molti casi le forme più tradizionali di contraffazione. A causa della pirateria le industrie creative europee potrebbero perdere 1,2 milioni di posti di lavoro entro il 2015.

Tutto ciò premesso, sono a chiedere alla Commissione:

1. quali misure intende adottare al fine di limitare la perdita di posti di lavoro, incentivando le aziende creative a produrre musica regolarmente?

2. considerata la diffusione di programmi e software per accedere facilmente alla musica, intende attuare i controlli sui siti che consentono di scaricare gratuitamente la musica, tutelando il consumatore, a volte minorenne?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2012)

1. La Commissione intende adottare nel primo semestre del 2012 una proposta sulla gestione collettiva dei diritti, che mirerà, tra l'altro, a facilitare la concessione della licenza di diritti d'autore per i servizi di musica digitale. Il quadro giuridico risultante dovrebbe favorire l'offerta legale di servizi di musica digitale in tutta l'UE.

2. La Commissione non ha competenza per effettuare controlli dei siti internet che consentono di scaricare musica illegalmente. Negli Stati membri, al fine di far cessare o impedire infrazioni di tale natura, potranno essere imposti provvedimenti inibitori da parte dei tribunali. In ogni caso, un filtraggio generale delle comunicazioni elettroniche solleverebbe problemi di compatibilità con la legislazione dell'UE. La Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea ha recentemente rilevato che l'obbligo, imposto a un fornitore di servizi internet o a un fornitore di servizi di hosting, di predisporre un sistema di filtraggio delle comunicazioni elettroniche attraverso i propri servizi o le informazioni memorizzate sui propri server, applicabile indistintamente a tutti i consumatori o utenti a titolo preventivo, esclusivamente a spese dello stesso fornitore di servizi e per un periodo illimitato, era contrario alla legislazione dell'Unione ([1]).

3. La Commissione sta attualmente riesaminando la direttiva 2004/48/CE sul rispetto dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale. In tale esercizio, la Commissione presterà particolare attenzione al raggiungimento di un giusto equilibrio tra la tutela dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale, la libertà d'impresa, la protezione dei dati personali e della libertà di informazione.

([1]) Cause C-70/10 e C-360/10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001900/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Growth in digital music as against piracy

Global revenues from digital music (USD 4.6 billion) are on the rise, even if the negative trend of traditional products affected by piracy cannot be curbed. With the advent of the MP3 compression format, the Internet and networks have become the principal medium for distributing illegal music. New technologies enable the distribution and downloading of songs in a few minutes without the need for particular skills or sophisticated equipment.

The appearance on the Internet of file-sharing programs like Napster, Kazaa and the like has made the whole thing even simpler and has led to digital piracy becoming widespread. It should not be assumed that this new form of piracy is exclusively for individual use, as criminal organisations are also turning to the Internet and its easy money, abandoning in many cases more traditional forms of counterfeiting. In the European creative industry, 1.2 million jobs could be lost due to piracy by 2015.

1. What measures does the Commission intend to adopt in order to limit the loss of jobs, incentivising businesses in the creative sector to produce music legally?

2. Given the spread of programs and software allowing easy access to music, does it intend to implement controls on sites which allow free music downloads, protecting consumers, who are often children?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

1. The Commission plans to adopt in the first semester of 2012 a proposal on collective rights management that will aim, among other objectives, to facilitate the licensing of copyright for online music services. This enabling legal framework should help stimulating the legal offer of online music services across the EU.

2. The Commission does not have any competence to carry out controls on websites which allow illicit music downloads. In the Member States, injunctions to stop or prevent infringements can be imposed by courts. However, general filtering of electronic communications would raise problems of compatibility with EC law. The European Court of Justice found recently that a requirement imposed on an Internet service provider or on a hosting service provider to install a system for filtering electronic communications passing via its services or information stored on its servers, which applies indiscriminately to all consumers or users, as a preventive measure, exclusively at the expense of the service providers and for an unlimited period was contrary to EC law ([1]).

3. The Commission is currently carrying out a review of Directive 2004/48 on the enforcement of intellectual property rights. In doing so, it will pay particular attention to striking the right balance between the protection of intellectual property rights, the freedom to conduct business, the protection of personal data and that of the freedom of information.

([1]) Cases C-70/10 and C-360/10.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001901/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Pillola contro la sclerosi multipla

Una nota azienda farmaceutica ha messo in commercio una nuova pillola in grado di contrastare la sclerosi multipla.

Il farmaco è già in vendita in Italia e riempie di speranza i tantissimi pazienti affetti da questa malattia. Si tratta, infatti, di una pillola da prendere oralmente al mattino, che libera i malati dalle fastidiose iniezioni a cui si dovevano sottoporre periodicamente.

Oltre alla facilità con cui è presa, la pastiglia avrebbe un'efficacia due volte maggiore rispetto alle terapie usate fino ad oggi. I pazienti sono finalmente liberati dalla schiavitù delle iniezioni e, inoltre, ricevono maggiori benefici.

Visto che il nuovo farmaco è presente in Italia e potrebbe rappresentare una rivoluzione positiva per la vita di tantissimi pazienti affetti da sclerosi multipla, può la Commissione far sapere se è al corrente del suddetto medicinale e se intende promuoverlo anche in altri Stati membri dell'Unione europea?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(29 marzo 2012)

La decisione della Commissione che concede l'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione in forza del regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 ([1]) del Parlamento e del Consiglio relativa alla Gilenya, un prodotto medicinale per uso umano, è stata adottata dalla Commissione il 17 marzo 2011. La Gilenya contiene la sostanza attiva fingolimod in capsule per uso orale ed è stata approvata quale terapia che altera la malattia per la sclerosi multipla recidivante-remittente altamente attiva.

Le autorizzazioni alla commercializzazione concesse dalla Commissione per il tramite della procedura centralizzata sono valide in tutti gli Stati membri dell'UE. Non compete però alla Commissione promuovere un prodotto medicinale specifico.

([1]) GU L 136 del 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001901/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Pill to combat multiple sclerosis

A well-known pharmaceutical company has placed a new pill capable of fighting multiple sclerosis on the market.

The drug is already on sale in Italy and has filled with hope the countless patients suffering from this disease. It is a pill taken orally in the morning, which frees sufferers from the need to have unpleasant injections at regular intervals.

Besides the ease with which it is taken, the tablet is reportedly twice as effective as the treatments used until now. Finally, patients are no longer slaves to injections, and, in addition, they receive greater benefits.

Given that the new drug is in use in Italy and could revolutionise the lives of numerous multiple sclerosis sufferers, can the Commission state whether it is aware of the abovementioned medicine and whether it intends to promote it in other EU Member States too?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(29 March 2012)

Commission Decision granting marketing authorisation under Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 ([1]) of the European Parliament and of the Council for Gilenya, a medicinal product for human use, was adopted by the Commission on 17 March 2011. Gilenya contains the active substance fingolimod in capsules for oral use and has been approved as a disease modifying therapy in highly active relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis.

Marketing authorisations granted by the Commission via the centralised procedure are valid in all EU Member States. By contrast, it is not the role of the Commission to promote any specific medicinal product.

([1]) OJ L 136, 30.4.2004.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001902/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Proteina per combattere l'AIDS

Novità importanti sul tema dell'HIV. Alcuni ricercatori del New York Langone Medical Center hanno scoperto l'esistenza di una proteina in grado di difendere le cellule dall'infezione. Una volta individuata questa nuova proteina, chiamata SAMHD1, gli studiosi hanno cercato di approfondire meglio la ricerca e di capire in che modo questa possa davvero bloccare il virus.

In sostanza SAMHD1, distruggendo i «mattoni della vita» del virus HIV, non consentirebbe a quest'ultimo di trasferire le sue informazioni genetiche e quindi di riprodursi. È stato dunque osservato che la proteina «affama» il virus. Dopo che il virus è entrato nella cellula, non succede più nulla. Non ha niente con cui potersi replicare, e così il DNA virale non viene ricostruito. Il passo successivo è quello di riuscire a capire come e se sia possibile fare in modo che questo meccanismo, che nelle cellule dendritiche avviene grazie alla nuova proteina scoperta, possa avvenire anche in altre cellule.

Visto che i dati sull'epidemia di AIDS, contenuti nel Global report 2010, indicano che nel 2009 le persone affette da HIV nel mondo erano 33,3 milioni, di cui oltre 30 milioni residenti nei paesi in via di sviluppo, 2,6 milioni quelle che hanno contratto il virus di recente e 1,8 milioni quelle decedute per malattie correlate all'AIDS, e considerata la gravità di questa malattia, può la Commissione dire quali misure intende adottare implementando i programmi per la ricerca al fine di sostenere quest'ultima a vantaggio della popolazione europea?

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio al quale si riferisce l'onorevole parlamentare. Benché questa ricerca specifica non sia stata finanziata dalla Commissione, l'UE ha contribuito al finanziamento di una componente essenziale di queste scoperte. Gli scienziati europei hanno infatti ricevuto finanziamenti UE per studiare la proteina SAMHD1 tramite il Sesto programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (6° PQ, 2002-2006), nell'ambito del programma specifico «Cooperazione» (contratto 012182, per un valore di 0,7 milioni di euro) e tramite il Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ), nell'ambito del programma specifico «Idee» (sovvenzione CER 250333, per un valore di 2 milioni di euro).

I programmi quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico dell'UE appoggiano la ricerca sull'HIV/AIDS fin dalla scoperta del virus. La ricerca finanziata dall'UE include nuove strategie terapeutiche e preventive contro l'HIV/AIDS, dalla scoperta iniziale alla sperimentazione clinica di nuovi farmaci, microbicidi e vaccini candidati nonché all'ottimizzazione del trattamento dei pazienti. Nel quadro del 6° PQ, alla ricerca sull'HIV/AIDS è stato destinato un contributo totale di 123 milioni di euro. Questo forte impegno è proseguito nell'ambito del 7° PQ. Alla ricerca sull'HIV/AIDS l'UE ha finora destinato un contributo totale di 82 milioni di euro. Inoltre, per accelerare la lotta contro l'HIV/AIDS, la malaria e la tubercolosi nell'Africa subsahariana, nel 2003 l'UE ha istituito l'EDTCP ([1]), in cooperazione con i paesi europei partecipanti. Tale partenariato ha beneficiato di un contributo comunitario di 200 milioni di euro nell'ambito del 6° PQ, e di un contributo di pari importo dai paesi europei partecipanti. Finora l'EDCTP ha finanziato 27 studi clinici sull'HIV/AIDS (118 milioni di euro).

Come indicato nella proposta relativa a Orizzonte 2020, la Commissione attribuisce grande priorità alle malattie infettive, compreso l'HIV/AIDS, e continuerà ad appoggiare la ricerca anche in questo settore specifico attraverso EDCTP-2, che è parte integrante di detta proposta.

([1]) Partenariato Europa-Paesi in via di sviluppo per gli studi clinici, http.//www.edctp.org/.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001902/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Protein used to fight AIDS

There is important news in the field of HIV. Researchers at the New York Langone Medical Center have discovered the existence of a protein capable of defending cells against the infection. Once this new protein, known as SAMHD1, was identified, the scientists sought to develop their research further and understand how it is really capable of blocking the virus.

In essence, it appears that by destroying the HIV virus's 'building blocks of life', SAMHD1 prevents it from transferring its genetic information and, therefore, from reproducing itself. It was therefore observed that the protein 'starves' the virus. After the virus enters the cell, nothing else happens. It has nothing to replicate with, so the virus's DNA is not rebuilt. The next step is to find out how and whether it is possible to make this mechanism, which occurs in dendritic cells thanks to the newly discovered protein, occur in other cells.

Given that the data on the AIDS epidemic contained in the 2010 Global Report show that in 2009, 33.3 million people were HIV-positive, 30 million of whom were living in developing countries, with 2.6 million people newly infected with HIV and 1.8 million AIDS-related deaths, and given the seriousness of this disease, can the Commission state what measures it intends to adopt with the implementation of research programmes, in order to support research for the benefit of Europeans?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the study referred to by the Honourable Member. Although this specific research was not funded by the Commission, a key building block of these findings was partly funded by the EU. European scientists have received EU funding for their studies on the SAMHD1 protein through the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development (FP6, 2002-2006) 'Cooperation' Programme (Contract 012182, EUR 0.7 million) and the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 'Ideas' Programme (ERC grant 250333, EUR 2 million).

The EU's Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development have been supporting research on HIV/AIDS since the discovery of the virus. The funded research includes new therapeutic and preventive strategies, from early discovery to clinical testing of new drugs, microbicides and vaccine candidates and optimisation of patient treatment. During FP6, a total EU contribution of EUR 123 million was directed to HIV/AIDS research. This strong commitment continued within FP7. So far, a total EU contribution of EUR 82 million was targeted to HIV/AIDS research. In addition, the EDCTP ([1]) was established in 2003 by the EU in cooperation with European participating countries to accelerate the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in sub-Saharan Africa. It received an EC contribution from FP6 of EUR 200 million and an equal amount from the participating European Countries. So far EDCTP has funded 27 clinical trials on HIV/AIDS (EUR 118 million).

As indicated in the proposal for Horizon 2020, the Commission considers infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, a priority and will continue to support research in this area, among others, through EDCTP-2 which is part of the Horizon 2020 proposal.

([1]) European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership: http://www.edctp.org/.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001904/12
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Violenza sulle donne: lo «spettro» delle mutilazioni genitali sulla normativa europea

Dai dati pubblicati dall'OMS emerge che nel mondo sono 140 milioni le donne vittime di mutilazioni genitali e che ogni anno 3 milioni di bambine sono esposte a queste pratiche. Le MGF sono compiute in almeno 25 paesi africani, in alcuni asiatici (Indonesia, Malaysia) e in Medio Oriente (Yemen, Emirati Arabi Uniti, Egitto); anche negli Stati Uniti, in Canada, in Australia, in Nuova Zelanda e in Europa vengono effettuate mutilazioni genitali femminili nell'ambito delle comunità di emigranti di tali paesi.

Il quadro normativo dell'UE sulla materia non sembra avere avuto completa attuazione: in particolare, nonostante l'acquis comunitario abbia solido fondamento anche su base internazionale, non vi è stato un recepimento uniforme delle disposizioni normative e degli orientamenti enunciati. In Francia, nel Regno Unito e in Svezia la pratica delle mutilazioni genitali femminili è stata riconosciuta quale reato, ma diversi Stati membri non hanno ancora proceduto alla ratifica della Convenzione del Consiglio d'Europa per prevenire e combattere la violenza contro le donne.

La situazione non sembra migliore per la metà dei 25-30 paesi africani che praticano tali mutilazioni, giacché le leggi penali che le condannano integralmente o parzialmente rimangono inapplicate. In particolare, le mutilazioni sessuali imposte alle bambine esigono la condanna più categorica, giacché costituiscono una violazione manifesta della normativa internazionale e nazionale per la protezione dell'infanzia e dei suoi diritti.

Considerando che qualsiasi mutilazione genitale femminile costituisce un atto di violenza contro le donne equivalente alla violazione dei suoi diritti fondamentali — in particolare il diritto all'integrità personale e alla salute fisica e psicologica — nonché dei suoi diritti sessuali e riproduttivi, e che tale violazione non deve essere giustificata dal rispetto di qualsivoglia tradizione culturale né dall'estremismo religioso quali uniche fonti di legittimazione morale, chiedo alla Commissione di verificare che gli Stati membri collaborino all'armonizzazione della legislazione esistente e qualora essa non si dimostri adeguata, all'elaborazione di una legislazione specifica in materia nel nome dei diritti della persona, della sua integrità, della libertà di coscienza e del diritto alla salute.

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(2 aprile 2012)

Le mutilazioni genitali femminili sono un'inammissibile violazione dei diritti fondamentali e la Commissione è impegnata a dare una forte risposta politica contro qualsiasi forma di violenza ai danni delle donne, tra cui la mutilazione genitale, come confermano il Programma di Stoccolma e la Strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini (2010-2015).

Nel 2010 uno studio di fattibilità ([1]) della Commissione ha valutato la possibilità e l'opportunità di uniformare le normative nazionali sulla violenza ai danni di donne e minori o per motivi di orientamento sessuale.

La Commissione è impegnata a sostenere l'empowerment femminile, le campagne di sensibilizzazione, gli scambi di buone pratiche e una migliore raccolta di dati e finanzia, nel quadro del programma DAPHNE III, la realizzazione di progetti transnazionali in questi ambiti.

In materia penale, a maggio 2011 la Commissione ha presentato un pacchetto di misure, tra cui una proposta di direttiva che istituisce norme minime sui diritti delle vittime di reato. La proposta, che riprende le norme UE esistenti e rafforza i diritti delle vittime, sancisce il diritto al rispetto e al riconoscimento della vulnerabilità, il diritto a fornire e ricevere informazioni e il diritto alla protezione. Scopo della proposta è garantire inoltre che le esigenze delle vittime siano valutate caso per caso per fornire un'assistenza adeguata ([2]) ai più vulnerabili. Per garantire che le misure di protezione adottate da uno Stato membro siano automaticamente riconosciute in un altro Stato membro, il pacchetto comprende anche una proposta di regolamento sul riconoscimento reciproco delle misure di protezione in materia civile, che integra l'ordine di protezione europeo (in materia penale) adottato di recente.

([1]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/funding/daphne3/daphne_feasibility_study_2010_en.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0275:FIN:IT:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001904/12
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Violence against women: the 'spectre' of female genital mutilation and European legislation

Statistics published by the OMS indicate that 140 million women around the world are victims of genital mutilation, and that such practices are carried out on three million girls every year. FGM is carried out in at least 25 African countries and in some Asian countries (Indonesia, Malaysia), as well as in the Middle East (Yemen, United Arab Emirates, Egypt). Female genital mutilation is also practiced by members of immigrant communities in the United States, in Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand and in Europe.

The EU's regulatory framework provisions on this matter do not appear to have been fully implemented. In particular, despite the fact that basic EU tenets are solidly anchored and also firmly endorsed at international level, the relevant legal provisions and guidelines have not been uniformly transposed. While the practice of female genital mutilation is outlawed in France, in the United Kingdom and in Sweden, a number of Member States have not yet ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women.

The situation does not seem to be any better in half of the 25-30 African countries in which such mutilations are carried out, given the failure to implement laws fully or partially criminalising such acts. In particular, sexual mutilation of girls is to be most strongly condemned, since it constitutes a blatant violation of international and national law on the protection of children and the rights of the child.

Considering that female genital mutilation constitutes an act of violence against women and that it constitutes an infringement of their fundamental rights — in particular the right to personal integrity and physical and psychological health — as well as their sexual and reproductive rights, and that such offences may not be justified by respect for any cultural tradition or religious extremism regarded as the only sources of moral legitimacy, can the Commission ensure that Member States work together to harmonise the existing legislation and, should this prove inadequate to the task, to draw up specific legislation in this area seeking to uphold human rights, human integrity, freedom of conscience and the right to health?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

Female genital mutilation constitutes an unacceptable violation of fundamental rights and the Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women, including female genital mutilation, as confirmed in the Stockholm Programme and the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015).

In 2010, the Commission carried out a feasibility study to assess the possibility and appropriateness of standardising national legislation on violence against women, violence against children and sexual orientation violence ([1]).

The Commission works for the empowerment of women, awareness raising, the promotion of exchanges of good practices and the improvement of collection of data. The Daphne III Programme provides financial support for the implementation of transnational projects in this field.

In the criminal justice area, the Commission presented in May 2011 the Victims' Package which includes a proposal for the directive on the rights of victims of crime that builds on existing EU legislation and strengthens the rights of victims. It includes the right to respect and recognition, the right to provide and receive information, and right to protection. It also aims at ensuring that the needs of victims are individually assessed and that the most vulnerable receive specific treatment appropriate to their requirements ([2]). This Package also includes a proposal for a regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters, which complements the recently adopted European Protection Order (which applies in criminal matters), in order to ensure that protection measures issued in one Member State can be recognised in another Member State.

([1]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/funding/daphne3/daphne_feasibility_study_2010_en.pdf .
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-001906/12
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(16 februari 2012)

Betreft: Corruptie in Griekenland

Uit gegevens van Transparancy International uit 2007 blijkt dat Griekenland zich op een weinig benijdenswaardige 56e plaats bevond in de ranking van de minst corrupte landen. Op gelijke hoogte met Namibië en Jordanië.

Dit was voor het ontstaan van de financiële crisis.

Vandaag, 5 jaar later, wijst de Trojka met aandacht op de corruptie, in bijzonder de fiscale en sociale fraude, als één van de grote pijnpunten van de Griekse economie.

Was de Commissie op de hoogte van de ranking van Griekenland in 2007? Indien ja, heeft de Commissie toen maatregelen getroffen of aanbevelingen gedaan? welk gevolg werd hieraan gegeven?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(20 maart 2012)

De Commissie is zich zeer goed bewust van de corruptie in Griekenland en van de nadelige invloed daarvan op de economie en het maatschappelijke weefsel. De Commissie en ook de Griekse autoriteiten zelf hebben dat probleem in het verleden herhaaldelijk aangekaart.

Corruptie is een fenomeen dat niet door één enkele maatregel onmiddellijk kan worden opgelost. Daarvoor is een aanpak op verschillende fronten nodig.

In het kader van het Griekse economische aanpassingsprogramma zijn beleidseisen gesteld die een belangrijk effect op corruptie kunnen hebben. Hierbij gaat het bijvoorbeeld om nieuwe begrotingsprocedures en transparantere maatregelen inzake overheidsopdrachten, de indienstneming van overheidspersoneel of de toekenning van vergunningen voor economische activiteiten. Ook de sluiting van overtollige overheidsinstanties en de uitvoering van een ambitieus privatiseringsplan zullen naar verwachting het corruptiepotentieel verkleinen. Tot slot spelen de strijd tegen belastingontduiking, de overschakeling naar elektronische belastingbetaling en de strijd tegen fraude met sociale zekerheidsbijdragen en tegen zwartwerk — op zich duidelijke signalen van corruptie — een cruciale rol bij het succes van het aanpassingsprogramma.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001906/12
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Corruption in Greece

Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2007 had Greece in an unenviable 56th place. At the same level as Namibia and Jordan.

This was before the financial crisis broke out.

Today, five years later, the Troika names corruption, in particular tax and social security fraud, as one of the biggest banes of the Greek economy.

Was the Commission aware of Greece's ranking in 2007? If so, did the Commission take or recommend any measures at the time? What has been done as a result of this?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Commission is very well aware of corruption in Greece and the damaging impact that corruption has on the economy and the social fabric. The Commission, and the Greek authorities themselves, have raised the attention to this problem on several occasions in the past.

Corruption is a phenomenon that cannot be solved at once through one single measure and needs to be tackled from different fronts.

In the context of the Greek Economic Adjustment Programme, there are a number of policy requirements that can have a relevant impact on corruption. These include, for instance, new budget procedures, more transparent measures on public procurement, public recruitments, or the licensing of economic activities. The closure of redundant state entities and the implementation of an ambitious privatisation plan are also expected to reduce corruption potential. Finally, the fight against tax evasion, the move to electronic tax payments, the fight against social security contribution fraud, as well as the fight against undeclared work, which are themselves clear signals of corruption, play a crucial role in the success of the Adjustment Programme.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001907/12
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Genocidal attacks on Boer farmers in South Africa

On 15 February 2012 there was a debate in plenary on 'the 19th session of the UN Human Rights Council; statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy'. I made a number of points in my one-minute speech relating to the genocidal attacks on South African Boer farmers by politically and racially motivated elements. I wish to know why these points were not answered by the Vice-President.

Since 1994, more than 3 000 white farmers and their families have been murdered in brutal attacks. Many farmers and their wives and young children have been beaten, tortured, killed or hospitalised.

The former President of the ANC Youth League, Julius Malema, who is described by *Forbes* magazine as one of the most influential young people in Africa, has called for the song 'Kill a Boer' to be sung at meetings. Among other slogans are these words: 'One Boer, One Bullet'.

When farmers have reported attacks, the police have frequently refused to take action, claiming, for example, that their vehicles had run out of fuel.

In September 2011 the Washington NGO, Genocide Watch, upgraded South Africa to stage 6 ('Preparation').

What is the reason for this hypocrisy, and what action will the High Representative/Vice-President take to convey in the strongest possible terms to the South African government that this situation is entirely unacceptable and must be addressed without delay?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

With regard to the issues of violence against white farmers and racism in South Africa, the Honourable Member is kindly referred to answers provided by HR/VP Ashton to Questions E-3506/2010, E-3505/2010, E-5051/2011 and E-0631/2012. The HR/VP is well aware of the issue referred to by the Honourable Member.

Close political dialogue with South Africa, including a dialogue on human rights, established under the framework of the EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership, provides the EU with the opportunity to convey messages to the South African authorities on important issues of concern such as those described by the Honourable Member whenever appropriate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001908/12
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Opt-outs from the Charter of Fundamental Rights

On 25 June 2007 Tony Blair said in the British House of Commons, referring to Protocol 30: 'It is absolutely clear that we have an opt-out from both the Charter (of Fundamental Rights) and judicial and home affairs'.

In Case C-411/10, involving Mr N.S., an Afghan citizen, the Advocate-General Ms Trstenjak said: 'Protocol 30 on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union to Poland and to the United Kingdom, which is annexed to the Treaty on the European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, cannot be regarded as constituting a general opt-out from the Charter of Fundamental Rights for the United Kingdom and the Republic of Poland. The provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights which are relevant to the present proceedings thus apply without restriction in the legal systems of the United Kingdom'.

However, Article 1(1) of the Protocol precludes both the domestic courts in Poland and the UK and the EU's courts from finding that laws, regulations or administrative provisions, practices or action in the countries to which it applies are inconsistent with the Charter.

Can the Commission, as the guardian of the treaties, explain the effects of this protocol on the validity of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the UK?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies made for Questions E-9870/2010 and E-4992/2010 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001909/12
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: EU-India FTA impact assessments

Is the Commission aware of the report entitled 'A Right-to-Food Impact Assessment of the *EU-India Free Trade Agreement*' ([1]), which was recently published by a group of Indian and European NGOs, assessing the possible impact of the EU-India FTA on food security in the case of high-risk populations?

Can the Commission share its views on the substance and conclusions of this report?

Has the Commission carried out any sustainable development impact assessments either since or prior to engaging in the process of formal negotiations with India? If it has, can it share its findings? If it has not, why has the Commission decided not to engage in further assessments at this time?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 March 2012)

The Commission is aware of the report mentioned by the Honourable Member. The Commission recognises the importance of the issues raised therein but it does not share the concerns. Overall, the Commission is confident that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) currently negotiated with India will not undermine food security in India. While agriculture is part of the negotiations, the EU's agricultural exports to India correspond to less than 2 % of total EU exports to India and the market opening India may decide to grant in sectors like dairy or poultry is not expected to be of a magnitude which would threaten to undermine the livelihoods of Indian farmers. Moreover, Indian and EU agricultural exports are largely complementary and a number of priority products to be exported by the EU to India do not compete with domestic production.

At the same time, the FTA is expected to generate significant economic benefits and export opportunities for Indian companies, including exporters of agricultural products.

With respect to services (multi-brand retail) or investment, any commitments to be negotiated with India in this respect do not challenge India's right to regulate or put accompanying measures in place to protect legitimate public policy objectives. As regards a sustainable development impact assessment, such assessment was indeed launched in 2007 and completed in May 2009. The Commission's response can be found following this link: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/june/tradoc_146221.pdf

([1]) Available online http://www.boell.de/downloads/2011-12-ecofair_rfia.pdf

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-001910/12
Komisi
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(16. února 2012)

Předmět: Právní předpisy EU týkající se ochrany dojnic

Strategie EU v oblasti dobrých životních podmínek zvířat přiznává, že neexistují konkrétní právní předpisy EU týkající se ochrany dojnic. Navzdory stávajícím problémům nebyly podány žádné nové návrhy na ochranu dojnic a na směrnice v oblasti dobrých životních podmínek zvířat nebo na jiná opatření, která by řešila problémy, jež odhalili odborníci a úřad EFSA.

Vzhledem k tomu, že v mnoha členských státech stále více dochází k industrializaci produkce mléka, bylo by třeba tento problém velmi naléhavě uspokojivým způsobem vyřešit.

Přestože úřad EFSA dospěl k závěru, že „dlouhodobý genetický výběr zaměřený na vysokou produkci mléka je hlavním faktorem, který způsobuje problémy v oblasti dobrých životních podmínek zvířat, zejména zdravotní problémy“, situaci zhoršují ještě další faktory, včetně přechodu k podmínkám, kde zvířata nemají možnost pastvy.

Je zvláštní, že zatímco Evropská unie podporuje zlepšení podmínek v jiných oblastech chovu hospodářských zvířat, jako je drůbež nebo prasata, u dojnic dělá pravý opak.

1. Je si Komise vědoma této situace ohledně dojnic?

2. Připravuje Komise nějaké konkrétní směrnice nebo jiné právní předpisy týkající se dobrých životních podmínek dojnic?

3. Není-li tomu tak, jaké jiné řešení by Komise navrhla s cílem zlepšit situaci ohledně chovu dojnic?

Odpověď Johna Dalliho jménem Komise
(16. dubna 2012)

Strategie Evropské unie v oblasti ochrany a dobrých životních podmínek zvířat pro období 2012-2015 ([1]) byla přijata dne 19. ledna 2012. Strategie je zaměřena na rozvíjení holistického přístupu tak, aby byly řešeny hlavní faktory špatných životních podmínek zvířat v EU s cílem zahrnout všechny dotčené skupiny zvířat.

V souladu s usnesením Evropského parlamentu z roku 2010 o hodnocení a posouzení akčního plánu Společenství v oblasti dobrých životních podmínek zvířat 2006-2010 ([2]) (zpráva Paulsenové) je dále na předním místě činností Komise lepší prosazování stávajících právních předpisů včetně směrnice 98/58/ES o ochraně zvířat chovaných pro hospodářské účely ([3]), jež obsahuje obecná ustanovení pro všechna hospodářská zvířata, včetně dojnic.

Zároveň je v současné době prioritou Komise práce na zlepšení porozumění problematice dobrých životních podmínek zvířat mezi zemědělci prostřednictvím technické pomoci a zvýšení odborné způsobilosti. Pro tento účel počítá výše uvedená strategie v oblasti dobrých životních podmínek zvířat s možností navrhnout nový obecný legislativní rámec týkající se dobrých životních podmínek zvířat („zákon o dobrých životních podmínkách zvířat“), jak předpokládal ve svém návrhu z roku 2010 Parlament.

([1]) COM(2012) 6 final, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2010-0053+0+DOC+XML+V0//CS.
([3]) Úř. věst. L 221, 8.8.1998.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001910/12
to the Commission
Pavel Poc (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: EU legislation regarding the protection of dairy cattle

EU animal welfare strategy acknowledges the absence of any specific EU legislation regarding the protection of dairy cattle. Despite existing problems, no proposals have been made for new dairy cattle protection and welfare directives or other measures to solve problems identified by experts and the EFSA.

It would appear to be very urgent to find a satisfactory solution to this problem, given the growing industrialization of milk production in many Member States.

Despite the EFSA conclusions, that 'long term genetic selection focused on high milk production is the main factor causing welfare problems, especially health problems', the situation is being aggravated by other factors also, including the switchover to 'zero-grazing' cattle.

It seems odd that, while European Union is supporting improved conditions in other areas of livestock breeding such as poultry or pigs, it is doing the opposite with regard to dairy cattle.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation with regard to dairy cattle?

2. Is the Commission drawing up any specific directives or other legislation regarding the welfare of dairy cattle?

3. If not, what other solution would the Commission propose to improve the situation with regard to dairy cattle breeding?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

The European Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([1]) was adopted on 19 January 2012. The strategy aims at developing a holistic approach so that common underlying drivers for poor welfare in the EU will be addressed so as to reach all animals concerned.

Furthermore, in line with the European Parliament 2010 resolution on evaluation and assessment of the Animal Welfare Action Plan 2006-2010 ([2]) (Paulsen report), better enforcement of the existing legislation is at the forefront of Commission actions, including Directive 98/58/EC on the protection of animals kept for farming purposes ([3]) which contains general provisions for all farmed animals, including dairy cows.

At the same time, the priority of the Commission is for the time being to work towards improving the understanding of animal welfare among farmers through increased competence and technical assistance. For that purpose, the above-indicated animal welfare strategy envisages the possibility of proposing a new general legislative framework on animal welfare ('animal welfare law') as suggested by the Parliament in 2010.

([1]) COM(2012) 6 final, http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2010-0053&language=EN.
([3]) OJ L 221, 8.8.1998.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001911/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Iran: cristiani arrestati in preghiera

Lo scorso 8 febbraio in Iran alcuni agenti in borghese sono piombati in un appartamento nel quale dieci cristiani erano riuniti in preghiera, prelevandoli con auto della polizia e portandoli in un luogo sconosciuto. Le autorità si rifiutano di dare alle famiglie informazioni in proposito.

Secondo l'agenzia iraniana cristiana Mohabat News, uno degli arrestati ha 23 anni ed era già stato fermato l'11 maggio 2008 insieme ad altre otto persone, accusate di essersi convertite al cristianesimo. Alcuni funzionari della sicurezza gli avevano chiesto di abbandonare la sua fede e di collaborare con i servizi segreti.

1. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere quali politiche intende avviare per porre fine alle continue e ripetute persecuzioni nei confronti della piccola comunità cristiana in Iran?

2. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante far sapere quali politiche intende avviare per garantire la libertà di culto in Iran?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(4 maggio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton ha esortato a più riprese le autorità iraniane ad onorare gli obblighi internazionali in materia di diritti umani sottoscritti dalla stessa Repubblica islamica dell'Iran, compresi quelli relativi alla libertà di religione e di culto.

I cristiani e gli appartenenti alle altre minoranze religiose presenti in Iran hanno il diritto di praticare liberamente la loro religione senza correre il rischio di essere arrestati.

A seguito del deterioramento della situazione dei diritti umani in Iran, l'Unione europea ha adottato sanzioni nei confronti di 78 cittadini iraniani accusati di gravi violazioni dei diritti umani: sarà vietato loro l'ingresso nell'Unione europea e le loro attività finanziarie sono state congelate. Nel caso la situazione lo richieda, all'elenco, che è costantemente aggiornato, saranno aggiunti altri nominativi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001911/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iran: Christians arrested while praying

On 8 February 2012, plainclothes policemen raided an apartment where ten Christians were praying together. The ten were taken away in a police car to an undisclosed location. The authorities are refusing to provide information to the persons' families.

According to the Iranian Christian agency *Mohabat News*, one of the persons arrested is 23 years old. He had already been stopped on 11 May 2008 and, together with another eight people, was accused of converting to Christianity. Security officials had reportedly asked him to renounce his faith and to collaborate with the secret services.

1. Can the Vice-President/High Representative state which policies she intends to implement to put an end to the constant and repeated persecution of the small Christian community in Iran?

2. Can the Vice-President/High Representative state which policies she intends to implement to guarantee freedom of worship in Iran?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 May 2012)

Vice-President/High Representative Ashton has, on several occasions, called on the Iranian authorities to live up to the international human rights obligations that the Islamic Republic of Iran has itself signed up to, including those related to the freedom of religion and belief.

Christians, and other religious minorities in Iran, have the right to freely practice their religion and should not be arrested while doing so.

In reaction to the worsening of the human rights situation in Iran, the European Union has adopted sanctions on 78 named Iranians for grave human rights violations. These Iranian nationals will not be allowed entry into the European Union and their financial assets have been frozen. The list is under constant review and will be extended with additional names as the situation requires.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001912/12
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(16 februari 2012)

Betreft: Corruptie in Roemenië en Bulgarije

Uit de meest recente ranking van Transparancy International, stellen we vast dat landen als Roemenië en Bulgarije ook zeer slechte scores halen.

1. Is de Commissie hiervan op de hoogte? Welke maatregelen neemt de Commissie vandaag om de fraude/corruptie in deze landen aan te pakken en te voorkomen dat we in een Griekenland bis scenario vervallen? Kan de Commissie een lijst van deze initiatieven geven?

2. Is het niet tijd dat de Commissie haar beleid terzake omgooit en een breed anticorruptie plan op tafel legt? Wat zouden volgens de Commissie hiervan de belangrijkste elementen moeten zijn?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(30 maart 2012)

Zoals het geachte Parlementslid wellicht weet, volgt de Commissie de vorderingen van Roemenië en Bulgarije bij het uitvoeren van hun toetredingsverplichtingen in het kader van het mechanisme voor samenwerking en toetsing op het gebied van juridische hervormingen, de bestrijding van corruptie en, in het geval van Bulgarije, de strijd tegen de georganiseerde misdaad. Nadere informatie over de rapporten die de Commissie in het kader van het mechanisme voor samenwerking en toetsing regelmatig opstelt, is beschikbaar op de volgende website: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/cvm/index_nl.htm.

Wat betreft het brede corruptiebestrijdingsbeleid wil de Commissie het geachte Parlementslid wijzen op het corruptiebestrijdingspakket dat in juni 2011 werd goedgekeurd en waarin de Commissie haar algemene beleid ter bestrijding van corruptie heeft voorgesteld. Onderdeel van dit strategisch initiatief van de EU ter bestrijding van corruptie is een EU-rapportagemechanisme, waarin de inspanningen van de lidstaten op dit vlak regelmatig worden beoordeeld („EU-corruptiebestrijdingsverslag"). De Commissie heeft het corruptiebestrijdingspakket gepresenteerd in de openbare hoorzitting van het Europees Parlement in september 2011. De resolutie van het Europees Parlement van 15 september 2011 over de inspanningen van de EU ter bestrijding van corruptie onderschrijft het pakket van de Commissie en doet een aantal specifieke aanbevelingen die de Commissie tijdens de uitvoering zorgvuldig in overweging zal nemen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001912/12
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Corruption in Romania and Bulgaria

Transparency International's latest ranking shows that countries such as Romania and Bulgaria also have very bad scores.

1. Is the Commission aware of this data? What measures is the Commission taking today to tackle the fraud/corruption in these countries and to prevent a repetition of the Greek scenario? Can the Commission provide a list of these initiatives?

2. Is it not time for the Commission to change its policy regarding this issue and present a broad anti-corruption plan? According to the Commission, what should be the most important elements of such a plan?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

As the Honourable Member might be aware, the Commission is monitoring Romania's and Bulgaria's progress in achieving their accession commitments under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism in the area of judicial reforms, fight against corruption and, in the case of Bulgaria, fight against organised crime. Further information on the Commission's regular reports under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism is available at the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/cvm/index_en.htm

As regards the broad anti-corruption policy, the Commission would like to remind the Honourable Member of the adoption of the anti-corruption package in June 2011 through which the Commission presented its extensive policy against corruption. This EU anti-corruption strategic initiative brought a new EU anti-corruption reporting mechanism for periodic assessment of Member States' efforts against corruption ('EU Anti-Corruption Report'). The Commission presented the anti-corruption package in the public hearing of the European Parliament held in September 2011. The European Parliament Resolution of 15 September 2011 on the EU's efforts to combat corruption welcomed the Commission's package and made a number of specific recommendations that will be carefully considered by the Commission in the implementation process.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001913/12
lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli)
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — It-Tranżizzjoni fis-Sirja

Is-Sinjura Ashton talbet li l-President tas-Sirja Bashar al-Assad jirriżenja u jagħmel elezzjonijiet ħielsa u ġusti. Madankollu, ħafna nies fis-Sirja huma kawti dwar x'se jkun il-futur jekk il-President Assad jirriżenja jew jitneħħa mill-poter bil-forza.

X'passi qegħdin jittieħdu biex jiġi żgurat li kwalunkwe tranżizzjoni politika bil-President Assad jew mingħajru fis-Sirja ma twassalx għal żieda fil-livelli preżenti ta' vjolenza?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentanta Għolja/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' Mejju 2012)

Fl-impenn tagħha mal-gruppi tal-oppożizzjoni tas-Sirja, l-UE ħeġġithom biex jingħaqdu fi ġlieda paċifika għal Sirja ġdida li tkun demokratika, pluralistika, u stabbli u li tiggarantixxi d-drittijiet tal-bniedem, inklużi d-drittijiet ta' persuni li jagħmlu parti minn minoranzi. Ir-Rappreżentanta Għolja/Il-Viċi President wasslet ukoll il-messaġġ li, biex isseħħ tranżizzjoni paċifika, l-oppożizzjoni għandha tkompli bl-isforzi tagħha biex tinkludi lill-membri tal-minoranzi reliġjużi u etniċi kollha fis-Sirja u sserrħilhom moħħhom.

Sabiex tinsab soluzzjoni politika paċifika għall-kriżi, l-UE tappoġġja bis-sħiħ lill-mibgħut konġunt tan-NU u tal-Lega Għarbija għas-Sirja, is-Sur Kofi Annan, u l-isforzi tiegħu biex iwaqqaf il-vjolenza u jiffaċilita djalogu politiku. Hija tilqa' bi pjaċir id-Dikjarazzjoni Presidenzjali tal-Kunsill tas-Sigurtà tan-Nazzjonijiet Uniti (NU), u tappoġġja bis-sħiħ lis-Sur Annan u l-pjan ta' sitt punti tiegħu. L-aċċettazzjoni ta' dan il-pjan mir-reġim Sirjan fis-27 ta' Marzu 2012 hija l-ewwel pass lejn it-tmiem tat-tixrid tad-demm fis-Sirja. L-UE tistieden lir-reġim biex iwettaq dak li wieġħed billi immedjatament jimplimenta l-pjan b'mod komplet u mingħajr kundizzjonijiet.

Sadanittant, l-UE tħeġġeġ lill-Kunsill tas-Sigurtà tan-NU biex jaqbel fuq riżoluzzjoni dwar is-Sirja li tkun tipprovdi, fost affarijiet oħra, għal proċess politiku li joffri tweġiba għat-talbiet leġittimi tas-Sirjani kollha. Hija timpenja ruħha attivament ukoll fil-Grupp tal-Ħbieb tal-Poplu Sirjan, li reġa' ltaqa' fl-1 ta' April f'Istanbul biex isaħħaħ l-appoġġ internazzjonali favur soluzzjoni politika.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001913/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Casa (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Transition in Syria

Lady Ashton has called for Syria's President Bashar al-Assad to step down and hold free and fair elections. Many people in Syria are, however, wary of what the future could hold should President Assad step down or be forcibly removed from power.

What steps are being taken to ensure that any political transition with or without President Assad in Syria will not lead to an increase in present levels of violence?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2012)

In its engagement with the Syrian opposition groups, the EU has urged them to unite in a peaceful struggle for a new Syria that is democratic, pluralistic, and stable and guarantees human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The HR/VP has also put forward the message that for a peaceful transition to materialise the opposition should continue its efforts to include and reassure members of all religious and ethnic minorities in Syria.

To bring about a peaceful political solution to the crisis, the EU fully supports the Joint UN-Arab League Envoy to Syria, Mr Kofi Annan, and his efforts to stop violence and facilitate a political dialogue. It welcomes the United Nations (UN) Security Council's Presidential Statement, fully backing Mr Annan and his six point plan. The acceptance of this plan by the Syrian regime on 27 March 2012 is a first step towards ending the bloodshed in Syria. The EU calls on the regime to follow up on its promises by thoroughly implementing the plan immediately and without conditions.

Meanwhile, the EU urges the UN Security Council to agree on a resolution on Syria providing, among other things, for a political process responding to the legitimate demands of all Syrians. It also engages actively in the Friends of the Syrian People Group, which met again on 1 April in Istanbul to strengthen international support towards a political solution.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001914/12
lill-Kummissjoni (Viċi President / Rappreżentant Għoli)
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: VP/HR — It-talba internazzjonali għaż-żejt Iranjan

It-talba mill-Indja u miċ-Ċina biss hija biżżejjed biex tassorbi l-esportazzjonijiet kollha taż-żejt tal-Iran.

Peress li l-Iran qiegħed jhedded li jagħlaq l-aċċess għall-Istrett ta' Ħormuż, li huwa stmat li jintuża għat-trasferiment ta' kważi 20% tal-produzzjoni taż-żejt globali, x'għamlet ir-Rappreżentant Għoli għall-Affarijiet Barranin u l-Politika tas-Sigurtà biex tfittex il-kooperazjoni ta' pajjiżi terzi bħall-Indja u ċ-Ċina, biex jissieħbu fl-embargo tal-UE fuq l-importazzjonijiet taż-żejt mill-Iran?

U kif jistgħu pajjiżi li jimportaw iż-żejt mill-Iran jiġu mħeġġa jieħdu azzjoni ulterjuri jekk l-Iran ma jikkonformax mat-talbiet biex jiftaħ il-programm nukleari tiegħu għal skrutinju?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentanta Għolja/il-Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(23 ta' April 2012)

L-UE qiegħda ssejjaħ b'mod attiv biex dawk l-Istati li jimportaw żejt mill-Iran jieħdu miżuri simili jew, alternattivament, biex ma jissostitwixxux l-esportazzjonijiet Iranjani li ma għadhomx jiġu importati mill-UE. It-tħassib dwar il-programm nukleari tal-Iran huwa kondiviż fil-livell internazzjonali u ġie kkonfermat mir-riżoluzzjonijiet tal-Kunsill tas-Sigurtà tan-NU.

L-UE qiegħda taħdem mill-qrib mal-Istati Uniti li, fil-qafas tal-ħekk imsejħa Emenda Kirk Menendeez tal-31 ta' Diċembru tal-2011, tista' tiddeċiedi li teżenta istituzzjonijiet finanzjarji f'pajjiżi terzi b'relazzjonijiet finanzjarji mal-Iran mill-miżuri restrittivi tal-Istati Uniti jekk il-pajjiż inkwistjoni jnaqqas b'mod sostanzjali l-importazzjonijiet tiegħu ta' żejt Iranjan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001914/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
David Casa (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — International demand for Iranian oil

Demand from India and China alone is sufficient to absorb all of Iran's oil exports.

With Iran threatening to block off access to the Strait of Hormuz, which is estimated to account for the transfer of nearly 20 % of global oil production, what has the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy done to seek the cooperation of third countries such as India and China, in joining the EU embargo on oil imports from Iran?

And how can countries importing oil from Iran be prompted to take further action if Iran does not comply with demands to open up its nuclear programme to scrutiny?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2012)

The EU is actively calling on states importing Iranian oil to take similar measures or, alternatively, to refrain from substituting for the Iranian exports no longer being imported by the EU. The concern over Iran's nuclear programme is shared internationally as has been confirmed by the UN Security Council resolutions.

The EU is working closely with the US, which may in the framework of the so called Kirk Menendeez Amendment of 31 December 2011 decide to exempt financial institutions in third countries having financial relations with Iran from US restrictive measures where a country substantially reduces its import of Iranian oil.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001916/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Ftehim fuq Data ta' Passiġġieri bejn l-UE u l-Istati Uniti

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi sommarju tad-differenzi bejn l-abbozz ta' ftehim reċenti li tnieda bejn l-Istati Uniti u l-Unjoni Ewropea rigward Ftehim dwar id-Data ta' Passiġġieri bejn l-UE u l-Istati Uniti u l-ftehim simili li ntlaħaq f'Ottubru 2011 bejn l-UE u l-Awstralja?

Differenza notevoli bejn l-abbozz ta' ftehim bejn l-UE u l-Istati Uniti u dak mal-Awstralja hija li d-data dwar il-passiġġieri miksuba mill-gvern Awstraljan tinżamm biss għal ħames snin u nofs.

Fid-dawl ta' dan il-perjodu ta' żamma preċedenti u minkejja t-tħassib mill-Kontrollur Ewropew għall-Protezzjoni tad-Data, għaliex il-Kummissjoni ddeċidiet fuq perjodu ta' 15-il sena għaż-żamma ta' data tal-passiġġieri fil-ftehim mal-Istati Uniti?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sra Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(27 ta' April 2012)

Il-kontenut tal-Ftehim bejn l-UE u l-Awstralja dwar il-PNR u tal-abbozzi tal-ftehimiet bejn l-UE u l-Awstralja dwar il-PNR hu miġbur fil-qosor fil-Memoranda ta' Spjegazzjoni tal-proposti tal-Kummissjoni għall-iffirmar u l-konklużjoni ta' dawk il-ftehimiet (COM(2011)280 final, COM(2011)281 final, COM(2011)805 final, u COM(2011)807 final), li l-Kummissjoni se tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għalihom.

Għar-rigward tal-perjodu li matulu d-dejta tal-PNR tista' tinżamm mill-Istati Uniti, għandu jiġi nnutat li skont l-abbozz tal-ftehim bejn l-UE u l-Istati Uniti, id-dejta tal-PNR tista' tintuża fil-ġlieda kontra l-kriminalità transnazzjonali għal perjodu ta' 10 snin. Id-dejta tal-PNR tista' tinżamm u tintuża għal perjodu ta' 15-il sena esklużivament fil-ġlieda kontra t-terroriżmu.

B'mod aktar ġenerali, il-Kummissjoni qed tirsisti biex ikun hemm konsistenza fil-politika tal-Unjoni Ewropea fuq id-dejta tal-PNR ma' pajjiżi terzi. Dan kien l-objettiv stabbilit fil-Komunikazzjoni mill-Kummissjoni dwar l-approċċ globali għat-trasferimenti tad-dejta tar-Rekord tal-Ismijiet tal-Passiġġieri (*Passenger Name Record*, PNR) lejn pajjiżi terzi (COM(2010)492 final).

Madankollu, konsistenza ma tfissirx dispożizzjonijiet identiċi. Kull ftehim jirrifletti t-theddida għas-sigurtà, is-sistema legali u r-realtajiet politiċi tal-pajjiż terz li miegħu tkun qed tinnegozja l-Unjoni Ewropea. L-Awstralja u l-Istati Uniti huma pajjiżi differenti, b'ordnijiet legali differenti, li qed jiffaċċjaw theddidiet ta' sigurtà differenti ħafna minn xulxin. Anke s-sensittività politika ta' kwistjonijiet ta' sigurtà tvarja b'mod sostanzjali. Barra minn hekk, in-negozjati mal-Awstralja u l-Istati Uniti għandhom punt ta' tluq differenti: Minkejja li ż-żewġ pajjiżi kellhom ftehimiet applikabbli provviżorji fis-seħħ, huma kellhom salvagwardji differenti dwar il-privatezza.

Meta wieħed jaraha f'dan il-kuntest, iż-żewġ ftehimiet jissodisfaw il-ħtiġijiet tas-sigurtà filwaqt li jipproteġu d-dritt tal-privatezza u d-dejta personali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001916/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: EU-US Passenger Data Agreement

Can the Commission provide a summary of the differences between the recent draft agreement initialled between the United States and the European Union on an EU-US Passenger Data Agreement and the similar agreement reached in October 2011 between the EU and Australia?

One notable difference between the EU-US draft agreement and that with Australia is that the passenger data obtained from the Australian government is retained for only five and a half years.

Given this previous retention period and despite concerns from the European Data Protection Supervisor, why has the Commission decided on a 15-year period for retention of passenger data in the agreement with the United States?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

The content of the EU-Australia PNR Agreement and of the draft EU-US PNR Agreements is summarised in the Explanatory Memoranda to the Commission's proposals for signature and conclusion of those agreements (COM(2011) 280 final, COM(2011) 281 final, COM(2011) 805 final, and COM(2011) 807 final), to which the Commission would refer the Honourable Member.

With respect to the period for which PNR data may be retained by the United States, it should be noted that under the draft EU-US agreement, PNR data may be used for fighting serious transnational crime for a period of 10 years. PNR data may be retained and used for a period of 15 years exclusively to fight terrorism.

More generally, the Commission strives for consistency in the European Union's policy on PNR data with third countries. That was the objective set out in the communication from the Commission on the global approach to transfers of Passenger Name record (PNR) data to third countries (COM(2010) 492 final).

However, consistency does not mean identical provisions. Each agreement reflects the security threat, the legal system and the political realities of the third country the European Union is negotiating with. Australia and the United States are different countries, with different legal orders, facing very different security threats. Also the political sensitivity of security issues differs substantially. In addition, the negotiations with Australia and the United States had a different starting point: although both countries had provisionally applicable agreements in place, they contained differing privacy safeguards.

Seen in this context, both agreements meet security needs whilst protecting the right to privacy and personal data.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001917/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Il-mard allerġiku fl-UE

Malta għandha waħda mill-ogħla rati fl-Unjoni Ewropea ta' sintomi allerġiċi ta' *rhinoconjunctivitis* fost it-tfal bl-età ta' bejn it-13 u l-14-il sena. Din il-marda respiratorja, flimkien ma' oħrajn, reċentement kienet is-suġġett ta' studju tal-Federazzjoni Ewropea tal-Assoċjazzjonijiet tal-Pazjenti bl-Allerġiji u bil-Mard tan-Nifs. Is-sejbiet tagħhom jindikaw konsegwenzi ta' saħħa u finanzjarji serji b'riżultat tan-numru kbir ta' tfal li qed jiġu affettwati b'dan il-mard allerġiku.

Il-Kummissjoni kkunsidrat xi programm implimentat fuq livell tal-UE sabiex jiżdied l-għarfien dwar il-konsegwenzi ta' allerġiji respiratorji fl-Istati Membri?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Dalli f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Marzu 2012)

Filwaqt li l-Istrateġija dwar l-Ambjent u s-Saħħa ([1]) u l-Pjan ta' Azzjoni ([2]) (EHAP) marbut magħha huma l-istrument ewlieni tal-Kummissjoni biex titkabbar il-kuxjenza dwar il-konsegwenzi marbuta mal-mard respiratorju, il-Kummissjoni tinsab għaddejja bi proċess ta' riflessjoni dwar il-mard kroniku flimkien mal-Istati Membri u se tkun qed tikkunsidra liema azzjonijiet ulterjuri huma xierqa fid-dawl tas-sejbiet tagħha. Azzjonijiet oħra rilevanti tal-Kummissjoni jinkludu politiki tal-UE bħal dawk dwar il-kwalità tal-arja ([3]), it-tixrid ta' speċi allerġiċi invażivi ([4]) u t-tnaqqis tal-użu tat-tabakk u d-duħħan tat-tabakk fl-ambjent ([5]).

Il-Kummissjoni tixtieq tirreferi wkoll lill-Onorevoli Membru għat-tweġiba tagħha għall-mistoqsija bil-miktub E-10880/10 ([6]).

([1]) COM (2003) 338 final.
([2]) COM(2004) 416 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/index.htm
([4]) COM(2006) 216 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/law/free_environments/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001917/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Allergic diseases in the EU

Malta has one of the highest rates in the European Union of allergic rhinoconjunctivitis symptoms in children aged 13 to 14 years. This respiratory disease, along with others, has recently been the subject of a study by the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations. Their findings indicate serious health and financial consequences resulting from a high number of children being affected by these allergic diseases.

Has the Commission considered a programme implemented at EU level to increase awareness of the consequences of respiratory allergies in Member States?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(22 March 2012)

While the Environment and Health Strategy ([1]) and its related Action Plan ([2]) (EHAP) are the Commission's main instrument for improving awareness of consequences of respiratory diseases, the Commission is carrying out a reflection process on chronic diseases together with Member States and will consider what further actions are appropriate in the light of its findings. Other relevant Commission actions include EU policies such as on air quality ([3]), spread of allergic invasive species ([4]) and reduction of tobacco use and environmental tobacco smoke ([5]).

The Commission would also like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-10880/10 ([6]).

([1]) COM(2003) 338 final.
([2]) COM(2004) 416 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/quality/index.htm
([4]) COM(2006) 216 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/tobacco/law/free_environments/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-001918/12
lill-Kummissjoni
David Casa (PPE)
(16 ta' Frar 2012)

Suġġett: Il-monitoraġġ tal-BEI

L-attivitajiet tal-Bank Ewropew tal-Investiment fil-viċinat tan-Nofsinhar tal-UE ġew ikkritikati minħabba l-finanzjament ta' proġetti pubbliċi mmexxija minn diversi mir-reġimi li waqgħu bir-Rebbiegħa Għarbija. Ħafna minnies li kienu madwar id-dittatur Eġizzjan ta' qabel Hosni Mubarak ġew implikati fi proċeduri ta' korruzzjoni relatati mal-użu ħażin ta' tali finanzjament.

Il-Kummissjoni ħadet xi azzjoni biex tiżgura li l-Bank Ewropew tal-Investiment jieħu miżuri aktar b'saħħithom biex jaċċerta li l-operazzjonijiet ta' finanzjament tiegħu ma jipprovdux appoġġ finanzjarju b'mod indirett lill-figuri politiċi li l-UE qiegħda tfittex li twarrab b'mod attiv?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Rehn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(3 ta' April 2012)

L-attivitajiet tal-BEI fir-reġjun tal-Mediterran isiru f'pajjiżi koperti bid-Deċiżjoni 1080/2011/UE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill, u dejjem fil-qafas ta' tali Deċiżjoni.

Huwa u jwettaq l-attivitajiet tiegħu, bi qbil mal-azzjoni ta' politika mheġġa mill-Kummissjoni, il-BEI japplika politika ta' tolleranza żero kontra l-frodi u l-korruzzjoni fl-operati finanzjarji kollha tiegħu. Barra minn hekk, il-BEI jżomm b'mod strett mal-listi tas-sanzjonijiet tal-UE, inklużi dawk adottati mill-UE wara r-rewwixti tal-Eġittu.

Bi qbil mal-politiki ppubblikata tiegħu, il-BEI rreveda u implimenta viġilanza iktar b'saħħitha fil-portafoll tiegħu fiż-żona Mediterranja wara l-ġrajjiet magħrufin bħala r-"Rebbiegħa Għarbija". Sal-lum, il-BEI ma sab l-ebda evidenza pprovata ta' irregolaritajiet fir-rigward tal-portafoll tiegħu ta' operati fir-reġjun.

Il-BEI huwa impenjat bis-sħiħ fl-investigazzjoni ta' kull allegazzjoni ta' frodi u korruzzjoni marbuta mal-attivitajiet tiegħu, b'kooperazzjoni fejn relevanti mal-Uffiċċju Ewropew Kontra l-Frodi (OLAF). Il-Bank iħeġġeġ lill-partijiet interessati kollha li jirrappurtaw minn kmieni, lid-Diviżjoni tal-Investigazzjoni tal-Frodi jew lill-OLAF, kwalunkwe suspett jew informazzjoni dwar xi frodi jew korruzzjoni fl-operati u fl-attivitajiet iffinanzjati mill-BEI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001918/12
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Monitoring the EIB

The European Investment Bank's activities in the EU's southern neighbourhood have come under criticism for financing public projects run by several of the regimes toppled by the Arab Spring. Many of the people surrounding former Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak have been implicated in corruption procedures related to the misuse of such financing.

Has the Commission taken any action to ensure that the European Investment Bank takes stronger measures to make certain that its financing operations do not indirectly provide financial support to political figures that the EU is actively seeking to isolate?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The EIB activities in the Mediterranean region take place in countries covered by Decision 1080/2011/EU of the Parliament and of the Council and within the scope of such Decision.

In carrying out its activities, in line with the policy action promoted by the Commission, the EIB applies a zero tolerance policy against fraud and corruption in all its financing operations. Moreover, it strictly adheres to EU sanctions lists, including those adopted by the EU after the Egyptian uprising.

In line with its published policies, the EIB has reviewed and implemented an enhanced vigilance on its portfolio in the Mediterranean area following the events known as the 'Arab Spring'. To date, the EIB has not found any proven evidence of irregularities regarding its portfolio of operations in the region.

The EIB is fully committed to investigate all allegations of fraud and corruption related to its activities, where relevant in cooperation with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). The Bank encourages all stakeholders to report promptly to its Fraud Investigation Division or to the OLAF suspicions of or information concerning fraud or corruption in EIB-financed operations or activities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-001919/12
alla Commissione
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(16 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Tutela siti di interesse comunitario: il caso del fiume Meschio

La direttiva comunitaria 92/43/CEE del 21 maggio 1992, anche nota come direttiva «Habitat», identifica dei siti di interesse comunitario selezionati sulla base di diversi criteri, ad esempio la loro importanza per mantenere o ripristinare una delle tipologie di habitat definite nell'allegato 1 o mantenere in uno stato di conservazione soddisfacente una delle specie definite nell'allegato 2 della direttiva; o ancora il contributo alla coerenza della rete di Natura 2000;

Il mantenimento di questi siti richiede maggior attenzione rispetto ad altre aree, in quanto per gli enti locali la gestione di queste zone risulta spesso economicamente e tecnicamente difficile.

Il fiume Meschio, sito di interesse comunitario, che scorre nella pedemontana veneta per una trentina di chilometri, accoglie diverse specie di fauna ittica, rivestendo cosi un ruolo importante per la biodiversità della zona.

— In che modo la Commissione può contribuire alla gestione di questi siti?

— Esistono programmi specifici per il mantenimento di corsi d'acqua come quello sopra citato?

— Esistono finanziamenti per gli enti locali destinati alla cura di questi siti, ad esempio, per la pulizia delle acque?

Risposta data da Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(20 marzo 2012)

La Commissione rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare al recente documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione del 12 dicembre 2011 sul finanziamento di Natura 2000:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/financing_natura2000.pdf

Questo documento illustra tra l'altro le esigenze di investimento e i benefici di una efficace gestione dei siti Natura 2000, nonché le possibilità di sostegno nell'ambito degli attuali strumenti finanziari dell'UE e nell'ambito delle proposte della Commissione sui futuri strumenti per il periodo 2014-2020.

Per quanto riguarda i Fondi strutturali, l'articolo 5 del regolamento n. 1080/2006, nell'ambito della priorità 2 «ambiente e prevenzione dei rischi», prevede la possibilità di erogare fondi per promuovere lo sviluppo di infrastrutture connesse alla biodiversità e agli investimenti nei siti Natura 2000, ove ciò contribuisca allo sviluppo economico sostenibile e/o alla diversificazione delle zone rurali. Nel caso di specie, il programma di sviluppo regionale per la Regione Veneto che è cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale, prevede uno stanziamento di 69 713 990 EUR nell'ambito della priorità 3, «ambiente e prevenzione dei rischi».

Conformemente al principio della gestione condivisa applicato per l'amministrazione dei Fondi strutturali, spetta alle autorità nazionali provvedere alla selezione e alla realizzazione del progetto. Pertanto, per maggiori informazioni la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione del programma Veneto:

Regione Veneto, Direzione Programmazione, Ing. Carlo Terrabujo, direttore dell'Autorità di gestione, Palazzo ex ULSS, Rio dei Tre Ponti — Dorsoduro, 3494/A, 30123 Venezia (VE)
Tel. 041 2791469 — 1470 — 1472; Fax. 041 2791477; e-mail: programmazione@regione.veneto.it

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001919/12
to the Commission
Giancarlo Scottà (EFD)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Protection of sites of Community importance: the River Meschio

Community Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992, also known as the Habitats Directive, identifies sites of community importance chosen on the basis of various criteria; for example, their importance in maintaining or restoring one of the types of habitat defined in Annex A to the directive, or in maintaining one of the species set out in Annex A at a favourable conservation status, or their contribution to the coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

These sites require more care and attention to maintain than others, and the local authorities managing these sites often experience economic and technical difficulties.

The River Meschio, a site of Community importance which runs through the Venetian foothills for around thirty kilometres, contains a diverse range of fish species and therefore plays an important role in the biodiversity of the area.

— How can the Commission contribute to the management of these sites?

— Are there any specific programmes for the maintenance of rivers such as this one?

— Is there any funding available for the local authorities that look after these sites, for example, for cleaning up the water?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the recent Commission Staff Working Paper of 12 December 2011 on Financing Natura 2000:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/financing_natura2000.pdf

This document presents, *inter alia*, the investment needs and benefits of effective management of Natura 2000 sites as well as the opportunities for support under the current EU financial instruments and under the Commission proposals for the future instruments for the period 2014-2020.

As regards Structural Funds, Article 5 of Regulation No 1080/2006, under its priority 2 'Environment and risk prevention' provides for the possibility to provide funds to promote the development of infrastructure linked to biodiversity and investments in Natura 2000 sites, where this contributes to sustainable economic development and/or diversification of rural areas. In the specific case at issue, the Regional development Programme for Region Veneto which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, provides for an allocation of EUR 69 713 990 for priority 3 'Environment and risk prevention'.

In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of the Structural Funds, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. For more information the Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the Veneto programme:

Regione Veneto, Direzione Programmazione, Ing. Carlo Terrabujo, Managing Authority Director, Palazzo ex ULSS, Rio dei Tre Ponti — Dorsoduro, 3494/A, 30123 Venezia (VE)
Tel. 041 2791469 — 1470 — 1472; Fax 041 2791477, E-mail: programmazione@regione.veneto.it

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-001920/12
do Komisji
Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) oraz Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(16 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Łamanie zasad konkurencyjności w przyznawaniu dotacji na projekty dotyczące energii odnawialnej

W dniu 6 grudnia 2011 r. skierowałem pytanie pisemne do Komisji dotyczące oceny przez Komisję Europejską zgodności z prawem wspólnotowym decyzji podjętej przez Narodowy Fundusz Ochrony Środowiska i Gospodarki Wodnej wobec projektu geotermalnego Fundacji Lux Veritatis z Torunia.

W odpowiedzi przesłanej przez pana komisarza 20 stycznia 2012 r. znalazło się m.in. następujące stwierdzenie: „instytucją zarządzającą odpowiedzialną za wdrożenie programu Infrastruktura i Środowisko, w ramach którego miał być finansowany wspomniany projekt, jest polskie Ministerstwo Rozwoju Regionalnego. Ponosi ono pełną odpowiedzialność za proces doboru projektów".

To stwierdzenie wywołało sprzeciw polskiego Ministerstwa Rozwoju Regionalnego, które w piśmie do jednego z dzienników poinformowało, że „Ministerstwo Rozwoju Regionalnego w żaden sposób nie uczestniczyło w dofinansowaniu tego projektu…".

W związku z tym, iż wyjaśnienia polskiego MRR godzą w wiarygodność Komisji wnosimy o zajęcie stanowiska w tej sprawie i pragniemy zapytać, czy Komisja może zbadać okoliczności zerwania przez NFOŚiGW umowy na dotację na badania wód geotermalnych w Toruniu podpisanej wcześniej z Fundacją Lux Veritatis?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(3 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Jak już wyjaśniono w odpowiedziach Komisji na pytania pisemne E-007033/2011 i E-011442/2011 ([1]), instytucją zarządzającą odpowiedzialną za realizację programu „Infrastruktura i środowisko", w ramach którego mają być finansowane projekty w zakresie energii odnawialnej, jest faktycznie polskie Ministerstwo Rozwoju Regionalnego. Ministerstwo przekazało zaś zadanie zarządzania procedurą wyboru projektów Narodowemu Funduszowi Ochrony Środowiska i Gospodarki Wodnej. W tym konkretnym przypadku Ministerstwo Rozwoju Regionalnego poinformowało obecnie Komisję, że projekt, o którym mowa, miał być finansowany przez Narodowy Fundusz Ochrony Środowiska i Gospodarki Wodnej tylko ze środków krajowych i że w ramach tego projektu nie korzystano ze środków unijnych.

Komisja przeprowadza regularne audyty wszystkich programów współfinansowanych w Polsce z funduszy strukturalnych. Komisja nie bierze jednak udziału w audytach ani kontrolach projektów finansowanych wyłącznie z krajowych środków budżetowych.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001920/12
to the Commission
Mirosław Piotrowski (ECR), Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD) and Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(16 February 2012)

Subject: Violation of competition rules for the allocation of subsidies for renewable energy projects

On 6 December 2011, I addressed a written question to the Commission concerning its assessment of compliance with Community law of a decision taken by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in respect of the geothermal project of the Lux Veritatis Foundation of Toruń.

The reply sent by the Commissioner 20 January 2012 included the following statement: 'The managing authority responsible for implementation of the Infrastructure and Environment Project, within the framework of which the project concerned was to be financed, is the Polish Ministry of Regional Development. It has full responsibility for the project selection process'.

This statement provoked an objection from the Polish Ministry of Regional Development, which, in a letter to one of the newspapers, reported that: 'The Ministry of Regional Development has not participated in the financing of this project in any way…'

In view of the fact that the explanations of the Polish Ministry of Regional Development call into question the credibility of the Commission, we request that a position be adopted on this matter and ask if the Commission can investigate the circumstances in which the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management has severed the contract for a grant to study the geothermal waters in Toruń that was signed earlier with the Lux Veritatis Foundation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

As already explained in the Commission's replies to Written Questions E-007033/2011 and E-011442/2011 ([1]), the managing authority responsible for implementation of the Infrastructure and Environment programme under which projects on renewable energy are to be financed, is indeed the Ministry of Regional Development in Poland. Furthermore, the task for managing the project selection process was delegated by the Ministry to the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management. In this particular case, the Ministry for Regional Development has now informed the Commission that the project in question would be financed by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management only with national funds and no EU funds were involved in this project.

The Commission is carrying out systematic audits of all programmes co-financed by the Structural Funds in Poland. However, the Commission is not involved in auditing or controlling projects financed purely from national budget sources.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/home.jsp

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001921/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(17 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Αναστολή των αδειών χρήσης νεονικοτινοειδών στην ΕΕ

Σύμφωνα με την Οδηγία 91/414/ΕΟΚ, οι μέλισσες χρησιμοποιούνται ως δείκτης για τις επιδράσεις των φυτοφαρμακευτικών ουσιών σε ασπόνδυλα μη στόχους. Η επικινδυνότητα των φυτοφαρμακευτικών ουσιών στις μέλισσες καθορίζεται από τους συντελεστές κινδύνου (ΣΚ), οι οποίοι υπολογίζονται από τη μέγιστη συγκέντρωση της δραστικής ουσίας του σκευάσματος που εφαρμόζεται σε ένα εκτάριο, διαιρούμενη με τη μέση θανατηφόρα δόση δι' επαφής ή δια στόματος. Όταν ο ΣΚ είναι κάτω του 50, τότε το σκεύασμα θεωρείται ακίνδυνο. Ωστόσο, το imidaclopid έχει Σ.Κ μόλις 1,85 και το clothianidin 4,95-20,85 παρόλο που η τοξικότητά τους για τις μέλισσες έχει τεκμηριωθεί. Με βάση τους χαμηλούς αυτούς δείκτες τα νεονικοτινοειδή έλαβαν άδεια κυκλοφορίας στην ΕΕ.

Ωστόσο, οι Συντελεστές Κινδύνου για τα νεονικοτινοειδή εντομοκτόνα είναι ελλιπείς, κυρίως για τρεις λόγους:

Πρώτον, υπολογίζουν μόνο την οξεία τοξικότητα και όχι τη χρόνια. Οι μέλισσες συλλέγουν γύρη με υπολείμματα νεονικοτινοειδών σε υποθανατηφόρες δόσεις, την οποία μεταφέρουν στην κυψέλη τους. Η χρήση αυτής της γύρης προκαλεί χρόνια τοξικότητα η οποία εκφράζεται, μεταξύ άλλων, με μειωμένη ικανότητα αναζήτησης και κατανάλωσης τροφής, θανάτωση του γόνου κ.α.

Δεύτερον, τα νεονικοτινοειδή είναι ιδιαίτερα σταθερά στο έδαφος. Η διάρκεια ημιζωής του imidacloprid στο έδαφος είναι 1 000 ημέρες και του clothianidin 1 155 ημέρες. Έτσι, οι ουσίες αυτές παραμένουν στο έδαφος μέχρι την επόμενη σοδειά με την οποία θα ανανεωθούν, ενώ μεταφέρονται και στην αυτοφυή βλάστηση, τη γύρη της οποίας θα συλλέξουν οι μέλισσες. Τρίτον, οι Σ.Κ. δεν λαμβάνουν υπόψη τους τη συνεργιστική δράση, που έχουν οι φαινομενικά μικρές συγκεντρώσεις των νεονικοτινοειδών στη γύρη, με τα χημικά σκευάσματα που χρησιμοποιεί ο μελισσοκόμος μέσα στη κυψέλη.

Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σκοπεύει να αναστείλει τις άδειες χρήσης των νεονικοτινοειδών στην ΕΕ, όπως άλλωστε έχει γίνει στη Γερμανία, Σλοβενία, Γαλλία και Ιταλία, έως ότου γίνουν οι απαραίτητες βελτιώσεις στους ΣΚ, ώστε να ανταποκρίνονται στην αποτελεσματική προστασία των μελισσών;

Απάντηση του κ. Dalli εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον αξιότιμο βουλευτή στις απαντήσεις της επί των γραπτών ερωτήσεων E-011166/2011 ([1]) και E-001297/2012 [(1)].

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001921/12
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: Suspension of authorisation for the use of neonicotinoids in the EU

Under Council Directive 91/414/EEC, bees are used as an indicator to measure the effects of plant protection products on non-target invertebrates. The risk posed by plant protection products to bees is established by Hazard Quotients (HQ), which are calculated by the maximum concentration of the active substance in one hectare, divided by the median lethal dose through contact or oral ingestion. When the HQ is below 50, the substance is considered safe. However, imidaclopid has a HQ of just 1.85 and clothianidin 4.95-20.85 despite the fact that their toxicity for bees has been documented. On the basis of these low indicators, neonicotinoids have been authorised in the EU.

Nevertheless, the Hazard Quotients for neonicotinoid pesticides are inadequate, primarily for three reasons:

First, they measure the acute toxicity and not the chronic toxicity. Bees collect pollen with traces of neonicotinoids in sublethal doses which they carry to their hive. The use of this pollen causes chronic toxicity which is reflected, amongst other things, in reduced foraging and food consumption, destruction of pollen, etc.

Second, neonicotinoids are particularly stable in the ground. The half-life of imidacloprid in soil is 1 000 days and that of clothianidin is 1 155 days. Thus, these substances remain in the ground until the next harvest when they are reapplied, and they are carried to wild vegetation, the pollen of which is collected by bees. Third, the HQs do not take into account the synergistic effect which the seemingly small concentrations of neonicotinoids have on pollen with the chemical substances used by the bee-keeper in the hive.

Will the Commission say whether:

It intends to suspend authorisation for the use of neonicotinoids in the EU, as has also happened in Germany, Slovenia, France and Italy, until the necessary improvements have been made to HQs in order to effectively protect bees?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-011166/2011 ([1]) and E-001297/2012.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001925/12
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: Governance Agreement/Treaty — referendums

Will the Commission undertake NOT to fund, overtly or covertly, one side of the campaign in a possible referendum on the Governance Agreement/Treaty agreed on 9 December 2011?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

The ratification of the international Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance (TSCG) is the exclusive responsibility of the Member States that signed the Treaty.

As part of its communication activities the Commission will continue to perform its duty of providing EU citizens with factual and objective information on matters related to the European Union. This can involve information on the TSCG.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001927/12
an die Kommission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Mario Mauro (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Oreste Rossi (EFD), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Gianluca Susta (S&D), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Gabriele Albertini (PPE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Leonardo Domenici (S&D), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Silvia Costa (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Luigi Berlinguer (S&D), Lara Comi (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (ALDE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Rosario Crocetta (S&D), Cristiana Muscardini (PPE), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Paolo De Castro (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Carlo Casini (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD) und Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(17. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: EBA-Vorschriften und KMU-Unterstützungsfaktor

Der Basler Ausschuss hat infolge der Finanzkrise einige Vorschriften angenommen, um die Mindestanforderungen an die Qualität des Kapitals der Kreditinstitute zu erhöhen.

Auf europäischer Ebene wird das neue Basler Abkommen durch eine Verordnung und eine Richtlinie umgesetzt werden, zu denen die Europäische Kommission im Juli 2011 Vorschläge vorgelegt hat.

Diese neuen Anforderungen werden einerseits zu einem Finanzsystem führen, das bei zukünftigen Finanzkrisen widerstandsfähiger sein wird, andererseits bringen sie aber auch beträchtliche Kosten für den Bankensektor mit sich, werden Auswirkungen auf die Kreditvergabe und die Unterstützung der Wirtschaft durch das Finanzsystem haben und bergen zudem reale Risiken für eine Kreditverknappung gegenüber kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen (KMU), die in Italien 98 % der Wirtschaft ausmachen.

Der Präsident der Europäischen Zentralbank, Mario Draghi, hat vor kurzem erklärt, dass „die Programme zur Kapitalisierung der Banken keine Entwicklungen enthalten dürfen, die der Wirtschaft schaden und die zu einer Kreditklemme führen".

Vor diesem Hintergrund wird die Kommission um folgende Auskünfte gebeten:

1. Wurden bei der Annahme der Entscheidung der Europäischen Bankenaufsichtsbehörde (EBA), die Erhöhung der Eigenkapitalanforderungen auf Juni 2012 vorzuziehen, den prozyklischen Folgen und Auswirkungen auf die Finanzierung der Realwirtschaft Rechnung getragen?

2. Wurde die Struktur der italienischen Wirtschaft berücksichtigt, die sich vorwiegend aus kleinen und mittleren Unternehmen zusammensetzt, deren durchschnittliche Größe unter dem EU-Durchschnitt liegt und die daher in höherem Maße von Bankkrediten abhängig sind und durch die Einführung der neuen Eigenkapitalquoten in stärkerem Maße benachteiligt werden?

3. Ist es möglich, in die Vorschläge zur Umsetzung des Basel-III-Abkommens einen sogenannten „KMU-Unterstützungsfaktor" aufzunehmen, einen Unterstützungsmechanismus für Bankangestellte zugunsten von KMU, der bei der Kalkulation des Kreditrisikos zum Tragen kommt und einen weiteren Rückgang der Kreditvergabe an KMU verhindern soll?

Antwort von Michel Barnier im Namen der Kommission

(25. April 2012)

Die Empfehlung zur Rekapitalisierung der Banken, die im Dezember 2011 von der EBA ([1]) bekannt gegeben wurde, hat zum Ziel, einen außerordentlichen, vorübergehenden Kapitalpuffer aufzubauen, um das Vertrauen der Investoren in den Bankensektor wiederherzustellen. Das oberste Ziel dieses Kapitalpuffers ist es nicht, die Umsetzung der Eigenkapitalanforderungen von Basel III voranzutreiben, sondern vielmehr, den Märkten entsprechend der Vereinbarung des Europäischen Rates vom 26. Oktober 2011 Zuversicht zu geben, dass die EU-Banken der anhaltenden Volatilität Stand halten und dabei ein adäquates Eigenkapital aufrechterhalten können.

In der Empfehlung wurde ausdrücklich unterstrichen, dass sichergestellt werden muss, dass die Kapitalaufstockung den Kreditfluss in die Realwirtschaft nicht negativ beeinflusst. Nach den vorläufigen Plänen zur Eigenkapitalerhöhung, welche die Banken im Januar 2012 vorgelegt haben, ist davon auszugehen, dass die Banken den vorübergehenden Kapitalpuffer vornehmlich durch eine Erhöhung des Eigenkapitals, anstatt durch die Einschränkung der Kreditvergabe — auch an KMU — aufbauen wollen. Die kürzlich von der EZB ergriffenen Maßnahmen, um den Bankensektor mit Liquidität zu versorgen, haben außerdem die Situation bei der Bankenfinanzierung entspannt und dürften eine weitere Verschärfung der Kriterien der Banken für die Kreditvergabe begrenzen.

Was die Eigenkapitalanforderungen im Zusammenhang mit der Kreditvergabe an KMU angeht, wurde in der Folgenabschätzung der Kommission empfohlen, dass der Vorschlag zu den Eigenkapitalvorschriften (CRD IV) die Kreditvergabe an KMU im Vergleich zur Kreditvergabe an andere Unternehmen nicht beeinträchtigen sollte. Der Vorschlag enthält auch eine Überprüfungsklausel ([2]), um zu überprüfen, ob die Risikogewichtungen für Kredite an KMU auf Grundlage der tatsächlichen Daten zu Verlusten bei solchen Krediten über einen vollständigen Konjunkturzyklus angepasst werden können. Die EBA wurde darüber hinaus gebeten, der Kommission bis zum 1. September 2012 einen Bericht zur Angemessenheit der derzeitigen Risikogewichtungen vorzulegen und zu prüfen, ob sie reduziert werden können, wobei eine Reduzierung um ein Drittel getestet werden soll. Die Kommission ist mit den Damen und Herren Abgeordneten einer Meinung, dass es überaus wichtig ist, mit dem neuen rechtlichen Rahmen den Zugang der KMU zu Finanzierungsmitteln nicht zu beschränken.

([1]) Europäische Bankenaufsichtsbehörde.

([2]) Artikel 485.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001927/12
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Mario Mauro (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Oreste Rossi (EFD), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Gianluca Susta (S&D), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Gabriele Albertini (PPE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Leonardo Domenici (S&D), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Silvia Costa (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Luigi Berlinguer (S&D), Lara Comi (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (ALDE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Rosario Crocetta (S&D), Cristiana Muscardini (PPE), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Paolo De Castro (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Carlo Casini (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD) e Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Disposizioni EBA e PMI Supporting factor

Il Comitato di Basilea, a seguito della crisi finanziaria, ha adottato alcuni provvedimenti per innalzare i requisiti minimi e la qualità del capitale degli istituti di credito.

A livello europeo i nuovi accordi di Basilea troveranno una trasposizione normativa in un regolamento e in una direttiva dei quali la Commissione europea ha pubblicato le relative proposte nel luglio 2011.

Tali nuovi requisiti, se da un lato condurranno a un sistema finanziario capace di resistere maggiormente a future crisi finanziarie, dall'altro, comportando ingenti costi per il settore bancario, avranno un impatto sull'erogazione del credito e sul sostegno del sistema finanziario all'economia, con rischi reali di credit crunch verso le piccole e medie imprese (PMI), che in Italia rappresentano il 98 % del sistema produttivo.

Il Presidente della Banca centrale europea, Mario Draghi, ha recentemente dichiarato che «i programmi di capitalizzazione delle banche non devono comportare sviluppi a detrimento delle attività economiche e non debbono tradursi in uno schiacciamento del credito».

Alla luce di quanto sopra, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se la decisione dell'Autorità bancaria europea (EBA) di anticipare il rafforzamento dei requisiti patrimoniali a giugno 2012 sia stata adottata tenendo conto delle conseguenze pro-cicliche e degli effetti sul finanziamento dell'economia reale;

2. se sia stato tenuto in considerazione il tessuto economico italiano, basato su piccole e medie imprese con dimensioni medie inferiori a livello UE, quindi maggiormente dipendenti dal credito bancario e più penalizzate dall'introduzione dei nuovi coefficienti patrimoniali;

3. se sia possibile introdurre nelle proposte di implementazione degli accordi di Basilea III un moltiplicatore detto «PMI Supporting Factor», un meccanismo di supporto agli impieghi bancari verso le PMI che, applicato al calcolo del rischio del credito, consenta di evitare un'ulteriore flessione nell'erogazione del credito alle PMI.

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(25 aprile 2012)

La raccomandazione sulla ricapitalizzazione, annunciata dall'Autorità bancaria europea ([1]) nel dicembre 2011, è volta a creare una riserva di capitale eccezionale e temporanea che consenta di ristabilire la fiducia degli investitori nel settore bancario. L'obiettivo principale di tale riserva non è di anticipare i requisiti patrimoniali stabiliti dall'accordo di Basilea III, ma di rassicurare i mercati sulla capacità delle banche dell'UE di fare fronte all'attuale volatilità mantenendo livelli di capitale adeguati, in linea con l'accordo del Consiglio europeo del 26 ottobre 2011.

([1]) Autorità bancaria europea (ABE).

Nella raccomandazione si menziona esplicitamente la necessità di garantire che la capitalizzazione non si ripercuota negativamente sul flusso di credito verso l'economia reale. Dai piani di ricapitalizzazione inoltrati dalle banche nel gennaio 2012 si evince che le banche intendono conformarsi al requisito della riserva temporanea aumentando il capitale anziché contraendo i prestiti ai propri clienti, PMI incluse. Inoltre, le misure adottate di recente dalla BCE per iniettare liquidità nel settore bancario hanno alleviato le tensioni legate al finanziamento delle banche, e si prevede che limiteranno ulteriormente l'inasprimento delle norme sui prestiti bancari.

Per quanto riguarda i requisiti patrimoniali delle banche per le esposizioni verso le PMI, la valutazione d'impatto della Commissione ha indicato che la proposta CRD IV non penalizzerà le PMI rispetto ad alte imprese nella concessione dei prestiti. Inoltre, la proposta comprende una clausola di riesame ([2]) per valutare se le ponderazioni del rischio legato ai prestiti alle PMI possano essere modificate sulla base dei dati effettivi sulle perdite relativi a tale tipo di prestito nell'arco di un intero ciclo economico. La Commissione ha inoltre invitato l'ABE a riferire entro il 1º settembre 2012 sull'adeguatezza delle attuali ponderazioni dei rischi e ad esaminare possibilità di riduzione, vagliando soluzioni che consentano di diminuirle di un terzo. La Commissione concorda sull'importanza fondamentale del fatto che il nuovo quadro di regolamentazione non debba limitare l'accesso ai finanziamenti da parte delle PMI.

([2]) Articolo 485.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001927/12
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Gianni Pittella (S&D), Mario Mauro (PPE), David-Maria Sassoli (S&D), Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD), Giuseppe Gargani (PPE), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Alfredo Pallone (PPE), Oreste Rossi (EFD), Sonia Alfano (ALDE), Andrea Zanoni (ALDE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Giovanni La Via (PPE), Clemente Mastella (PPE), Francesco De Angelis (S&D), Gianluca Susta (S&D), Mara Bizzotto (EFD), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE), Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE), Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE), Salvatore Tatarella (PPE), Barbara Matera (PPE), Crescenzio Rivellini (PPE), Herbert Dorfmann (PPE), Antonello Antinoro (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE), Antonio Cancian (PPE), Gabriele Albertini (PPE), Claudio Morganti (EFD), Vittorio Prodi (S&D), Leonardo Domenici (S&D), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Salvatore Caronna (S&D), Silvia Costa (S&D), Debora Serracchiani (S&D), Licia Ronzulli (PPE), Elisabetta Gardini (PPE), Luigi Berlinguer (S&D), Lara Comi (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Vincenzo Iovine (ALDE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (S&D), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Potito Salatto (PPE), Pino Arlacchi (S&D), Mario Pirillo (S&D), Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE), Rosario Crocetta (S&D), Cristiana Muscardini (PPE), Iva Zanicchi (PPE), Lorenzo Fontana (EFD), Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D), Paolo De Castro (S&D), Guido Milana (S&D), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Carlo Casini (PPE), Giommaria Uggias (ALDE), Magdi Cristiano Allam (EFD) and Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: EBA initiatives and SME Supporting Factor

Following the financial crisis, the Basel Committee adopted a number of provisions to raise the minimum requirements and quality of the capital of credit institutions.

At European level, the new Basel Accords will be transposed into a regulation and a directive for which proposals were published by the European Commission in July 2011.

While leading to a financial system that is better equipped to resist future financial crises, these new requirements will entail substantial costs for the banking sector, with an impact on the availability of credit and on the support for the economy provided by the financial system, with the genuine risk of a credit crunch affecting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which in Italy account for 98 % of the manufacturing sector.

The President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, stated recently that 'the bank capitalisation programmes must not include developments that are detrimental to economic activity and must not translate into a credit squeeze'.

In light of the above, the Commission is asked:

1. whether the decision of the European Banking Authority (EBA) to bring forward the strengthening of capital requirements to June 2012 has been taken considering the procyclical consequences and the effects on the funding of the real economy;

2. whether the fabric of the Italian economy has been taken into consideration, i.e. based on small and medium-sized enterprises that are smaller than the EU average and are therefore more dependent on bank credit and more disadvantaged by the introduction of the new capital requirements;

3. whether it is possible to introduce a so-called 'SME Supporting Factor' (a multiplier) in the implementation proposals of the Basel III Accords, i.e. a support mechanism for banks investing in SMEs which, applied to the credit risk calculation, could prevent a further decline in the supply of credit for SMEs.

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The bank recapitalisation recommendation, announced by the EBA ([1]) in December 2011, aims at creating an exceptional and temporary capital buffer to restore investor confidence in the banking sector. The primary objective of this buffer is not to bring forward the Basel III capital requirements but rather to provide reassurance to markets about EU bank ability to withstand the ongoing volatility and still maintain adequate capital, in line with the agreement of the European Council on 26 October 2011.

([1]) European Banking Authority.

The recommendation was explicit in pointing to the need to ensure that the capitalisation would not adversely impact the credit flow to the real economy. The preliminary recapitalisation plans submitted by banks in January 2012, indicate that banks intend to comply with the temporary buffer requirement largely by increasing capital rather than curtailing their lending to clients, including SMEs. Also, measures taken recently by the ECB to provide liquidity to the banking sector have alleviated bank funding tensions and are expected to further limit the extent of the tightening of bank lending standards.

As regards bank capital requirements for exposures to SMEs, the Commission impact assessment suggested that the CRD IV proposal would not penalise lending to SMEs compared to lending to other corporates. Furthermore, the proposal contains a review clause ([2]) to assess whether the risk weights for loans to SMEs could be changed on the basis of actual loss data for such loans over a full economic cycle. The EBA has also been requested by the Commission to report by 1 September 2012 on the appropriateness of the current risk weights and to analyse a possibility to reduce them, testing the possibilities for a reduction by 1/3. The Commission agrees that this it is fundamental that the new regulatory framework does not limit SMEs access to financing.

([2]) Article 485.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001928/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Sharqia: Chiesa e abitazioni di copti bruciate

Lo scorso 14.2.2012 circa duemila salafiti hanno attaccato la chiesa di St. Mary e St. Abram, bruciato la casa del parroco e diversi edifici e auto della comunità copta, nel villaggio di Meet Bashar (provincia di Sharqia, circa 50 km a nord est del Cairo).

Dallo scorso 12 febbraio, la zona è teatro di scontri fra estremisti islamici e cristiani. La calma è tornata solo grazie all'intervento della polizia e alla mediazione di alcuni leader del partito Giustizia e Libertà dei Fratelli musulmani, che hanno convinto i salafiti a lasciare il villaggio.

A scatenare le violenze è stata la scomparsa di una ragazza cristiana di 14 anni, sparita lo scorso 12 febbraio dopo la conversione del padre all'islam. La giovane è stata ritrovata il 15.2.2012 ed è ora nelle mani della polizia, che la interrogherà nei prossimi giorni insieme alla madre. Secondo i salafiti i cristiani hanno rapito la ragazza per evitare la sua conversione all'islam.

Si chiede:

1. il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante è al corrente di questa vicenda?

2. quali azioni ha intenzione di intraprendere il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per risolvere le violenze che si stanno verificando nel paese?

3. quali politiche intende avviare il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per garantire la libertà religiosa nel paese?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton è a conoscenza dell'episodio di violenza settaria a cui si fa riferimento nell'interrogazione. Il rispetto dei valori democratici e dei diritti umani è un elemento fondamentale nelle relazioni tra l'UE e i suoi vicini. L'articolo 2 dell'accordo di associazione stipulato tra l'UE e l'Egitto prevede che le relazioni tra le due Parti si basino sul rispetto dei principi democratici e dei diritti fondamentali, tra cui la libertà di religione e di credo. Tutte le minoranze religiose dovrebbero avere un loro spazio nel «nuovo Egitto». L'Unione europea si aspetta che le politiche dell'attuale e dei futuri governi egiziani garantiscano sempre il rispetto dei diritti fondamentali, compresa la libertà di religione e di credo. A tale proposito, è della massima importanza l'adozione in tempi rapidi, promessa dalle autorità egiziane, di un testo unico di legge relativo alla costruzione dei luoghi di culto. Inoltre, la libertà di religione e di credo sarà uno dei criteri fondamentali per la valutazione del processo di democratizzazione in Egitto secondo il principio «more for more» applicabile alla nuova politica di vicinato.

Nelle dichiarazioni del 10 ottobre 2011, del 10 marzo 2012 e del 9 maggio 2012 l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha condannato con fermezza la violenza settaria. Inoltre, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente e il Presidente della Commissione, durante le loro visite in Egitto rispettivamente del 14 marzo 2011 e del 14 luglio 2011, hanno espresso i loro timori direttamente al Maresciallo Tantawi. Il Consiglio «Affari esteri» di febbraio 2011 ha ribadito nelle sue conclusioni la profonda preoccupazione e la condanna dell'UE per qualsiasi tipo di intolleranza, discriminazione o violenza, come ad esempio i recenti atti di violenza e di terrorismo perpetrati in vari paesi contro i cristiani e i loro luoghi di culto, i pellegrini musulmani e altre comunità religiose.

Le conclusioni del Consiglio «Affari esteri» del 27 febbraio 2012 hanno sottolineato l'importanza del ruolo delle autorità provvisorie egiziane e delle libertà fondamentali, nonché l'esigenza di far luce sulle violazioni, anche quelle contro le minoranze religiose.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001928/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Sharqiya: Coptic church and houses burned

On 14 February 2012, around 2 000 Salafists attacked the church of St Mary and St Abram and burned the pastor's house and various buildings and cars belonging to the Coptic community in the village of Meet Bashar (Sharqiya governorate, around 50 km north-east of Cairo).

Since 12 February, the area has been a focal point of clashes between Islamic and Christian extremists. Calm has only been restored thanks to the intervention of the police and the mediation of several leaders of the Freedom and Justice party of the Muslim Brotherhood, who convinced the Salafists to leave the village.

The violence was sparked by the disappearance of a 14-year-old Christian girl who went missing on 12 February 2012 after her father's conversion to Islam. The young girl was found on 15 February 2012 and is now in the hands of the police, who will be questioning her over the next few days together with her mother. According to the Salafists, the Christians kidnapped the girl to prevent her conversion to Islam.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this incident?

2. What action does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to take to address the violence that is taking place in the country?

3. What policies does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to put in place to guarantee religious freedom in the country?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2012)

High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) Ashton is aware of the sectarian incident mentioned in the question. The respect of democratic values and human rights is a cornerstone in the relations between the EU and its neighbours. Article 2 of the Association Agreement between the EU and Egypt stipulates that the relations between both parties should be based on the respect for democratic principles and fundamental rights which include freedom of religion or belief. All religious minorities should have their place in the 'New Egypt'. The EU expects that the policies implemented by the current and forthcoming Egyptian governments are and will be in line with the respect of fundamental rights, including freedom of religion or belief. In this respect, the adoption at the earliest of the unified law on the building of places of worship promised by the Egyptian authorities is of the utmost importance. Besides, freedom of religion and belief will be among the key benchmarks that will be used to assess the democratic progresses made by Egypt in the framework of the 'more for more approach' inherent to the new neighbourhood policy.

Sectarian violence has been strongly condemned in HR/VP statements (notably on 9 May 2012, 10 March 2012 and 10 October 2011). The EU concerns in this matter were also directly communicated to Marshal Tantawi by HR/VP Ashton during her visit to Egypt on 14 March 2011 and by President Barroso when he visited the country on 14 July 2011. The Foreign Affairs Council conclusions adopted in February 2011 reiterated the EU's serious concern and condemnation over any intolerance, discrimination or violence as epitomised by recent violence and acts of terrorism, in various countries, against Christians and their places of worship, Muslim pilgrims and other religious communities.

The Foreign Affairs Conclusions of 27 February 2012 emphasised the importance of the Egyptian interim authorities and fundamental freedoms and to investigate violations, including against religious minorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001930/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Tibet, giovane monaco si dà fuoco

Lo scorso 13.2.2012 un giovane monaco di appena 19 anni si è dato fuoco nella provincia cinese del Sichuan, in un'escalation di protesta contro la repressione imposta da Pechino.

Si tratta del secondo gesto estremo, in due giorni, di ragazzi tibetani, che porta a 24 il numero delle vittime dal febbraio 2009 — anche se non vi sono conferme ufficiali sul decesso.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se il VP/HR è al corrente di questa vicenda?

2. quali azioni ha intenzione di intraprendere il VP/HR per risolvere le violenze che si stanno verificando nel paese a danno dei tibetani?

Risposta data dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è profondamente turbata dai terribili episodi verificatisi nelle zone tibetane. Il 9 dicembre 2011 la delegazione dell'UE in Cina ha intrapreso un'iniziativa diplomatica nei confronti del ministero degli Affari esteri esprimendo forte preoccupazione per i recenti episodi di autoimmolazione, che palesano la sensazione di molti Tibetani che i loro diritti religiosi, linguistici e culturali non siano rispettati. L'iniziativa ha ribadito l'apprensione dell'Unione per la situazione nel monastero di Kirti, dove si dice siano rimaste solo poche centinaia di monaci mentre la maggior parte di loro sono stati mandati via o incarcerati. L'Unione europea ha sollecitato le autorità cinesi ad affrontare le cause alla radice degli atti di autoimmolazione, in particolare la sensazione da parte della popolazione tibetana di non partecipare appieno alla politica di sviluppo della regione.

L'Unione ha espresso preoccupazione per la situazione in Tibet anche durante la visita a Bruxelles del 12 dicembre 2011 di Zhu Weiqun, viceministro esecutivo del Dipartimento del Fronte Unito di lavoro.

Anche nel corso del vertice UE-Cina del 14 febbraio 2012 a Pechino, l'UE si è detta profondamente preoccupata per la situazione dei diritti umani in Tibet. Pur aderendo alla politica «Una sola Cina», l'UE continuerà a sollecitare il pieno rispetto dei diritti umani, compresa la libertà culturale, di espressione, di credo, di riunione e di associazione in queste zone ma anche altrove in Cina.

L'UE ha inoltre ripetutamente esortato le autorità cinesi a riprendere il dialogo con gli inviati del Dalai Lama e ha chiesto, finora invano, di poter visitare le regioni a popolazione tibetana.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001930/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mario Mauro (PPE)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Tibet: young monk sets himself on fire

On 13 February 2012, a young monk of just 19 years of age set himself on fire in the Chinese province of Sichuan in an escalation of protests against the suppression being perpetrated by Beijing.

It is the second extreme act by a young Tibetan in two days, which brings the number of victims since February 2009 to 24 — although there is no official confirmation of the death.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether the VP/HR is aware of this event;

2. what action does the VP/HR intend to take to address the violence against Tibetans taking place in the country?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2012)

The High Representative/Vice-President is deeply concerned at the distressing events in the Tibetan areas. On 9 December 2011, the EU Delegation to China made a demarche to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressing its profound concern at the recent series of self-immolations which demonstrate the continuing depth of feeling among many Tibetans that their religious, linguistic and cultural rights are not being respected. The demarche underlined that the EU is concerned with the situation at Kirti monastery, in particular with reports that only a few hundred monks remain at the monastery and that the majority have either been sent home or are in detention. The EU urged the Chinese authorities to address the root causes of the self-immolations, and in particular the perceived lack of genuine participation by the Tibetan population in the development policy of the region.

The EU also expressed its concerns regarding the situation in Tibet during the visit of Zhu Weiqun, Executive Vice-Minister of the United Front Work Department to Brussels, on 12 December 2011.

EU's deep concerns as to the human rights situation in Tibet were raised as well at the EU-China summit which took place on 14 February 2012 in Beijing. While adhering to the 'One-China policy', the EU will continue to call for full respect for human rights, including the freedom of expression, religion, culture, association and assembly in these areas as in other parts of China.

Moreover, the EU repeatedly urges the Chinese authorities to resume their dialogue with the Envoys of the Dalai Lama. It has also asked to visit the regions inhabited by Tibetans but this request has been refused until now.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-001933/12
Komisi
Jan Březina (PPE)
(17. února 2012)

Předmět: Zdravotní tvrzení při označování potravinářských produktů

Úřad EFSA dokončil hodnocení 4 637 tvrzení podle čl. 13 odst. 1 s výjimkou látek rostlinného původu. Z analýzy jeho stanovisek vyplývá, že mezi počtem kladných stanovisek k tvrzením týkajícím se vitamínů a minerálních látek na straně jedné a počtem kladných stanovisek k tvrzením týkajícím se jiných látek, než jsou vitamíny a minerální látky, na straně druhé existuje propastný rozdíl. Téměř všechna tvrzení týkající se jiných látek (97 %) byla zamítnuta, zatímco většina tvrzení týkajících se vitamínů a minerálních látek byla schválena.

Důkazy z referenčních publikací byly v případě tvrzení týkajících se vitamínů a minerálních látek považovány za dostačující podpůrné podklady, nikoli však v případě tvrzení týkajících se jiných látek, pro něž úřad EFSA stanovil povinnost předkládat studie, jaké provádějí farmaceutické společnosti, které jsou však často velmi nákladné, nebo je nelze provést. Navíc v případě tvrzení týkajících se vitamínů a minerálních látek, např. vitamínu C, úřad přijal důkazy založené na studiích provedených na pacientech, nepřijal je ale v případě jiných látek.

Pokud uváděný účinek nelze nezvratně prokázat, úřad EFSA navíc tvrzení zamítá, jako v případě brusinek, ačkoli podmínky, jež Komise uložila úřadu EFSA ve věci čl. 13 odst. 1, jednoznačně stanovují, že by měla být zvážena míra prokázaného příčinného vztahu mezi užíváním látky a uváděnými účinky. Kliničtí lékaři brusinky obecně doporučují ženám ke snížení rizika infekce močového ústrojí a vnitrostátní orgány pro hodnocení látek vydaly pro brusinky kladná stanoviska.

Může Komise vysvětlit, proč se k těmto dvěma kategoriím látek přistupuje odlišně?

Může Komise odůvodnit svůj návrh rozhodnutí, jímž by měla být všechna tvrzení týkající se brusinek od poloviny tohoto roku zakázána?

Odpověď Johna Dalliho jménem Komise
(28. března 2012)

Nařízení (ES) č. 1924/2006 o výživových a zdravotních tvrzeních při označování potravin ([1]) stanoví, že veškerá zdravotní tvrzení, jež nejsou schválena v seznamu povolených zdravotních tvrzení, jsou zakázána. Zákonodárci rozhodli, že hlavním aspektem, který je třeba vzít v úvahu při používání výživových a zdravotních tvrzení, by měla být vědecká zdůvodnění a že by tato zdůvodnění měla být založena na všeobecně uznávaných vědeckých důkazech. Tvrzení, jež nemohou být podložena obecně uznávanými vědeckými důkazy, nemohou být schválena.

Proběhly rozsáhlé studie živin, jako jsou bílkoviny, mastné kyseliny, vitamíny a minerály. Evropský úřad pro bezpečnost potravin (EFSA) považuje výsledky těchto studií za obecně uznávané vědecké poznatky pro potřeby a funkce a biochemické cesty, v nichž se tyto živiny uplatňují. Tyto důkazy byly testovány a validovány a staly se „učebnicovými" důkazy, které lze nalézt v obecně uznávaných knihách a publikacích. Tak tomu však není se všemi ostatními látkami, u nichž výzkum dosud nedospěl k jednoznačným důkazům, jako je tomu u vitamínů a minerálů. Provádí se vědecká posouzení jednotlivých případů, na jejichž základě se stanoví, zda je vědecký důkaz všeobecně uznáván.

Komise při rozhodování o tom, která tvrzení jsou způsobilá k uvedení v seznamu povolených zdravotních tvrzení, vychází především z vědeckého zdůvodnění, a poté přihlíží k veškerým dalším opodstatněným faktorům. Uváděné tvrzení týkající se brusinek nebylo dostatečně podloženo.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:CS:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001933/12
to the Commission
Jan Březina (PPE)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: Health claims made concerning food products

EFSA has finalised its evaluations of the 4 637 Article 13.1 claims, with the exception of botanicals. Analysis of its opinions reveals a massive difference between the number of favourable opinions granted, on the one hand, for claims for vitamins and minerals, and, on the other, that concerning substances other than vitamins and minerals (Other Substances). Almost all claims for Other Substances (97 %) have been rejected, while most claims for vitamins and minerals have been approved.

Evidence from reference textbooks has been deemed sufficient supporting evidence for vitamin and mineral claims, but not for Other Substances. Instead, for Other Substances EFSA is requiring pharmaceutical-style studies, which are often impossible or extremely costly to provide. In addition, evidence based on patient studies has been accepted for vitamins and minerals, such as Vitamin C, but not for Other Substances.

Besides, ESFA rejects a claim unless the claimed effect can be proved conclusively, as in the case of cranberry, although the terms of reference provided by the Commission to EFSA on Article 13.1 specifically state that the extent to which a cause-and-effect relationship is demonstrated for a claim should be considered. Cranberry is widely advocated by clinicians for women, to reduce the risk of urinary tract infection, and has received positive opinions from national assessment bodies.

Can the Commission explain why these two categories of substance have been treated differently?

Can the Commission justify its proposed decision that all claims for cranberry will be prohibited from the middle of this year?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 ([1]) on nutrition and health claims made on foods requires use of all health claims which are not authorised on the list of permitted health claims to be prohibited. The legislators decided that scientific substantiation should be the main aspect to be taken into account for the use of nutrition and health claims and that this should be based on generally accepted scientific evidence. Claims which cannot be substantiated by generally accepted scientific evidence cannot be authorised.

Nutrients like proteins, fatty acids, vitamins and minerals have been extensively studied; there is what the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) considers as generally accepted scientific evidence for needs and functions and biochemical pathways in which these nutrients participate. This evidence has been tested and validated and has become 'textbook' evidence, found in the generally accepted books and publications. This is not the case with all 'other substances', where the research has not established the clear evidential base that is there for vitamins and minerals. It is a scientific judgment done on a case-by-case basis to see whether the scientific evidence is generally accepted.

The Commission bases its decision on which claims are eligible for the permitted list of health claims, first on the basis of the scientific substantiation and then taking account of any other legitimate factors. The claims on cranberry referred to have not been substantiated.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:404:0009:0025:EN:PDF.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001934/12
à la Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 février 2012)

Objet: Nomenclature douanière des soies imprimées

Selon les règles actuelles, et notamment les dispositions du protocole n° 4 du 21 septembre 2006 relatif à la notion de «produits originaires» ([1]), les tissus en provenance de pays tiers qui auraient subi un traitement de façon à les rendre «unis ou teints» ne peuvent donner le statut d'origine européenne, du seul fait que le protocole, dans la position SH 5208 à 5212, ne stipule pas le terme «unis ou teints» mais uniquement le terme «impression».

Cependant, selon les dispositions d'application du Code des douanes communautaire, et plus précisément son l'annexe 10, l'opération de teinture confère l'origine «non préférentielle» aux tissus.

La Commission pourrait-elle expliquer la logique de ces règles douanières divergentes qui conduisent à une insécurité juridique, notamment pour les PME?

Si la Commission reconnaît l'existence d'une incohérence entre les différentes dispositions communautaires, comment entend-elle remédier à ce problème?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(11 avril 2012)

Le protocole n° 4 auquel l'Honorable Parlementaire fait référence est sans doute le protocole relatif à la définition de la notion de «produits originaires» et aux méthodes de coopération administrative figurant dans l'accord d'association euro-méditerranéen entre l'Union européenne et la Tunisie. Il s'agit d'un accord préférentiel définissant l'ouvraison ou la transformation qui est suffisante pour permettre aux marchandises de devenir originaires du territoire d'un partenaire et de bénéficier d'un traitement tarifaire préférentiel lors de l'importation de la marchandise sur le territoire de l'autre partenaire ([2]).

L'annexe 10 des dispositions d'application du code des douanes communautaire ([3]) fixe les règles relatives à la détermination de l'origine non préférentielle qui reposent sur le principe de «dernière transformation substantielle», défini à l'article 24 du code des douanes communautaire ([4]). Les règles d'origine non préférentielle sont utilisées pour appliquer des mesures de politique commerciale, telles que les mesures antidumping et compensatoires, les mesures de sauvegarde, les restrictions quantitatives, ainsi que pour la réglementation relative au marquage de l'origine, pour les marchés publics et les statistiques commerciales.

En raison de la différence de finalité des règles d'origine préférentielle et non préférentielle, les règles ne sont pas nécessairement identiques. En outre, les règles figurant dans les accords préférentiels sont le résultat de négociations entre les parties, tandis que les règles d'origine non préférentielle sont établies de façon autonome par l'UE. La disparité des règles résulte donc des objectifs et de la nature des règles d'origine préférentielle et non préférentielle. Il ne peut pas être considéré qu'elles conduisent à une insécurité juridique, puisqu'elles sont clairement définies et établies dans des instruments juridiquement contraignants.

([1]) JO L 260 du 21.9.2006, p. 3.
([2]) En ce qui concerne la question particulière évoquée par l'Honorable Parlementaire pour les soies imprimées», il y a lieu de signaler que ces marchandises ne sont pas classées dans les positions 5208 à 5212 du SH (positions concernant les produits textiles de coton), mais dans le chapitre 50.
([3]) Règlement (CEE) n° 2454/93.
([4]) Règlement (CEE) n° 2913/92.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001934/12
to the Commission
Dominique Vlasto (PPE)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: Customs nomenclature for printed silk

According to current regulations, in particular the provisions of Protocol No 4 of 21 September 2006 on 'originating products' ([1]), fabrics from third countries which have been 'mixed or dyed' cannot be conferred EU originating status, for the sole reason that the protocol, in HS heading 5208 to 5212, does not specify the term 'mixed or dyed' but only the term 'printing'.

However, according to the implementing provisions of the Community Customs Code, more specifically Annex A0, the dyeing process confers 'non-preferential' origin to fabrics.

Could the Commission explain the reasoning behind these diverging customs regulations that lead to legal uncertainty, especially for SMEs?

If the Commission recognises the existence of a discrepancy between the different Community provisions, how does it intend to deal with this problem?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

With the reference to 'Protocol 4', it is assumed that the Honourable Member refers to the Protocol concerning the definition of the concept of 'originating products' and methods of administrative cooperation included in the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the EU and Tunisia. This is a preferential agreement, defining working or processing that is sufficient for goods to become originating in the territory of a partner and to benefit from preferential tariff treatment at importation of the goods into the territory of the other partner ([2]).

Annex A0 to the implementing provisions of the Community Customs Code ([3]) contains rules for the determination of non-preferential origin, based on the principle of 'last substantial transformation' as laid down in Article 24 of the Community Customs Code ([4]). Non-preferential rules of origin are applied for the implementation of trade policy measures, such as anti-dumping and countervailing measures, safeguards, quantitative restrictions, and also for origin marking requirements, public procurement and trade statistics.

As a result of the difference in purpose of preferential and non-preferential rules of origin, the rules are not necessarily identical. In addition, the rules included in preferential agreements are the result of negotiations between the parties, while the non-preferential rules of origin are established autonomously by the EU. The differences in the rules are therefore the result of the objectives and nature of the preferential and non-preferential rules of origin. It cannot be said that they lead to legal uncertainty, as they are clearly defined and laid down in legally binding instruments.

([1]) OJ L 260, 21.9.2006, p. 3.
([2]) As to the specific question evoked by the Honourable Member for 'printed silk', it has to be pointed out that these goods are not classified in HS headings 5208 to 5212 (headings for cotton textile products), but in Chapter 50.
([3]) Regulation (EEC) No 2454/93.
([4]) Regulation (EEC) No 2913/92.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001935/12
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: EU-China Summit

The EEAS communiqué issued following the 14th EU-China Summit (14 February 2012) makes no mention at all in its 31 paragraphs of any agreement between the EU and China regarding the much-vaunted Chinese support for the EU and China's possible assistance in tackling the eurozone crisis.

Can the Commission provide information on the substance of any agreements, provisional or substantive, that exist between the EU and China regarding the eurozone crisis?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

During the EU-China Summit, the Chinese leadership delivered a unified message of confidence in the EU integration process and in the euro area.

The global economic outlook and the economic situation in the European Union and the euro area were discussed at length. China reaffirmed its support and readiness to engage in the stabilisation of the euro area. This commitment was welcomed by the EU. However, no formal agreement was foreseen in this regard.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001936/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: Horizon 2020

What market testing has the Commission carried out with micro-SMEs in relation to the simplification of Horizon 2020?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission proposal for Horizon 2020 was preceded by broad stakeholder consultations involving all types of potential participants, including micro-SMEs. The Green Paper consultation triggered more than 2000 contributions and position papers on a wide range of questions, among which was the attractiveness and accessibility of EU research and innovation funding and the specific place and role of SMEs in the future programme. Moreover, 3 900 respondents participated in the online survey on administrative costs of Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) beneficiaries. These consultations were open and allowed to receive input from the widest range of contributors, including from representatives of micro-SMEs.

Horizon 2020 provides for a set of measures that are clearly favourable to SMEs, including the smallest ones. These measures include a reimbursement rate of up to 100 % for direct research costs, the possibility to charge a flat rate for SME owner-managers without a salary (particularly useful for micro-SMEs) and the abolition of *ex-ante* financial capacity checks for the vast majority of participants. Moreover, a completely new funding instrument for SMEs in Horizon 2020 will provide funding opportunities for individual SMEs, without the need for forming a consortium, reducing thus the entrance hurdle for participation. The SME instrument consists of three different, but seamlessly connected support parts covering the whole innovation cycle of a company. This includes the funding of small projects in the concept and feasibility phase, support to R & D, but notably demonstration and market replication activities as well as links to financial instruments so as to boost commercialisation of innovative solutions.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001937/12
alla Commissione
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(17 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Le agenzie esecutive

Le agenzie esecutive stanno raggiungendo degli obiettivi importanti e stanno dimostrando di essere un nuovo modello di amministrazione pubblica europea molto operativo ed efficiente, capace di raggiungere i risultati prefissati e soprattutto con spese amministrative e costi per il bilancio dell'UE ridotti rispetto alla Commissione. Tuttavia, il personale che vi lavora è composto all'incirca dal 70 % di agenti contrattuali e dal 30 % di agenti temporanei con condizioni salariali e prospettive di carriera molto inferiori rispetto a quelle dei funzionari statutari della Commissione, nonostante varie sentenze della Corte di giustizia dell'UE si siano espresse contro tale discriminazione e disparità di trattamento salariale e di carriera.

Nello specifico, gli agenti contrattuali di tipo 3 a) (presso le agenzie) dovrebbero essere equiparati da un punto di vista di grado e condizioni salariali, e con effetto retroattivo per sanare tale discriminazione, agli agenti contrattuali 3 b) della Commissione. A parità di funzioni dovrebbe corrispondere infatti parità di trattamento. Tra le varie differenze, a livello di contratto 3 a) usato dalle agenzie non è riconosciuta l'entrata in funzione con il grado 15 ma solo 13-14 e 16 (nonostante l'assunto abbia gli anni di esperienza richiesti per essere assunto con il grado 15), il che rappresenta un vero e proprio «salary cap» dissimulato (inserito nelle norme di applicazione dello statuto del personale) che costituisce «de facto» una discriminazione grave.

— Come giustifica la Commissione questa discriminazione? S'impegna a eliminarla con urgenza con effetto retroattivo nell'ambito delle negoziazioni in corso sullo statuto e s'impegna a compensare gli agenti che hanno subito tali pregiudizi al momento dell'assunzione?

— Quali altre proposte per le agenzie esecutive la Commissione intende portare avanti nell'ambito della riforma dello statuto? Sarà consentita la mobilità interna degli agenti delle agenzie esecutive verso altre agenzie (sia esecutive che «di regolamentazione»), verso la Commissione e verso altre istituzioni ed organi, comprese le delegazioni dell'UE? Ciò s'impone per consentire un adeguato sviluppo professionale e quella necessaria mobilità interistituzionale che possa motivare l'agente nel proprio percorso professionale e garantire lo scambio di esperienze.

— Sarà consentito agli agenti contrattuali e temporanei delle agenzie di beneficiare di un efficace sistema di «certificazione/attestazione» e di concorsi interni per poter passare da un gruppo di funzioni ad uno più elevato e per passare dallo status di agente contrattuale a quello di agente temporaneo?

— L'attuale sistema prevede tempi lunghissimi ed è fortemente demotivante; agli agenti contrattuali e temporanei delle agenzie saranno aperti anche i concorsi interni previsti dal testo della proposta dello statuto per gli agenti contrattuali 3 b) della Commissione?

Risposta data da Maroš Šefčovič a nome della Commissione
(17 aprile 2012)

Per quanto riguarda il primo e il secondo trattino: non vi è discriminazione tra la Commissione e le agenzie esecutive, dal momento che anche la Commissione impiega agenti contrattuali di cui all'articolo 3 *bis* in uffici, delegazioni e rappresentanze.

Il regime applicabile agli altri agenti delle Comunità vieta il ricorso a personale contrattuale per mansioni ausiliarie (di cui all'articolo 3 *ter*) qualora sia di applicazione l'articolo 3 *bis* (cfr. l'articolo 3 *ter*, ultimo comma). Le differenze tra le regole in materia di inquadramento che si applicano agli agenti contrattuali di cui all'articolo 3 *bis* e a quelli di cui all'articolo 3 *ter* derivano dalle diverse basi giuridiche di queste due tipologie di agenti contrattuali. L'inquadramento iniziale degli agenti contrattuali di cui all'articolo 3 *bis* è più basso rispetto a quello degli agenti di cui all'articolo 3 *ter*, perché questi ultimi sono assunti per un periodo massimo di tre anni, diversamente da quanto accade agli agenti di cui all'articolo 3 *bis* per i quali esistono prospettive di carriera. Inoltre, un'occupazione di breve durata dovrebbe, in linea di principio, ricevere una retribuzione più elevata. Attualmente la Commissione non intende modificare tale approccio.

La questione della mobilità degli agenti contrattuali tra le agenzie/le istituzioni dell'Unione e altri organismi dell'UE è trattata principalmente mediante disposizioni generali di esecuzione e solo limitatamente nel regime applicabile agli altri agenti delle Comunità. La Commissione ha di recente modificato le proprie disposizioni generali di esecuzione in materia di assunzione e impiego del personale contrattuale, tra l'altro in vista di facilitarne la mobilità ([1]).

Per quanto riguarda il terzo trattino: no.

Per quanto riguarda il quarto trattino: no. La proposta legislativa di modifica dello Statuto dei funzionari e del regime applicabile agli altri agenti prevede, all'articolo 29, la possibilità di «organizzare un concorso interno all'istituzione» aperto anche agli agenti contrattuali di cui agli articoli 3 *bis* e 3 *ter*. Le agenzie sono considerate entità giuridiche separate ed eventuali concorsi interni (come il nome stesso rivela) sarebbero limitati all'istituzione che li organizza.

([1]) Ad esempio, ai sensi dell'articolo 9 della decisione della Commissione del 2.3.2011, si considera che il personale contrattuale al servizio di un'altra istituzione/agenzia, che viene assunto dalla Commissione mediante un nuovo contratto in qualità di agente contrattuale nel medesimo gruppo di funzioni, senza interruzione o con un'interruzione pari o inferiore a sei mesi, abbia in linea di principio già soddisfatto i criteri della procedura di selezione e/o sia sollevato dall'obbligo di effettuare il periodo di prova. Inoltre, se il contratto con l'altra istituzione/agenzia è a durata indeterminata, anche la Commissione sarà tenuta ad assumere l'agente a tempo indeterminato e a mantenerne l'inquadramento, nonché lo scaglione e l'anzianità all'interno dello stesso.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001937/12
to the Commission
Alfredo Antoniozzi (PPE)
(17 February 2012)

Subject: Executive agencies

Executive agencies are achieving important objectives and are showing themselves to be a new European public administrative model that is functioning well and very effectively. They are capable of achieving the desired results, and what is more, with lower administrative expenditure and costs to the EU budget than the Commission. However, their personnel is composed of around 70% contract staff and 30% temporary staff with far lower salaries and career prospects than those of officials at the Commission, despite the EU Court of Justice having ruled in various judgments against this discrimination and disparity in salary and career prospects.

Specifically, in order to correct this discrimination, contract staff in the category '3a' at the agencies should be treated in the same manner, as regards their grade and salary conditions, and with retroactive effect, as Commission contract staff in category '3b'. Equality of function must correspond in reality to equality of treatment. Among the various differences, for Category ca, used by the agencies, entry into service is not recognised at grade 15, but only at grades 13-14 and 16 (despite the fact that the person being employed has the required number of years of experience to be hired at grade 15). This represents a real hidden 'salary cap' (included in the Implementing Rules for the Staff Regulations) which constitutes a serious *de facto* discrimination.

— How does the Commission justify this discrimination? Will it commit itself to eliminating this as a matter of urgency and with retroactive effect in the negotiations currently underway on the Staff Regulations, and will it commit itself to compensating employees who were discriminated against in this manner when they were first employed?

— What other proposals for executive agencies does the Commission intend to put forward in the reform of the Staff Regulations? Will it permit internal mobility allowing executive agency staff to transfer to other agencies (both executive and 'regulatory' agencies), to the Commission and to other institutions and bodies, including EU delegations? This is necessary to allow suitable professional development and the interinstitutional mobility needed to motivate employees within the sphere of their own careers and to ensure the exchange of experience.

— Will it permit contract and temporary staff at the agencies to benefit from an effective system of 'certification/attestation' and from internal competitions so they are able to move from one function group to a higher one and from the status of contract staff to that of temporary staff?

— The current system entails very long waiting periods, and is very demotivating. Will the internal competitions envisaged in the text of the draft Staff Regulations for the Commission's Category cb contract staff be opened up to contract and temporary staff at the agencies?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

1st and 2nd indents: There is no discrimination between the Commission and the executive agencies The Commission also uses contract agents referred to in Article 3a in offices, delegations and representations.

The Conditions of Employment of Other Servants (CEOS) prohibit the use of contract staff for auxiliary tasks (referred to in Article 3b) where Article 3a applies (see Article 3b *in fine*). The difference between grading rules applicable to contract agents 3a and 3b is linked to the difference stemming from the legal bases of these two kinds of contracts agents. The initial grading of contract agents 3a is lower in comparison to 3b because the latter are hired for a maximum period of three years unlike contract agents 3a that have career perspectives. In addition, short term employment should in principle be remunerated higher. At present, the Commission does not intend to modify this approach.

The question of mobility of contract agents between the agencies/EU institutions and other EU bodies is mostly treated in the general implementing rules and only to a limited extent in CEOS. The Commission recently modified its general implementing provisions on engagement and use of contract staff, *inter alia* with a view to facilitate mobility of contract staff ([1]).

([1]) For instance pursuant to Article 9 of the Commission decision of 2.3.2011 contract staff who were under contract to another institution/agency and who are engaged by the Commission under a new contract as a member of the contract staff in the same function group without interruption

3rd indent: No.

4th indent: No. The legislative proposal amending the SR/CEOS provide in Article 29 a possibility 'to hold a competition internal to the institution' also open to contract staff 3a and 3b. The agencies are considered as separate legal entities and internal competitions (as their name already indicates) would be internal to the institution that holds the competition.

---

or with an interruption of six months or less have in principle their selection procedure considered as passed and/or probation period obligation waived. In addition, if the contract with the other institution/agency was for an indefinite duration, the Commission shall also engage the agent for an indefinite duration and the contract staff member shall keep the grade and step and seniority within the grade.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001938/12
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(20. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Staatsbeihilfen für die Fluggesellschaft „Cirrus Air"

Am 23. Januar 2012 beantragte die Fluggesellschaft „Cirrus Air" beim Amtsgericht Saarbrücken Insolvenz. Damit wurde auch der Betrieb am Flughafen Hof-Plauen eingestellt, obwohl laut der Stadt Hof allein im Jahr 2011 Subventionen von 3,6 Mio. EUR in den Linienflugbetrieb von „Cirrus Air" zwischen diesem Standort und dem Flughafen Frankfurt/Main geflossen sind. Bei 8 000 Fluggästen auf dieser Verbindung im Jahr 2011 bedeutet dies eine Subvention von 450 EUR je Fluggast, obwohl Tickets teilweise ab 106 EUR pro Fluggast angeboten wurden.

Vor diesem Hintergrund frage ich die Kommission mit ausdrücklicher Bitte um separate Beantwortung der einzelnen Fragen:

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission die laut dem Hofer Bürgermeister jährlich geleisteten Subventionen vor dem Hintergrund der EU-Regeln für Staatsbeihilfen?

2. Ist es nach Auffassung der Kommission zulässig, Subventionen zu zahlen, die den von Endkunden gezahlten Ticketpreis um das Vierfache übersteigen?

3. Wie bewertet die Kommission die gezahlten öffentlichen Beihilfen vor dem Hintergrund des intermodalen Wettbewerbs auf der von „Cirrus Air" angebotenen Strecke Hof-Frankfurt/Main?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(20. April 2012)

Die Kommission nimmt wie folgt zu den Fragen des Herrn Abgeordneten separat Stellung:

1. Den der Kommission vorliegenden Informationen zufolge betrieb Cirrus Airline eine Flugstrecke zwischen Hof-Plauen und Frankfurt/Main, um die Region an den Flughafen Frankfurt/Main anzubinden. Für den Betrieb der Strecke wurde Cirrus Air auf der Grundlage von Artikel 16 Absatz 4 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1008/2008 ([1]) mit der Erfüllung einer gemeinwirtschaftlichen Verpflichtung betraut. Die Betrauung erfolgte im Anschluss an eine Ausschreibung, mit der sichergestellt wurde, dass geringstmögliche Kosten für die Allgemeinheit entstehen (und die Betrauung somit im Grundsatz beihilfefrei ist) ([2]). Der Kommission ist nichts bekannt, was auf eine unrechtmäßige Betrauung mit der gemeinwirtschaftlichen Verpflichtung durch Deutschland hindeuten würde ([3]).

2. Was die Höhe des Ausgleichs angeht, sind die Mitgliedstaaten nach Artikel 16 Absatz 3 Buchstabe a der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1008/2008 verpflichtet, die Verhältnismäßigkeit der beabsichtigten Verpflichtungen bezüglich der Bedürfnisse der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung des betroffenen Gebiets zu beurteilen.

3. Nach Artikel 16 Absatz 3 Buchstabe b der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1008/2008 sind die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, bei der Beurteilung der Notwendigkeit und Angemessenheit beabsichtigter gemeinwirtschaftlicher Verpflichtungen zu berücksichtigen, ob auf andere Verkehrsträger zurückgegriffen werden kann und inwieweit diese Verkehrsträger den betreffenden Beförderungsbedarf decken können, insbesondere wenn bestehende Schienenverkehrsdienste die betreffende Strecke mit einer Reisezeit unter drei Stunden und mit ausreichenden Frequenzen und Verbindungen sowie mit angemessenen zeitlichen Abstimmungen bedienen. Die Kommission weist ferner darauf hin, dass die Reisezeit mit dem Zug von Hof Hauptbahnhof bis Frankfurt/Main zwischen vier und fünf Stunden beträgt.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1008/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. September 2008 über gemeinsame Vorschriften für die Durchführung von Luftverkehrsdiensten in der Gemeinschaft (ABl. L 293 vom 31.10.2008, S. 3).

([2]) Nähere Angaben sind auf der Website der GD MOVE unter folgendem Link zu finden: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/internal_market/doc/ 2009_12_pso-eu_and_eea.pdf.

([3]) Siehe z. B. die Ausschreibung der gemeinwirtschaftlichen Verpflichtung im Amtsblatt C 10 vom 14.1.2011, S. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001938/12
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: State aid for the airline Cirrus Air

On 23 January 2012 the airline Cirrus Air petitioned the District Court of Saarbrücken for insolvency. This brought an end to operations at Hof-Plauen Airport, despite the fact that the municipal authorities of Hof reportedly ploughed subsidies of EUR 3.6 million into the Cirrus Air route between Hof and Frankfurt/Main in 2011 alone. Given that 8 000 passengers used this route in 2011, this represents a subsidy of EUR 450 per passenger, even though tickets were sold at prices starting from EUR 106.

With this in mind, I would like to ask the Commission the following questions, with a specific request that they should be answered separately:

1. In the light of the EU directives on state aid, what view does the Commission take of the subsidies which the Mayor of Hof claims have been paid each year?

2. Does the Commission regard it as permissible that subsidies should be paid which are four times more than the face value of tickets sold to passengers?

3. Against the background of the intermodal competition on the Hof-Frankfurt/Main route provided by Cirrus Air, what view does the Commission take of the state aid paid out?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 April 2012)

In reply to the Honourable Member's specific questions:

1. According to the Commission's knowledge, Cirrus Airline operated a route between Hof Plauen and Frankfurt/Main to connect the region with the Frankfurt/Main airport. For the operation of this route, Cirrus Air was awarded a public service obligation, based on Article 16(4) of Regulation 1008/2008 ([1]) following a tender procedure capable to ensure the lowest cost for the community (and therefore in principle the absence of aid) ([2]). The Commission is not aware of any facts contradicting the correct granting of the public service obligation by the German authorities ([3]).

2. As regards the question concerning the amount of the compensation, according to Article 16(3) letter a) of Regulation 1008/2008 the Member States are required to assess the proportionality between the envisaged obligation and the economic development needs of the region concerned.

3. According to Article 16(3) letter b) of Regulation 1008/2008, the Member States are required to assess the necessity and the adequacy of an envisaged public service obligation in view of the possibility of having recourse to other modes of transport and the ability of such modes to meet the transport needs under consideration, in particular when existing rail services serve the envisaged route with a travel time of less than three hours and with sufficient frequencies, connections and suitable timings. Furthermore, the Commission observes that the travelling time between Hof Hauptbahnhof and Frankfurt Main is between four and five hours by train.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community, OJ L 293, 31.10.2008, p. 3.
([2]) For further details see in particular information published on DG MOVE's website: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air/internal_market/doc/2009_12_pso-eu_and_eea.pdf
([3]) See for example the publication of the public service obligation in OJ C 10, 14.1.2011, p. 3.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001939/12
alla Commissione
Vito Bonsignore (PPE)
(20 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Interrogazione sull'uso del bisfenolo A

Il bisfenolo A (BPA), composto organico con due gruppi di fenolo, viene generalmente utilizzato nelle lattine contenenti bevande o altri alimenti come zuppe pronte o conserve di pomodoro. Tale sostanza viene impiegata per prevenire la corrosione e rendere il metallo resistente alle alte temperature applicate nelle fasi di sterilizzazione.

L'università di Harvard ha condotto uno studio per rilevare l'effettiva quantità di BPA rilasciato nel contenuto della lattina e poi assorbito dall'organismo. Lo studio ha coinvolto 75 volontari che hanno condotto una dieta a base di minestre pronte, il cui imballaggio era una lattina contenente BPA.

Dopo l'assunzione di cinque porzioni di zuppa in scatola, si è rilevato un deciso aumento di concentrazione di BPA nelle urine (da 2 microgrammi per litro a 20 microgrammi), con una crescita percentuale dell'1,221 %.

Secondo gli esperti dello studio, si tratta di un incremento temporaneo, destinato a scomparire dopo pochi giorni, ma dei dubbi restano. Ad esempio, non si sa quanto e se l'incremento di BPA abbia effetti sulla salute; inoltre, il rilascio di BPA nell'organismo potrebbe essere considerevolmente maggiore se durante la giornata si assumessero più alimenti o bevande contenuti in imballaggi con BPA.

Intanto, dalla scorsa primavera il BPA non viene più utilizzato nei biberon venduti nell'Unione, anche se è ancora largamente consentito in altri prodotti come resine e plastiche, impiegati per gli imballaggi o per le stoviglie.

Alla luce di tali considerazioni, può la Commissione far sapere

1. se intende avviare analisi più dettagliate per accertare l'eventuale pericolosità del BPA sull'organismo umano?

2. qualora fossero confermati tali dati, quali azioni intende intraprendere al fine di vietare l'uso di lattine o imballaggi contenenti BPA o altre sostanze chimiche dannose?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-010732/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001939/12
to the Commission
Vito Bonsignore (PPE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Question on the use of bisphenol A

Bisphenol A (BPA), an organic compound with two phenol groups, is generally used in cans containing drinks or other foods such as ready-made soups or tinned tomatoes. The substance is used to prevent corrosion and renders the metal resistant to the temperatures applied during the sterilisation phase.

The University of Harvard conducted a study to establish the effective quantity of BPA released into the contents of the can and then absorbed by the body. The study involved 75 volunteers who followed a diet based on ready-made soups that come in cans containing BPA.

After consuming five portions of canned soup, there was a clear increase in the concentration of BPA in urine (from 2 mg per litre to 20 mg) — a rise of 1.221 %.

According to the study experts, the increase is temporary and disappears after a few days, but doubts still remain. For instance, it is not known whether the increase in BPA affects health and to what extent; furthermore, the release of BPA into the body could be considerably greater if several different types of food or drink contained in BPA packaging are consumed on the same day.

Since last spring, BPA is no longer used in babies' bottles sold in the EU, although it is still widely permitted in other products such as resins and plastics used in packaging and crockery.

In light of these considerations, could the Commission state:

1. whether it intends to carry out a more detailed analysis to ascertain the potential dangers of BPA for humans?

2. if this data is confirmed, what action does it intend to take in order to prohibit the use of cans or packaging containing BPA or other harmful chemical substances?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-010732/2011 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-001940/12
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(20 februarie 2012)

Subiect: VP/HR — Promovarea drepturilor omului pentru cetățenii din zonele afectate de conflictele înghețate

Având în vedere tratatele fondatoare și principiile care se află la baza politicii externe a Uniunii, care sunt acțiunile și măsurile specifice ale Vice-Președintelui / Înaltului Reprezentant pentru apărarea și promovarea drepturilor fundamentale ale persoanelor din zonele afectate de „conflictele înghețate" din vecinătatea UE?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton în numele Comisiei
(31 mai 2012)

UE abordează cu regularitate situația drepturilor omului în Transnistria cu autoritățile din Republica Moldova, precum și cu cele din Rusia și cu autoritățile de facto din Transnistria. În mai multe ocazii, Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele a condamnat public anumite încălcări ale drepturilor omului în Transnistria, de exemplu, reținerea și judecare lui E. Vardanean și a lui I. Kazak. Dialogul bilateral privind drepturile omului dintre UE și Republica Moldova a generat numeroase rezultate tangibile, cum ar fi decizia de a include promovarea drepturilor omului în Planul de acțiune național privind drepturile omului din Transnistria, precum și un angajament pe termen mai lung de a revizui rezervele teritoriale la diverse instrumente internaționale referitoare la drepturile omului. În colaborare cu PNUD, UE sprijină organizațiile societății civile de pe ambele maluri ale râului Nistru în contextul măsurilor de consolidare a încrederii.

În ceea ce privește regiunile separatiste din Abhazia și Oseția de Sud, pe lângă participarea la așa-numitele convorbiri de la Geneva, UE finanțează proiecte de dezvoltare în Abhazia, proiectele de consolidare a încrederii (inclusiv acțiuni axate pe drepturile omului) ai căror beneficiari pot proveni din Oseția de Sud și Abhazia, și programe de sprijin bugetar în favoarea persoanelor strămutate intern în Georgia.

În contextul conflictului din Nagorno-Karabah, UE a finalizat în 2011 proiectului „Sprijin pentru soluționarea pașnică a conflictului din Nagorno Karabakh", pus în aplicare de un consorțiu de ONG-uri, și se prevede lansarea unui proiect de monitorizare, probabil la sfârșitul anului 2012. Alte două proiecte finanțate în cadrul IEDDR vizează îmbunătățirea standardului de viață și oferirea mijloacelor de subzistență pentru persoanele strămutate în interiorul țării și îmbunătățirea accesului acestora la justiție. Reprezentantul Special al UE pentru Caucazul de Sud are întâlniri periodice cu reprezentanții societății civile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001940/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — The promotion of human rights for citizens in areas affected by frozen conflicts

Taking into consideration the founding Treaties and principles underlying the Union's foreign policy, what are the actions and specific measures of the Vice-President/High Representative for the defence and promotion of the fundamental human rights of people from areas affected by 'frozen conflicts' in the proximity of the EU?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(31 May 2012)

The EU regularly raises the human rights situation in Transnistria with the Moldovan authorities, as well as with Russia and the de facto Transnistrian authorities. On several occasions, the High Representative/Vice-President has publicly condemned specific human rights violations in Transnistria, e.g. the detention and trial of E. Vardanyan and I. Kazak. The bilateral human rights dialogue between the EU and the Republic of Moldova has yielded various tangible results, such as the decision to include the promotion of human rights in Transnistria in the national Human Rights Action Plan, as well as a longer-term commitment to review territorial reservations to various international human rights instruments. In cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the EU supports civil society organisations on both banks of the Dniester river in the context of confidence building measures.

As regards the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, apart from participation in the so-called Geneva Talks, the EU finances development projects in Abkhazia, confidence-building projects (including human rights-oriented actions) whose beneficiaries may come from South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and budget support programmes in favour of Internally Displaced People in Georgia.

In the context of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, the EU finalised in 2011 the project 'Support to the peaceful settlement of the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh', implemented by a consortium of NGOs, and a follow up project is being envisaged to start probably at the end of 2012. A couple of other projects financed under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) aim at improving lives, providing livelihoods to Internally Displaced Persons, and improving their access to justice. The European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus has regular meetings with representatives of civil society.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001955/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Standard chargers for mobile phones

Given that some mobile phone manufacturers are providing an adaptor for the new standardised chargers rather than having the required socket built into the handset, for example on the new Apple iPhone 4s, is the Commission satisfied that implementation of this measure has gone to plan?

Does the Commission have any plans to review this situation and introduce a requirement for these standardised chargers to be usable on all phones without an adaptor?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(23 March 2012)

The signatories of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) agreed to introduce a common charging solution for mobile phones based on the Micro-USB technology. It should be noted that the MoU also allows for the use of an adaptor between the common charger and some mobile phones not having a Micro-USB socket.

A first progress report provided by the MoU signatories has shown that 90 % of the new models placed on the market by the signatories during the 2nd half of 2011 offer the common charging capability. This is to be considered as a positive step as the MoU specifies that 'all new mobile phone models and new charger models on the market produced by the signatories shall offer this common charging capability one year after the related standards have become available'. This deadline corresponds to the beginning of 2012, as the relevant standards were published in December 2010.

The Commission will further closely monitor market developments during 2012, when all new mobile telephone models and new charger models should be compliant with the common charger specifications.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001957/12
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Capital investment for wind farm and diving support vessels

Can the Commission state whether there is EU funding or grant aid available in cases of capital investment which a company makes to build inshore wind farm and diving support vessels or large offshore specification diving support vessels or multipurpose vessels?

The proposed development would take place off the west coast of Ireland, and would contribute towards meeting Ireland's renewable energy goals.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

In the current Multiannual Financial Framework (2007-2013), EUR 785 million of cohesion policy funds are allocated for wind energy projects across the EU (onshore and offshore). The European Investment Bank (EIB) also offers loans and other financial services to support investment into wind farms as well as for integrating wind energy sources into electricity grids.

In addition, the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), jointly set up by the Commission and the EIB, and the Marguerite Fund offer finance for innovative wind energy projects.

The FP7 research activities also address new concepts for larger wind turbines (>10MW) and corresponding floating structures. Demonstration of cost-competitive floating structures was included as a topic in the FP7 Energy call 2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001959/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(20 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Irruzione delle autorità siriane in una chiesa clandestina a Shiraz

Il 10 febbraio 2012, l'agenzia di stampa Compass Direct News ha riferito dell'arresto, da parte delle autorità iraniane, di alcuni membri (tra i sei e i dieci) di una chiesa clandestina nella città di Shiraz. Le autorità iraniane sono solite trattenere coloro i quali rinnegano l'Islam, sottoponendoli a interrogatori ed esercitando pressioni su di essi, considerando i convertiti un elemento «occidentale» che minaccia il regime.

In passato, il governo era solito arrestare i cristiani nel periodo natalizio; tuttavia, vista l'enorme esposizione cui l'Iran è sottoposto nell'ambito della comunità internazionale, le autorità ora preferiscono procedere ad arresti di cristiani con maggior frequenza in un arco di tempo più lungo.

Nel dicembre 2011, è stato arrestato nella città di Ahwaz un gruppo di convertiti al Cristianesimo. Tre di essi si trovano tuttora in carcere, compreso un pastore che necessita di medicazioni per un intervento chirurgico a un occhio. La moglie è stata rilasciata dopo avere presentato come cauzione l'atto di cessione di una casa. I cristiani sono costretti a cedere le proprie case come cauzione, una pratica che, secondo le fonti, costituisce una tecnica di estorsione finalizzata a erodere le loro finanze e ad aumentare il controllo del governo sulla loro vita quotidiana. I principi della legge islamica della Sharia stabiliscono che chi rinnega l'Islam è «apostata», punibile quindi con la morte. Di rado i giudici condannano i cristiani a morte per avere abbandonato l'Islam, ma un cristiano, Yousef Nadarkhani, ha presentato appello contro una decisione in tal senso presso un tribunale della città di Rasht. Sfortunatamente, molti cristiani sono sottoposti a trattamenti molto duri, ma i loro casi spesso rimangono sconosciuti nel mondo esterno.

1. L'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza della persecuzione nei confronti delle chiese clandestine in Iran?

2. Il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ha sollevato presso le autorità iraniane la questione del trattamento riservato ai convertiti iraniani al Cristianesimo? In caso affermativo, con quale esito?

3. Il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sta adottando misure atte a seguire i casi di individui accusati di apostasia come Nadarkhani? Che sforzi sta compiendo per intervenire a loro favore?

4. Il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ritiene che la persecuzione anti-cristiana in Iran sia in aumento?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2012)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della difficile situazione delle minoranze religiose, tra cui i cristiani, nella Repubblica islamica dell'Iran. La Commissione ha esortato le autorità iraniane a rispettare gli obblighi internazionali in materia di diritti umani che la stessa Repubblica islamica dell'Iran ha sottoscritto, compreso dunque il rispetto della libertà di religione e di credo.

I cristiani e le altre minoranze religiose dell'Iran dovrebbero poter professare liberamente la loro religione senza doversi organizzare clandestinamente. Né dovrebbero essere arrestati, molestati o perseguiti a causa della loro religione e del loro credo.

Per quanto riguarda la situazione del pastore Nadarkhani, l'Unione europea ha esortato ripetutamente e tramite molteplici canali la Repubblica islamica dell'Iran a liberarlo immediatamente e ad annullare le sentenze contro di lui. Tale appello rimane valido.

In risposta al deteriorarsi della situazione dei diritti umani in Iran, compresa quella delle minoranze religiose, l'Unione europea ha adottato sanzioni contro 61 iraniani. L'elenco dei nominativi è costantemente riesaminato e verrà se del caso ampliato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001959/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Iranian authorities raid underground church in Shiraz

On 10 February 2012, the news agency Compass Direct News reported that the Iranian authorities had arrested between six and ten members of an underground church in the city of Shiraz. It is common for the authorities to detain, question and put pressure on converts from Islam, as they are viewed as a 'Western' element which threatens the regime.

In the past, the government would arrest Christians around Christmastime; however, given the enormous exposure that Iran has received in the international community, the authorities now choose to arrest smaller groups of Christians over longer time periods.

In December 2011 in the city of Ahwaz, a group of Christian converts were arrested, of whom three remain in prison, including a pastor who is in need of medication for eye surgery. His wife was released after submitting the deed of a house as bail. Christians are being forced to put their homes up as bail, a practice which sources say is an extortion tactic aimed at eroding their finances and increasing government control over their daily lives. The tenets of Islamic Sharia law stipulate that converts from Islam are 'apostates' and thus punishable by death. It remains rare for judges to sentence Christians to death for leaving Islam, but one Christian, Yousef Nadarkhani, is a appealing a decision with a court in the city of Rasht. Unfortunately many Christians are subject to harsh treatment, but their cases often remain unknown to the outside world.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the persecution of underground churches in Iran?

2. Has the Vice-President/High Representative raised the issue of the treatment of Iranian Christian converts with the Iranian authorities? If so, what were some of the outcomes?

3. Is the Vice-President/High Representative taking measures to follow the cases of individuals such as Nadarkhani who are facing charges of apostasy? What efforts is she making to intervene on their behalf?

4. Does the Vice-President/High Representative consider that anti-Christian persecution is on the rise in Iran?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2012)

The Commission is aware of the difficult situation for religious minorities, including Christians, in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Commission has called on the Iranian authorities to respect the international human rights oblligations that the Islamic Republic has itself signed up to, hence also the respect of freedom of religion and belief.

Christians and other religious minorites in Iran should be able to freely practice their religion and should not need to have to do so in underground facilities. Neither should they be arrested, harrassed or prosecuted for their religion and beliefs.

As for the situation regarding Pastor Nadarkhani, the European Union has called on the Islamic Republic of Iran through multiple channels and at several occasions to release him immediately and to repeal the sentences against him. This call still stands.

In reaction to the deterioration of the human rights situaiton in Iran, including that of religious minorities, the European Union has adopted sanctions against 61 named Iranians. The list of names is under constant review and will be extended as approprate.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001960/12
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(20 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: VP/HR — L'Alto Commissario delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti umani critica l'inazione dell'ONU in Siria

Il 13 febbraio 2012, il quotidiano del Regno Unito «*The Guardian*» ha riferito che l'Alto Commissario delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti umani Navi Pillay ha dichiarato che il mancato intervento dell'ONU ha incoraggiato il Presidente siriano Bashar al-Assad a proseguire nei propri tentativi di scatenare un'offensiva senza esclusione di colpi nei confronti dei suoi oppositori. Il Commissario ha dichiarato all'Assemblea generale dell'ONU a New York che il governo siriano ha «palesemente mancato» di tenere fede al proprio obbligo di proteggere la popolazione. Egli ha dichiarato inoltre che: «Quanto più la comunità internazionale si asterrà dall'intervenire, tanto più i civili saranno soggetti a innumerevoli atrocità», ammonendo inoltre che il tentativo di alimentare intenzionalmente le tensioni potrebbe far piombare la Siria in una guerra civile.

Il Commissario Pillay ha inoltre esortato il Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU a deferire la situazione alla Corte penale internazionale. Ciò, tuttavia, richiederebbe il sostegno delle potenze che detengono il diritto di veto, come la Cina e la Russia, il che è improbabile nel prossimo futuro. Il governo siriano ha respinto tutti gli appelli formulati dalla Lega araba in merito all'invio di esperti di mantenimento della pace per porre fine al conflitto mentre l'agenzia di stampa ufficiale Sana ha dichiarato che la proposta della Lega araba costituisce una «palese interferenza» negli affari interni della Siria.

L'Assemblea Generale dovrebbe esaminare una risoluzione non vincolante a sostegno di un piano della Lega araba finalizzato a far sì che Assad trasferisca i suoi poteri al suo Vicepresidente aprendo la strada alla creazione di un governo di unità nazionale.

Il 13 febbraio, il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ha rilasciato una dichiarazione in cui affermava: «Il primo obiettivo dell'Unione europea è un'immediata cessazione della violenza e dunque sostengo con forza ogni iniziativa che possa contribuire a raggiungere questo obiettivo, inclusa una più forte presenza araba sul territorio, in cooperazione con l'ONU, al fine di trovare una soluzione pacifica alla crisi siriana».

1. Qual è l'attuale posizione del Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante sulla crisi in Siria?

2. Attualmente, quali misure sta prendendo il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante per persuadere il governo russo e il governo cinese ad adottare misure atte a sostenere le proposte della Lega Araba per una missione congiunta araba-ONU di mantenimento della pace in Siria?

3. Può inoltre il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante fornire informazioni circa l'impatto delle attuali sanzioni e restrizioni sull'economia siriana e la capacità del governo di condurre operazioni di sicurezza?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2012)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è inorridita dalle brutali aggressioni e dalle diffuse violazioni dei diritti umani inflitte alla popolazione dal regime siriano, e lo ha sollecitato a porre immediatamente fine alle violenze, a ritirare le truppe dalle città e dai villaggi sotto assedio e a concedere libero accesso alle organizzazioni umanitarie in tutte le zone del paese.

Nei contatti ufficiali con i suoi omologhi russi e cinesi, l'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente ha esortato questi paesi a non schierarsi dalla parte sbagliata e ad assumersi le proprie responsabilità riguardo alla Siria. L'UE ha costantemente sollecitato l'ONU ad intervenire in maniera incisiva e pertanto accoglie favorevolmente la dichiarazione rilasciata il 21 marzo 2012 dal presidente del Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite a sostegno di Kofi Annan, inviato speciale dell'ONU e della Lega araba, e del suo piano in sei punti che prevede tra l'altro una missione di osservazione militare in Siria gestita dall'ONU. L'UE esorta tutti i membri del Consiglio di sicurezza a proseguire in questa direzione.

Per fare pressione sul regime siriano, dal maggio 2011 l'UE ha rafforzato per ben quattordici volte le misure restrittive. Tali misure sono concepite in modo da massimizzare l'impatto sul regime siriano e al contempo minimizzare gli eventuali effetti negativi sulla popolazione del paese. Il divieto UE sulle importazioni di petrolio dalla Siria sta già producendo risultati tangibili. Prima di tale divieto, l'UE assorbiva il 90 % del totale delle esportazioni di petrolio dalla Siria. Grazie alle sanzioni si registra una diminuzione della capacità produttiva del 40 %, con una riduzione significativa delle entrate a disposizione del regime per finanziare la sua brutale campagna.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001960/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — UN Human Rights Commissioner criticises UN inaction in Syria

On 13 February 2012, the UK's *Guardian* newspaper reported the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, as saying that the failure of the UN to take action has emboldened Syria's President, Bashar al-Assad, in his attempts to mount an all-out assault on his opponents. She told the UN General Assembly in New York that the Syrian government has 'manifestly failed' to fulfil its obligation to protect its population. She said: 'The longer the international community fails to take action, the more the civilian population will suffer from countless atrocities', and also warned that the deliberate attempt to stir tensions could plunge Syria into a civil war.

Pillay also encouraged the UN Security Council to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court. This, however, would require the support of veto-wielding powers such as China and Russia, which is unlikely to be the case soon. The Syrian government has rejected calls for the Arab League to deploy peacekeepers to end the conflict, and the official Sana news agency has said that the Arab League's proposal constitutes 'flagrant interference' in Syria's internal affairs.

The General Assembly is expected to consider a non-binding resolution which backs an Arab League plan calling for Assad to hand over power to his vice-president and pave the way for the creation of a unity government.

On 13 February, the Vice-President/High Representative released a statement in which she said: 'The EU's first goal is an immediate cessation of violence and therefore I am very supportive of any initiative that can help achieve this objective including a stronger Arab presence on the ground in cooperation with the UN to achieve a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis'.

1. What is the current position of the Vice-President/High Representative on the crisis in Syria?

2. At present, what measures is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to persuade the Russian and Chinese governments to take measures to support the Arab League's proposals for a joint Arab-UN peacekeeping mission in Syria?

3. Can the Vice-President/High Representative also provide information on the impact of the current sanctions and restrictions on the Syrian economy and the ability of the government to conduct security operations?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2012)

The HR/VP is appalled by the brutal attacks and widespread human rights abuses inflicted by the Syrian regime on its population. She has called on the regime to immediately end the violence, withdraw its troops from besieged towns and cities, and grant unimpeded humanitarian access to all areas of Syria.

In official contacts with her Russian and Chinese counterparts the HR/VP has conveyed the message that these countries should not stand on the wrong side of history and need to assume their responsibilities in relation to Syria. The EU has continuously pressed for strong UN action and therefore welcomes the UN Security Council's Presidential Statement of 21 March 2012, expressing full support to the UN-Arab League Envoy Kofi Annan and his six point plan, which provides among others for a UN led military observation mission in Syria. It encourages all members of the UNSC to continue working in this direction.

To increase pressure on the Syrian regime the EU has extended its restrictive measures 14 times since May 2011. These measures are designed to have maximum impact on the Syrian regime, while minimising any potential negative impact on the Syrian population. The EU ban on imports from the Syrian oil sector is already having a serious effect. Before the prohibition to import Syrian oil into the EU, the EU accounted for 90 % of Syria's total oil exports. The sanctions have reportedly led to a reduction in production capacity of 40 %, thus significantly reducing the revenue available to the regime for the financing of its brutal campaign.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-001963/12
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(20 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Marocchino incriminato per aver criticato la monarchia marocchina

Il 14 febbraio, la Associated Press ha riferito che un giovane studente marocchino, Abdelsamad Haydour, proveniente dalla città montana di Taza, a est della capitale Rabat, è stato condannato, secondo l'agenzia di stampa nazionale, per avere «violato i sacri valori» del regno e condannato a tre anni di prigione dopo avere postato online un video che lo ritraeva mentre criticava il re Mohammed VI. Nel video, oltre ad altre accuse, Haydour tacciava il monarca di essere un «dittatore».

Sin dall'inizio della Primavera araba, il Re Mohammed VI si è dimostrato tollerante nei confronti di varie proteste, ma la condanna di Haydour ha dimostrato che la libertà di espressione in Marocco è soggetta a limitazioni. Prima del 2011, il monarca era considerato sacro dalla costituzione; tuttavia, in base ad alcuni emendamenti approvati nel 2011, in seguito alla Primavera araba, la formulazione è stata cambiata. Il monarca è ora definito «inviolabile» e si afferma che «gli è dovuto rispetto». Un altro marocchino è stato incriminato il 7 febbraio per avere attentato ai «sacri valori», avendo postato su Facebook un cartone che si prendeva gioco del re.

La città di origine di Haydour, Taza, è stata recentemente teatro di scontri tra le forze di sicurezza e giovani disoccupati che protestavano, molti dei quali laureati. La crescita economica vissuta dal Marocco non ha contribuito a creare abbastanza posti di lavoro per i milioni di giovani che accedono al mondo del lavoro. La disoccupazione è pari ad almeno il 30 % nella fascia d'età al di sotto dei 34 anni.

In gennaio, il Commissario europeo per l'allargamento e la politica di vicinato, Štefan Füle, si è recato in visita a Rabat. Il Commissario ha affermato che la Commissione sostiene fermamente i tentativi di riforma in atto in Marocco. Füle ha dichiarato: «Esprimo la mia soddisfazione nel vedere che, neppure un anno dopo la mia ultima visita a Rabat, si sono verificati diversi importanti cambiamenti: una nuova costituzione è stata approvata con il referendum di luglio, si sono svolte elezioni libere ed eque e il nuovo governo sta ora portando avanti il programma di riforme». Füle ha proseguito: «È opportuno che l'entità del nostro sostegno e la maggiore cooperazione riflettano le necessità e le ambizioni dei nostri partner. Perché le riforme democratiche ed economiche progrediscano ulteriormente, l'UE fornirà maggiore assistenza».

1. Qual è la posizione della Commissione circa la recente condanna di Abdelsamad Haydour?

2. La Commissione è disposta a chiedere al governo marocchino di rivedere la propria decisione rispetto all'arresto del signor Haydour?

3. Può dichiarare se tale argomento è stato affrontato durante i colloqui del Commissario Füle con le autorità marocchine?

Risposta data da Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(10 maggio 2012)

L'UE è al corrente del caso di Abdelsamad Haydour, che seguirà attentamente con l'assistenza della sua delegazione a Rabat.

I diritti umani figurano tra i punti fondamentali del dialogo politico tra l'UE e il Marocco e vengono esaminati regolarmente nel corso delle riunioni degli organismi congiunti istituiti nel quadro dell'accordo di associazione. La Commissione ritiene che, nel complesso, il Marocco stia compiendo progressi per quanto concerne il rispetto dei principi in materia di diritti umani. La nuova costituzione prevede una serie di importanti misure riguardo ai diritti umani e alle libertà fondamentali, come ad esempio la creazione del Consiglio nazionale per i diritti umani. Occorrono tuttavia ulteriori miglioramenti, per esempio in materia di libertà di espressione. La Commissione auspica che il Marocco garantirà il pieno rispetto della libertà di espressione e di stampa quali sancite dalla nuova costituzione.

Durante la sua recente visita in Marocco, il commissario Füle ha ricordato alle nuove autorità l'importanza annessa dalla Commissione al proseguimento del processo di democratizzazione per rispondere alle aspirazioni dei cittadini e garantire una migliore tutela delle libertà fondamentali e dei diritti umani.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001963/12
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Moroccan charged for criticising Moroccan monarch

On 14 February, the Associated Press reported that a young Moroccan student, Abdelsamad Haydour, from the mountain town of Taza, east of the capital Rabat, was, according to the state news agency, convicted of 'violating the sacred values' of the kingdom and sentenced to three years in prison after a video posted online showed him criticising King Mohammad VI. Among the accusations levelled in the video was that of the monarch being a 'dictator'.

Since the start of the Arab Spring, King Mohammad VI has been willing to tolerate a number of protests, but the sentencing of Haydour has illustrated that there are limitations to freedom of expression in Morocco. Before 2011, the monarch was considered constitutionally sacred, but under amendments passed in 2011, as a result of the Arab Spring, the wording was changed. He is now described as 'inviolable' and it is stated that 'respect is due to him'. Another Moroccan was charged on 7 February for attacking 'sacred values' when he posted a cartoon on Facebook mocking the king.

Haydour's town of Taza has been a recent hotspot for clashes between security forces and protesting unemployed youths, many of whom are university graduates. The economic growth Morocco has seen has not helped to provide enough employment for the millions of young people entering the workforce. Unemployment is at least 30 % for those under the age of 34.

In January, the Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, visited Rabat. He stated that the Commission stands firmly behind Morocco's efforts to reform. He noted: 'I can express my satisfaction, that barely one year after my last visit to Rabat, several important changes occurred: a new constitution was approved in the July referendum, free and fair elections took place and now the new government is taking the reform agenda forward'. He continued, 'The extent of our support and increased cooperation should reflect the needs and ambitions of our partners. For more progress in democratic and economic reforms there will be more EU assistance'.

1. What is the Commission's position on the recent conviction of Abdelsamad Haydour?

2. Is the Commission prepared to ask the Moroccan Government to review its decision regarding Mr Haydour's imprisonment?

3. Can the Commission state whether this topic was covered during Commissioner Füle's discussions with the Moroccan authorities?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2012)

The EU is aware of the case of Abdelsamad Haydour and will follow it closely with the assistance of its Delegation in Rabat

Human rights are among core issues in the EU-Morocco political dialogue and are regularly addressed in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the Association Agreement. The Commission considers that overall Morocco is making progress in compliance with human rights principles. The new Constitution includes a number of important measures with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms, e.g. the creation of the National Council for Human Rights. Further improvements are however necessary. Freedom of expression should be improved. The Commission hopes that Morocco will ensure full respect for freedom of speech and the press as enshrined in the new Constitution.

During his recent visit to Morocco, Commissioner Füle reminded the new authorities of the importance that the Commission attaches to the continuation of the democratisation process in order to respond to people's aspirations and improve the protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001964/12
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Funding of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security programme

During a plenary debate on the future of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme, Commissioner Barnier, on behalf of Commissioner Tajani, seemed to suggest that as the funding of the future GMES project went beyond the timeframe of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), it therefore cannot be included in the EU budget. It will therefore need, in future, to be subject to intergovernmental funding via a financial model comparable to that of the European Development Fund.

1. Can the Commission clarify the status of large project funding from within the MFF?

2. Can long-term research-led projects, which will assist the EU collectively in its future growth and competitiveness, be funded directly by the EU budget even if they go beyond seven years?

3. Can the Commission elaborate on what funding model and what involvement, if any, of outside financing might be utilised for GMES specifically?

4. What other large long-term research-driven projects are likely to be subject to a change of funding from within the EU budget to alternative intergovernmental funded or privately funded vehicles?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

1. Three large-scale projects were identified in Commission communication COM(2011) 500, A budget for Europe 2020: Galileo, GMES and ITER.

Galileo was proposed to be funded within the MFF while GMES and ITER were proposed to be funded outside the MFF after 2013.

2. It is quite common to find projects that do not concur exactly with the seven years of the MFF. In the case of long-term research-led projects they can be funded directly by the EU budget within several MFFs but appropriations are only foreseen for one multiannual financial framework.

3. In its communication COM(2011) 831 on GMES and its operations (from 2014 onwards), the Commission suggested the setting up of a specific GMES fund with financial contributions from all 27 EU Member States based on their gross national income (GNI). The management of the fund will be delegated to the Commission. This will require an intergovernmental agreement between the EU Member States meeting within the Council. Management of the fund will be done under a set of financial rules to be adopted by the Council on the basis of a proposal from the Commission.

4. Out of the three large-scale projects identified in the COM(2011) 500, GMES and ITER are proposed to be funded outside the EU budget. The funding of ITER after 2013 was put forward in the Commission's proposal COM(2011) 931 for a Council decision as a 'Supplementary Research Programme' funded with contributions from Member States under the Euratom Treaty.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001965/12
to the Commission
Arlene McCarthy (S&D)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Reporting requirements for Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 on trade in seal products

According to Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 on trade in seal products, all Member States were required to submit their first report outlining the actions that they have taken to implement this legislation by 20 November 2011.

Could the Commission please indicate whether it has now received reports on the implementation of the aforementioned Regulation from all 27 EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

The Commission has received reports from 18 out of 27 EU Member States so far. In accordance with Article 7.2 of Regulation (EC) No 1007/2009 on trade in seal products ([1]), the Commission will reflect on its findings and report back to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the regulation by 20 November 2012.

([1]) OJ L 286, 31.10.2009.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001967/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(20. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Bekämpfung von Produktpiraterie — das ACTA-Abkommen

Zur Bekämpfung von Produktpiraterie im Internet bedarf es einer stärkeren internationalen Zusammenarbeit.

1. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass das ACTA-Abkommen das richtige Instrument hierfür ist?

2. Warum hat die Kommission Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments nicht stärker in die Verhandlungen zum ACTA-Abkommen eingebunden?

3. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass ACTA im Einklang mit dem bestehenden Recht der Europäischen Union steht?

4. Was sind die Anforderungen im Hinblick auf die Durchsetzung von Maßnahmen seitens der Kommission gegen Produktpiraterie?

Antwort von Karel De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(16. April 2012)

1. Das Handelsübereinkommen zur Bekämpfung von Produkt- und Markenpiraterie (ACTA) ist nur eines der Instrumente zur Bekämpfung der Produktpiraterie. Allerdings ist es die aktuellste Zusammenstellung internationaler Durchsetzungsnormen, die den meisten der wichtigen Welthandelsblöcke gemein sind. Zu diesen Blöcken gehören die EU ebenso wie die USA und Japan. ACTA beinhaltet Klarstellungen und Ergänzungen des Übereinkommens über handelsbezogene Aspekte der Rechte des geistigen Eigentums (TRIPS) und berücksichtigt auf diese Weise die Entwicklungen im Bereich der weltweiten Produkt- und Markenpiraterie seit der Annahme des Übereinkommens im Jahre 1994. Die Kommission setzt sich weiterhin für die Verwendung anderer Instrumente ein, wie technische Hilfe oder die Aushandlung von Vertragsklauseln zum geistigen Eigentum im Rahmen bilateraler Freihandelsabkommen, aber auch die multilateralen Erörterungen bei der Welthandelsorganisation und bei der Weltorganisation für geistiges Eigentum.

2. Die Kommission hat die Regeln des Vertrags von Lissabon über die Zusammenarbeit mit dem Parlament in vollem Umfang eingehalten. Eine umfassende Aufstellung der Interaktion von Kommission und Parlament während der ACTA-Verhandlungen kann die Frau Abgeordnete dem Factsheet zur Transparenz bei den Verhandlungen ([1]) entnehmen.

3. Ja, ACTA steht in allen Punkten im Einklang mit den einschlägigen EU-Rechtsvorschriften. Es sind keine Änderungen am bestehenden EU-Recht erforderlich. Im Rahmen ihrer Bemühungen um Rechtssicherheit in Bezug auf die Vereinbarkeit von ACTA mit den Europäischen Verträgen und Grundrechten, hat die Kommission entschieden, den Gerichtshof der Europäischen Union mit ACTA zu befassen. Das oberste europäische Gericht soll feststellen, ob ACTA — in welcher Weise auch immer — mit diesen Grundrechten und Grundfreiheiten unvereinbar ist.

4. ACTA bringt keine Änderungen an den bereits in der EU geltenden Durchsetzungsmaßnahmen mit sich. Dabei handelt es sich in erster Linie um die Durchsetzungsrichtlinie von 2004 und die Zollverordnung von 2003. ACTA wird jedoch die den EU-Rechteinhabern auf internationaler Ebene zu Verfügung stehenden Mittel stärken.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/february/tradoc_149103.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001967/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Combating counterfeiting — the ACTA tool

There is a need for greater international cooperation to combat counterfeiting on the Internet.

1. Does the Commission believe that ACTA is the right tool to achieve this?

2. Why has the Commission not involved Members of the European Parliament more closely in the negotiations on the ACTA deal?

3. Does the Commission believe that ACTA complies with the existing body of European Union law?

4. What are the requirements as regards the enforcement by the Commission of anti-counterfeiting measures?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

1. The Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) is one of the tools available to combat counterfeiting. It constitutes the most up to date set of international enforcement standards shared by most of the main world trading blocks, including the EU, the United States and Japan. It clarifies and complements the Agreement on trade related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) to take into account the evolution of the global piracy and counterfeiting practices since its adoption in 1994. The Commission remains committed to the use of other instruments, such as technical assistance, the negotiation of Intellectual Property (IP) clauses in bilateral free trade agreements and the multilateral discussions at the World Trade Organisation and the World Intellectual Property Organisation.

2. The Commission has fully respected the rules regarding cooperation with Parliament set in the Lisbon Treaty. For a detailed report of the interaction between the Commission and Parliament during the negotiation of ACTA, the Honourable Member is invited to refer to the Factsheet on transparency of the ACTA negotiations ([1]).

3. Yes. ACTA is fully in line with the relevant EU legislation and it does not require any changes to the EU *acquis*. As part of its efforts to provide legal certainty about the compliance of ACTA with the European Treaties and fundamental rights, the Commission decided to refer ACTA to the European Court of Justice to ask Europe's highest court to assess whether ACTA is incompatible — in any way — with such fundamental rights and freedoms.

4. ACTA will not change the enforcement instruments already existing in the EU. They are mainly the 2004 Enforcement Directive and the 2003 Customs Regulation. ACTA will reinforce the means available to EU rightholders at the international level.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/february/tradoc_149103.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-001968/12
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(20 février 2012)

Objet: Hépatite C: alerte sur le traitement du Laboratoire Merck

Le géant américain de l'industrie pharmaceutique Merck aurait dissimulé un dysfonctionnement grave dans son traitement de l'hépatite C, révèle aujourd'hui le journal *Libération*.

Le problème ne résulterait pas du médicament ViraferonPeg lui-même, mais du stylo-seringue permettant son injection.

L'alerte a été lancée en février 2011 par un professeur de médecine, Albert Tran, chef du service d'hématologie à l'hôpital l'Archet de Nice. À l'époque, il constate dans son service que le ViraferonPeg guérit deux fois moins de patients que le traitement concurrent, le Pegasys, fabriqué par Roche.

Conscient de ce problème de blocage, le laboratoire américain avait mis en place, dès 2006, un numéro vert pour informer les patients, mais ce sans résoudre le dysfonctionnement en question. Le taux de réclamation lié au blocage restait extraordinairement élevé, à tel point que l'Agence européenne des médicaments (EMA) analysait, chaque trimestre, le nombre d'accidents reportés. Cependant, elle n'a jamais demandé le retrait du produit car elle estimait que ce problème «ne soulevait pas d'inquiétude».

— La Commission peut-elle préciser pourquoi l'Agence européenne des médicaments n'a pas demandé le retrait du produit dès 2006? Peut-elle également indiquer si elle entend le faire à présent?

— Sinon, l'établissement d'un comité d'enquête chargé d'évaluer les risques liés aux dysfonctionnements des stylos injecteurs utilisés dans le traitement de l'hépatite C, est-il envisagé par la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Dalli au nom de la Commission
(3 avril 2012)

Au cours de la première année suivant le lancement, en 2002, du médicament ViraferonPeg et de son stylo-seringue, le titulaire de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché a ouvert une enquête à la suite de plaintes déposées concernant le dysfonctionnement de ce stylo. Dix rapports d'enquête ont été soumis à l'agence européenne des médicaments entre 2002 et 2005, et un nouveau stylo a été introduit.

En mai 2005, le comité de l'agence des médicaments à usage humain (CHMP) a constaté que, depuis l'introduction d'une nouvelle version du stylo et du programme de formation des patients et des professionnels de la santé, le nombre de plaintes a considérablement diminué. Le comité en a conclu qu'aucune autre mesure n'était nécessaire.

À la suite de plaintes dans deux États membres, le titulaire de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché, en 2007 et en 2010, a analysé ces plaintes et communiqué ses observations à l'agence. Le comité des médicaments à usage humain a conclu que les dysfonctionnements dénoncés dans les plaintes étaient liés à une mauvaise utilisation du stylo par les patients, et a reconnu que le programme de formation devrait être poursuivi et que le stylo actuel devrait être remplacé par une version améliorée au cours du troisième trimestre de l'année 2012.

En février 2012, à la suite d'un article publié dans un journal français révélant un éventuel dysfonctionnement du stylo-seringue du ViraferonPeg, le comité des médicaments à usage humain a demandé au titulaire de l'autorisation de mise sur le marché d'enquêter sur les causes de ce dysfonctionnement et de remédier aux conséquences éventuelles sur la sécurité des patients. Il s'agira également de revoir le processus de fabrication et d'analyser les plaintes introduites après le lancement du nouveau stylo en 2005.

Le comité des médicaments à usage humain examinera les conclusions de l'enquête au cours de sa réunion de mars.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001968/12
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Hepatitis C: alarm regarding Merck Laboratory treatment

The American pharmaceutical giant Merck, has been concealing a serious malfunction in its Hepatitis C treatment, the *Libération* newspaper revealed today.

The problem does not result from the ViraferonPeg medication itself but rather from the syringe pen used to inject it.

The alarm was raised in February 2011 by a professor of medicine, Albert Tran, head of the haematology unit at L'Archet Hospital in Nice. At the time, he noted in his unit that ViraferonPeg cured half as many patients as a competing treatment, Pegasys, manufactured by Roche.

Aware of this blockage problem, in 2006 the American laboratory set up a helpline to give patients information, but without resolving the malfunction in question. The rate of complaints linked to the blockage remained extraordinarily high, to the point where the European Medicines Agency (EMA) began to analyse the number of incidents reported per quarter. However, it never requested the withdrawal of the product as it believed that the problem 'did not raise concern'.

— Can the Commission specify why the European Medicines Agency did not request that the product be withdrawn in 2006? Can it also indicate if it intends to do so now?

— If not, does the Commission envisage the establishment of a committee of inquiry charged with evaluating the risks linked to the malfunctioning of the injector pens used in the treatment of Hepatitis C?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

During the first year after launch of the ViraferonPeg prefilled pens in 2002, complaints on non-functioning pens triggered an investigation by the marketing authorisation holder. Ten investigation reports were submitted to the European Medicines Agency between 2002 and 2005 and a new device was launched.

In May 2005, the Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) concluded that the introduction of a new version of the pen and educational programme for patients and medical professionals led to a significant decline in complaints. The CHMP concluded that no further action was required.

Following complaints in two Member States the marketing authorisation holder provided in 2007 and 2010 to the Agency an analysis of complaints. The CHMP concluded that the complaints were related to incorrect use of the device by patients and agreed that educational measures should be continued and the current pen be replaced with a further improved version in the third quarter of 2012.

In February 2012, further to a publication related to potential malfunction of ViraferonPeg pens in a French journal, the CHMP has requested the marketing authorisation holder to perform an evaluation of the malfunctioning of pens and to address the potential impact on patient safety. The response will include a review of the manufacturing process and post-marketing complaints after the launch of the new pen in 2005. The CHMP will discuss the responses during its March meeting.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001973/12
aan de Commissie
Emine Bozkurt (S&D)
(20 februari 2012)

Betreft: Vluchtelingen en het recht op gezinshereniging

Het recht op gezinsleven is in vele verdragen terug te vinden. Voor vluchtelingen geldt dit in het bijzonder. In de Gezinsherenigingrichtlijn (2003/86/EG) hebben de lidstaten dit erkend. In de preambule staat dat voor vluchtelingen gunstiger voorwaarden moeten worden geschapen en dat is in hoofdstuk V gedaan zodat zij hun recht op gezinshereniging kunnen uitoefenen. Het huidige aangescherpte beleid in Nederland houdt in dat Nederland de eis stelt dat er sprake moet zijn van een „feitelijke gezinsband". Deze eis wordt sinds de EHRM uitspraak Tuquabo-Tekle (1 december 2005) niet meer bij reguliere gezinsherenigingen gesteld. Daarvoor is voldoende als sprake is van een gezinsleven in overeenstemming met art. 8 EVRM. Voor gezinshereniging van vluchtelingen geldt dat zij feitelijk tot het gezin van de vluchteling moeten behoren op het moment van vertrek uit het land van herkomst.

Om eerst de zogeheten „feitelijke" gezinsband vast te stellen worden alle gezinsleden waaronder zelfs kinderen beneden de 12 jaar, onderworpen aan een interview op de ambassade. Het maakt daarbij niet uit of het om pleegkinderen of biologische kinderen gaat en het gebeurt bij alle nationaliteiten. Bij die interviews worden tientallen of soms zelfs honderden detailvragen gesteld, ook aan jonge kinderen. De omstandigheden waarbij deze kinderen worden gehoord op een ambassade zijn kindonvriendelijk en het niveau van de vragen is veelal niet afgestemd op kinderen. Als er een aantal verschillen worden gevonden dan wordt de aanvraag afgewezen, zelfs als uit de overige antwoorden blijkt dat ouder en kind wel bij elkaar horen. En zelfs als via DNA is vastgesteld dat het om een biologisch kind gaat.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de toepassing van dit criterium van „feitelijke" gezinsband door Nederland?

2. Vindt de Commissie dat Nederland door de toepassing van het extra criterium „feitelijke gezinsband" bij vluchtelingen in strijd handelt met Richtlijn Gezinshereniging en de fundamentele rechten op privacy en familieleven?

3. Vindt de Commissie dat de verscherpte Nederlandse maatregelen evenredig en proportioneel zijn?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(23 maart 2012)

Op grond van Richtlijn 2003/86/EG (de richtlijn inzake gezinshereniging) zijn de lidstaten verplicht om toestemming tot toegang en verblijf te verlenen aan de echtgenoot en minderjarige kinderen, inclusief adoptiekinderen, van elke gezinshereniger die in aanmerking komt. De aanvrager moet documentair bewijs indienen om de gezinsband te staven en de lidstaten kunnen ook interviews en andere onderzoeken uitvoeren om na te gaan of die gezinsband werkelijk bestaat. Voor vluchtelingen gelden gunstigere regels; bij het ontbreken van documentair bewijs moeten de lidstaten ook andere bewijzen van de gezinsband aanvaarden, en mogen zij het verzoek niet afwijzen enkel vanwege het ontbreken van documenten. In het geval van adoptiekinderen blijkt dat bij het ontbreken van documenten de gezinsband- en soms zelfs de identiteit- enkel vastgesteld kan worden door middel van een interview.

Nederland gebruikt al sinds 2008 een DNA-onderzoek. In sommige Nederlandse ambassades zijn werknemers van de Immigratiedienst ter plaatse om interviews uit te voeren. Sinds 2010 leidt de Immigratie-en Naturalisatiedienst ambassadepersoneel op om interviews uit te voeren. Sinds 2011 zijn de interviews leeftijdspecifiek.

De Commissie zal nauwlettend blijven toezien op de vermeende problemen met betrekking tot het vaststellen van de gezinsbanden en de manier waarop de nodige informatie wordt verzameld bij het ontbreken van documenten, en blijft paraat om op te treden middels de bevoegdheden die haar door de Verdragen zijn toegekend, indien de EU-wetgeving geschonden wordt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001973/12
to the Commission
Emine Bozkurt (S&D)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Refugees and the right to family reunification

The right to family life is stipulated in many Treaties. This right applies particularly to refugees. The Member States recognised this right in the Family Reunification Directive (2003/86/EC). The preamble states that more favourable conditions must be created for refugees, which is done in Chapter V in order to allow them to exercise their right to family reunification. The current tightened policy in the Netherlands demands an 'actual family relationship'. This requirement is no longer applied in ordinary family reunifications since the ECHR ruling in the case of Tuquabo-Tekle (1 December 2005). It is sufficient in such cases if there is a family life in accordance with Article 8 of the ECHR. In the case of family reunification of refugees, those to be reunited must actually be part of the refugee's family at the moment of departure from the country of origin.

In order to first establish the so-called 'actual' family relationship, all family members, even children under 12 years of age, are subject to an interview at the embassy. It does not matter whether they are foster children or biological children, and the system is applied to all nationalities. During these interviews, dozens or sometimes even hundreds of detailed questions are asked, even to young children. The environment in which these children are interviewed at an embassy is not child-friendly and the level of questions is often not geared towards children. If a number of discrepancies are identified, then the application is rejected, even if it is clear from the other answers that the parent and the child do belong together. And even if a DNA test shows that a biological child is involved.

1. Is the Commission aware that the Netherlands applies this criterion of 'actual' family relationship?

2. Is the Commission of the opinion that the Netherlands, by applying the additional criterion of 'actual' family relationship to refugees, is in breach of the Family Reunification Directive and the fundamental rights to privacy and family life?

3. Does the Commission regard the tightened Dutch measures as being commensurate and proportionate?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 March 2012)

Under Directive 2003/86/EC (the Family Reunification Directive), Member States are obliged to authorise the entry and residence of an eligible sponsor's spouse and minor children, including adopted children. The applicants have to provide documentary evidence of the family relationship and Member States may also carry out interviews and other investigations to obtain evidence on the existence of the family relationship. In the case of refugees, more favourable rules apply; in the absence of documentation Member States must accept other evidence of the family relationship, and may not reject the application solely on the basis of missing documentation. In the case of foster children, it appears that in the absence of any documentation, the family relationship and sometimes even the identity can only be established through interviews.

On the practice of the Netherlands, a DNA test has been used since 2008. Employees of the Immigration Service are stationed at some Dutch embassies to conduct interviews. Since 2010, the Immigration and Naturalisation Service trains embassy staff to conduct interviews. Since 2011, age-specific interviews have started.

The Commission will continue closely to monitor alleged problems relating to means of establishing family ties and modalities of acquiring the information necessary in the absence of documentation, and, in cases of violations of EC law, it remains ready to use the powers conferred to it by the Treaties.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001975/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Apoio aos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo

Depois de travado o despedimento de 380 trabalhadores dos Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo — ENVC (que chegou a ser anunciado pela respetiva administração), graças à justa e determinada luta dos trabalhadores dos Estaleiros, a realidade dá razão aos cerca de 700 trabalhadores dos ENVC, uma vez que a empresa apresenta uma importante carteira de encomendas, sendo de destacar dois navios asfalteiros contratados pelo Estado da Venezuela. Todavia, no momento presente, os ENVC não dispõem de capacidade financeira própria para financiar a aquisição de aço e dos motores necessários ao arranque da construção dos dois navios. As consequências da não realização destes investimentos podem chegar à denúncia do contrato por parte da entidade contratante. A ser este o desfecho, os ENVC perderiam a oportunidade de ocupar os seus trabalhadores durante cerca de três anos e o país perderia a possibilidade de manter uma atividade que traduz uma relevante componente exportadora com forte valor acrescentado.

Recorde-se que esta empresa é um pilar do desenvolvimento da região do Alto Minho, onde se insere, sendo responsável, para além dos postos de trabalho diretos, por milhares de outros empregos, a montante e a jusante. Esta região tem sido fortemente afetada pelo desemprego e pela pobreza, sendo os respetivos índices dos mais elevados da Zona Euro.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. De que forma poderão os ENVC ser apoiados no investimento inicial que têm de realizar para que esta importante encomenda possa ser concretizada, com os benefícios que daí decorrerão para os trabalhadores, para a economia da região e para o país? Que apoios comunitários poderão ser mobilizados?

2. Não considera a Comissão uma incongruência que se destinem avultados recursos públicos ao setor financeiro privado e que não se apoie diretamente a economia produtiva, que mais diretamente pode contribuir para o crescimento económico sustentado, como sucede, por exemplo, com o programa FMI-UE em Portugal?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(14 de maio de 2012)

No que se refere à primeira pergunta do Senhor Deputado, a Comissão recorda que, de acordo com as regras da UE em matéria de auxílios estatais à construção naval, não são autorizados auxílios para cobrir os custos normais de produção de um navio, sendo este tipo de auxílio considerado como um auxílio ao funcionamento, capaz de provocar fortes distorções da concorrência. De qualquer modo, se o estaleiro naval estiver em dificuldades financeiras, apenas os auxílios que preenchem as condições estabelecidas nas orientações comunitárias relativas aos auxílios estatais de emergência e à reestruturação a empresas em dificuldade ([1]) podem ser autorizados ([2]). Compete exclusivamente ao Governo português decidir se deseja ponderar esta solução. Além do mais, a UE não dispõe de fundos para este tipo de situação.

No que se refere à segunda pergunta do Senhor Deputado, as medidas em favor do setor financeiro privado no âmbito do Programa de Ajustamento Económico para Portugal visam também facilitar a concessão de crédito à economia real por parte dos bancos comerciais, garantindo-lhe os níveis necessários de capital e de financiamento para continuarem a exercer as suas atividades bancárias normais, ou seja, a concessão de crédito à economia. A Comissão está a equacionar várias formas de reduzir as restrições ao crédito através de uma maior participação do BEI.

([1]) (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52004XC1001(01):PT:NOT).
([2]) Comunicação da Comissão relativa à aplicação dos artigos 87.° e 88.° do Tratado CE aos auxílios estatais sob forma de garantias, JO C 155 de 20.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001975/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Support for Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo

After the redundancy of 380 workers announced by the management of Estaleiros Navais de Viana do Castelo (ENVC) was delayed, the determined efforts of the shipyard's 700 workers have been borne out, since the company has a significant portfolio of orders, most importantly the two asphalt ships ordered by the Venezuelan Government. However, its lack of financial resources means that the ENVC is currently unable to fund the acquisition of the steel and engines necessary to start the construction of the two ships. The consequence of failure to make these investments could be that the contracting party rescinds the contract. In this event, the ENVC would be unable to employ its workers for the approximate three-year period, and the country would lose the chance to keep in place an activity which represents a significant proportion of its high-value exports.

It should be noted that this company is a pillar of development in the Alto Minho region, where it is located, as in addition to its direct employment, it is responsible for thousands of other related jobs both upstream and downstream. This region has been hit hard by unemployment and poverty, with some of the highest levels of both in the euro area.

In view of the above, I would ask the Commission to answer the following:

1. How can the ENVC be assisted with the initial investment that it needs to undertake this major order, with the resulting benefits for the workers, the regional economy and the country? What EU assistance can be mobilised?

2. Does the Commission not consider it incongruent that vast amounts of public funding are being channelled into the private financial sector, but no direct support is being given to a productive economy that could contribute more directly to sustained economic growth, as is happening with the IMF-EU programme in Portugal?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2012)

As regards the first question of the Honourable Member, the Commission notes that under EU state aid rules for shipbuilding, aid for covering the normal costs of producing a vessel is not authorised, as this is considered as operating aid which is particularly distortive of competition. In any event, if the shipyard is in financial difficulties, only aid complying with the conditions of the Community guidelines on state aid for rescuing and restructuring companies in difficulty ([1]) can be authorised ([2]). It is the exclusive decision of the Portuguese Government whether it would consider such a solution. Further, there are no EU funds available for these types of situations.

As regards the second question by the Honourable Member, the measures channelled into the private financial sector under the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal, also aim at facilitating lending by commercial banks to the real economy by ensuring that they have the necessary levels of capital and funding to continue perform their banking tasks, i.e., lending to the economy. The Commission is also exploring ways to ease credit constraints through enhanced EIB involvement.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52004XC1001(01):EN:NOT.
([2]) Commission notice on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to state aid in the form of guarantees, OJ C 155, 20.6.2008.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001976/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Disponibilização do medicamento «tafamidis» aos doentes com paramiloidose

A paramiloidose, vulgarmente conhecida como a «doença dos pezinhos», é uma doença crónica, neurodegenerativa, progressiva e hereditária, que provoca às famílias e às pessoas que dela padecem enorme desgaste e sofrimento.

É em Portugal, e particularmente nos concelhos de Póvoa de Varzim e Vila do Conde, que reside o maior núcleo de doentes com paramiloidose. Além do sofrimento que provoca, a doença é altamente incapacitante, levando a que jovens com 30/35 anos não consigam trabalhar, o que provoca sérias dificuldades também de ordem social e económica.

Recentemente, surgiu um novo medicamento que criou novas e fundadas esperanças a estes doentes. O Vyndaqel, anteriormente designado como Tafamidis, surge como hipótese de tratamento para esta doença. O medicamento revela-se capaz de travar a progressão da doença, sendo mais eficaz nos doentes cujos sintomas estão numa fase inicial. Uma vez concluída a fase de testes e face aos resultados positivos, vários países começaram a prescrever o medicamento, fazendo uso da autorização de utilização especial a doentes com paramiloidose. Lamentavelmente, em Portugal, este medicamento ainda não foi incluído no Serviço Nacional de Saúde, aguardando os doentes e as suas famílias que tal aconteça e que o medicamento seja fornecido aos hospitais para administração aos doentes que dele necessitam.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual a situação, nos diferentes Estados-Membros, relativamente ao acesso à terapêutica da paramiloidose com tafamidis?

2. Que programas e ações existem ao nível da União Europeia passíveis de apoiar estes doentes, as suas famílias e as respetivas associações?

3. Que apoios comunitários à investigação biomédica desta doença existem? Tem conhecimento de atividades que venham sendo desenvolvidas neste domínio?

Resposta dada por John Dalli em nome da Comissão
(16 de abril de 2012)

Em 16 de novembro de 2011, a Comissão adotou uma decisão que concedia uma autorização de introdução no mercado ao «Tafamidis», indicado no tratamento da paramiloidose associada à transtirretina em doentes adultos com polineuropatia sintomática de estádio 1 para retardar a deterioração da função neurológica, sob reserva do cumprimento de determinados requisitos em relação à utilização segura e eficaz do medicamento que serão reavaliadas anualmente. Com base na autorização de introdução no mercado da UE, o «Tafamidis» pode ser colocado no mercado em todos os Estados-Membros da UE.

No entanto, o acesso aos medicamentos após a autorização, bem como os preços dos medicamentos e a sua inclusão no sistema nacional de saúde ou nos regimes de segurança social, é, de acordo com o Tratado da UE, da competência dos Estados-Membros. Por conseguinte, a Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre a situação em matéria de acesso ao «Tafamidis» nos diferentes Estados-Membros.

No que se refere à segunda pergunta, a Comissão remete o Senhor Deputado para a resposta às perguntas escritas E-002278/2011 e E-003304/2011 ([1]). No sítio Web da Direção-Geral da Saúde e dos Consumidores ([2]), está disponível uma descrição pormenorizada da política da UE em matéria de doenças raras e de ações específicas.

([1]) (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-003304&language=EN).
([2]) (http://ec.europa.eu/health/rare_diseases/policy/index_en.htm).

As doenças raras são um dos domínios prioritários para o tema da saúde do sétimo programa-quadro de investigação da UE (7.° PQ) ([3]), que tem atualmente atribuídos mais de 320 milhões de euros no financiamento de projetos nesse domínio, com um montante adicional de 108 milhões de euros reservados para novos projetos a selecionar este ano. Alguns projetos financiados pela UE dizem respeito a doenças hereditárias relacionadas com a paramiloidose, p. ex., Eurotrps e Euramy ([4]), embora estes não foquem especificamente a doença em questão.

([3]) (http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/medical-research/rare-diseases/index_en.html).
([4]) (http://fmf.igh.cnrs.fr/ISSAID/EUROTRAPS/index.php; http://www.euramy.org/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001976/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Availability of 'tafamidis' for familial amyloid polyneuropathy (FAP) sufferers

Familial amyloid polyneuropathy (FAP), also known as paramiloidosis and commonly called *doença dos pezinhos* ('tiny steps disease') in Portuguese, is a chronic neurodegenerative, progressive and hereditary illness, which causes patients and their families enormous strain and suffering.

The largest group of paramiloidosis sufferers is found in Portugal, particularly in the municipalities of Póvoa de Varzim and Vila do Conde. In addition to the pain it causes, the disease is highly incapacitating, meaning that young people between 30 and 35 are unable to work, which leads to serious social and economic difficulties.

Recently a new drug has appeared, leading to new and well-founded hope for these sufferers. Vyndaqel, previously known as Tafamidis, has emerged as a possible treatment for this illness. The drug has been seen to slow progression of the illness, particularly in the early stages of the disease. When the testing phase was over and the positive results were seen, some countries began to prescribe this drug, using special authorisation for FAP sufferers. Unfortunately, this drug is not yet prescribed under the National Health Service in Portugal, and sufferers and their families are waiting for this to happen and for the drug to be supplied to hospitals for patients who need it.

I would ask the Commission:

1. What is the situation in the different Member States concerning access to tafamidis treatment for FAP?

2. What programmes and measures are there at European Union level to support these sufferers, their families and the relevant associations?

3. What Community support is available for biomedical research into this illness? Is the Commission aware of any activities being carried out in this field?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

On 16 November 2011 the Commission adopted a decision granting marketing authorisation for 'Tafamidis', intended for the treatment of transthyretin amyloidosis in adult patients with stage 1 symptomatic polyneuropathy to delay neurologic impairment, under certain requirements with regard to the safe and effective use of the medicinal product which shall be reviewed annually. On the basis of the EU marketing authorisation, 'Tafamidis' can be put on the market in all EU Member States.

However, access to medicinal products after authorisation, including prices of medicinal products and their inclusion into the national health system or social security schemes is according to the EU Treaty the competence of the Member States. Therefore, the Commission does not have information on the situation concerning access to Tafamidis in the different Member States.

Regarding the second question the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Questions E-002278/2011 and E-003304/2011 ([1]). A detailed description of the EU policy on rare diseases and specific actions is available on the website of the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers ([2]).

Rare diseases is one of the priority areas in the Health Theme of the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research (FP7) ([3]) which has currently committed over EUR 320 million of project funding in the area, with an additional EUR 108 million reserved for new projects to be selected this year. Some EU-funded projects address hereditary diseases with amyloidosis, e.g. EUROTRAPS and EURAMY ([4]), although not focusing specifically on the disease in question.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-003304&language=EN.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/rare_diseases/policy/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/medical-research/rare-diseases/index_en.html
([4]) http://fmf.igh.cnrs.fr/ISSAID/EUROTRAPS/index.php; http://www.euramy.org/.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001977/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Recuperação da produção de açúcar de beterraba em Portugal

Em Portugal, a Associação Nacional de Produtores de Beterraba (Anprobe) veio recentemente afirmar que o país tem excelentes condições para voltar a produzir açúcar de beterraba, defendendo que essa possibilidade seja contemplada na nova reforma da Política Agrícola Comum.

Segundo a Associação, Portugal apresenta vantagens em relação à Europa Central, antes de mais porque o clima permite duas produções (na primavera e no outono).

Antes da última reforma do setor do açúcar, os produtores nacionais de beterraba sacarina já obtinham o maior rendimento por hectare da Europa. A Anprobe refere ainda que uma produção de 100 mil toneladas de beterraba cobriria 20 por cento do consumo anual de açúcar. Ao mesmo tempo forneceria matéria-prima à fábrica DAI, refinadora de açúcar, de Coruche, que atualmente é forçada a laborar com cana-de-açúcar importada, estando portanto sujeita aos constrangimentos do mercado internacional desta matéria-prima, ao nível de disponibilidade e preços, cujos efeitos têm sido bem visíveis durante as últimas campanhas. Ademais, a produção de açúcar de beterraba em Portugal constituiria um contributo para inverter a dependência do país, reduzir os desequilíbrios da balança comercial, o défice externo e, por essa via, superar as dificuldades com que o país atualmente se debate.

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Como será a possibilidade de recuperação da produção nacional de açúcar de beterraba considerada na futura PAC?

2. Que apoios comunitários podem ser canalizados para estimular a produção nacional de beterraba sacarina?

3. Dispõe a Comissão de alguma avaliação sobre qual o impacto da última reforma do setor do açúcar nos diferentes Estados-Membros e, particularmente, em Portugal?

4. Que alterações pondera introduzir na estratégia europeia de produção de beterraba sacarina?

5. Depois da última reforma, que países europeus dispõem de quotas de produção de beterraba sacarina? Quais os volumes de produção associados? Quais os volumes de cana-de-açúcar importada?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloş em nome da Comissão
(28 de março de 2012)

Os agricultores dos Estados-Membros que não dispõem de quota de açúcar não deixam de poder produzir beterraba sacarina, desde que esta seja utilizada unicamente na produção de bioetanol e para outros fins industriais. A proposta relativa à nova política agrícola comum após 2013 não altera as disposições vigentes no domínio das quotas de açúcar. Significa isto que, se a proposta for adotada pelo Parlamento Europeu e pelo Conselho, as quotas de açúcar serão abolidas a 30 de setembro de 2015, desaparecendo os condicionalismos à produção de beterraba sacarina para fins alimentares em Portugal.

No período de 2006 a 2009, despenderam-se mais de 5 000 milhões de euros na reestruturação do setor açucareiro da UE. Em Portugal, utilizara-se ajudas na cessação da transformação de beterraba. Antes de 30 de setembro de 2015, seria incoerente apoiar o reinício da produção de açúcar de beterraba em Portugal. Em determinadas circunstâncias, poderão ser disponibilizados fundos regionais, mas apenas para a produção de beterraba sacarina destinada a fins industriais.

A Comissão avaliou o impacto das propostas relativas à nova política agrícola comum e concluiu que não haverá alterações de vulto a longo prazo depois da abolição das quotas de açúcar no mercado da União. A produção de açúcar da UE aumentará ligeiramente e a União Europeia continuará a ser importadora líquida de açúcar. A Comissão está a efetuar uma análise mais aprofundada para avaliar os impactos regionais da abolição das quotas.

São 18 os Estados-Membros que dispõem de quotas de açúcar, além dos Açores e dos departamentos franceses ultramarinos. As quantidades das quotas de açúcar figuram no anexo VI do Regulamento (CE) n.° 1234/2007.

As importações de açúcar para a UE excederam 4 milhões de toneladas na campanha de comercialização de 2010/2011. Em 2011, importaram-se 2,6 milhões de toneladas de açúcar de cana bruto — a maior quantidade de sempre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001977/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Restarting beet sugar production in Portugal

In Portugal, the Associação Nacional de Produtores de Beterraba [National Beet Producers' Association] (Anprobe) recently stated that conditions in the country are excellent for restarting beet production, arguing that this possibility should be provided for in the new reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP).

According to the association, Portugal has advantages over Central Europe, above all because the climate permits two crops (in Spring and in Autumn).

Before the last reform of the sugar sector, Portugal's sugar beet producers were already achieving the best output per hectare in Europe. Anprobe also states that production of 100 000 tonnes of beet would cover 20 % of annual sugar consumption. It would, furthermore, provide raw material for the DAI sugar refinery in Coruche, which is currently forced to work with imported sugarcane, meaning it is subject to the availability and price constraints of the international market in this raw material — the effects of which have been very visible during recent campaigns. Moreover, beet sugar production in Portugal would contribute to reversing the country's dependency, to reducing trade imbalances and the external deficit, and, through these means, to overcoming the difficulties currently faced by the country.

In view of the above, I would ask the Commission:

1. How will the possibility of restarting beet sugar production in Portugal be considered in the future CAP?

2. What Union assistance can be channelled into stimulating Portugal's sugar beet production?

3. Does the Commission have any assessment on the impact of future reforms of the sugar sector in the various Member States and particularly in Portugal?

4. What changes is the Commission considering making to the European sugar beet production strategy?

5. Following the latest reform, which European countries have sugar beet production quotas? What are the associated production volumes? What are the volumes of sugarcane imported?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

If a Member State has no sugar quota farmers can still produce sugar beet provided they are used for bio-ethanol or other industrial use only. The proposal for a new Common Agricultural Policy after 2013 does not change the existing provisions on sugar quotas. This means that, if adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, sugar quota will end on 30 September 2015 lifting constraints on sugar beet production for food purposes in Portugal.

During the period 2006-2009 more than EUR 5 billion was used to restructure the EU sugar sector. In Portugal aid was used to abolish processing of beet. Before 30 September 2015, it would be incoherent to assist Portugal to start up sugar production again. Regional funds may be available in certain circumstances, but only for sugar beet production which is used for industrial purposes.

The Commission's impact assessment of the proposals for a new Common Agricultural Policy concludes that there will be no major longer term changes after the end of the sugar quota on the EU market. EU sugar production will increase slightly and the EU will remain a net importer of sugar. The Commission is conducting additional analysis assessing the regional impacts of quota abolition.

18 Member States have sugar quota, plus the Azores and the French Overseas Departments. The volumes of sugar quota can be found in Annex VI of Regulation 1234/2007.

Total imports of sugar into the EU were more than 4 million tonnes in marketing year 2010/2011. Imports of raw cane sugar were 2.6 million tonnes in calendar year 2011, the highest imports ever.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001978/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Recessão, quebras no consumo de bens alimentares das famílias portuguesas e programas FMI-UE

Segundo dados do Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE), no terceiro trimestre de 2011, a redução das despesas de consumo final das famílias portuguesas atingiu, pela primeira vez desde o começo da atual série de dados trimestrais, em 1996, os bens alimentares. Todos os outros setores, como o dos bens duradouros, bens correntes não alimentares e serviços, já antes se encontravam em queda.

Esta evolução negativa é confirmada pelas primeiras estimativas da evolução do PIB no 4.° trimestre de 2011 e na totalidade do ano. O INE estima que o PIB tenha caído - 1,5 % em 2011 e que em termos homólogos no 4.° trimestre a queda tenha sido de - 2,7 % e em cadeia de - 1,3 %. O 4.° trimestre de 2011 foi sem qualquer margem para dúvida o pior trimestre do ano, com o PIB trimestral a recuar em termos reais para valores inferiores aos registados no 4.° trimestre de 2005. Estes dados confirmam que, em 2011, após um 1.° semestre em que a queda do PIB foi de - 0,7 %, no 2.° semestre o PIB afundou-se, caindo - 2,2 %. Este dado é tanto mais relevante quanto esta é a maior queda registada em termos percentuais no PIB do 2.° semestre, desde que esta nova série se iniciou.

Tudo isto, a que se soma ainda um desemprego a níveis históricos, em democracia, e o alastramento da pobreza e da exclusão social, é indissociável dos programas FMI-UE atualmente em curso, replicando, de forma inquietante, a situação dramática que se vive na Grécia — país vítima de programas de cariz idêntico.

Face ao exposto, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento de outros países que tenham registado quebras no consumo de bens alimentares das famílias?

2. Que medidas imediatas tem em curso a UE para travar o crescimento da pobreza e da fome na UE e, particularmente, em Portugal?

3. Que alterações na política da UE e, particularmente, nos programas FMI-UE atualmente em curso, vão determinar os dados agora divulgados?

Resposta dada por Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(26 de abril de 2012)

A Comissão Europeia não controla periodicamente as despesas relativas ao consumo de bens alimentares na União Europeia (UE), pelo que não tem conhecimento de quais os Estados-Membros em que o mesmo diminuiu nos últimos anos.

Em 2010, a UE adotou uma iniciativa para aumentar o crescimento e promover o emprego, a Estratégia Europa 2020, que inclui sete ações emblemáticas, entre as quais a «Plataforma europeia contra a pobreza». Neste contexto, tanto os Estados-Membros como a UE estão a coordenar esforços para combater a pobreza, as desigualdades sociais e a exclusão, a fim de garantir que as pessoas possam viver com dignidade e participar ativamente na sociedade. Para além destes esforços, a Comissão criou o grupo de apoio a Portugal e uma equipa de ação para combater o desemprego dos jovens em Portugal.

O Memorando de Entendimento (ME) assinado pelo Governo português no quadro do programa de assistência financeira tem devidamente em conta a necessidade de minimizar o impacto social das reformas. Para o efeito, o ME prevê um certo número de medidas destinadas a proteger os grupos mais vulneráveis da sociedade. Estas incluem a não aplicação de reduções dos salários e das pensões para os grupos com rendimentos mais baixos, a redução do período mínimo de emprego para poder beneficiar do subsídio de desemprego ou as considerações de caráter social previstas na reforma da lei de arrendamento urbano.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001978/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Recession, drop in Portuguese household food consumption, and IMF-EU programmes

According to figures from Statistics Portugal, in the third quarter of 2011 the reduction in Portuguese family expenditure affected foodstuffs for the first time since the present series of quarterly data started in 1996. All other sectors, such as durable goods, basic non-food goods, and services, were already in decline.

This downward trend is confirmed by the preliminary estimates of GDP growth for the fourth quarter of 2011 and the year as a whole. Statistics Portugal estimates that GDP fell by 1.5 % in 2011 and that it fell year-on-year by 2.7 % and quarter-on-quarter by 1.3 %. There can be no doubt that the fourth quarter of 2011 was the worst quarter of that year: quarterly GDP was lower, in real terms, than the level recorded for the fourth quarter of 2005 . These statistics show that after GDP had dropped by 0.7 % in the first half of 2011, it collapsed in the second half of the year, falling by 2.2 %. The latter figure is particularly significant, denoting as it does the largest six-monthly percentage drop in GDP to have been recorded since the new series of statistics began.

All this, combined with an unemployment rate higher than at any time since the transition to democracy, and with the spread of poverty and social exclusion, is the inevitable consequence of the current IMF-EU programmes; it bears an alarming resemblance to the plight of Greece, a country suffering under programmes of exactly the same kind.

1. Does the Commission know of other countries where household food consumption has fallen?

2. What immediate measures is the EU taking to slow the growth of poverty and hunger in its Member States and in Portugal in particular?

3. What changes will be made to EU policy and, especially, to the IMF-EU programmes currently under way in the light of the newly published statistics?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission does not monitor expenditure on food consumption in the European Union (EU) on a regular basis and is therefore not aware of Member States where food consumption has fallen in recent years.

In 2010, the EU adopted an initiative for growth and jobs — the Europe 2020 strategy. The strategy contains as one of seven flagships initiatives the 'European platform against poverty'. Within this framework both EU and Member States are coordinating efforts to address poverty, social inequalities and exclusion to ensure that people live in dignity and can actively take part in society. Beyond these efforts, the Commission set up the Portugal support group and an action team to tackle youth unemployment in Portugal.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Portuguese Government in the framework of financial assistance programme takes due account to the need to minimise the social impact of reforms. To this end, the MoU provides for a number of measures that protect the most vulnerable groups of the society. These include the non-application of wage and pension cuts to the lowest income groups, the shortening of the minimum period of employment necessary to be eligible for unemployment benefits or the social considerations that have included in the reform of the urban lease law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001979/12
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: Práticas abusivas por parte da empresa Sun Planet

O Sindicato dos Trabalhadores do Comércio, Escritórios e Serviços de Portugal (CESP/CGTP-IN) denuncia no seu boletim de janeiro que os trabalhadores das 37 lojas da Sun Planet são vítimas de «práticas abusivas», reduções do horário de trabalho e do salário e transferências para longe das suas residências. A empresa desrespeita normas e salários em vigor no Contrato Coletivo de Trabalho.

Representada em Portugal pela Country Manager, a Sun Planet impede mesmo os seus trabalhadores de recorrerem aos lavabos durante o horário de expediente, pelo que estes são forçados a usar «um balde» para satisfazer as suas necessidades fisiológicas, revela o CESP.

Em face do exposto, solicito à Comissão que me informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento de práticas idênticas por parte desta empresa noutros Estados-Membros?

2. Que medidas estão previstas ao nível da UE para evitar práticas como as descritas, de profundo desrespeito pela dignidade e pelos direitos dos trabalhadores, por parte de empresas que exercem a sua atividade em vários Estados-Membros?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(28 de março de 2012)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de práticas análogas pela empresa Sun Planet noutros Estados-Membros.

Observa que as violações do direito nacional — incluindo dos diferentes diplomas nacionais que transpõem as diretivas da UE — devem ser tratadas, numa primeira fase, no âmbito do quadro normativo nacional. Cabe às autoridades nacionais competentes, nomeadamente os tribunais, garantir que o direito é aplicado de forma correta e eficaz, tendo em conta as circunstâncias específicas de cada caso, incluindo os termos dos contratos de trabalho dos trabalhadores em causa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001979/12
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Abusive practices at the Sun Planet company

The Union of Commerce, Office and Service Workers of Portugal (CESP/CGTP-IN) revealed in its January bulletin that workers in Sun Planet's 37 shops are the victims of 'abusive practices', reductions in working time and salaries, and transfers to branches far away from their homes. The company is failing to comply with the standards and salaries set out in the Collective Wage Agreement.

According to the CESP, Sun Planet, which is represented in Portugal by the Country Manager, even prevents employees from going to the toilet during working hours, forcing them to use 'a bucket' to perform their normal bodily functions.

1. Does the Commission know whether this company follows similar practices in other Member States?

2. What measures can be taken at European Union level to prevent companies operating in Member States from resorting to practices such as those described, which show a profound lack of respect for workers' dignity and rights?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Commission is not aware of similar practices by the company Sun Planet in other Member States.

It recalls that breaches of national law — including the national laws transposing EU directives — are to be dealt with in the first instance within the national legal framework. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the law is correctly and effectively applied, having regard to the specific circumstances of each case including the terms of the employment contracts of the workers concerned.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001980/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR— Envolvimento dos EUA, da França e do Reino Unido no treino de grupos armados sírios

Numa entrevista à revista American Conservative (citada em globalresearch.ca), um ex-agente da CIA, Philip Giraldi, refere que «aviões da NATO sem identificações estão a chegar às bases militares turcas perto de Iskenderum, na fronteira síria, transportando armas dos arsenais do falecido Muamar Kadafi, bem como voluntários do CNT líbio […]. Iskenderum é também a sede do Exército Livre Sírio, braço armado do Conselho Nacional Sírio. Instrutores das forças especiais francesas e britânicas estão no terreno, assistindo os rebeldes sírios, enquanto a CIA e Forças Especiais dos EUA fornecem equipamento de comunicações e informações para ajudar a causa rebelde, permitindo aos seus combatentes evitar concentrações de soldados sírios».

Estas declarações são, evidentemente, de grande gravidade, apontando para razões da violência registada na Síria bem diversas das que vêm sendo aventadas pelas grandes cadeias internacionais de meios de comunicação. Ao mesmo tempo, confirmam as denúncias de diversas organizações quanto à sucessão de atentados terroristas contra infraestruturas e edifícios públicos, causando milhares de vítimas civis, desencadeados por forças identificadas com a «oposição».

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Vice-presidente/Alta Representante:

1. Tem conhecimento do conteúdo desta entrevista? Que avaliação faz do seu conteúdo?

2. Que avaliação faz do envolvimento de países europeus, nomeadamente da França e do Reino Unido, no treino de grupos armados sírios responsáveis por atos de violência no país? Foi este assunto discutido no Conselho?

3. Como avalia as declarações de alguns dos principais rostos do chamado Conselho Nacional de Transição, solicitando «mais financiamento e armamento estrangeiro»?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(5 de junho de 2012)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton não dispõe de quaisquer informações sobre as alegações publicadas na American Conservative.

A UE atribui a violência na Síria à brutalidade dos ataques e às violações generalizadas dos direitos humanos perpetradas pelas forças de segurança do regime sírio contra a população. A UE tem apelado repetidas vezes à oposição síria para que prossiga na via da não violência a fim de atingir os seus objetivos de uma Síria pacífica e democrática. No Conselho de Negócios Estrangeiros de 23 de março de 2012, a UE apelou uma vez mais à oposição para que se una na sua luta pacífica em prol de uma nova Síria, em que todos os cidadãos gozem dos mesmos direitos fundamentais, independentemente da sua filiação, etnia, crença ou género.

A UE dá o seu total apoio ao enviado da ONU e da Liga Árabe, Kofi Annan, e ao seu plano de 6 pontos que visa uma solução política para a crise. A UE congratula-se com a adoção por unanimidade, em 14 de abril de 2012, da Resolução do Conselho de Segurança das Nações Unidas que autoriza o destacamento imediato de uma missão preparatória, constituída por 30 observadores militares não armados, para fiscalizar os progressos realizados no sentido de uma cessação completa da violência armada na Síria. Esta resolução constitui mais um passo positivo no sentido da execução do plano de seis pontos de Kofi Annan.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001980/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Involvement of the USA, France and the United Kingdom in training Syrian armed groups

In an interview with *The American Conservative* magazine (quoted in globalresearch.ca), a former CIA agent, Philip Giraldi, claimed that 'unmarked NATO warplanes are arriving at Turkish military bases close to Iskenderun on the Syrian border, delivering weapons from the late Muammar Gaddafi's arsenals as well as volunteers from the Libyan Transitional National Council […]. Iskenderun is also the seat of the Free Syrian Army, the armed wing of the Syrian National Council. French and British special forces trainers are on the ground, assisting the Syrian rebels while the CIA and US Spec Ops are providing communications equipment and intelligence to assist the rebel cause. This enables the fighters to avoid any concentration of Syrian soldiers'.

These statements clearly have very serious implications, since they suggest that the reasons for the violence in Syria are very different from those being put forward by the international media. They also lend weight to the complaints by various organisations about the series of terrorist attacks on infrastructure and public buildings, causing thousands of civilian deaths, being carried out by forces labelled as 'opposition'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of what was said in this interview? What is her assessment of its content?

2. What is her view of the involvement of European countries, namely France and the United Kingdom, in the training of Syrian armed groups responsible for acts of violence? Has this matter been discussed in the Council?

3. What does she think about the calls by some of the leading figures in the National Transitional Council for 'more foreign funding and arms'?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2012)

High Representative/Vice-President Ashton has not received any information regarding the allegations published in The American Conservative.

The EU considers that violence in Syria is caused by the brutal attacks and widespread human rights violations inflicted by the regime's security forces on the population. The EU has consistently called on the Syrian opposition to pursue a non-violent path to attain its objectives of a peaceful and democratic Syria. In its Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 23 March 2012 the EU called once more on the opposition to unite in a peaceful struggle for a new Syria that guarantees the fundamental rights of all its citizens, regardless of their affiliations, ethnicity, belief or gender.

The EU fully supports the UN-Arab League Envoy to Syria, Mr Kofi Annan, and his six point plan for a political settlement to the crisis. It welcomes the UN Security Council's resolution of 14 April 2012, unanimously authorising the immediate deployment of an advance team of 30 unarmed military observers to begin reporting on the implementation of a full cessation of violence in Syria. This is an additional step in the right direction in the implementation of the six point plan.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-001981/12
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente / Alta Representante)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 de fevereiro de 2012)

Assunto: VP/HR — Impunidade nos casos de massacres perpetrados por tropas americanas no Iraque e Afeganistão

As forças armadas dos EUA retiraram todas as acusações contra o quinto soldado acusado de assassinar civis afegãos e guardar os restos mortais como troféus, entre 2009 e 2010, na província de Kandahar. O caso foi tornado público em maio de 2010.

O sargento Frank Wuterich, chefe de um pelotão de infantaria, declarou-se culpado da morte de 24 iraquianos desarmados em novembro de 2005, na cidade de Haditha. A assunção da culpa por parte de Wuterich valeu-lhe um acordo com as autoridades militares, mediante o qual lhe foram retiradas as acusações de homicídio. Os restantes sete implicados nos acontecimentos foram absolvidos.

Antes desta última sentença sobre o caso de Haditha ser conhecida, um franco-atirador de um pelotão das tropas especiais, Chris Kyle, afirmou publicamente ter morto 255 iraquianos. Oficialmente, o Pentágono reconhece-lhe cerca de 150 vítimas. Kyle é agora instrutor de tiro no Estado do Texas.

Segundo o grupo de defesa dos direitos humanos Iraq Body Count, em 2011 morreram no país 4 059 civis, mais 83 que em 2010.

Em sentido contrário ao juízo dos casos de massacres perpetrados por tropas norte-americanas no Iraque e Afeganistão — em que a regra é a impunidade para executantes e decisores políticos —, a justiça militar de Washington decidiu, no passado dia 4 de fevereiro, levar por diante o processo contra o soldado Bradley Manning, acusado de fornecer ao Wikileaks documentos militares sobre as guerras no Médio Oriente e Ásia Central, e aproximadamente 260 mil mensagens trocadas entre representações diplomáticas da Casa Branca e o Departamento de Estado. Manning pode ser condenado a prisão perpétua por «conluio com o inimigo».

Em face do exposto, pergunto à Vice-presidente/Alta Representante:

1. Que avaliação faz dos factos relatados e, mais concretamente, da impunidade nos casos de massacres perpetrados por tropas norte-americanas no Iraque e Afeganistão?

2. Foi este tema alguma vez abordado no âmbito das relações bilaterais UE-EUA?

3. Não considera necessário expressar uma condenação pública destes atos?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(24 de maio de 2012)

A UE acompanha atentamente a situação no Iraque e está extremamente preocupada com os atos de violência que, lamentavelmente, continuam a causar a perda de vidas em todo o país. Ainda recentemente, em 23 de março de 2012, a Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente condenou publicamente a última vaga de violência cruel, lamentando a morte e a destruição causadas, que só poderão agravar a, já de si, frágil situação política.

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente instou o Governo do Iraque e os dirigentes políticos a encetarem um diálogo inclusivo e genuíno e sublinhou que é essencial um governo que dê provas de unidade nacional, de inclusividade e de eficácia, a fim de evitar o regresso ao círculo vicioso da violência que, assim o esperamos, fará um dia parte do passado do Iraque.

Como o Senhor Deputado deve saber, as instituições da UE não têm competência em matéria de operações militares realizadas pelos Estados-Membros ou por países terceiros.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001981/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Impunity for massacres perpetrated by US troops in Iraq and Afghanistan

The United States armed forces have dropped all charges against the fifth soldier accused of murdering Afghan civilians and keeping their remains as trophies in Kandahar province, in 2009 and 2010. The case was made public in May 2010.

Staff Sergeant Frank Wuterich, leader of an infantry squad, pleaded guilty to the murder of 24 unarmed Iraqis in the city of Haditha, in November 2005. Wuterich's admission of guilt resulted in an agreement with the military authorities, whereby the charges of homicide against him were dropped. The other seven individuals implicated in the attack were acquitted.

Before this latest judgment on the Haditha case was known, Chris Kyle, a sniper from a special forces platoon, publicly claimed to have killed 255 Iraqis. The official Pentagon version puts the number of his victims at about 150. Mr Kyle is now a shooting instructor in the state of Texas.

According to the human rights defence group Iraq Body Count, 4 059 civilians died in Iraq in 2011, 83 more than in 2010.

In contrast to the judgments in cases relating to massacres perpetrated by US troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, in which the rule is impunity for perpetrators and political decision-makers, the military courts in Washington decided on 4 February to pursue the case against Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of supplying WikiLeaks with military documents relating to the wars in the Middle East and Central Asia and with approximately 260 000 messages exchanged between diplomatic representatives of the White House and the State Department. Mr Manning could be sentenced to life imprisonment for 'aiding the enemy'.

1. How does the Vice-President/High Representative view the above facts and, more specifically, the impunity for massacres perpetrated by US troops in Iraq and Afghanistan?

2. Has this issue ever been raised in the context of EU-US bilateral relations?

3. Does she not consider it necessary to publicly condemn these acts?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 May 2012)

The EU follows the situation in Iraq very closely and is extremely concerned about acts of violence which continue to cause deplorable loss of life across the country. Most recently, on 23 March 2012, the High Representative/Vice-President condemned publicly the latest wave of ruthless violence and deplored the death and destruction caused, which can only exacerbate an already fragile political situation.

The High Representative/Vice-President has urged the Government of Iraq and the political leaders to engage in an inclusive and genuine dialogue and stressed that a government which demonstrates national unity, inclusiveness and effectiveness is essential to avoid a return to the vicious cycle of violence that everyone hopes will remain firmly consigned to Iraq's past.

The Honourable Member will be aware that the EU institutions have no competence regarding Member States' or third countries' military operations.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-001982/12
an die Kommission (Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin)
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(20. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Folter von Gefangenen in Libyen durch Milizen und Militärangehörige der Übergangsregierung

Mehrere Hilfsorganisationen, darunter Human Rights Watch, Ärzte ohne Grenzen und das Rote Kreuz, berichten seit Monaten über schwere Folter von zum Großteil willkürlich inhaftierten Gefängnisinsassen. Human Rights Watch berichtet von lokalen Brigaden, Milizen und Sicherheitsgruppen, die dem Übergangsrat angehören, die in Tripolis und West-Libyen willkürlich Verhaftungen vornehmen und Gefangene unter anderem mit Elektroschocks zum Teil bis zum Tode foltern. Darunter auch der ehemalige libysche Botschafter in Frankreich, Dr. Omar Brebesch, der sich freiwillig einer Untersuchung stellte und weniger als 24 Stunden nach seiner Verhaftung zu Tode gefoltert wurde. Aus Misrata berichtet die Hilfsorganisation Ärzte ohne Grenzen, dass Patienten während der Verhöre zur Behandlung gebracht wurden, um sie für die Fortsetzung der „Befragung" wieder fit zu machen.

Am 3. Januar 2012 behandelten die Mediziner eine Gruppe von 14 Gefangenen, die von einem Verhörzentrum außerhalb der Internierungslager zurückkehrten. Trotz der vorherigen eindringlichen Mahnung von Ärzte ohne Grenzen, die Folterpraktiken mit sofortiger Wirkung einzustellen, wiesen neun der 14 Gefangenen Verletzungen auf, die offensichtlich auf Folter zurückzuführen waren. Allen Gefangenen, bis auf einen, wurde medizinische Hilfe vorenthalten, und sie wurden zu weiteren Verhören mit erneuter Folter außerhalb des Gefangenlagers abtransportiert.

Die Organisation hat mehrere Regierungsvertreter in persönlichen Gesprächen und am 9. Januar 2012 in einem offiziellen Brief an den Militärrat, an das Sicherheitskomitee, an den Sicherheitsdienst der Armee und an den zivilen Stadtrat von Misrata über die Vorgänge informiert und die sofortige Beendigung jeglicher Misshandlung von Gefangenen gefordert. Doch es folgten keinerlei konkrete Maßnahmen. Zudem hat der Delegierte der neuen libyschen Regierung bei seinem ersten Auftritt im VN-Menschenrechtsrat mit einer scharfen Attacke gegen Homosexuelle die Universalität der Menschenrechte negiert. Er erklärte, dass die Beratung über schwul-lesbische Themen „die Religion beeinträchtigen und das Überleben der Menschheit" infrage stellen würde.

1. Sind der Vizepräsidentin/Hohen Vertreterin diese Vorgänge und Äußerungen bekannt?

2. Wenn ja, sind Maßnahmen seitens der EU geplant, um diese massiven Folterungen und Menschenrechtsverletzungen zu unterbinden? Ist in diesem Zusammenhang die Anrufung des VN-Sicherheitsrates geplant?

3. Ist die Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin der Auffassung, dass unter diesen Umständen der Nationale Übergangsrat in Libyen noch als Verhandlungspartner und Regierung anerkannt werden kann?

Antwort von Frau Catherine Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(21. Mai 2012)

Die EU ist aufgrund der Berichte aus Libyen über die Misshandlung von Gefangenen gefährdeter Gruppen in bestimmten von Milizen kontrollierten Hafteinrichtungen besorgt. Sie hat dieses Thema in ihrem Dialog mit den libyschen Behörden bereits angesprochen. Erst kürzlich hat die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin eine Erklärung veröffentlicht, in der sie die vollständige Achtung der Rechte von Inhaftierten in Libyen fordert und die Behörden dazu aufruft, alle Hafteinrichtungen schneller unter ihre Kontrolle zu bringen und vermeintliche Rechtsverletzungen von Gefangenen zu untersuchen. Die libysche Regierung hat hierauf positiv reagiert und versichert, dass sie dabei ist, Maßnahmen für die Übertragung der Kontrolle von Hafteinrichtungen auf die Behörden durchzuführen.

Die EU hat den Menschen, die aufgrund des Konflikts Schutz benötigen, Soforthilfe geleistet und wird die Behörden dabei unterstützen, die Wahrung der Menschenrechte, demokratische Werte und die Rechtsstaatlichkeit sicherzustellen. Darüber hinaus fördert sie mit dem Europäischen Instrument für Demokratie und Menschenrechte die Rehabilitation von und Hilfsdienste für Folteropfer, Verschleppte und Traumaopfer und die Entwicklung eines nationalen Rechts- und Politikrahmens, mit dem Folter und andere Formen der Misshandlung bekämpft werden sollen.

In Bezug auf die Kommentare des libyschen Vertreters im Menschenrechtsrat ist die EU der Ansicht, dass Homophobie eine eklatante Verletzung der Menschenwürde darstellt, die darauf abzielt, Menschen aufgrund ihrer sexuellen Ausrichtung zu beleidigen und ihrer Rechte zu berauben. Die EU appelliert an die libyschen Behörden, sich von derartigen Äußerungen zu distanzieren und jegliche Diskriminierung von libyschen Bürgerinnen und Bürgern auch aufgrund der sexuellen Ausrichtung zu vermeiden.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001982/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Torture of prisoners in Libya by militias and military groups associated with the transitional government

Several aid organisations, including Human Rights Watch, Doctors Without Borders and the Red Cross, have been reporting for months on serious torture against mostly arbitrarily detained prisoners. Human Rights Watch has reported on local brigades, militias and security groups associated with the Transitional Council who are detaining people arbitrarily in Tripoli and Western Libya, using electric shock torture on prisoners, sometimes even causing fatalities. One of the victims was the former Libyan Ambassador to France, Dr Omar Brebesh, who volunteered for questioning and was tortured to death within less than 24 hours of his arrest. Reporting from Misrata, the Doctors Without Borders aid organisation tells of how patients have been brought for treatment during interrogation, so that their 'questioning' could continue.

On 3 January 2012, doctors treated a group of 14 prisoners who were returning from an interrogation centre outside the internment camp. Despite urgent prior protests by Doctors Without Borders, demanding that torture practices should immediately cease, 9 of the 14 prisoners displayed injuries that were obviously the result of torture. All but one of the prisoners had been denied medical attention and they were then driven away for continued interrogation and renewed torture outside the prison camp.

The organisation spoke with several government representatives in person and, on 9 January 2012, wrote an official letter to the Military Council, to the Security Committee, to the army security service and to the City Council of Misrata, informing them of what was happening and demanding an immediate halt to all mistreatment of prisoners. However, no concrete action was taken. In addition, in his first appearance at the UN HRC, the delegate from the new Libyan Government denied the universality of human rights with a sharp attack on homosexuals. He declared that discussion of gay and lesbian issues was an 'affront to religion' and threatened 'the survival of humanity'.

1. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these occurrences and statements?

2. If so, is the EU planning measures to prevent this widespread torture and violation of human rights? Are there any plans in this context to convene the UN Security Council?

3. Under these circumstances, does the Vice-President/ High Representative think that the National Transitional Council in Libya can still be recognised as a negotiating partner and government?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

The EU is concerned about reports from Libya of ill-treatment of detainees belonging to vulnerable groups in certain detention facilities controlled by militias. The EU has raised this issue in its dialogue with the Libyan authorities. Most recently the High Representative/Vice-President issued a statement calling for full respect of the rights of detainees in Libya and for the authorities to accelerate the process of bringing all places of detention under their control and to investigate allegations of violations of detainees' rights. The Libyan government has reacted positively to these calls and has stated that it is in the process of implementing measures aiming at transferring the control of detention facilities to the authorities.

The EU has provided emergency assistance to people in need of protection as a result of the conflict and will support by the authorities in their efforts to ensure respect for human rights, democratic values and the rule of law. Moreover, it is currently funding through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights to provide victims of torture, enforced disappearances and victims of violent trauma in Libya with rehabilitation and support services and to advocate for a national legal and policy framework that addresses torture and other forms of ill-treatment.

As regards the comments of the Libyan representative at the Human Rights Council, the EU believes that homophobia constitutes a blatant violation of human dignity which aims to denigrate people and deprive them of their rights on the basis of their sexual orientation. The EU encourages the Libyan authorities to dissociate themselves from such statements and to avoid any possible discrimination among Libyan citizens, including on the basis of sexual orientation.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-001984/12
Komisijai
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(2012 m. vasario 20 d.)

Tema: Aviacijos saugumo ir keleivių tapatybės nustatymo procedūra

Oro transporto vežėjai linkę vis labiau automatizuoti keleivių įlaipinimo į orlaivius procedūrą. Kai kurių ES valstybių oro uostuose įsigaliojo nauja tvarka: tam, kad patektų į lėktuvą, keleiviui užtenka automate prie įlaipinimo vartų nuskaityti iš anksto išspausdintą įlaipinimo taloną. Automatizacija sutaupo keleivių laiką, o kelionių organizatoriai ir oro vežėjai sumažina paslaugų teikimo išlaidas ir užtikrina operatyvumą. Tačiau atkreiptinas dėmesys į tai, kad keleivio tapatybės nebenustatoma nei atliekant rezervaciją, nei registruojantis ar įlaipinant į orlaivį.

— Kokia yra EK pozicija šiuo klausimu?

— Įlaipinimo procedūros supaprastinimas, kai vyksta skrydžiai ES erdvėje, būtų sveikintinas, bet ar nenukenčia keleivių saugumas, ar nesudaromos palankesnės sąlygos nusikaltėlių ir nusikalstamų grupuočių veiklai?

— Ar EK nemano, kad visiškas keleivių tapatybės nustatymo procedūros atsisakymas kai kurių ES valstybių narių oro uostuose gali padidinti nelegalaus žmonių vežimo ir kitokio piktnaudžiavimo riziką, kai į orlaivį gali būti įlaipinami asmenys su kito asmens vardu išduotu bilietu ir gautu įlaipinimo talonu?

— Kaip nelaimingo atsitikimo ar kitais ypatingais atvejais oro vežėjas galėtų patvirtinti, kad asmenys, kurių duomenys pateikiami konkretaus skrydžio keleivių sąraše, buvo iš tiesų vežami orlaiviu?

S. Kallaso atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2012 m. birželio 26 d.)

Kai Sąjungoje vykdomi nacionaliniai skrydžiai ir skrydžiai Šengeno erdvėje, kertant ES vidaus sieną tikrinti asmens tapatybės kortelės nereikalaujama. Oro uostuose, kurie dažnai yra sienos kirtimo punktai, vadovaujamasi iš esmės tuo pačiu principu.

Su aviacijos sauga susijusiais ES teisės aktais, pagrįstais tarptautiniais standartais, siekiama uždrausti į oro uosto saugumo zonas ar į lėktuvą įsinešti daiktus, kurie gali būti pavojingi aviacijai. Juose nenumatytas keleivių tapatybės nustatymas, tačiau reikalaujama, kad visi keleiviai, norintys praeiti oro uosto patikros punktą, turėtų galiojantį įlaipinimo taloną. Registruotas bagažas turi priklausyti lėktuve esančiam keleiviui. Valstybių narių aviacijos saugos institucijos pagrįstais atvejais gali reikalauti tikrinti įlaipinamų oro transporto keleivių tapatybę.

Komisija nemano, kad šios aviacijos saugos priemonės tinkamiausios nusikaltėlių tapatybei arba administracinės ar sutarčių teisės pažeidimams nustatyti, ir mano, kad joms turi būti taikomi platesnio masto teisėsaugos veiksmai. Policija, muitinė ir kitos institucijos gali bet kada įsikišti į įlaipinimo ar išlaipinimo procesą ir atlikti tapatybės patikrą, kad būtų užkirstas kelias prekybai žmonėmis ir kitokiai nusikalstamai veikai. Be to, keletas oro transporto bendrovių dėl komercinių priežasčių prašo vykdyti vizualinę tapatybės patikrą registravimo vietoje ar vykdant įlaipinimą ir tikrinti, ar turimos reikiamos vizos.

Nelaimingo atsitikimo ar kitos ekstremalios situacijos atveju vežėjas atskleidžia turimą informaciją apie keleivius. ES saugos teisės aktais reikalaujama, kad oro transporto bendrovės pateiktų visų orlaivyje esančių asmenų patvirtintą sąrašą, grindžiamą turima geriausia informacija.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001984/12
to the Commission
Justas Vincas Paleckis (S&D)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Aviation security and passenger identification procedures

Air carriers are increasingly tending to automate aircraft boarding procedures. New arrangements have come into force at airports in some EU Member States: in order to board a plane, a passenger simply has to swipe a pre-printed boarding pass across a scanner at the boarding gate. Automation saves passengers time, while travel agents and air carriers can reduce the cost of providing services and guarantee efficiency. However, attention should be drawn to the fact that a passenger's identity is no longer checked when making a reservation, at check-in or when boarding.

— What is the position of the European Commission on this issue?

— Simplification of boarding procedures for flights within the EU would be welcome, but does this not adversely affect passenger security, and does it not create favourable conditions for the activities of criminals and criminal gangs?

— Does the European Commission not feel that the total abandonment of procedures for checking the identity of passengers at airports in some EU Member States may increase the risk of illegal people trafficking and other forms of abuse when people can board a plane with a ticket and boarding pass issued in the name of another person?

— In the event of an accident or other emergency, how would an air carrier be able to confirm that people whose details are included on a specific passenger list really were on board the aircraft?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2012)

For national flights and within the Schengen area of the Union there is no requirement to check an identity card before crossing an EU internal boarder. Identity checks at airports which are often border crossings follow in principle the same spirit.

As regards aviation security EU legislation based on international standards pursues the objective of prohibiting items identified as potentially dangerous for aviation from being brought into security relevant areas of an airport or on board a plane. It does not stipulate the identification of passengers but requires any passenger wishing to proceed beyond the airport security checkpoint to hold a valid boarding pass. Checked-in baggage must relate to a passenger on board. Whenever justified identity checks of air passengers for boarding may be required by Member States' aviation security authorities.

The Commission does not consider aviation security measures as best conceived to identify criminals or detect infringement of administrative or contractual law and deems these to be subject to action of wider law enforcement. Police, customs, or other authorities can intervene at any point in the boarding or disembarking process and perform identity checks to prevent people trafficking and other form of criminal offences. In addition several airline companies ask for visual identification at check-in or on boarding for commercial reasons and the verification of correct travel visas.

In the event of an accident or other emergency situation the transport operator discloses the passenger information at its disposal. EU safety legislation requests from airlines to provide validated lists of all persons on board an aircraft based on the best available information.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001985/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Prácticas comerciales desleales con el consumidor por parte de entidades bancarias

Durante los últimos cinco años, las entidades de crédito han intensificado la comercialización de determinados productos financieros entre pequeños ahorradores como «participaciones preferentes», «deuda subordinada», «obligaciones convertibles en acciones», «cuotas participativas», etc. Estos productos contribuyen a reforzar el capital de las entidades de crédito, ya que todos ellos entran dentro del concepto «instrumentos financieros», tal y como lo recoge la Ley 24/1988 del Mercado de Valores en su artículo 2.1, que incorpora el anexo I, sección C, de la Directiva 2004/39/CE. Las entidades bancarias que los han comercializado de una manera masiva en estos últimos años tienen en conjunto una cuota de mercado cercana al 100 %.

El elevado número de afectados, calculado en un millón, constituyen prueba de que esta operación responde a una intensa operativa diseñada por las entidades, y puesta en práctica con voluntad de colocar estos productos a gran escala. Según datos del AIAF (Mercado de Deuda Privada), de 2007 a 2011 la cifra ascendió a 12 876 millones de euros. Desde que en 2009 la Autoridad Bancaria Europea (EBA) determinara que las preferentes emitidas hasta esa fecha no cumplían con las exigencias de capital computable como recursos propios, bancos y cajas han lanzado ofertas de canje de las antiguas «participaciones preferentes» por productos que cumplían con los nuevos requisitos exigidos por la EBA, pero que resultaban igualmente complejos, e incluso más arriesgados.

Los consumidores acudían al canje ante la amenaza, puesta de manifiesto en ese momento, de quedarse con unos productos perpetuos y con nula rentabilidad. Es decir, las entidades advertían de la verdadera naturaleza del producto y sus riesgos en el momento del canje de las «participaciones preferentes», en lugar de haberlo hecho en el momento anterior de su comercialización. Las entidades que hicieron operaciones de canje fueron BBVA, Santander, Bankia, Banco Sabadell, Banco Popular, CaixaBank y Banca Cívica.

1. El problema provocado por estas entidades en la comercialización masiva de los productos descritos entre quienes no poseen el perfil adecuado para contratarlo ¿no cree la Comisión que supone un indicativo claro del incumplimiento generalizado de las exigencias recogidas en el artículo 19, apartado 3 de la Directiva 2004/39/CE?

2. ¿Considera la Comisión que las entidades relacionadas han podido cometer una práctica comercial desleal de carácter masivo por omisiones engañosas, al ocultar al destinatario información relevante para adoptar una decisión con conocimiento de causa? (Directiva 2005/29/CE de prácticas comerciales desleales, artículos 5 y 6).

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La Directiva 2004/39/CE regula la prestación de servicios de inversión por las empresas de inversión y las entidades de crédito en relación con los instrumentos financieros. El artículo 19 establece las normas de conducta que debe cumplir la prestación de servicios de inversión a clientes. Por ejemplo, cuando se presta asesoramiento en materia de inversiones, el artículo 19, apartado 4, impone la obligación de realizar un test estricto de aptitud. Las empresas de inversión también deben proporcionar a los clientes información relativa a la empresa y sus servicios, a los instrumento financieros y las estrategias de inversión, información que deberá incluir orientaciones y advertencias apropiadas acerca de los riesgos asociados a las inversiones en esos instrumentos, de modo que les permita, en lo posible, comprender la naturaleza y los riesgos del servicio de inversión y del instrumento financiero de que se trate (artículo 19, apartado 3).

La Directiva 2005/29/CE («Directiva sobre las prácticas comerciales desleales») es una Directiva horizontal que se aplica a todas las transacciones entre empresas y consumidores. Sobre esta Directiva prevalecen las disposiciones sectoriales de la UE que regulan aspectos de las prácticas comerciales desleales, tales como las disposiciones del artículo 19 de la Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros, que establecen el principio general de que las empresas de inversión deben actuar con honestidad, imparcialidad y profesionalidad, en el mejor interés de sus clientes. La Directiva sobre las prácticas comerciales desleales solo interviene para complementar la Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros.

La Comisión es responsable del control de la transposición y aplicación correcta del Derecho de la UE por los Estados miembros. La Comisión no puede adoptar una posición sobre casos individuales de prácticas de comercialización ni sobre la posible naturaleza engañosa de la información facilitada a los inversores por las entidades de crédito. El análisis y el asesoramiento en los casos individuales deben realizarse teniendo en cuenta las circunstancias del caso tratado, y ello incumbe a las autoridades nacionales competentes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001985/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Unfair marketing practices by banks with regard to consumers

Over the last five years, credit institutions have stepped up the marketing of certain financial products among small savers such as 'preference shares', 'subordinated debt', 'convertible bonds', 'voting shares', etc. These products help to strengthen the capital of credit institutions, since they all fall under the heading of 'financial instruments', as included in Article 2.1 of *Ley 24/1988 del Mercado de Valores*, Securities Market Act, which incorporates Annex I, section C of Directive 2004/39/EC. Banks which have marketed them massively in recent years have a combined market share of close to 100 %.

The high number of people affected, estimated at one million, is proof that this was an intensive operation, designed by the entities and carried out with the aim of placing these products on a large scale. According to data from the AIAF Private Debt Market, from 2007 to 2011 the figure stood at EUR 12.876 million. Since 2009, when the European Banking Authority (EBA) judged that the preference shares issued up to that time did not meet requirements for capital countable as own funds, banks and building societies have launched offers to exchange the old 'preference shares' for products that comply with the new EBA requirements, but that are equally complex and that can be of even higher risk.

Consumers accepted the exchange under the threat, made evident at the time, of being left with unprofitable perpetual products. In other words, banks warned of the true nature of the product and its risks at the time of exchanging the 'preference shares', instead of doing so prior to marketing them. The banks that carried out exchange operations were BBVA, Santander, Bankia, Banco Sabadell, Banco Popular, CaixaBank and Banca Cívica.

1. Does the Commission not believe that the problem caused by these entities, when they undertook mass marketing of the products described to people without the right profile to contract them, is a clear indication of widespread noncompliance with the requirements set out in Article 19(3) of Directive 2004/39/EC?

2. Does the Commission consider that the entities involved may have committed a massive unfair trading practice by means of misleading omissions, since they concealed information from recipients that was relevant to making an informed decision (Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, Articles 5 and 6)?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) regulates the provision of investment services by investment firms and credit institutions in relation to financial instruments. Article 19 contains the conduct of business obligations to be complied with when providing investment services to clients. For instance when investment advice is provided, Article 19(4) imposes the obligation to conduct a strict suitability test. Investment firms have also to provide clients with information about the firm and its services, the financial instruments and investment strategies, including appropriate guidance and warnings on the risks associated with investments in those instruments, so that clients are reasonably able to understand the nature and risks of the service and of the financial instrument (Article 19(3)).

Directive 2005/29/EC (UCP) is a horizontal Directive which applies to all business-to-consumer transactions. Sector-based EU provisions regulating aspects of unfair commercial practices, such as the MiFID requirements set in Article 19 establishing the general principle that investment firms act honestly, fairly and professionally in accordance with the best interests of the client, prevail over it. The UCPD may only come into play to complement the MiFID.

The Commission is responsible for the monitoring of Member States' correct transposition and application of EC law. The Commission cannot take a position on individual cases of marketing practices or the possible misleading nature of the information provided to investors by credit institutions. The analysis and assessment of individual cases have to be undertaken against the background of the circumstances of the relevant case. This falls under the competence of national competent authorities.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001986/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Protección de consumidores minoristas de productos financieros en la Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros

La Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros permitió y promovió la fragmentación de los mercados de renta variable europea, creando sistemas de negociación multilaterales (o MTF) y también alentando las operaciones bilaterales extrabursátiles o fuera del ámbito de los mercados organizados (OTC), que podrían representar hoy en día aproximadamente el 40 % de los intercambios.

En general, la Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros ha facilitado la reintermediación de los mercados de acciones en beneficio de los intermediarios financieros y en detrimento de los inversores finales, empujando a muchos minoristas a adquirir productos «empaquetados», es decir, con elementos subyacentes y altas comisiones integradas. Esta posición vulnerable de los pequeños inversores se ha puesto de manifiesto en la comercialización masiva e indiscriminada de productos tales como «participaciones preferentes», «deuda subordinada», «obligaciones convertibles en acciones», «cuotas participativas», etc.

La transparencia de la información preintercambio y postintercambio se ha deteriorado considerablemente, ya que los pequeños inversores no suelen obtener la información directamente del mercado, sino de sus intermediarios.

1. ¿Ha investigado la Comisión la aplicación efectiva de las disposiciones referidas a la protección de los pequeños inversores incluidas en la Directiva?

2. ¿Ha considerado la Comisión la posibilidad de reducir la «oscuridad» y el comercio en los mercados extrabursátiles?

3. Los últimos acontecimientos han puesto de manifiesto cómo la venta influenciada de productos financieros a los consumidores minoristas pone en peligro la primacía de los intereses de los clientes. ¿Ha constatado la Comisión que esta función de protección del inversor clave en la Directiva no se aplica correctamente en los Estados miembros e incluso es ignorada por los supervisores?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La Directiva 2004/39/CE (DMIF) ([1]) introdujo más competencia entre los centros de negociación y más posibilidades de elección para los inversores, aumentó la transparencia en los mercados de acciones y aplicó normas de organización y de conducta empresarial a las sociedades de inversión y a los bancos. No obstante, los mercados financieros han cambiado considerablemente en los últimos años. La crisis financiera también ha revelado deficiencias. La propuesta de revisión de la Directiva MIF ([2]) tiene por objeto abordar los ámbitos en que hacen falta mejoras, incluidas medidas sobre transparencia y sobre la prestación de servicios a los inversores minoristas.

Si bien la incorporación y la aplicación de la Directiva MIF han sido satisfactorias en general, hay algunas disposiciones que pueden haber dado lugar a que los inversores no gocen de un grado suficiente de protección. Varios de estos problemas se han reconocido y abordado en la revisión ([3]).

La nueva categoría, totalmente transparente, de «sistema organizado de negociación (SON)» ([4]), la ampliación de la transparencia previa y posterior a la negociación a los valores no participativos y la obligación de negociación de derivados normalizados supondrán que, por defecto, solo habrá negociación en mercados no organizados irregular y *ad hoc* fuera de esta normativa transparente.

([1]) DO L 145 de 30.4.2004, pp. 1-44.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0656:FIN:ES:PDF.
([3]) Por ejemplo, limitación de la posibilidad que tienen los Estados miembros de eximir a las entidades que prestan determinados servicios a escala nacional o la falta de regulación de la venta de depósitos estructurados.
([4]) Propuesta de Reglamento relativo a los mercados de instrumentos financieros y por el que se modifica el Reglamento [EMIR] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0652:FIN:ES:PDF.

La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de casos concretos en que las autoridades competentes hayan pasado por alto las normas de protección de los inversores de la DMIF. La propuesta de revisión de la Directiva MIF ([5]) introduce medidas para mejorar la distribución de instrumentos financieros a los clientes, la responsabilidad de los órganos de dirección de los bancos y las empresas de inversión y el marco de supervisión. En su trabajo sobre los productos preempaquetados de inversión minorista, la Comisión está elaborando un importante documento de información armonizado para aumentar el conocimiento de los inversores minoristas acerca de los productos en los que se proponen invertir.

([5]) Ver la nota a pie de página n° 2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001986/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Protection of retail consumers of financial products in the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive

The Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) allowed and encouraged the fragmentation of European equity markets, creating multilateral trading facilities (MTFs) and also encouraging bilateral OTC (over-the-counter) transactions, which today could represent about 40 % of trades.

In general, MiFID has facilitated the reintermediation of equity markets for the benefit of financial intermediaries and to the detriment of end-investors, pushing many retailers to purchase 'packaged' products, i.e. with underlying instruments and high commissions built in. The vulnerable position of small investors has been demonstrated by the large-scale, indiscriminate marketing of products such as 'preference shares', 'subordinated debt', 'convertible bonds', 'voting shares', etc.

The transparency of pre-exchange and post-exchange information has deteriorated considerably, since small investors rarely get information directly from the market, but instead from the intermediaries.

1. Has the Commission investigated whether MiFID's provisions on the protection of small investors have been property implemented?

2. Has the Commission considered the possibility of shedding light on this 'darkness' and trading in OTC markets?

3. Recent events have shown how the biased sale of financial products to retail customers threatens the primacy of customer interests. Has the Commission found that provisions on investor protection, a key aim of the directive, are being incorrectly implemented by the Member States and even ignored by supervisory bodies?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID) ([1]) introduced more competition among trading venues and more choice for investors, increased transparency in the equities markets and applied organisational and conduct of business rules to investment firms and banks. However, financial markets have over the last years changed substantially. The financial crisis has also exposed weaknesses. The proposal for a review of MiFID ([2]) aims at addressing areas where improvements are needed, including measures on transparency and on provision of services to retail investors.

While the transposition and application of MiFID have generally been satisfactory, there are some provisions which may have resulted in investors not benefiting from sufficient levels of protection. Several of these problems have been identified and addressed in the review ([3]).

The new fully transparent category of Organised Trading Facility (OTF) ([4]), the extension of the pre- and post-trading transparency to non-equity instruments, the trading obligation of standardised derivatives will mean that by default only ad hoc and irregular OTC trading will take place outside this transparent regulatory framework.

The Commission is not aware of specific cases in which MiFID investor protection rules have been ignored by competent authorities. The proposal for a MiFID review ([5]) introduces measures to improve the distribution of financial instruments to clients, the responsibility of management bodies of banks and investment firms, the supervisory framework. In its work on packaged retail investment products, the Commission is developing a harmonised key information document to increase retail investors' awareness about the products they intend to invest in.

([1]) OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1-44.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0656:FIN:EN:PDF.
([3]) For instance, narrowing the option left to Member States to exempt entities providing certain services at national level or the lack of regulation for the sale of structured deposits.
([4]) Proposal for a regulation on markets in financial instruments and amending Regulation [EMIR], http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0652:FIN:EN:PDF.
([5]) See footnote No 2.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001987/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Medidas para proteger el derecho de los consumidores en los mercados financieros

La Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros permitió y promovió la fragmentación de los mercados de renta variable europea, creando sistemas de negociación multilaterales (o MTF) y también alentando las operaciones bilaterales extrabursátiles o fuera del ámbito de los mercados organizados (OTC), que podrían representar hoy en día aproximadamente el 40 % de los intercambios.

En general, la Directiva ha facilitado la reintermediación de los mercados de acciones en beneficio de los intermediarios financieros y en detrimento de los inversores finales, empujando a muchos minoristas a adquirir productos «empaquetados», es decir, con elementos subyacentes y altas comisiones integradas. Esta posición vulnerable de los pequeños inversores se ha puesto de manifiesto en la comercialización masiva e indiscriminada de productos tales como «participaciones preferentes», «deuda subordinada», «obligaciones convertibles en acciones», «cuotas participativas», etc.

1. ¿Ha valorado la Comisión la necesidad de incluir en la Directiva disposiciones de protección del inversor para cubrir todos los productos financieros de inversión para minoristas que se ofrece a los ciudadanos de la UE (como los productos de renta fija privada que cotizan en mercados secundarios) y no sólo, como parece ser el caso, de una parte de ellos?

2. ¿Qué medidas se están contemplando ante problemas como el de la venta indiscriminada de productos de ahorro entre minoristas tales como «participaciones preferentes», «deuda subordinada», «obligaciones convertibles en acciones», «cuotas participativas», etc. en la reforma financiera que se está llevando a cabo de la Directiva 39/2004/CE y la Directiva 2006/73/CE, conocida como MiFID 2?

3. En caso contrario, ¿va a proponer la Comisión medidas específicas para mejorar los derechos de los consumidores y clientes minoristas para evitar y, en caso de ser necesario, sancionar adecuadamente hechos como los descritos?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión está totalmente de acuerdo en que todos los productos de inversión minorista deben ser regulados adecuadamente. La Comisión está preparando propuestas que se aplicarían horizontalmente a los productos de inversión al por menor, independientemente de su forma jurídica, para aumentar la transparencia. Hará falta un nuevo «documento de información clave» para cada producto, en el que se indiquen, en unas cuantas páginas, las características principales del mismo. Los documentos deben ser breves, presentarse en formato normalizado y facilitar una información resumida esencial sobre los riesgos y los costes que pueda servir para comparar productos de manera equitativa. Se informará al inversor ordinario en un lenguaje comprensible acerca de la posibilidad de perder dinero y de los altos riesgos.

La propuesta de revisión de la Directiva DMIF ([1]), basada en las normas vigentes, fija requisitos más estrictos en una serie de ámbitos a fin de reforzar la protección de los inversores. La propuesta aclarará que la venta de depósitos estructurados por las entidades de crédito y la venta por las empresas de inversión y las entidades de crédito de sus propios valores, aún cuando no se proporcione asesoramiento, entran en el ámbito de aplicación de la DMIF. Se reforzarán las normas de conducta de las empresas en lo relativo al asesoramiento de inversiones y la gestión de la cartera de valores. La lista de productos no complejos que puede ofrecerse con un menor nivel de protección a los clientes se reduce considerablemente y estos instrumentos no podrán ofrecerse conjuntamente con la concesión de préstamos.

([1]) Directiva 2004/39/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 21 de abril de 2004, relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros (DO L 145 de 30.4.2004, pp. 1-44).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001987/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Measures to protect the rights of consumers in financial markets

The directive on financial instrument markets allowed and encouraged the fragmentation of European equity markets, creating multilateral trading facilities (MTFs) and also encouraging bilateral OTC (outside the organised market) transactions, which today could represent about 40 % of exchanges.

In general, the directive has facilitated the reintermediation of equity markets in favour of financial intermediaries and to the detriment of end-investors, pushing many retailers to purchase 'packaged' products, i.e. with underlying elements and high commissions built in. The vulnerable position of small investors has been demonstrated in the massive and indiscriminate marketing of products such as 'preference shares', 'subordinated debt', 'convertible bonds', 'voting shares', etc.

1. Has the Commission assessed the need to include within the directive provisions for investor protection that cover all financial products for retail investment offered to EU citizens (such as fixed-income products traded in secondary markets) and not only, as seems to be the case, some of them?

2. In the financial reform being made to Directive 39/2004/EC and Directive 2006/73/EC, known as MiFID 2, what measures are being considered to deal with problems such as the indiscriminate sale to retailers of savings products like 'preference shares', 'subordinated debt', 'convertible bonds', 'voting shares', etc.?

3. If none, will the Commission propose specific measures to improve the rights of consumers and retail customers in order to prevent and, if necessary, adequately punish acts such as those described?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission strongly agrees that all retail investment products need to be properly regulated. The Commission is currently preparing proposals which would apply horizontally to retail investment products, irrespective of their legal form, to improve transparency. A new 'key information document' would be required for every product, setting out in a few pages the main features of the product. The documents should be short and take a standardised form, offering key summary information on risks and costs that can be used to compare products in a fair way. The ordinary investor would be told in plain language about the possibility of losing money and about the important risks.

The proposal for a review of MiFID ([1]), building on the existing rules, sets stricter requirements in a number of areas in order to strengthen investor protection. The proposal would clarify that the sale of structured deposits by credit institutions or the sale by investment firms and credit institutions of their own securities, even when no advice is provided, falls within the scope of MiFID. The conduct of business requirements will be strengthened for investment advice, portfolio management. The list of non-complex products that can be offered with a lower level of protection to clients is significantly narrowed down and these instruments cannot be offered in conjunction with the granting of loans.

([1]) Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on markets in financial instruments, OJ L 145, 30.4.2004, p. 1-44.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001988/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Malas prácticas en el cumplimiento de exigencias de capital

Durante los últimos cinco años, las entidades de crédito han intensificado la comercialización de determinados productos financieros entre pequeños ahorradores como «participaciones preferentes», «deuda subordinada», «obligaciones convertibles en acciones», «cuotas participativas», etc. Estos productos contribuyen a reforzar el capital de las entidades de crédito, ya que todos ellos entran dentro del concepto «instrumentos financieros», tal y como lo recoge la Ley 24/1988, del Mercado de Valores en su artículo 2.1, que incorpora el anexo I, sección C, de la Directiva 2004/39/CE. Las entidades bancarias que los han comercializado de una manera masiva en estos últimos años (BBVA, CAM, Caixa Galicia, La Caixa, Santander, Banco Sabadell, Banco Popular, Banesto y Bankia, entre otros) tienen en conjunto una cuota de mercado cercana al 100 %.

En general todos estos productos descritos tienen en común, que: (1) son valores que no tienen liquidez inmediata; (2) no existe garantía sobre el capital invertido, pudiendo generarse pérdidas en el capital; (3) no están cubiertos por el Fondo de Garantía de Inversiones; (4) en general, no se prevé ningún tipo de compromiso de recompra por parte del emisor.

Son pues instrumentos financieros de riesgo elevado para el ahorrador (consumidor), y que merecen por tanto la catalogación de «producto complejo». Tradicionalmente estos productos se han comercializado entre inversores que pueden clasificarse como «clientes profesionales», según el anexo II de la Directiva 2044/39/CE. Para que el cliente minorista pueda adquirir un producto complejo es necesario que la entidad de crédito realice un «test de conveniencia» que «facilite información sobre sus conocimientos y experiencia en el ámbito de inversión correspondiente al tipo concreto de producto o servicio ofrecido o solicitado, de modo que la empresa de inversión pueda evaluar si el servicio o producto de inversión previsto es adecuado para el cliente» (artículo 19, apartado 5 Directiva 2004/39/CE).

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que la venta de estos productos, por su dimensión y carácter masivo, responde a un plan operativo específico puesto en marcha por las entidades descritas con el objetivo de captar capital?

2. ¿Cuál es la opinión de la Comisión sobre el hecho que las exigencias de capital impuestas a las entidades de crédito traten de cumplirse a costa de vulnerar los derechos de los consumidores?

3. ¿Considera la Comisión que se ha infringido el artículo 5, apartado 1, letra g) de la Directiva 2006/73/CE?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La cuestión de si la venta por las entidades de crédito de los mencionados productos financieros a los consumidores podría responder a un plan específico para reunir capital a sus expensas, directa o indirectamente, incumbe en primer lugar a las autoridades nacionales competentes y a los tribunales. En general, la Comisión observa que el cumplimiento de los requisitos de capital debe realizarse siempre sin perjuicio del cumplimiento por parte de las entidades de crédito, cuando presten servicios de inversión, de las condiciones organizativas y de funcionamiento previstas en la Directiva MIF. La DMIF dispone que estas entidades tengan y empleen dispositivos organizativos y administrativos eficaces para impedir que los conflictos de intereses vayan en detrimento de los intereses de los clientes ([1]). Puede surgir un conflicto de intereses en los casos en que la empresa de inversión considerada pueda obtener un beneficio financiero o evitar una pérdida financiera a expensas del cliente o tenga un interés en el resultado de un servicio del interés del cliente. Si los dispositivos para gestionar los conflictos de intereses son insuficientes para garantizar la prevención de perjuicios a los intereses de los clientes, la empresa debe revelar la naturaleza o el origen de los conflictos de intereses al cliente antes de hacer negocios en su nombre ([2]).

([1]) Artículo 13, apartado 3, y artículo 18.
([2]) Artículo 18, apartado 2, de la DMIF.

Como posible infracción del artículo 5, apartado 1, letra g), de la Directiva de ejecución 2006/73/CE, este extremo exige una valoración de las peculiaridades de cada asunto considerado. La Comisión es responsable de supervisar la correcta transposición y aplicación del Derecho de la UE por parte de los Estados miembros. Sin embargo, cuando se trata de asuntos concretos, incumbe principalmente a las autoridades nacionales competentes y a los tribunales nacionales investigar si las empresas de inversión cumplen su obligación de ejercer sus funciones de manera correcta, honrada y profesional frente a sus clientes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001988/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Bad practices in meeting capital requirements

Over the last five years, credit institutions have stepped up the marketing of certain financial products among small savers such as 'preference shares', 'subordinated debt', 'convertible bonds', 'voting shares', etc. These products help to strengthen the capital of credit institutions, since they all fall under the heading of 'financial instruments', as included in Article 2.1 of *Ley 24/1988, del Mercado de Valores,* Securities Market Act 24/1988, which incorporates Annex I, section C of Directive 2004/39/EC. The banks that have marketed them massively in recent years (BBVA, CAM, Caixa Galicia, La Caixa, Santander, Banco Sabadell, Banco Popular, Banesto and Bankia, among others) have a combined market share of close to 100 %.

In general, all of the products mentioned have the following in common: (1) they are values without immediate liquidity; (2) there is no guarantee on invested capital and capital losses can be generated; (3) they are not covered by the Investment Guarantee Fund; (4) in general, the issuer makes no repurchase commitment.

Thus, they are financial instruments with high-risk for the saver (consumer) and, therefore, deserve the classification of 'complex product'. Traditionally, these products have been marketed to investors who qualify as 'professional customers', according to Annex II of Directive 2044/39/CE. For a retail customer to acquire a complex product the credit institution must perform a 'suitability test' to 'provide information about their knowledge and experience in the investment field related to the specific type of product or service offered or requested, so that the investment firm can assess whether the planned investment service or product is appropriate for the customer' (Article 19(5), Directive 2004/39/EC).

1. Does the Commission believe that the sale of these products, given their massive scale and nature, responds to a specific plan of operations, implemented by the entities mentioned in order to raise capital?

2. What is the Commission's opinion of the fact that an attempt is being made to meet capital requirements imposed on credit institutions at the expense of violating the rights of consumers?

3. Does the Commission consider Article 5, Section 1(1)(g) of Directive 2006/73/EC to have been infringed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The question whether the sale by credit institutions of the mentioned financial products to consumers might respond to a specific plan in order to raise capital at their direct or indirect expense falls under the primary competence of national competent authorities (NCAs) and courts. By way of a general comment, the Commission notes that the fulfilment of capital requirements should always be without prejudice to the compliance by credit institutions, when providing investment services, with the MiFID organisational and operating conditions. MiFID requires these institutions to maintain and operate effective organisational and administrative arrangements in order to prevent conflicts of interest from adversely affecting the interests of the clients ([1]). A conflict of interest might arise in cases where the investment firm is likely to make a financial gain or avoid a financial loss at the expense of the client or if it has an interest in the outcome of the service, distinct from the client's interest. Where arrangements to manage conflicts of interest are insufficient to ensure prevention of damages to clients' interests, the firm is required to disclose the nature or the sources of conflicts of interest to the client before undertaking business on its behalf ([2]).

As to a potential violation of Article 5(1)(g) of the implementing Directive 2006/73/EC, this requires the assessment of the specificities of the individual case at stake. The Commission is responsible for the monitoring of Member States' correct transposition and application of EC law. However, when it comes to individual cases, it is the primary competence of NCAs and national courts to investigate if investment firms comply with the requirement to exercise their functions soundly, honestly and professionally in relation to their clients.

([1]) Articles 13(3) and 18.
([2]) Article 18(2) of MiFID.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001989/12
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Posible conflicto de intereses en la venta de productos financieros complejos

Durante los últimos cinco años, las entidades de crédito han intensificado la comercialización de determinados productos financieros entre pequeños ahorradores como «participaciones preferentes», «deuda subordinada», «obligaciones convertibles en acciones», «cuotas participativas», etc. Estos productos contribuyen a reforzar el capital de las entidades de crédito, ya que todos ellos entran dentro del concepto «instrumentos financieros», tal y como lo recoge la Ley 24/1988 del Mercado de Valores en su artículo 2.1, que incorpora el anexo I, sección C, de la Directiva 2004/39/CE. Las entidades bancarias que los han comercializado de una manera masiva en estos últimos años tienen en conjunto una cuota de mercado cercana al 100 %.

En general, todos estos productos descritos tienen en común que: (1) son valores que no tienen liquidez inmediata; (2) no existe garantía sobre el capital invertido y se pueden generar pérdidas en el capital; (3) no están cubiertos por el Fondo de Garantía de Inversiones; (4) en general, no se prevé ningún tipo de compromiso de recompra por parte del emisor. Son, pues, instrumentos financieros de riesgo elevado para el ahorrador que merecen, por tanto, la catalogación de «producto complejo». Las entidades, aprovechando su extensa red comercial, colocaron entre pequeños ahorradores, al margen de su perfil, esta tipología de productos en detrimento de las obligaciones que la normativa impone en su relación con la clientela.

Según denuncia Adicae, estos productos complejos fueron colocados entre consumidores que tradicionalmente sólo habían ahorrado en productos como depósitos; o que por su elevada edad o situación económica no estaban dispuestos en buena lógica a dejar sus ahorros en perpetuidad ni comprendían su funcionamiento. El elevado número de afectados, calculado en un millón, constituyen prueba de que esta operación responde a una intensa operativa diseñada por las entidades y puesta en práctica con voluntad de colocar estos productos a gran escala. Según datos del AIAF (Mercado de Deuda Privada), de 2007 a 2011, la cifra ascendió a 12 876 millones de euros.

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que ha habido un conflicto de intereses entre las entidades comercializadoras de estos productos y los consumidores?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que los organismos reguladores competentes (en España, la CNMV) han cumplido con las exigencias planteadas por el artículo 13, apartado 3, y el artículo 18 de la Directiva 2004/39/CE, así como los artículos 21 y 22 de la Directiva 2006/73/CE?

3. ¿Cree que ha prevalecido en exclusiva el interés por sanear las entidades de crédito (competencia del Banco de España)?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-001988/2012.

La Comisión se pondrá en contacto con las autoridades españolas para recabar más información sobre los hechos mencionados por Su Señoría.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001989/12
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(20 February 2012)

Subject: Possible conflict of interest in the sale of complex financial products

Over the last five years, credit institutions have stepped up the marketing of certain financial products among small savers such as 'preference shares', 'subordinated debt', 'convertible bonds', 'voting shares', etc. These products help to strengthen the capital of credit institutions, since they all fall under the heading of 'financial instruments', as included in Article 2.1 of Law 24/1988 on the Securities Market, which incorporates Annex I, section C of Directive 2004/39/EC. Banks, which have marketed them massively in recent years, have a combined market share of close to 100 %.

In general, all of the products mentioned have the following in common: (1) they are values without immediate liquidity; (2) there is no guarantee on invested capital and capital losses can be generated; (3) they are not covered by the Investment Guarantee Fund; (4) in general, the issuer makes no repurchase commitment. Thus, they are financial instruments with high-risk for the saver and, therefore, deserve the classification of 'complex product'. The institutions, using their extensive marketing network, placed this type of product with small savers, regardless of their profile, contrary to the obligations the law imposes on their relationship with customers.

The Association of Users of Banks, Building Societies and Insurers (ADICAE) complains that these complex products were placed with consumers who traditionally had only saved in products such as deposits, or who, because of their advanced age or economic situation, were not prepared, quite reasonably, to leave their savings in perpetuity or did not understand how they worked. The high number of people affected, estimated at one million, is proof that this was an intensive operation, designed by the entities and carried out with the aim of placing these products on a large scale. According to data from the AIAF Private Debt Market, from 2007 to 2011, the figure stood at EUR 12.876 million.

1. Does the Commission consider there has been a conflict of interest between the institutions marketing these products and consumers?

2. Does the Commission believe that the responsible regulatory agencies (in Spain, the CNMV) have fulfilled the requirements of Article 13(3) and Article 18 of Directive 2004/39/EC, as well as Articles 21 and 22 of Directive 2006/73/EC?

3. Does it consider that the interest in reorganising the credit institutions (the responsibility of the Bank of Spain) has prevailed to the exclusion of all others?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-001988/2012.

The Commission will be in contact with the Spanish authorities to obtain more information about the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-001990/12
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(21 février 2012)

Objet: Blocus énergétique de Gaza

L'unique centrale énergétique de la bande de Gaza, qui fournit jusqu'aux deux tiers de ses besoins énergétiques, a été fermée mardi 14 février en raison d'un défaut d'approvisionnement en combustible en provenance d'Égypte. Ceci fait que le territoire sous blocus connaît des coupures d'électricité allant jusqu'à 18 heures par jour pour le 1,7 million d'habitants de Gaza.

Le secteur de l'énergie de Gaza est paralysé par une interdiction d'importation sur les matériaux pour la construction ou les réparations, laissant la centrale dans l'incapacité de fonctionner.

L'Égypte veut stopper le passage de combustible par les tunnels sous la frontière entre les pays, mais le terminal officiel de Rafah n'est pas équipé pour le transfert de produits pétroliers et son développement est limité par un accord entre l'Égypte, Israël et l'Autorité palestinienne basée en Cisjordanie.

La centrale électrique de Gaza a besoin de 600 000 litres de combustible par jour pour continuer à fonctionner, mais des sources proches du Centre palestinien pour les Droits de l'homme (PCHR) ont déclaré que seulement 340 000 litres étaient arrivés d'Égypte depuis vendredi, sans qu'il y ait de réserve dans Gaza pour couvrir le déficit.

La crise actuelle peut avoir un impact sur l'accès aux services essentiels, tels que les hôpitaux, les locaux d'enseignement, les pompes à eau et les installations d'eaux usées et tous les autres domaines de la vie nécessitant des quantités suffisantes d'électricité, y compris la fourniture d'eau potable. Les autorités ont mis en garde contre une crise humanitaire.

1. La Commission a-t-elle pris connaissance de la situation?

2. Quelles mesures d'urgence peut prendre la Commission afin d'alléger les besoins des citoyens de Gaza?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Mme Ashton au nom de la Commission
(29 mai 2012)

La Commission connaît la situation en matière d'approvisionnement en énergie dans la bande de Gaza. Pendant plusieurs années, elle a subventionné l'approvisionnement en combustibles de la centrale de Gaza, qui assure un tiers de la production d'électricité.

En 2010, après consultation de l'Autorité palestinienne, l'Union européenne a décidé de concentrer son aide financière sur une contribution au paiement des salaires et des retraites des fonctionnaires et sur le versement trimestriel d'allocations sociales aux familles palestiniennes les plus vulnérables.

L'autorité palestinienne de l'énergie (PENRA) négocie actuellement avec l'Égypte afin de trouver une solution durable pour l'approvisionnement en électricité dans la bande de Gaza. Dans l'intervalle et en guise de solution à court terme, il a été convenu que l'Égypte augmentera immédiatement son approvisionnement en électricité à Gaza, qui passera de 17 MW actuellement à 22 MW, et fournira des combustibles à Gaza dès qu'un accord commercial aura été conclu.

L'UE s'efforce d'apporter son aide dans ce domaine par l'intermédiaire d'un projet de 7 millions d'euros visant à augmenter les performances du secteur énergétique grâce au développement institutionnel et à la réforme du secteur de l'électricité, ce qui comprend la négociation de contrats énergétiques avec des fournisseurs de la région.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-001990/12
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Energy blockade in Gaza

The only power station in the Gaza strip, which supplies up to two-thirds of its energy needs, was closed on Tuesday 14 February 2012 due to a lack of fuel supplies coming from Egypt. As a result, the 1.7 million inhabitants of Gaza, under Israeli blockade, have been suffering power cuts for up to 18 hours a day.

The energy supply in Gaza has been paralysed by the ban on importing materials for construction or repairs, leaving the facility unable to operate.

Egypt wants to stop the flow of fuel via the tunnels underneath the border between the countries, but the official terminal of Rafah cannot take in petroleum products, and its development is limited by an agreement between Egypt, Israel and the Palestinian authority based in the West Bank.

The power station in Gaza requires 600 000 litres of fuel per day to continue to operate, but sources close to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) stated that only 340 000 litres had arrived from Egypt since Friday, with no reserve stocks left in Gaza to make up for the shortfall.

The current crisis may have an impact on access to essential facilities such as hospitals, educational establishments, water pumps and wastewater facilities and all other essential public services requiring significant amounts of electricity, including the provision of drinking water. The authorities have issued warnings of a humanitarian crisis.

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation?

2. What emergency measures can the Commission take in order tohelp meet the needs of the citizens of Gaza?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(29 May 2012)

The Commission is aware of the energy supply situation in the Gaza Strip. For several years, the Commission granted payment for fuel delivery to the Gaza Power Plant which provides one-third of the electricity supply to Gaza.

In 2010, following consultation with the PA, the EU decided to concentrate its financial support on contribution to the salaries and pensions for civil servants and on quarterly payments of social allowances to the most vulnerable Palestinian families.

To provide a sustainable solution for the supply of electricity to the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Energy and National Resources Agency (PENRA) is currently conducting negotiations with Egypt. In the meantime, as a short term solution, it has been agreed that Egypt will immediately increase its current supply of electricity to Gaza from 17 MW to 22 MW and will supply Gaza with Egyptian fuel as soon as a formal commercial agreement is reached.

The EU is looking into ways in which it could help in this issue through a project of EUR 7 million aiming at increasing the performance of the energy sector through institutional development and electricity sector reform which includes negotiating energy contracts with providers in the region.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001991/12
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(21 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Negociaciones para la renovación del Protocolo relativo al Acuerdo de Asociación Pesquero entre Mauritania y la UE

El próximo 31 de julio expira el Protocolo con la República Islámica de Mauritania relativo al Acuerdo de Asociación Pesquero (AAP) con la UE de 2006. Tras cinco rondas de negociaciones, existe cierto pesimismo respecto a la efectiva adopción de un nuevo Protocolo que permita la continuación de la actividad pesquera en las aguas mauritanas.

La no renovación del Protocolo afectaría a numerosas embarcaciones comunitarias, en concreto a 24 buques gallegos, que junto a italianos, griegos y portugueses pescan actualmente en la zona de referencia. La flota gallega vive con particular inquietud, toda vez que, en los sucesivos protocolos adoptados, ha visto cómo su presencia en estas aguas se ha ido reduciendo desde las 39 embarcaciones en 2006 hasta las 24 actuales, es decir, en 15 buques.

Si bien en la última ronda de negociaciones, celebradas en Nouakchott los días 11-15 de diciembre, parece haberse avanzado en cuanto a determinados aspectos técnicos, las mayores diferencias parecen referirse a los aspectos financieros del acuerdo.

— ¿Qué perspectivas tiene la Comisión respecto de la adopción del referido Protocolo?

— ¿Cómo va a asegurar que pueda adoptarse antes de que concluya el actual el próximo 31 de julio?

— ¿Mantendrá la flota de la UE su actual presencia y oportunidades de pesca?

— Aparte de los aspectos financieros, ¿existe algún otro tipo de diferencias que dificulten la adopción del acuerdo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de marzo de 2012)

Las negociaciones con Mauritania con vistas a la celebración de un nuevo Protocolo están en curso. Cualquier acuerdo final debe tener en cuenta el estado de las poblaciones de peces en consonancia con un planteamiento sostenible basado en datos científicos y fundarse en la información relativa al esfuerzo pesquero acumulado en las aguas mauritanas. Considerando el estado de las poblaciones, el esfuerzo pesquero global ha de reducirse.

Mientras que parece posible resolver la cuestión más técnica, el principal problema pendiente en la negociación para la renovación de los AAP es la cuantía de la contribución financiera abonada por el presupuesto de la UE. Mauritania considera que la oferta de la UE es demasiado baja. La UE considera que la demanda de Mauritania no se justifica atendiendo a unas consideraciones comerciales sólidas y a los principios de sostenibilidad.

La Comisión seguirá haciendo todo lo posible por encontrar una solución aceptable para ambas partes y por concluir las negociaciones a tiempo antes de la fecha de expiración del Protocolo actual a fin de evitar la interrupción de las operaciones de pesca después del 1 de agosto de 2012. No obstante, habida cuenta de la situación actual de las negociaciones y del proceso posterior para la adopción del Protocolo por la UE, existe un riesgo de interrupción de las actividades pesqueras.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001991/12
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Negotiations for the renewal of the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between Mauritania and the EU

On 31 July 2012, the 2006 Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the European Community and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania expires. After five rounds of negotiations there is a certain degree of pessimism over whether a new protocol will actually be adopted to enable fishing to continue in Mauritanian waters.

Failure to renew the Protocol would affect many Community vessels, notably 24 Galician boats, which, along with Italian, Greek and Portuguese vessels, currently fish in the area concerned. The Galician fleet is particularly concerned as the successive Protocols that have been adopted have reduced its presence in those waters by 15 vessels, from 39 ships in 2006 to the current total of 24.

While there appears to have been some progress on certain technical aspects in the last round of negotiations, held in Nouakchott from 11 to 15 December 2011, the greatest differences seem to relate to the financial aspects of the agreement.

— In the Commission's opinion, what are the prospects of this Protocol being adopted?

— How will it ensure that it can be adopted before the current Protocol expires on 31 July 2012?

— Will the EU fleet maintain its current presence and fishing opportunities?

— Apart from the financial issues, are there any other differences standing in the way of the adoption of the agreement?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(29 March 2012)

The negotiations with Mauritania in view of conclusion of a new Protocol are ongoing. Any final agreement should take into account the status of the stocks in line with a sustainable approach based on scientific advice and be based on information on the cumulative fishing efforts in the Mauritanian waters. Considering the state of the stocks the overall fishing effort will need to be reduced.

While it seems possible to resolve most technical issue, the main remaining issue in the negotiation for the renewal of the FPA is the level of financial contribution paid by the EU budget. Mauritania considers the EU offer as being too low. The EU considers the Mauritanian demand as not justifiable in terms of sound commercial considerations and sustainability principles.

The Commission will continue to do its utmost to find a mutually acceptable solution and to conclude negotiations in time before the expiry of the current Protocol so as to avoid discontinuity of fishing operations after 1 August 2012. Nevertheless, given the current state of negotiations and subsequent process for the EU adoption for the protocol, there remains a risk of discontinuation of fishing activities.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001992/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Δυσπιστία και ανθελληνικό κλίμα

Με δραματικούς τόνους περιέγραψε ο Ευάγγελος Βενιζέλος, ενώπιον του Προέδρου της Δημοκρατίας τον οποίο επισκέφθηκε σήμερα, τη δυσπιστία που αντιμετωπίζει η Ελλάδα από τους ευρωπαίους εταίρους. «Στην ευρωζώνη είναι αρκετοί αυτοί που δεν μας θέλουν πια», είπε επί λέξει ο κ. Βενιζέλος. Εξερχόμενος του Προεδρικού Μεγάρου, ο αντιπρόεδρος της κυβέρνησης αποκάλυψε ότι ο Κάρολος Παπούλιας, ως ένδειξη συμβολής στο δημοσιονομικό αγώνα της χώρας, αποφάσισε να παραιτηθεί της αποζημίωσής του.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: με ποιον τρόπο μπορεί να επέμβει ώστε να σταματήσουν τα κακόβουλα σχόλια και να σταματήσει το ανθελληνικό κλίμα που καλλιεργείται;

Απάντηση της κας Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Απριλίου 2012)

Η Επιτροπή έχει δηλώσει με σαφήνεια ότι η Ελλάδα θα παραμείνει μέλος της ζώνης του ευρώ. Έχει επίσης υπογραμμίσει την ανάγκη να επιδειχτεί αλληλεγγύη με τον ελληνικό λαό ώστε να ξεπεραστεί η οικονομική κρίση και να επανέλθει η χώρα στην ανάπτυξη. Τα πολύ μεγάλα χρηματοδοτικά ποσά που παρέχουν τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης ευρώ και το ΔΝΤ στην Ελλάδα (καθώς και τα μέτρα που έλαβε η ΕΚΤ προς υποστήριξη του ελληνικού χρηματοοικονομικού συστήματος) είναι η απτή απόδειξη της υποστήριξης της Ελλάδας από τη διεθνή κοινότητα. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή έχει αναλάβει ορισμένες συγκεκριμένες πρωτοβουλίες για να βοηθήσει τις ελληνικές αρχές να προωθήσουν την ανάπτυξη και την απασχόληση, ιδίως με τη χρήση των Ταμείων της ΕΕ στο μέγιστο δυνατό.

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει την κυρία βουλευτή στην απάντηση της στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-1835/12.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001992/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Mistrust and anti-Greek feeling

Evangelos Venizelos has described in dramatic terms the mistrust Greece is facing from its fellow Europeans to the President of the Hellenic Republic, whom he visited today. 'Some eurozone countries do not want us there anymore,' Mr Venizelos stated verbatim. Leaving the Presidential Palace, the Government Vice-President revealed that Karolos Papoulias, as a token contribution to the country's struggle to control the financial situation, has decided to renounce his salary.

In view of the above, will the Commission say how it can intervene to end malicious comments and stem the growing tide of anti-Greek feeling?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(12 April 2012)

The Commission has taken the unequivocal position that Greece will remain a member of the euro area. It has also underlined the need to show solidarity with the Greek people to overcome the financial crisis and return to growth. The very large amounts of financing which the euro area Member States and the IMF are providing Greece (as well, as the measures taken by the ECB in support of the Greek financial system) are the tangible proof of the support the international community gives to Greece. Also, the Commission has taken a number of concrete initiatives to help the Greek authorities to boost growth and jobs, in particular by using EU funds to their full potential.

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-1835/12.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-001993/12
προς την Επιτροπή
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2012)

Θέμα: Γρεβενά: χωριά σε κατάσταση έκτακτης ανάγκης

Περισσότερα από τριάντα πέντε ορεινά χωριά στο νομό Γρεβενών παραμένουν σε κατάσταση έκτακτης ανάγκης, για τρίτη συνεχόμενη ημέρα, εξαιτίας των πυκνών χιονοπτώσεων, ενώ παρά την ύφεση που παρουσιάζει η κακοκαιρία, σε μεγάλα τμήματα του επαρχιακού οδικού δικτύου στη Βόρεια Ελλάδα και τη Θεσσαλία η κυκλοφορία των οχημάτων διεξάγεται με αλυσίδες.

Όπως είπε στο ΑΜΠΕ ο δήμαρχος Γρεβενών Δημοσθένης Κιουπτσίδης, πρόκειται για 37 οικισμούς, που βρίσκονται στον ορεινό όγκο της Πίνδου, αλλά και στο ανατολικό τμήμα του νομού, που κηρύχτηκαν σε κατάσταση έκτακτης ανάγκης, εξαιτίας των συνεχιζόμενων χιονοπτώσεων, αλλά και μεμονωμένων βλαβών που σημειώνονται στα δίκτυα ύδρευσης και ηλεκτροδότησης.

Ωστόσο, όπως διευκρίνισε, κανένας από τους κατοίκους των ορεινών αυτών χωριών δεν κινδυνεύει και δεν παρατηρείται έλλειψη ειδών πρώτης ανάγκης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή: με ποιον τρόπο μπορεί να επέμβει ώστε να βοηθηθούν οι άνθρωποι που έχουν πληγεί από τις καταστροφές που προκάλεσε η κακοκαιρία;

Απάντηση του κ. Hahn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαρτίου 2012)

Το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ μπορεί να κινητοποιηθεί για να υποστηρίξει τα κράτη μέλη τα οποία αντιμετωπίζουν μείζονα καταστροφή με συνολικές ζημίες που υπερβαίνουν το 0,6 % του ακαθάριστου εθνικού εισοδήματός τους ή τα 3 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ σε τιμές του 2002. Για την Ελλάδα, το 2012 το όριο είναι 1 300 000 000 ευρώ. Το Ταμείο Αλληλεγγύης μπορεί επίσης να κινητοποιηθεί, κατ' εξαίρεση, για μια περιφερειακή καταστροφή με σοβαρές και μακροχρόνιες επιπτώσεις στις συνθήκες διαβίωσης και στην οικονομική σταθερότητα της πληγείσας περιοχής. Στις περιπτώσεις αυτές, ένα κράτος μέλος μπορεί να υποβάλει στην Επιτροπή αίτηση για την κινητοποίηση του Ταμείου Αλληλεγγύης της ΕΕ μέσα σε προθεσμία 10 εβδομάδων από την ημερομηνία πρόκλησης της πρώτης ζημίας από την καταστροφή.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001993/12
to the Commission
Niki Tzavela (EFD)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Grevena, Greece: villages in state of emergency

More than thirty-five mountain villages in the prefecture of Grevena are in a state of emergency for the third consecutive day due to heavy snowfall. Despite the respite in the bad weather, drivers are having to fit snow chains to their vehicles on large sections of country roads in northern Greece and Thessaly.

The Mayor of Grevena, Dimosthenis Kiouptsidis, has confirmed to the Athens-Macedonian News Agency (AMNE) that 37 villages in the Pindus massif have been affected. Also villages in the eastern part of the prefecture have declared a state of emergency due to the continuous snowfall and isolated damage to water and electricity networks.

However, he stated that none of the residents of these mountain villages were in any danger and no shortage of basic commodities had been reported.

Will the Commission say how it can intervene in order to help the people affected by the bad weather?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

The EU Solidarity Fund can be mobilised to support Member States that are facing a major disaster with total damage exceeding 0.6 % of their gross national income or EUR 3 billion in 2002 prices. For Greece the threshold in 2012 is EUR 1.3 billion. Exceptionally the Solidarity Fund can also be mobilised for a regional disaster with serious and lasting repercussions on the living conditions and the economic stability of the region concerned. In such cases a Member State may present to the Commission an application to mobilise the EU Solidarity Fund within 10 weeks of the occurrence of the first damage caused by the diaster.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001994/12
to the Commission
John Stuart Agnew (EFD)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Regulatory impact on butchers

Do current EU regulations require that butchers:

1. cut bacon and ham on different slicing machines,

2. pack bacon and ham with different vacuum packers,

3. use separate sterilisers,

thus duplicating and doubling the cost of equipment requirements;

and is the Commission aware that the UK authorities are apparently interpreting the regulations in this way?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

EU legislation on food hygiene ([1]) provides that food business operators have the primary responsibility for food safety. This legislation concentrates on objectives to be reached rather than maintaining very detailed requirements such as those mentioned in the question.

However, the legislation clearly establishes that food business operators must apply the hygienic procedures necessary to ensure that food is safe. In particular, the operators must, at all stages of production, processing and distribution, ensure that food is protected against any contamination. It is for them to ensure that contamination is under control and to be able to justify their choices to the competent authorities responsible for the controls.

These controls include the verification and assessment that the objectives of the legislation are achieved and this assessment shall be done on the spot on a case-by-case basis.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 1), Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 55) and Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption (OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 206).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-001995/12
aan de Commissie
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(21 februari 2012)

Betreft: Baksteenindustrie in Afghanistan

Het IAB heeft een rapport gepubliceerd met als titel „Buried in Bricks" over de baksteenindustrie in Afghanistan (Kabul en Nanghar) en de prangende mensenrechtensituatie van de arbeiders in deze sector. Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de eigenaars van de steenbakkerijen de arbeiders aan zich binden door een systeem van voorschotten. Bijna alle huishoudens die in het onderzoek waren opgenomen (98 %) begonnen in steenbakkerijen te werken toen ze in ballingschap leefden in Pakistan. De huishoudens bestaan uit grote families en hebben bijna geen toegang tot kredietverlening. Zo komen ze in de steenbakkerijen terecht omdat dit een van de weinige plaatsen is waar je voorschotten kan krijgen, evenals betalingen in natura zoals onderdak en water. Door hun schulden zitten deze mensen vast aan de steenbakkerijen. Bovendien is het verboden voor leden van de huishoudens om elders werk te zoeken. Ze mogen de steenbakkerij enkel op gezette tijden verlaten om naar bepaalde plaatsen te gaan (het ziekenhuis bijvoorbeeld) en kunnen dus geen ander werk zoeken. De families zijn ook gebonden aan de steenbakkerij omdat ze geen grond bezitten en afhankelijk zijn van het onderdak dat de eigenaars hun bieden.

Er is ook veel kinderarbeid in de steenbakkerijen (56 % van de arbeiders zijn kinderen). De kinderarbeid helpt de eigenaars van de steenbakkerijen om het maximum uit de betalingen in natura te halen, door alle leden van het huishouden in te zetten. Kinderen voeren de taken uit die de volwassenen productiever maken, zoals water dragen en modderballen rollen. Deze kinderen zitten vast aan de steenbakkerij, omdat ze geen school kunnen lopen en gedwongen worden de schulden van hun ouders over te nemen.

— Is de Commissie zich bewust van deze prangende mensenrechtensituatie in de steenbakkerijen in Afghanistan en zo ja, welke acties zijn er dan tot nog toe ondernomen?

— Zou de Commissie in principe bereid zijn om de programma's van bv. UNICEF, het IAB en ngo's te steunen om zowel de dwangarbeid als de kinderarbeid in de Afghaanse steenbakkerijen aan te pakken, waarvoor het IAB in het rapport „Buried in Bricks" een aantal mogelijkheden aanreikt?

— Zou de Commissie bereid zijn om specifieke programma's te steunen die tot doel hebben kinderen die in steenbakkerijen werken naar school te laten gaan, als onderdeel van de aandacht voor de „onderwijsnoden van kwetsbare groepen" zoals vermeld in het landenstrategiedocument voor de Islamitische Republiek Afghanistan, 2007-2013?

— Aangezien het landenstrategiedocument voor Afghanistan mogelijke acties vermeldt onder het thematische programma „migratie en asiel", waarbij de klemtoon ligt op het verband tussen migratie en ontwikkeling, zou de Commissie bereid zijn een regionaal programma met Pakistan te steunen, zoals aanbevolen wordt door het IAB?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(10 mei 2012)

De speciale vertegenwoordiger van de EU en hoofd van de EU-delegatie in Afghanistan (SVEU/hoofd van de delegatie Afghanistan) houdt in nauw overleg met de missiehoofden van de EU ter plaatse toezicht op de mensenrechtensituatie en heeft het vraagstuk van kinderarbeid in de baksteenindustrie besproken met de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie (IAO). De EU hecht er bijzonder veel belang aan dat het probleem van de kinderarbeid wordt aangepakt op basis van de conclusies van de Raad over kinderarbeid van juni 2010.

De EU-bijstand pakt de sociale bescherming aan door capaciteitsopbouw in het ministerie van Arbeid, Sociale Zaken, Martelaren en Personen met een handicap en door het financieren van niet-gouvernementele organisaties (ngo's) om een scala van sociale diensten te verstrekken via een publiek-privaat partnerschap dat zich in het bijzonder richt op zeer kwetsbare bevolkingscategoriën, onder andere kinderen. Dit omvat ook ondersteuning voor de „inclusieve onderwijsstrategie" van het ministerie van Onderwijs, die onder meer de re-integratie van kinderen in het reguliere onderwijs tot doel heeft.

De EU-bijstand is vooral gericht op bestuur, landbouw en gezondheidszorg en ondersteunt de Afghaanse nationale ontwikkelingsstrategie en de nationale prioritaire programma's. De Afghaanse regering heeft zich ertoe verbonden kinderarbeid aan te pakken via een gerichte strategie onder leiding van een „eenheid kinderarbeid" binnen het ministerie van Arbeid, Sociale Zaken, Martelaren en Personen met een handicap. In dit verband heeft de EU een secretariaat voor de bescherming van kinderen gefinancierd, waarin alle nationale overheidsdiensten die zich richten op kwetsbare kinderen worden samengebracht en waarmee de coördinatie tussen deze diensten zal worden verbeterd. In het kader van het driejarige programma voor sociale bescherming, dat momenteel wordt voorbereid, heeft de EU het vraagstuk van uitbuitende kinderarbeid aan alle betrokkenen (maatschappelijk middenveld en regering) voorgelegd om ervoor te zorgen dat voldoende aandacht aan de kwestie wordt besteed in de relevante nationale prioritaire programma's, die de basis vormen voor de toekomstige steun van de EU in deze sector.

Hoewel de EU programma's heeft ter bevordering van de regionale samenwerking, onder meer tussen Afghanistan en Pakistan, wordt kinderarbeid niet aangepakt in deze context.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001995/12
to the Commission
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Brick industry in Afghanistan

The ILO has published a report, 'Buried in Bricks', on the brick sector in Afghanistan (Kabul and Nanghar) and the pressing human rights situation of the labourers in this sector. The study shows that, by using a system of advances, the kiln owners keep their labourers bonded to the kiln. Nearly all the households surveyed (98%) began working in brick kilns while they were in exile in Pakistan. The households consist of large families and have almost no access to credit, therefore they turn to brick kilns because this is one of the few places where they can get credit advances as well as in-kind payments such as shelter and water. Their debt keeps these households bonded to the kilns. In addition, since the household's members are all forbidden to seek employment outside the kiln, and are only allowed to leave the kiln at set times to go to set locations (the hospital for example), they cannot seek jobs elsewhere. The families are also tied to the kiln because they do not own land and are dependent on the shelter offered by the kiln owner.

Child labour is also widespread in the kilns (56% of the labourers are children). Child labour helps kiln owners maximise the in-kind payments by using all the household's members, and children perform the tasks that make adults more productive, such as carrying water and rolling mud balls. These children are trapped in a cycle of being bonded to the kiln since they cannot attend school and are forced to take over their parents' debt.

— Is the Commission aware of this pressing human rights situation in the kilns in Afghanistan and if so, what action has been taken so far?

— Would the Commission be willing in principle to support the programmes of e.g. Unicef, the ILO and NGOs, to tackle both bonded and child labour in the Afghan brick kilns, for which options have been sketched by the ILO in the report 'Buried in Bricks'?

— Would the Commission be willing to support specific programmes to get children working in brick kilns into mainstream education as part of the focus on the 'educational needs of vulnerable groups' as mentioned in the Country Strategy Paper, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2007-2013?

— As the Country Strategy Paper for Afghanistan mentions possible actions under the thematic programme 'migration and asylum', with an emphasis on the link between migration and development, would the Commission be willing to support a regional programme with Pakistan, as recommended by the ILO?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2012)

The EU Special Representative and Head of the EU Delegation to Afghanistan (EUSR/HoD Afghanistan) is monitoring the human rights situation on the ground in close consultation with EU Heads of Mission (HoMs) and has discussed the issue of child labour in the brick industry with the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The EU attaches particular importance to addressing the problem of child labour, based on the Council Conclusions on Child Labour of June 2010.

EU assistance addresses social protection through capacity building in the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD) and by funding non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to provide a range of social services in a public-private partnership targeting in particular highly vulnerable categories of the population, among them children. This also involves support to the Ministry of Education's (MoE) 'inclusive education strategy' aimed, *inter alia*, at reintegrating children into mainstream education.

EU assistance focuses on governance, agriculture and health, in support of the Afghan National Development Strategy and National Priority Programmes (NPP). The Afghan Government is committed to addressing child labour through a dedicated strategy led by a 'child labour unit' under the MoLSAMD. In this context, the EU has funded a Child Protection Secretariat, which aims to group together all national government services targeting vulnerable children, and improve their coordination. In preparing its upcoming three year Social Protection programme, the EU has been raising the issue of exploitative child labour with all stakeholders (civil society and government) to ensure that the issue is given sufficient attention in the relevant National Priority Programmes, which are the basis for the EU's future support in this sector.

While the EU has programmes aimed at fostering regional cooperation, including between Afghanistan and Pakistan, child labour is not addressed in this context.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-001998/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Gemeinsames Europäisches Asylsystem

Die Kommission beschreibt das Gemeinsame Europäische Asylsystem als einen „common area of protection and solidarity based on a common asylum procedure and uniform status for people who have been granted international protection" [gemeinsamen Raum für Schutz und Solidarität auf der Grundlage eines gemeinsamen Asylverfahrens und einheitlichen Status für Menschen, denen internationaler Schutz gewährt wurde].

1. Hat die Kommission der Einrichtung einer Datenbank zugestimmt, die die Fingerabdrücke aller Asylbewerber in der Europäischen Union enthält?

2. Warum stellt sich die Kommission gegen Forderungen der Mitgliedstaaten, dass Polizei und andere Strafverfolgungsbehörden außerhalb des Asylsystems Zugang zur Datenbank bekommen sollen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(27. April 2012)

Um die korrekte Funktionsweise des Dubliner Übereinkommens (nun Dublin-Verordnung) zu unterstützen, schlug die Kommission 1999 die Einrichtung von „EURODAC" zum Vergleich der Fingerabdrücke von Asylbewerbern in der Europäischen Union vor. Die EURODAC-Verordnung ([1]) wurde 2000 erlassen. Die EURODAC-Datenbank speichert die Daten aller Fingerabdrücke, die im Geltungsbereich von EURODAC (alle EU-Mitgliedstaaten plus Norwegen, Island, Schweiz und Liechtenstein) von allen Asylbewerbern abgenommen wurden, über einen Zeitraum von zehn Jahren.

Die Kommission könnte ihren Vorschlag für eine Neufassung der EURODAC-Verordnung aus dem Jahr 2010 abändern, um die Möglichkeit des Zugangs zu EURODAC zu Strafverfolgungszwecken als Teil eines ausgewogenen Asyl-Gesamtlösung im Hinblick auf alle Asylinstrumente, einschließlich der Dublin-Verordnung, zu schaffen.

([1]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2725/2000 des Rates vom 11. Dezember 2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001998/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Common European Asylum System

The Commission describes the Common European Asylum System as a 'common area of protection and solidarity based on a common asylum procedure and uniform status for people who have been granted international protection'.

1. Did the Commission agree to the creation of a database containing the fingerprints of all asylum-seekers in the European Union?

2. Why is the Commission resisting demands by the Member States that police and other law enforcement officials outside the asylum system should have access to the database?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 April 2012)

In order to support the correct functioning of the Dublin Convention (now Regulation), the Commission proposed in 1999 the establishment of 'EURODAC' for the comparison of the fingerprints of asylum-seekers in the European Union. The EURODAC Regulation ([1]) was adopted in 2000. The EURODAC database stores the fingerprint data for 10 years of all asylum-seekers taken within the territorial scope of EURODAC (all EU Member States plus Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein).

The Commission could amend its 2010 Recast proposal on EURODAC in order to include the possibility for law enforcement access to EURODAC, as part of a balanced overall asylum package deal on all the asylum instruments, including the Dublin Regulation.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2725/2000 of 11 December 2000.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-001999/12
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: Mutilación genital femenina (MGF)

Con ocasión del Día internacional de tolerancia cero con respecto a la mutilación genital femenina, es necesario recordar que 500 000 mujeres y niñas residentes en Europa sufren durante toda su vida las consecuencias de la MGF ([1]), y otras 180 000 corren el mismo riesgo cada año. La mayoría de las veces las niñas son llevadas al extranjero durante las vacaciones de verano y son obligadas a someterse a la MGF para asegurar sus posibilidades de matrimonio. Este también es un problema de Europa, puesto que muchas mujeres y niñas europeas sufren esta violación de los derechos humanos.

Habida cuenta de que la Comisión se ha comprometido a adoptar una estrategia en materia de violencia contra la mujer ([2]), incluida la MGF, y en vista del informe titulado «Lucha contra la mutilación genital femenina en la UE» ([3]), que trata dicha práctica como una violación de los derechos humanos, se ruega a la Alta Representante para Asuntos Exteriores y Política de Seguridad que aclare:

— si la Comisión cree que la falta de aplicación uniforme entre los Estados miembros implica que las mujeres y las niñas corren el riesgo de ser devueltas a países en que podrían ser víctimas de MGF;

— si, teniendo en cuenta las diferencias existentes en la legislación y en las medidas políticas de los Estados miembros sobre la MGF, la Comisión considera necesario crear un enfoque global que anime a los Estados miembros a velar por que se proteja a las niñas y no se estigmatice a sus familias;

— qué medidas va a adoptar la Comisión para proteger a las mujeres y a las niñas residentes en Europa frente a la MGF;

— habida cuenta de que la MGF, que constituye una grave violación de los derechos humanos, se está cometiendo en el territorio de la UE, qué medidas va a emprender la Comisión para combatirla.

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2012)

La mutilación genital femenina constituye una violación inaceptable de los derechos fundamentales y la Comisión se ha comprometido a dar una respuesta política contundente de lucha contra todas las formas de violencia contra las mujeres, incluida la mutilación genital femenina, según se confirma en el Programa de Estocolmo y la Estrategia sobre igualdad entre mujeres y hombres (2010-2015).

La Comisión trabaja a favor del empoderamiento de las mujeres, la sensibilización, la promoción de intercambios de buenas prácticas y la mejora de la recopilación de datos sobre violencia contra las mujeres.

El Programa Daphne III proporciona apoyo financiero para la ejecución de proyectos transnacionales a organizaciones de base que trabajan para evitar tales prácticas mediante la sensibilización y el cambio de las actitudes sociales.

La Comisión también está tomando medidas en el ámbito de la justicia penal y, en particular, ha introducido legislación sobre los derechos de las víctimas de los delitos ([4]).

Asimismo, el Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior (SEAE) está preparando actualmente una campaña, bajo los auspicios de las Directrices de la UE sobre la violencia contra las mujeres y las niñas, para destacar la necesidad de intensificar los esfuerzos para erradicar esta práctica, concretamente en el continente africano.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/printficheglobal.pdf?id=560899&l=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=890&furtherNews=yes
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/printficheglobal.pdf?id=560899&l=en
([4]) COM(2011) 275 final. Disponible en: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001999/12
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Female genital mutilation (FGM)

On the occasion of the International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Violation, it is necessary to recall that 500 000 women and girls living in Europe are suffering from the lifelong consequences of FGM ([1]), and another 180 000 are at risk each year. Most often, girls are taken abroad during their summer vacations and are forced to undergo FGM to ensure their marriageability. This is also a European problem, due to the fact that many European women and girls are also affected by this human rights violation.

Given that the Commission has committed itself to adopting a strategy on violence against women ([2]), including FGM, and having regard to the report entitled 'Combating female genital mutilation in the EU' ([3]), which treats the practice as a violation of human rights, can the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy state:

— whether the Commission believes that the lack of uniform implementation among Member States means that women and girls are at risk of being returned to countries where they could be subjected to FGM;

— whether, considering the disparities in laws and policy measures among Member States over FGM, the Commission believes it is necessary to create a holistic approach which will encourage Member States to ensure that girls are protected and their families not stigmatised;

— what steps the Commission intends to take to protect women and girls living in Europe from FGM;

— given that FGM, a serious human rights violation, is happening inside the EU, what action the Commission intends to take to fight it?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

Female genital mutilation constitutes an unacceptable violation of fundamental rights and the Commission is committed to a strong policy response to combat all forms of violence against women, including female genital mutilation, as confirmed in the Stockholm Programme and the strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015).

The Commission works for the empowerment of women, awareness raising, the promotion of exchanges of good practices and the improvement of collection of data on violence against women.

The Daphne III Programme provides financial support for the implementation of transnational projects to grass roots organisations working to prevent such practices by raising awareness and changing social attitudes.

The Commission is also taking measures in the criminal justice area and has notably put in place legislation on the rights of victims of crime ([4]).

Furthermore, the European External Action Service (EEAS) is currently preparing a campaign, under the EU human rights guidelines on violence against women and girls, to draw attention to the need to step up efforts to eradicate this practice, particularly on the African continent.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/printficheglobal.pdf?id=560899&l=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=890&furtherNews=yes
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/printficheglobal.pdf?id=560899&l=en
([4]) COM(2011) 275 final. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/criminal/victims/docs/com_2011_275_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002001/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Pueblos indígenas de Guatemala y Colombia

Mediante actos que constituyen graves violaciones del derecho a la previa consulta de los pueblos indígenas de Guatemala y Colombia, ciertas empresas, que gozan del beneficio de acuerdos de libre comercio, mecanismos de desarrollo limpio o financiación privada europea, han desarrollado su actividad en territorios indígenas, cometiendo graves atentados contra los derechos humanos.

El Acuerdo de asociación entre los países de América Central y la UE y el Acuerdo comercial UE-Colombia son responsables de generar graves amenazas para las comunidades indígenas de esos países.

Considerando la Declaración de la Presidencia de la UE sobre los derechos humanos de los pueblos indígenas, la Resolución del Consejo de Desarrollo de 30 de noviembre de 1998 sobre los pueblos indígenas y el informe de la Comisión de 2002, ¿podría la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante:

— presentar un seguimiento de la mencionada resolución en relación con el respeto de los derechos de los pueblos indígenas;

— considerar la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas como marco conceptual durante el seguimiento de dicha resolución;

— explicar cómo han participado las comunidades indígenas en la negociación del Acuerdo comercial UE-Colombia y del Acuerdo de asociación UE-América Central;

— velar por que Colombia y Guatemala respeten el derecho de consulta de los pueblos indígenas, y pedir a los dos Gobiernos que pongan fin a su criminalización de la lucha de los pueblos indígenas por defender sus territorios, garantizando un acceso justo e imparcial a la justicia durante las negociaciones;

— informar sobre cómo está desarrollando la UE un proceso de consultas con organizaciones representativas de los pueblos indígenas de Guatemala y Colombia?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de junio de 2012)

Las cuestiones indígenas son una parte inherente de la política europea de derechos humanos, en el contexto de la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de los pueblos indígenas (2007). La UE pretende integrar los derechos humanos, incluidas las cuestiones indígenas, en todos los aspectos de sus políticas exteriores: mediante el diálogo político con terceros países y organizaciones regionales, en foros multilaterales y dando apoyo financiero a través del Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (IEDDH). Durante 2012, se prevé que el grupo de trabajo del Consejo sobre los derechos humanos (COHOM) se reúna para debatir el estado actual de la política de la UE sobre los derechos de los pueblos indígenas y para determinar acciones futuras al respecto. En cuanto a los acuerdos bilaterales, las disposiciones sobre Comercio y Desarrollo Sostenible garantizarán que las comunidades indígenas, a partir de ahora, tengan un acceso institucionalizado a los procesos de toma de decisiones, a través de los mecanismos de consulta obligatorios de la sociedad civil.

Para obtener más información sobre la acción de la UE relativa a los pueblos indígenas de Colombia y Guatemala, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la carta de 6 de septiembre de 2011 enviada por la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Sra. Ashton, en respuesta a una carta con fecha de 7 de julio de 2011, firmada por Su Señoría y 38 otros miembros, ya que ambas preguntas tratan el mismo tema.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002001/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Indigenous peoples of Guatemala and Colombia

In actions constituting a serious breach of the right to prior consultation of the indigenous peoples of Guatemala and Colombia, certain corporations, with support from free trade agreements, clean development mechanisms or private European financing, have been operated in indigenous territories in ways resulting in serious human rights violations.

The association agreement between the countries of Central America and the EU and the EU-Colombia trade agreement are liable to generate serious threats to the indigenous communities in those countries.

Considering the declaration of the EU Presidency regarding the human rights of indigenous peoples, the resolution of the Development Council of 30 November 1998 on indigenous peoples, and the Commission report of 2002, will the Vice-President High Representative:

— present a follow-up to the abovementioned resolution in relation to respecting the rights of indigenous peoples;

— consider the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a conceptual framework during the follow-up to that resolution;

— explain how the indigenous communities have been involved in the negotiation of the EU-Colombia trade agreement and the EU-Central America association agreement;

— ensure that Colombia and Guatemala respect the right to consultation of the indigenous peoples, and ask the two governments to end their criminalisation of the struggle of indigenous peoples to defend their territories, guaranteeing fair and impartial access to justice during the negotiations;

— provide information on how the EU is carrying out a process of consultation with representative organisations of indigenous peoples from Guatemala and Colombia?

Answer given by the High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2012)

Indigenous issues are an integral part of the European's human rights policy, within the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The EU seeks to integrate human rights, including indigenous issues, into all aspects of its external policies; through political dialogue with third countries and regional organisations, at multilateral forums and by giving financial support via the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). During 2012, it is foreseen for the Council Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) to have an exchange on the state of play in the EU policy on the rights of indigenous peoples and consider the way ahead. With regard to bilateral agreements, the Trade and Sustainable Development provisions will ensure that indigenous communities will from now on have an institutionalised access to decision making processes via mandatory civil society consultation mechanisms.

For details concerning EU action related to indigenous peoples in Colombia and Guatemala, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the letter sent by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on 6 September 2011 in reply to a letter dated 7 July 2011, signed by the Honourable Member and thirty-eight other Members as the questions cover the same topic.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002002/12
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta / Alta Representante)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: VP/HR — Derechos de los pueblos indígenas en Panamá

Los ngobe-buglé, un grupo indígena de Panamá, han protestado recientemente por una enmienda a un proyecto de ley que, en su opinión, dejará sus tierras expuestas a la construcción de centrales hidroeléctricas en las provincias de Chiriquí, Veraguas y Bocas del Toro, al norte del país.

Sus manifestaciones fueron sofocadas haciendo uso de la violencia extrema y del abuso de fuerza por parte de la policía, con el resultado de dos manifestantes muertos (Jerónimo Rodríguez Tugri y Mauricio Méndez) y más de cuarenta heridos.

Las manifestaciones continuarán e incluso se incrementarán, con violentas consecuencias para los pueblos indígenas, a menos que la UE actúe de conformidad con los instrumentos internacionales de que es parte y los principios de la declaración realizada por su presidencia acerca de los derechos humanos de los pueblos indígenas.

Por otro lado, habida cuenta del artículo 11 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea (sobre la libertad de expresión), de la Estrategia Regional para América Central 2007-2015 y del Acuerdo de Diálogo Político y Cooperación entre la UE y América Central de 2003, ¿podría la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante:

— condenar en una declaración la violación del código de conducta de las Naciones Unidas sobre las fuerzas del orden público por parte de la policía panameña;

— exigir que se ponga fin inmediatamente a esta violencia policial y defender el derecho de los pueblos indígenas a manifestarse;

— presentar un seguimiento de la mencionada resolución en relación con la garantía del respeto a los derechos y las tierras de los pueblos indígenas;

— considerar la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas como marco conceptual para dicho seguimiento de la resolución?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta, Sra. Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de mayo de 2102)

Entre el 31 de enero y el 7 de febrero de 2012, la población indígena protestó contra medidas gubernamentales destinadas a la legalización de la minería y el desarrollo hidráulico en vías de navegación interior en la reserva de Ngäbe-Buglé en Panamá. Tras una semana de manifestaciones, el Gobierno y los representantes de los pueblos indígenas, por intercesión del Cardenal de la Iglesia Católica, entraron a debatir la cuestión el 8 de febrero y firmaron un acuerdo que esencialmente establece la supresión de un artículo del Acto, que actualmente se está debatiendo, con el fin de prohibir concesiones mineras y nuevas plantas hidroeléctricas en Ngäbe-Buglé.

Las cuestiones indígenas son inherentes a la política de derechos humanos de la Unión. El compromiso de la UE con respecto a los pueblos indígenas se inscribe en el contexto de la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los derechos de los pueblos indígenas de 2007. La UE pretende integrar los derechos humanos, incluidas las cuestiones indígenas, en todos los aspectos de sus políticas exteriores, inclusive en su diálogo político con terceros países.

Desde 2004 hasta 2008 la comunidad indígena Ngäbe-Buglé ha participado en un proyecto de cooperación de cuatro años financiado por la UE. Actualmente, la UE está financiando un proyecto de fomento de la cohesión social, llevado a cabo por el Ministerio de Desarrollo Social (MIDES) y del que se espera que contribuya a reducir las disparidades sociales y territoriales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002002/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Rights of indigenous peoples in Panama

The Ngäbe-Buglé, an indigenous group in Panama, have recently protested against an amendment to a bill which they believe will leave their land vulnerable to the construction of hydroelectric projects, in the provinces of Chiriquí, Veraguas and Bocas del Toro in the north of the country.

Their demonstrations were put down with extreme violence and excessive force by the police, with two protesters (Jerónimo Rodríguez Tugri and Mauricio Méndez) being killed and over 40 injured.

These demonstrations will continue and even grow, with violent consequences for the indigenous peoples, unless the EU acts in consistency with the international instruments it is party to and the principles of the declaration made by its presidency on the human rights of indigenous peoples.

Given, furthermore, Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (on free expression), the Regional Strategy for Central America 2007-2015, and the EU-Central America Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement of 2003, will the Vice-President/High Representative:

— issue a statement condemning the violation of the UN code of conduct for law enforcement officials by the Panama police;

— call for this police violence to end as a matter of urgency, and defend the right to demonstrate of the indigenous peoples;

— present a follow-up to the abovementioned resolution in relation to ensuring respect for indigenous peoples' rights and land;

— consider the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a conceptual framework for that follow-up to the resolution?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2012)

Between 31 January and 7 February 2012, indigenous people protested against governmental action aiming at legalising mining and hydraulic development of water ways in the Ngäbe-Buglé reservation in Panama. After a week of demonstrations, the government and representatives of the indigenous peoples, via the Cardinal of the Catholic Church, entered into discussion on 8 February and signed an agreement which essentially provides that an article is removed from the Act currently under discussion in order to prohibit the mining concessions and new hydroelectric plants in Ngäbe-Buglé.

Indigenous issues are an integral part of the European Union's human rights policy. The EU engagement towards indigenous peoples takes place in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007. The EU seeks to integrate human rights, including indigenous issues, into all aspects of its external policies, including into its political dialogues with third countries.

From 2004 to 2008 the Ngäbe-Buglé indigenous community benefited of a four year cooperation project financed by the EU. The EU is currently financing a project on social cohesion carried out by the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) expected to contribute to reducing social and territorial disparities.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-002003/12
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(21 février 2012)

Objet: Les autoroutes de la mer comme facteur de l'intégration euro-méditerranéenne

Lancée dans le cadre du plan d'action régional Euromed Transport, le projet d'«Autoroutes de la mer», appelé MEDA-MoS I, a été finalisé mi-2010. Un nouveau programme, MEDA-MoS II, a démarré fin 2010 dans le but de promouvoir l'intégration et l'efficacité des liaisons intermodales de transport de marchandises et de transport maritime entre l'Union et les pays partenaires méditerranéens, mais aussi entre les pays méditerranéens eux-mêmes. Cette action d'une durée de 36 mois est dotée d'un budget de 6 millions d'euros pour financer des mesures d'assistance technique.

— Quel bilan tire la Commission européenne des projets soutenus jusqu'ici? Sur la base de l'expérience des projets MEDA-MoS, la Commission envisage-t-elle d'augmenter le budget consacré aux autoroutes de la mer en Méditerranée dans le cadre des prochaines perspectives financières?

— Outre l'assistance technique, des financements pourraient-ils être mobilisés pour les infrastructures dans la cadre de l'Union pour la Méditerranée? N'y aurait-il pas un intérêt à coordonner les différents fonds possibles, et à opérer des synergies entre le multilatéral et le bilatéral?

Afin de favoriser les échanges commerciaux et les mouvements de personnes et de marchandises dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen, les réseaux doivent se densifier au Nord, au Sud et entre les deux rives de la Mer commune.

— Quelle est l'articulation entre les projets financés par MEDA-MoS et les projets d'autoroutes de la mer financés au sein du programme de travail pluriannuel du Réseau transeuropéen de transport (RTE-T) pour la période 2007-2013? Quels ports de Méditerranée ont été retenus au titre du dernier appel à propositions du RTE-T?

— Plus largement, quelle priorité compte accorder la Commission européenne à la connexion entre le réseau transeuropéen et le réseau transméditerranéen de transport (RTM-T)? Ces deux réseaux n'ont-ils pas vocation à se rencontrer pour donner sens à cette intégration euro-méditerranéenne tant souhaitée depuis le lancement du Processus de Barcelone?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(3 mai 2012)

Le programme Medamos II vise à faciliter le transport de marchandises entre les rives de la Méditerranée mais également entre les pays partenaires. Le projet favorise l'interopérabilité entre les ports et l'arrière-pays, ainsi que l'efficacité des plateformes logistiques, des ports et des connexions de transport maritime.

Des projets pilotes individuels ont été retenus dans le cadre du programme Medamos, et une assistance technique spécifique est actuellement fournie. Le programme s'achèvera en octobre 2013. La Commission examinera en temps utile les résultats du projet ainsi que les éventuels engagements financiers à venir.

— L'objectif à long terme de la Commission est de renforcer les liaisons entre les réseaux de transport transeuropéen et transméditerranéen. Cette ambition a été consacrée dans les critères de sélection des projets Medamos. De même, un des objectifs des nouvelles orientations pour le réseau transeuropéen, dont une partie comprend les autoroutes de la mer, est de promouvoir et de développer des connexions de transport efficaces avec les pays voisins.

— Les instruments utilisés pour le soutien des réseaux sont de nature diverse: le programme Medamos apporte une assistance technique. Un soutien supplémentaire pour les infrastructures de transport dans les pays voisins est disponible dans le cadre de la facilité d'investissement pour le voisinage (FIV), dotée de 745 millions d'euros pour la période 2007-2013. Les projets du réseau transeuropéen de transport (RTE-T) se concentrent sur un soutien direct aux investissements des États membres.

— La coordination des efforts est importante et prévue, à la fois dans le cadre du projet et des propositions adoptées par la Commission concernant le mécanisme d'interconnexion en Europe ainsi que les orientations RTE-T, le 19 octobre 2011. L'accent porté sur les aspects liés au marché des transports et l'harmonisation des systèmes opérationnels sont autant d'éléments qui servent la cohérence.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002003/12
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Motorways of the sea as a factor of Euro-Mediterranean integration

Launched under the Euromed Transport Regional Transport Action Plan, the 'Motorways of the Sea' project, MEDA-MoS I, was finalised mid-2010. A new programme, MEDA-MoS II, was launched at the end of 2010 with the aim of promoting the integration and efficiency of intermodal goods and maritime transport connections between the EU and the Mediterranean partner countries, and also between the Mediterranean countries themselves. This 36-month project has a budget of EUR 6 million to finance technical assistance programmes.

— How does the Commission assess the projects supported until now? Based on the experience from the MEDA-MoS projects, does the Commission plan to increase the budget devoted to Mediterranean motorways of the sea in the forthcoming financial perspectives?

— In addition to technical assistance, could funds be mobilised for infrastructure under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership? Would it not be of interest to coordinate different possible funds and make use of synergies between the multilateral and bilateral funding programmes?

In order to promote trade and the movement of people and goods in the Euro-Mediterranean area, networks must be reinforced in the north and the south, and between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

— How are the projects financed by MEDA-MoS and the motorways of the sea projects, financed under the Trans-European Transport Network's (TEN-T) multi-annual work programme for the 2007-2013 period, coordinated? Which Mediterranean ports were chosen in the last call for proposals by the TEN-T?

— More broadly, how much priority does the Commission intend to give to the connection between the Trans-European network and the Trans-Mediterranean transport network (TMN-T)? Are these two networks not intended to come together to make this Euro-Mediterranean integration meaningful, as called for since the launch of the Barcelona process?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(3 May 2012)

Medamos II aims at facilitating transport of goods between the Mediterranean shores and between the partner countries. The project promotes interoperability between ports and hinterland, and effectiveness of logistic platforms, ports, and maritime transport connections.

Individual Medamos pilot projects have been identified, and specific technical assistance is now being provided. The programme will end in October 2013. The Commission will assess the outputs of the project and possible future financial commitments in due time.

— The long term aim of the Commission is to increase the links between the emerging trans-European and trans-Mediterranean transport networks. This ambition was embedded in the criteria for the selection of Medamos projects. Similarly, one of the objectives of the new guidelines for the trans-European network, part of which covers the Motorways of the Sea, is to foster and develop efficient transport connections with the neighbouring countries.

— The instruments applied in support of the networks are of a different nature: The Medamos programme provides technical assistance. Additional support for transport infrastructure in the Neighbourhood is available through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) with EUR 745 millions for the period 2007-2013. The Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) projects focus on direct support to Member States' investments.

— Coordination between the efforts is important and foreseen both by the project and the proposals adopted by the Commission regarding the Connecting Europe Facility and the TEN-T Guidelines on 19 October 2011. The focus on transport market considerations and harmonisation of operational systems are elements that support coherence.

(Leagan Gaeilge)

Ceist i gcomhair freagra scríofa E-002004/12
chuig an gCoimisiún
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(21 Feabhra 2012)

Ábhar: Maoiniú agus cúnamh an AE do bhailte agus réigiúin dhíothacha

Is baile atá thíos go mór i láthair na huaire leis an meirbhliú eacnamaíoch agus leis an díothacht é baile mór Dhún Dealgan, atá suite ar an 'gconair' ó Bhaile Átha Cliath go Béal Feirste. Tá fadhbanna struchtúracha suntasacha ag an mbaile agus ag an gceantar máguaird — tá aitheantas tugtha do na fadhbanna sin i dtuarascálacha neamhspleácha éagsúla a rinneadh ar an tsaincheist seo — agus is beag buntáiste atá bainte ag baile Dhún Dealgan as an mborradh i gcathair Bhaile Átha Cliath agus i gcathair Bhéal Feirste. Is ait an scéal é, ach cé go bhfuil siad araon ar an gConair ó Bhéal Feirste go Baile Átha Claith, agus in ainneoin bóithre maithe agus seirbhísí maithe traenach a bheith ann, tá leibhéal ard díothachta i nDún Dealgan agus in Iúr Chinn Trá. Ós rud é go bhfuil an Chonair agus forbairt na Conaire ríthábhachtach ó thaobh todhchaí gheilleagar an Oileáin de, is aisteach go bhfuil an dá bhaile atá i lár na Conaire chomh bocht is atá.

Tar éis Chomhaontú Aoine an Chéasta tugadh aird ar leith ar réigiún na Teorann. Cuireadh bearta ginearálta Eorpacha (Intereg) agus beartais spriocdhírithe eile (m.sh. PEACE) i bhfeidhm chun dul i ngleic le hiarmhairt blianta fada achrainn agus trioblóide. Chomh maith le hiarrachtaí níos leithne chun an réigiún a fhorbairt, cuireadh béim ar leith ar cheantair thearcfhorbartha na Teorann, ina ndearnadh infheistiú — airgeadúil agus neamhairgeadúil — suntasach. In ainneoin na n-iarrachtaí sin, áfach, tá cás Dhún Dealgan níos measa i gcónaí ná cás bhailte níos lú atá suite ar an taobh eile den Teorainn.

Chuir mórchláir réigiúnacha agus Eorpacha eile béim níos mó ar réigiún an Iarthuaiscirt ná ar réigiúin eile na tíre, toisc gur braitheadh go raibh an réigiún sin faoi mhíbhuntáiste i gcomparáid leis an gcuid eile den tír; Dún Dealgan san áireamh.

Tá Meabhrán Comhthuisceana sínithe le déanaí ag Comhairle Chontae Lú agus Comhairle an Iúir agus Mhúrna, a bhfuil sé mar aidhm aige lánchumas bhailte an réigiúin a bhaint amach agus comhoibriú a chur ar bun chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar dhianfhadhbanna structúracha agus eacnamaíocha na mbailte sin.

Chuige sin, an bhféadfadh an Coimisiún eolas a thabhairt maidir leis na cláir, na cistí airgid agus na foinsí cúnaimh a bheadh ar fáil do thionscnaimh trasteorann mar seo?

Cad go praiticiúil atá i mBeartas Réigiúnach agus Comhtháthaithe an AE a chabhróidh leo siúd i nDún Dealgan agus san Iúr atá ag iarraidh cumas eacnamaíoch na mbailte sin a fhorbairt?

An bhféadfadh an Coimisiún breis eolais a thabhairt maidir lena bhfuil ar fáil ar an leibhéal Eorpach, náisiúnta agus réigiúnach chun spreagadh agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do chomhpháirtíocht trasteorann cosúil leis an gceann thuasluaite?

Freagra ón gCoimisinéir Hahn thar ceann an Choimisiúin
(10 Aibreán 2012)

Tugann beartas comhtháthaithe an AE spreagadh agus tacaíocht shonrach do chomhoibriú trasteorann trí chláir a dhéantar mar chuid den bheartas 'Comhar Críche Eorpach'.

Is é clár a bhfuil baint shonrach aige le Dún Dealgan Interreg IVA 'Tuaisceart Éireann, Réigiún na Teorann in Éirinn agus Iarthar na hAlban'. Tá buiséad iomlán EUR 256 milliún (EUR 192 milliún ón AE) ag an gclár sin. Cuireann sé le rathúlacht agus inbhuanaitheacht an réigiúin i gceist, spreagann sé nuálaíocht agus iomaíochas i bhforbairt fiontraíochta agus gnó agus cuireann sé chun cinn an turasóireacht agus forbairt beartas chun rochtain ar sheirbhísí a fheabhsú.

Ina theannta sin, tá an ceantar i gceist incháilithe tacaíocht a fháil faoi chlár PEACE III 2007-2013, clár ag a bhfuil buiséad EUR 333 milliún (EUR 225 milliún ó Chiste Forbraíochta Réigiúnaí na hEorpa). Is éard is aidhm shonrach an chláir sin dea-chaidreamh trasphobail agus trasteorann a chothú agus spásanna coiteanna poiblí a chruthú chun deighiltí fisiciúla a laghdú agus chun rannpháirtíocht trasteorann shóisialta agus eacnamaíoch níos gníomhaí a spreagadh.

Cothaítear comhoibriú trasteorann le roinnt tionscnamh agus le roinnt clár eile de chuid an AE, e.g. 'Na Réigiúin Eolais' faoin 7ú Creatchlár; tá an clár sin ceaptha méadú ar an gcomhoibriú a bhíonn ar siúl idir bhraislí réigiúnacha taighde agus nuálaíochta agus i réimse an oideachais.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002004/12
to the Commission
Liam Aylward (ALDE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: EU funding and assistance for deprived towns and regions

Dundalk town, on the Dublin-Belfast corridor, is currently suffering because of economic stagnation and deprivation. The town and surrounding areas have significant structural problems — various independent reports on this issue have indicated this — and Dundalk itself has hardly benefited at all from the boom in Dublin and Belfast. Strangely, despite both Dundalk and Newry being on the Dublin-Belfast corridor, with their good roads and train services, both towns are highly deprived. Since the corridor and its development are vitally important for the island's future economy, it is striking that both towns are as poor as they are.

Following the Good Friday Agreement, special attention was given to the border region. General European measures (Interreg) and other targeted measures (e.g. the PEACE programme) were put in place to overcome the consequences of years of bitter confrontation. In addition to broader efforts to develop the region, particular emphasis was given to the border's underdeveloped areas. Significant financial and non-financial investments were made. Yet, despite these efforts, Dundalk's situation remains worse than smaller towns situated across the border.

Major regional and European programmes focused more on the north-western region than the rest of the country's regions because it appeared to be more disadvantaged than the rest of the country, Dundalk included.

Louth County Council and Newry and Mourne District Council recently signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at allowing the region's towns achieve their full potential and at cooperating in addressing their severe structural and economic problems.

To that end, could the Commission state which programmes, financial funds and sources of assistance have been made available to such cross-border initiatives?

What aspects of the EU's regional and cohesion policy could actually help those in Dundalk and Newry to develop their towns economically?

Could the Commission provide more information about what is available at EU, national and regional level to encourage and support this kind of cross-border partnership?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(10 April 2012)

EU cohesion policy specifically encourages and supports cross-border cooperation through programmes developed within its European Territorial Cooperation objective.

The specific programme of relevance for Dundalk is the programme Interreg IVA 'Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland'. This programme has a total budget of EUR 256 million (EUR 192 million of EU funding). The programme contributes to a more prosperous and sustainable region, encouraging innovation and competitiveness in enterprise and business development and promoting tourism and policy development to improve access to services.

Moreover, the area is eligible for support under the 2007-2013 PEACE III programme which has a budget of EUR 333 million (EUR 225 million ERDF). It specifically seeks to facilitate positive relationships on a cross-community and/or cross-border basis and to create shared public spaces with a view to address physical segregation and encourage increased economic and social cross-border engagement.

Cross-border cooperation is encouraged by several other EU initiatives and programmes such as 'Regions of Knowledge' under the 7th Framework Programme aiming at boosting cooperation between regional research and innovation clusters and in the field of education.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002005/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Violazione della privacy da parte di Google

Google ha spiato gli internauti che navigano sul web attraverso Safari, il navigatore di Apple. È quanto ha denunciato venerdì 10 febbraio il Wall Street Journal (WSJ), precisando che il colosso Usa di internet e altre imprese di pubblicità hanno fatto ricorso a codici di programmazione speciali, nascosti nelle istruzioni di Safari, per monitorare e registrare milioni di utenti di Apple.

Google ha successivamente disattivato tali codici dopo essere stato contattato dal WSJ, sottolinea il quotidiano. In un comunicato inviato alla testata Google si è difeso dall'accusa di aver violato la vita privata degli internauti: «Questi "cookies" non raccolgono informazioni personali». Da parte sua, un funzionario di Apple ha fatto sapere che il gruppo sta «lavorando per far cessare» questa pratica. Safari è il navigatore internet più usato sui telefoni multifunzione grazie al successo dell'iPhone. L'intrusione di Google è stata scoperta da un ricercatore dell'Università di Stanford, Jonathan Mayer, e confermata in modo indipendente da un ingegnere consultato dal WSJ.

Alla luce dei fatti più sopra esposti, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. è informata sull'abuso di Google?

2. intende fornire informazioni dettagliate sull'accaduto e sulla eventuale violazione della privacy degli internauti?

3. intende predisporre misure per evitare che in futuro si ripetano altri episodi analoghi?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(25 aprile 2012)

La Commissione è consapevole dei rischi per la protezione dei dati legati all'uso crescente di dispositivi mobili per la connessione a Internet. È inoltre conscia del fatto che i criteri di liceità del trattamento dei dati personali fissati dalla direttiva 95/46/CE ([1]) non sono sempre rispettati in tali circostanze.

La proposta di riforma delle norme dell'UE sulla protezione dei dati ([2]) presentata dalla Commissione nel gennaio 2012 individua le problematiche in materia di protezione dei dati derivanti dalle nuove tecnologie, in particolare on line. La comunicazione ([3]) che accompagna la proposta sottolinea la necessità di chiarire l'applicazione delle norme di protezione dei dati alle nuove tecnologie nel contesto della riforma del quadro giuridico, al fine di garantire che i dati personali delle persone fisiche siano protetti efficacemente in modo tecnologicamente neutro e che i responsabili del trattamento siano pienamente consapevoli delle implicazioni delle loro prassi. Ciò comprende il diritto delle persone a ricevere informazioni chiare e intelleggibili sul trattamento dei loro dati personali (principio di trasparenza) e gli obblighi dei responsabili del trattamento di limitare i dati da trattare al minimo necessario per le finalità perseguite (principio di minimizzazione dei dati) e di introdurre principi di protezione dei dati fin dalla fase di progettazione delle nuove tecnologie (principio della protezione dei dati fin dalla progettazione).

Fatti salvi i poteri della Commissione in qualità di custode dei trattati, il controllo e l'applicazione della normativa in materia di protezione dei dati, comprese le norme relative ai servizi on line, sono di competenza delle autorità nazionali, in particolare le autorità di protezione dei dati. La Commissione non è competente a controllare il rispetto delle norme da parte dei responsabili del trattamento, né ad indagare sui casi di inosservanza o a comminare sanzioni.

([1]) La direttiva 95/46/CE tutela i diritti e le libertà fondamentali delle persone fisiche con riguardo al trattamento dei dati personali (GU L 281 del 23.11.1995).
([2]) COM(2012)11 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:IT:PDF.
([3]) «Salvaguardare la privacy in un mondo interconnesso — Un quadro europeo della protezione dei dati per il XXI secolo» (COM(2012)9).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002005/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Google violation of privacy

Google has been spying on Internet users surfing the web on Safari, the browser from Apple. The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) reported on Friday 10 February 2012 that the American Internet giant and other advertising companies have resorted to placing special programming codes, hidden in Safari's instructions, to monitor and record the activity of millions of Apple users.

The newspaper pointed out that Google subsequently deactivated these codes after it was contacted by the WSJ. In a press release sent to the newspaper, Google defended itself from the accusation of having violated the privacy of Internet users, saying: 'These cookies do not collect personal information.' For its part, an Apple spokesman stated that the group was 'working to put a stop' to this practice. Thanks to the success of the iPhone, Safari is the most used Internet browser on smartphones. The intrusion by Google was discovered by a researcher at the University of Stanford, Jonathan Mayer, and confirmed independently by an engineer consulted by the WSJ.

In view of the above facts, can the Commission state whether:

1. it is aware of the abuse by Google;

2. it intends to provide detailed information on the event and on the potential privacy violation of Internet users;

3. it intends to identify measures to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2012)

The Commission is aware of the data protection risks arising with ever-growing use of the Internet on mobile devices. Furthermore, it is aware that the criteria established for lawful processing of personal data by Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) are not always met in such contexts.

The January 2012 Commission proposal for a reform of EU data protection rules ([2]), identified the data protection challenges brought about by new technologies, particularly online. The communication ([3]) which accompanies the proposals indicates the need to clarify the application of data protection rules to new technologies in the context of the reform of the legal framework, in order to ensure that individuals' personal data are effectively protected in a technology neutral way, and that data controllers are fully aware of the implications of their practices. This includes the right of individuals to have clear and intelligible information on the processing of their data (transparency principle), obligations on controllers to process only the minimum data required for a given purpose (data minimisation principle), and to introduce data protection principles from the very design stage of new technologies (data protection by design principle).

Without prejudice to the powers of the Commission as guardian of the Treaties, the supervision and enforcement of data protection legislation, including for online services, falls under the competence of national authorities, in particular data protection authorities. The Commission has no competence to monitor the compliance of data controllers, investigate cases of non-compliance, or impose penalties.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons with respect to the protection of their personal data, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995.
([2]) COM(2012)011 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0011:FIN:EN:PDF.
([3]) 'Safeguarding Privacy in a Connected World — A European Data Protection Framework for the 21st Century' — COM(2012) 9.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002006/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Investimenti nell'innovazione

La Commissione europea lancia ancora una volta la sfida dell'innovazione, proponendo gli investimenti in ricerca e sviluppo come un importante motore di crescita e uno stimolo alle idee innovative per il futuro dell'Europa. L'obiettivo prioritario della strategia «Europa 2020» di un investimento del 3 % del Pil in ricerca e sviluppo appare ancora lontano: siamo passati da una media UE dell'1,85 % del Pil nel 2007 a una percentuale del 2,01 % nel 2009. In un'Europa che stenta a tenere il passo con paesi di consolidata tradizione nell'innovazione come gli Stati Uniti e che emergono sempre più rapidamente come la Cina e la Corea del Sud, l'Italia si colloca in una posizione ancora più di retroguardia.

A fronte infatti di una media europea di investimenti in ricerca e sviluppo che supera di pochissimo il 2 % del Pil nel 2009, il tasso italiano si ferma ad appena l'1,27 % del Pil. E quindi l'obiettivo per il 2020 è dell'1,53 %.

In Italia ci sono anche pochi laureati: il livello della popolazione con «educazione terziaria» raggiunge appena l'11,6 % contro la media europea del 22,8 %; la partecipazione a programmi di «life-long learning» riguarda appena il 6,8 % della popolazione, contro una media europea del 9,8 %.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se può tracciare un quadro europeo sull'innovazione con dati e statistiche riferite a tutti gli Stati membri?

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

Il monitoraggio quantitativo, a cura della Commissione, delle politiche e dei risultati in materia di ricerca e innovazione nell'ambito della strategia Europa 2020 è articolato in tre livelli.

1. Fra gli obiettivi trasversali della strategia Europa 2020 rientrano due indicatori principali per la ricerca e l'innovazione: intensità dell'R&S, con l'obiettivo del 3 % entro il 2020 per l'UE nel suo complesso, e un indicatore dell'innovazione attualmente in fase di sviluppo. I singoli Stati membri hanno fissato obiettivi di R&S propri per il 2020: l'obiettivo dell'Italia per l'intensità dell'R&S è l'1,53 % del PIL.

2. I progressi verso la realizzazione di un'Unione dell'innovazione efficiente sono monitorati mediante il corrispondente quadro di valutazione, composto di 25 indicatori di ricerca e innovazione, che viene pubblicato ogni anno. L'ultima edizione è stata appena diffusa il 7 febbraio 2012 ([1]).

3. La relazione sulla competitività dell'Unione dell'innovazione è un testo analitico e strategico esauriente che copre, oltre alla vastissima gamma delle statistiche disponibili in materia di scienza, tecnologia e innovazione, anche dati nuovi in fase più sperimentale. La prima edizione è stata pubblicata il 9 giugno 2011 ([2]); nelle previsioni, le altre seguiranno a cadenza biennale. La relazione fornisce un'analisi statistica ed economica approfondita relativa agli elementi principali di un sistema di ricerca e innovazione efficiente e socialmente efficace.

Tutti gli Stati membri dell'Unione sono monitorati a ciascuno dei tre livelli, così come i principali partner internazionali dell'UE. La relazione sulla competitività dell'Unione dell'innovazione è strutturata in schede in cui sono presentati, per paese, i dati statistici fondamentali su ricerca e innovazione. Si ricorre a dati statistici anche per comprendere meglio la situazione e l'evoluzione riguardo all'integrazione delle attività di ricerca e innovazione nello Spazio europeo della ricerca, i modelli di specializzazione scientifica e tecnologica dei vari paesi e i modelli della cooperazione internazionale in campo scientifico e tecnologico.

([1]) http://www.proinno-europe.eu/inno-metrics/page/innovation-union-scoreboard-2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/iuc2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002006/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Investment in innovation

The Commission is once again launching the innovation challenge, presenting investment in research and development as a major driver for growth and a stimulus for innovative ideas for Europe's future. The Europe 2020 strategy's priority objective — investing 3 % of GDP in research and development — still seems far from being achieved as the EU's average investment figure of 1.85 % of GDP in 2007 rose to only 2.01 % by 2009. Europe is struggling to keep up with countries that have a well-established tradition of innovation, like the United States, and ever more rapidly emerging nations such as China and South Korea, and Italy is dropping farther and farther behind.

While the European average for investment in research and development in 2009 stood at just over 2 % of GDP, the corresponding figure in Italy only reached 1.27 % of GDP. As a result, the goal for 2020 is 1.53 %.

The number of graduates in Italy is also low: only 11.6 % of the population has studied at tertiary level, compared to the European average of 22.8 %, and just 6.8 % of the population take part in lifelong learning programmes compared to a European average of 9.8 %.

In light of the above, can the Commission provide an overview of the situation regarding innovation in the EU, giving data and statistics for all the Member States?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The quantitative monitoring by the Commission of research and innovation policies and performance under the Europe 2020 strategy is organised in three levels:

1. Two headline indicators for research and innovation are part of the overarching objectives of Europe 2020 strategy: the R & D intensity, with a target of 3 % for the EU as a whole by 2020, and an innovation indicator currently in development. Member States have set their own individual R & D targets for 2020. Italy's R & D intensity target is 1.53 % of GDP.

2. The Innovation Union Scoreboard, composed of 25 research and innovation indicators, is used to monitor progress in achieving a well performing Innovation Union. It is published every year. The last edition has just been released on 7 February 2012 ([1]).

3. The Innovation Union Competitiveness (IUC) report is a comprehensive analytical and strategic report covering a very wide range of available Science, Technology and Innovation statistics, as well as new data at a more experimental stage. The first edition of this report was released on 9 June 2011 ([2]). The report is planned to be published every two years. It provides an in-depth statistical and economic analysis covering the main features of an efficient and socially effective research and innovation system.

At each of these three levels, all EU Member States are covered, as well as the main international partners of the EU. The IUC report presents country fiches with key research and innovation statistics. Statistics are also used to understand better the evolution and state of play regarding the integration of research and innovation activities in the European Research Area, the scientific and technological specialization patterns of countries, and the patterns of international cooperation in science and technology.

([1]) http://www.proinno-europe.eu/inno-metrics/page/innovation-union-scoreboard-2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/iuc2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002007/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Pistacchi iraniani spacciati per «Made in Italy»

Il 14 febbraio 50 agenti del Corpo forestale hanno condotto una operazione nei mercati di Palermo e Catania per esaminare la tracciabilità dei prodotti agroalimentare venduti sui banconi. Dai controlli è emersa la presenza di quintali di prodotti con falso marchio «*Made in Italy*».

Tra i prodotti contraffatti sono state scoperte patate provenienti dall'Africa e pistacchi provenienti dall'Iran. I risultati purtroppo confermano che in mancanza di controlli alla frontiera questi prodotti arrivano nei nostri mercati intaccando anche le tasche dei nostri agricoltori e commercianti. Le associazioni di categoria hanno protestato perché l'agropirateria ogni anno sottrae milioni di euro agli imprenditori agricoli che hanno investito sulle produzioni tipiche del territorio.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. È informata sul caso delle patate africane e dei pistacchi iraniani spacciati come «*Made in Italy*»?

2. Intende coordinare l'azione degli Stati membri durante le fasi di controllo doganale?

3. Quali iniziative intende assumere per contrastare il traffico illecito di prodotti spacciati per «*Made in Italy*» non controllati e forse pericolosi per la salute umana?

Risposta data da John Dalli a nome della Commissione
(26 aprile 2012)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei casi cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento.

Le pratiche di etichettatura ingannevoli sono chiaramente proibite dalle norme generali sull'etichettatura dei prodotti alimentari. L'articolo 2 della direttiva 2000/13/CE ([1]) dispone che l'etichettatura e i metodi utilizzati non debbano essere tali da indurre in errore l'acquirente, soprattutto per quanto riguarda le caratteristiche dell'alimento, la sua origine o provenienza.

Inoltre, qualsiasi dichiarazione volontaria che possa essere considerata un'indicazione del luogo di origine deve, dal 13 dicembre 2014, conformarsi alle nuove norme stabilite nel regolamento dell'UE sulle informazioni alimentari ai consumatori ([2]). Secondo tali norme il paese di origine dei prodotti alimentari non trasformati interamente in un unico paese corrisponde al paese dell'ultima trasformazione sostanziale del prodotto. Nel caso in cui il suo ingrediente primario provenga da un altro luogo, dev'essere indicato anche il paese d'origine o il luogo di provenienza di tale ingrediente.

Gli Stati membri sono responsabili del rispetto della normativa UE in campo alimentare e di verificare, attraverso controlli ufficiali, che le pertinenti disposizioni della medesima siano rispettate dagli operatori del settore. I controlli ufficiali devono essere eseguiti periodicamente, con una frequenza appropriata, e devono essere adottate misure idonee a eliminare ogni rischio e a garantire il rispetto della normativa UE sugli alimenti.

Le autorità doganali collaborano strettamente con le autorità responsabili dell'applicazione della normativa UE in campo alimentare per garantire lo stesso livello di conformità sia per i prodotti importati che per i prodotti fabbricati nell'UE. Le amministrazioni doganali degli Stati membri sono tenute per legge a scambiarsi le informazioni pertinenti attraverso il sistema doganale di gestione dei rischi. In tal modo si assicura che i rischi vengano affrontati al momento dell'entrata delle merci indipendentemente dallo Stato membro attraverso il quale esse entrano nell'UE.

([1]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità (GU L 109 del 6.5.2000).

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1169/2011 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 25 ottobre 2011, relativo alla fornitura di informazioni sugli alimenti ai consumatori, che modifica i regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e (CE) n. 1925/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e abroga la direttiva 87/250/CEE della Commissione, la direttiva 90/496/CEE del Consiglio, la direttiva 1999/10/CE della Commissione, la direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, le direttive 2002/67/CE e 2008/5/CE della Commissione e il regolamento (CE) n. 608/2004 della Commissione, GU L 304 del 22.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002007/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Iranian pistachios passed off as 'Made in Italy'

On 14 February 2012, 50 Forestry Department officials carried out an operation at markets in Palermo and Catania to examine the traceability of food products on sale. The checks revealed that many products were falsely marked 'Made in Italy'.

The counterfeit products included potatoes from Africa and pistachios from Iran. Unfortunately these findings confirm that these products arrive in our markets with no checks at the border, eating away at the pockets of our farmers and traders. Trade associations have protested because every year this agricultural piracy takes millions of euros away from farmers who have invested in producing goods typical of their region.

1. Has the Commission been informed of the case of African potatoes and Iranian pistachios being passed off as 'Made in Italy'?

2. Does it intend to coordinate the actions of Member States during the customs inspection phases?

3. What initiatives will it take to curb the illegal trafficking of goods passed off as 'Made in Italy' that are not checked and may pose a threat to human health?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the cases mentioned by the Honourable Member.

Misleading labelling practices are clearly prohibited by the general rules on food labelling. Article 2 of Directive 2000/13/EC ([1]) requires that the labelling and methods used must not be such as could mislead the purchaser, particularly as to the characteristics of the food, its origin or provenance.

In addition, any voluntary statement that can be considered as an indication of origin should, from 13 December 2014, comply with the new rules established in the EU Regulation on food information to consumers ([2]). According to these rules, the country of origin of processed foods not wholly obtained in one single country corresponds to the country of the last substantial transformation of the food. If its primary ingredient originates from a different place, the country of origin or place of provenance of this ingredient should be also provided.

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of EU food law and verify, through the organisation of official controls, that the relevant requirements thereof are fulfilled by business operators. Official controls must be carried out regularly, with appropriate frequency, and appropriate measures must be taken to eliminate risk and ensure enforcement of EU food law.

The customs authorities cooperate closely with the authorities responsible for the enforcement of EU food law to ensure the same level of compliance for imported products as for products produced in the EU. The customs administrations of the Member States are engaged by law to exchange relevant information via the Customs Risk Management System. Thus it is ensured that risks can be addressed at entry of goods independently from the Member State where the goods enter the EU.

([1]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers, amending Regulations (EC) No 1924/2006 and (EC) No 1925/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Commission Directive 87/250/EEC, Council Directive 90/496/EEC, Commission Directive 1999/10/EC, Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Directives 2002/67/EC and 2008/5/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) No 608/2004, OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002008/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Possibili fondi per il Sermolfetta

Il Sermolfetta, che aderisce all'Anpas e alla Protezione civile, è una onlus impegnata nelle piccole e grandi emergenze nel settore della pubblica assistenza nella città di Molfetta.

Nato nel 1985 per scopi umanitari, con una trentina di aderenti, cominciò con l'autotassazione dei soci per affrontare l'onere delle spese. Il motto iniziale rivolto alla cittadinanza era «aiutateci per aiutare». Dopo un trimestre di attività si sono resi pubblici i primi risultati: 36 interventi con l'Unità di soccorso e 103 interventi con l'ambulanza, per un totale di 3 840 ore. Il pronto intervento è assicurato alla cittadinanza gratuitamente 24 ore su 24.

Tra i vari progetti sociali intrapresi dal Sermolfetta c'è «Crescere insieme». Si tratta di un progetto riservato a bambini e adolescenti, di età compresa tra i sei e i quattordici anni, che vivono situazioni difficili nelle loro famiglie di origine. Fino a questo momento sono cinquanta i bambini che frequentano quotidianamente la sede sociale del Sermolfetta e le educatrici e gli educatori, sia volontari che appartenenti al Servizio civile nazionale, puntano soprattutto a fornire loro sostegno scolastico, ma anche a promuovere una serie di attività ludico-sportive e laboratori che consentano ai bambini di esprime al meglio le loro attitudini.

1. Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza delle attività e dei progetti svolti dalla onlus Sermolfetta?

2. Può indicare se, considerando le finalità sociali e di pubblica utilità della onlus, il Sermolfetta può usufruire di fondi europei per le proprie attività?

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(16 aprile 2012)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza delle attività e dei progetti realizzati dall'organizzazione senza scopo di lucro Sermolfetta.

La Regione Puglia beneficia del sostegno dei Fondi strutturali europei per favorire la crescita, la competitività e l'occupazione. Il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) in particolare mira a rafforzare la coesione economica e sociale migliorando le possibilità di occupazione e di impiego.

Le organizzazioni senza scopo di lucro come Sermolfetta possono beneficiare dei finanziamenti del FSE. Per essere cofinanziate, le azioni devono essere connesse al mercato del lavoro e orientate all'integrazione nel mondo del lavoro.

Le informazioni sulle opportunità di finanziamento regionale devono essere chieste alle autorità di gestione del programma operativo del FSE in Puglia. Infatti, in base al principio di sussidiarietà, i programmi operativi cofinanziati dai Fondi strutturali vengono attuati dagli Stati membri e dalle loro regioni. La Commissione non interviene nella selezione, nel monitoraggio e nella valutazione dei progetti.

La Commissione può erogare altresì contributi finanziari diretti sotto forma di sovvenzioni a sostegno di progetti od organizzazioni che sostengono gli interessi dell'Unione europea o contribuiscono alla realizzazione di un programma o di una politica dell'UE. Informazioni di carattere generale sono disponibili sul sito internet della Commissione ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002008/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Possible funding for Sermolfetta

Sermolfetta, which is affiliated to the National Public Assistance Association (ANPAS) and to the Civil Protection Organisation, is a non-profit organisation that handles small and large emergencies in the town of Molfetta.

It was founded in 1985 for humanitarian purposes, with around 30 members, covering its costs by means of donations from members. Its original slogan implored citizens to 'help us to help'. The first results were made public following three months of activities: 36 operations with the Rescue Unit and 103 ambulance operations, totalling 3 840 hours. Citizens are guaranteed a free emergency service, 24/7.

One of the various social programmes undertaken by Sermolfetta is 'Growing Together'. This project is aimed at children and young people, aged between 6 and 14, with difficult home lives. So far there are 50 children who come to the Sermolfetta head office on a daily basis and the youth workers, volunteers from the National Community Service, primarily focus on providing educational support as well as encouraging a range of fun sports activities and workshops which enable the children to better express their abilities.

1. In view of the above, can the Commission state whether it is aware of the activities and projects carried out by the non-profit organisation Sermolfetta?

2. Can it indicate whether, considering the social purposes and public interest of this non-profit organisation, Sermolfetta can make use of EU funds for its activities?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 April 2012)

The Commission is not aware of the activities and projects carried out by the non-profit organisation Sermolfetta.

The Puglia region benefits from the support of the European structural funds to foster growth, competitiveness and employment. The European Social Fund (ESF) in particular aims at strengthening economic and social cohesion by improving employment and job opportunities.

Non-profit organisations like Sermolfetta can benefit from ESF funding. To be co-financed, actions have to be linked to the labour market and oriented to integration in employment.

Information on funding opportunities should be asked to the regional managing authority of the ESF operational programme in Puglia. As a matter of fact, according to the subsidiarity principle, the operational programmes co-financed by the structural funds are implemented by the Member States and their regions. The Commission does not intervene in the selection, monitoring and evaluation of projects.

The Commission can also make direct financial contributions in the form of grants to projects or organisations which support the interests of the EU or contribute to the implementation of an EU programme or policy. General information is available on the Commission's website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002009/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Politiche giovanili europee: «Friends online»

Prevenire il bullismo e promuovere un uso sicuro di Internet fra i più giovani, attraverso la condivisione di buone pratiche, è l'obiettivo del progetto europeo «Friends online», cui partecipano Svezia, Romania, Spagna e Italia. Il progetto, avviato nel 2009, prevede, fra le altre cose, attività di sensibilizzazione sui temi del cyberbullismo e della sicurezza online, rivolte a docenti, genitori ed esperti che si occupano di minori. Il web, ormai mezzo di comunicazione quotidiano per bambini e ragazzi, offre molte potenzialità ma, allo stesso tempo, se non usato correttamente, nasconde rischi e insidie e può diventare terreno fertile per forme di abuso e violenza sui più giovani.

Tutto ciò premesso, può dire la Commissione:

1. se è a conoscenza della diffusione di questo sistema negli Stati Membri, in particolare quali sono i mezzi messi in campo dalla Commissione europea affinché questo strumento raggiunga i suoi destinatari naturali, e cioè le scuole, in primis, i docenti e gli alunni?

2. a quanto ammonta il finanziamento del progetto (che utilizza i fondi Daphne III, programma speciale dell'Unione europea per la prevenzione della violenza contro bambini, giovani e donne e per la protezione delle vittime e dei gruppi a rischio) e intende la Commissione riproporlo nel prossimo Quadro finanziario pluriennale?

Risposta data da Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 aprile 2012)

Il cyberbullismo è una delle priorità del programma DAPHNE III. Nel 2008, 2009 e 2010 sono stati finanziati progetti in materia. La violenza connessa agli strumenti online rientra altresì fra le priorità dell'invito a presentare proposte attualmente in corso per il programma Daphne III (termine ultimo per la presentazione: 29 marzo 2012). In tale ambito la Commissione desidera finanziare attività volte a sensibilizzare maggiormente i gruppi destinatari sui potenziali effetti negativi delle nuove tecnologie.

Il progetto «Friends online», già ultimato, era finanziato dal programma Daphne ed è stato realizzato dal comune di Partille, in Svezia. Il beneficiario ha garantito la diffusione mediante un sito web che contiene tutto il materiale elaborato dal progetto. La Commissione intende inserire il progetto e i suoi risultati nel prossimo aggiornamento di Daphne Toolkit.

Mediante il programma Safer Internet ([1]), finalizzato a promuovere un uso più sicuro delle tecnologie online da parte dei minori, la Commissione cofinanzia una rete paneuropea di centri «Internet più sicuro» in tutti gli Stati membri. Tali centri gestiscono un servizio telefonico di assistenza. È previsto che questo programma diventi uno dei servizi digitali del meccanismo per collegare l'Europa proposto dalla Commissione per il periodo 2014-2020 ([2]).

Il programma «Diritti e cittadinanza», proposto dalla Commissione per il periodo 2014-2020, sarà inoltre il successore dell'attuale programma Daphne III e ai suoi fondi si aggiungeranno i fondi del programma proposto «Giustizia», soprattutto per le attività in materia di diritti delle vittime. La combinazione di questi fondi determinerà una dotazione analoga a quella attuale per il programma Daphne III o addirittura superiore.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0665_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002009/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: European youth policy: 'Friends online'

Sweden, Romania, Spain and Italy are all taking part in the European 'Friends online' project, whose aim is to prevent bullying and promote the safe use of the Internet among younger people by sharing good practice. Launched in 2009, the initiative offers activities to raise awareness of cyberbullying and online safety. These are aimed at teachers, parents and experts who work with young people. The web is now an everyday means of communication for children and adolescents, but although this medium offers exciting potential, if it is not used correctly it can contain hidden dangers and risks that create a breeding ground for violence and abuse against youngsters.

Can the Commission therefore state:

1. how widely this system has been adopted by Member States, and especially, what measures have been put in place by the European Commission to enable this project to reach its natural target group — in other words schools, and above all teachers and pupils?

2. how much funding is available for the project, which draws on Daphne III funds, a special European Union programme for the prevention of violence against children, adolescents and women and for the protection of victims and groups at risk? Does the Commission intend to propose continued funding in the next Multiannual Financial Framework?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 April 2012)

Cyber-bullying is one of the priorities of the Daphne III Programme. Projects on this issue have been financed in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Violence linked to online tools, is also one of the priorities of the ongoing Daphne III call for proposals (deadline for submission: 29 March 2012). Under this priority, the Commission would like to fund activities designed to increase target groups' understanding of the potentially negative impacts of new technologies.

The already finalised 'Friends online' project was financed by the Daphne Programme and implemented by the Municipality of Partille in Sweden. Dissemination was ensured by the beneficiary through a website which contains all the material developed by the project. The aim of the Commission is to include the project and its results in the next update of the Daphne Toolkit.

Under the Safer Internet Programme ([1]), which aims at promoting a safer use of online technologies by children the Commission co-funds a pan-European network of Safer Internet Centres in all Member States. These Centres run helplines. The follow-up to this programme is foreseen as one of the digital services of the Connecting Europe Facility proposed by the Commission for 2014-2020 ([2]).

Furthermore, the Rights and Citizenship Programme, proposed by the Commission for 2014-2020, will be the successor of the current Daphne III Programme. Its funds will be supplemented by the funds of the proposed Justice Programme, especially for funding activities in the area of victims' rights. The combination of these two funds would result in a budget comparable to and even higher than the current budget of the Daphne III Programme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/documents/com2011_0665_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002010/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Lotta europea alla corruzione

La corruzione non è una piaga solo italiana: ogni anno 120 milioni di EUR — circa l'1 % del PIL dell'Unione europea — spariscono a causa della corruzione. L'80 % dei cittadini ritiene che sia uno dei principali problemi del proprio paese e chiede alla politica una risposta più efficace. La Commissione europea ha presentato e discusso in Parlamento il pacchetto di misure «Combattere la corruzione nell'UE», già pubblicato a giugno 2011.

Negli ultimi dieci anni è stato creato un quadro normativo per contrastare la corruzione in Europa. Purtroppo, i risultati sono ancora scarsi e non tutti gli Stati membri hanno fatto gli sforzi necessari. L'Italia, accompagnata dall'Austria e dalla Germania, non è nella migliore posizione, visto che non ha nemmeno ratificato la Convenzione penale sulla corruzione del Consiglio d'Europa.

1. Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se è in grado di fornire una statistica della situazione a livello di corruzione in tutti gli Stati membri, con un elenco dei paesi più e meno virtuosi?

2. Può indicare come intende procedere e quali sono le politiche già in atto nell'attuazione del nuovo sistema, che prevede un «rapporto anti-corruzione» da pubblicarsi ogni due anni a partire dal prossimo 2013, per contrastare l'inerzia delle politiche degli Stati membri?

Risposta data da Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(30 marzo 2012)

La relazione dell'Unione sulla lotta alla corruzione non stabilirà alcuna classifica tra Stati membri. Il suo scopo è rilevare debolezze e carenze, identificare buone pratiche, formulare raccomandazioni in vista di azioni future ed incoraggiare l'apprendimento *inter pares*. Per quanto riguarda le statistiche sui livelli di corruzione, se l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento a dati oggettivi sugli effetti della corruzione, va osservato che non sono disponibili dati comparativi per tutta l'UE. La maggior parte degli indici comparativi disponibili, compreso l'Eurobarometro sulla corruzione (la cui ultima edizione è del 15 febbraio 2012:
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_374_en.pdf) concernono la percezione

All'audizione pubblica tenuta al Parlamento europeo nel settembre 2011 la Commissione ha presentato la metodologia di lavoro per la relazione dell'Unione sulla lotta alla corruzione. La relazione si fonderà sulle conoscenze esistenti in materia di valutazione delle politiche anti-corruzione, apporterà valore aggiunto nei settori di maggiore rilevanza per l'Unione e cercherà strumenti innovativi per la valutazione che si concentrino sull'impatto. La Commissione ha istituito un gruppo di esperti sulla corruzione che ha dato il via ai lavori nel gennaio di quest'anno. Informazioni sulla composizione del gruppo sono reperibili alla seguente pagina web:
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/detailGroup.cfm?groupID=2725&lang=IT

Sono attualmente in corso le procedure di aggiudicazione per l'istituzione di una rete di corrispondenti di ricerca locali provenienti dalla società civile, dal mondo accademico e della ricerca, che avrà carattere complementare rispetto al gruppo di esperti. Inoltre, la relazione dell'Unione sulla lotta alla corruzione attingerà a tutte le risorse disponibili: gli strumenti esistenti di monitoraggio, la società civile, reti specializzate, istituzioni, servizi e agenzie dell'Unione (comprese l'OLAF, Eurojust ed Europol), studi della Commissione, Eurobarometro, ecc.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002010/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: European fight against corruption

Corruption is not just an Italian affliction: every year EUR 120 million — around 1 % of the European Union's GDP — vanishes as a result of corruption. 80 % of citizens believe that this is one of the biggest problems facing their country and call for a more forceful response. The European Commission has presented and discussed in Parliament the EU anti-corruption package, which was published in June 2011.

In the last 10 years a regulatory framework has been created to tackle corruption in Europe. Unfortunately the results are still poor and not all Member States have made the necessary efforts. Italy, together with Austria and Germany, is not in the best position, as it has not even ratified the Council of Europe's Criminal Law Convention on Corruption.

1. That said, can the Commission state whether it can provide statistical information on the corruption situation in all Member States, with a list of countries and the extent to which they are afflicted?

2. Can it indicate how it intends to proceed and what policies are already in place to implement the new system, which includes an 'anti-corruption report' to be published every two years starting in 2013, to tackle the inertia of Member States' policies?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(30 March 2012)

The EU Anti-Corruption Report will not rank Member States. Its aim is to point out vulnerabilities and shortcomings, identify good practices, make recommendations for future action and encourage peer learning. As regards the statistics on the level of corruption, if the Honourable Member meant objective data on impact of corruption, there is no available comparative measurement across the EU. Most of the comparative indexes available regard perception, including the Eurobarometer on corruption (the latest one released on 15 February 2012 http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_374_en.pdf).

The Commission presented the working methodology for the EU Anti-Corruption Report in the public hearing of the European Parliament held in September 2011. The report will build on existing knowledge in terms of evaluation of anti-corruption policies, add value on matters most relevant to the EU and look into innovative assessment instruments focused on impact. The Commission set up an expert group on corruption which started its work in January this year. Information on the composition of the group is available on the following web-page: http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/detailGroup.cfm?groupID=2725

Public procurement procedures are ongoing for the setting up of a network of local research correspondents coming from civil society, academia and research that will complement the work of the expert group. Moreover, the EU Anti-Corruption Report will make use of all available sources, such as existing monitoring tools, civil society, specialised networks, EU institutions, services and agencies (including OLAF, Eurojust, Europol), Commission studies, Eurobarometer, etc.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002011/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Internazionalizzazione delle imprese agricole

Una delle conseguenze della sempre maggiore globalizzazione dell'economia è l'internazionalizzazione delle imprese. In sostanza, mentre si fanno sempre più stretti i legami economici tra diversi paesi e realtà territoriali del pianeta, le imprese agricole si adeguano a questa tendenza e si aprono a mercati sempre più vasti. In tal modo, da un lato, aumenta la propensione all'esportazione dei propri prodotti agricoli — ossia le imprese guardano alla domanda non più solo in relazione al mercato domestico, ma anche a quello dei paesi terzi — dall'altro aumenta l'interesse a espandere la propria attività in altri paesi. Le imprese che lavorano con le risorse del campo progettano la realizzazione d'investimenti diretti in altri paesi; sia tramite l'acquisizione d'imprese esistenti, sia creandole ex novo, sia creando alleanze con imprese estere.

L'internazionalizzazione delle imprese agricole pertanto si configura, in estrema sintesi, proprio nei due processi appena descritti.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione precisare se esistono fondi europei ai quali le piccole e medie aziende possono attingere per adeguare le proprie linee di azione, realizzando specifici progetti (fiere ed iniziative internazionali) volti, da un lato, a favorire la promozione all'esportazione di prodotti agricoli agroalimentari e dall'altro a supportare gli imprenditori agricoli che intendono fare investimenti diretti all'estero?

Risposta data da Dacian Cioloş a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

Il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR) offre agli imprenditori agricoli l'opportunità di investire nelle proprie imprese, nella trasformazione e nella commercializzazione delle produzioni agricole, nella creazione di nuovi prodotti e tecnologie, nonché in attività non agricole. In tale ambito potrebbe essere previsto un sostegno ad azioni promozionali (ad esempio, per attività connesse alla promozione del turismo rurale).

Gli imprenditori agricoli e le PMI rurali possono inoltre beneficiare di sostegno formativo e consulenza specifici, a seconda del contenuto dei programmi di sviluppo rurali. Tuttavia, gli investimenti che beneficiano del sostegno del FEASR dovrebbero interessare l'area contemplata dal programma rurale.

I progetti di cooperazione transnazionale potrebbero essere realizzati nel quadro di LEADER. Anche tali progetti, condotti da gruppi di azione locale (GAL) di diversi Stati membri, potrebbero prevedere un sostegno alle PMI rurali, date le attività di commercializzazione in comune, la partecipazione a fiere, ecc.

I soggetti di piccole e medie dimensioni, quali i membri di organizzazioni professionali e/o interprofessionali, rappresentano i potenziali beneficiari del sostegno finanziario previsto per le campagne di informazione e promozione nel quadro del regolamento (CE) n. 3/2008 del Consiglio. Tali campagne possono essere destinate a paesi terzi o al mercato interno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002011/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Internationalisation of agricultural businesses

One consequence of increasing economic globalisation is the internationalisation of businesses. In essence, whilst economic links between different countries and regions worldwide are becoming ever stronger, agricultural businesses are adapting to this trend and opening up to increasingly large markets. This increases the propensity to export agricultural products — companies are looking for orders not just from domestic markets, but also from other countries — and also increases interest in expanding their own activities in other countries. Businesses that work with resources in the field are planning direct investments in other countries, whether by purchasing existing businesses, creating new ones or forming alliances with foreign businesses.

Very briefly, the internationalisation of agricultural businesses therefore is structured around the two processes described above.

In view of the above, can the Commission specify if there are EU funds available, on which small and medium-sized companies can draw, to adapt their action plans by carrying out specific projects (international exhibitions and initiatives) aimed, on the one hand, at encouraging the promotion of agricultural food product exportation and, on the other, at supporting farmers who intend to invest directly in other countries?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) provides farmers with the opportunity to invest in their own businesses, in processing and marketing of their production, in the creation of new products and technologies as well as in non-agricultural activities. In this context certain promotional activities (e.g. linked to encouragement of rural tourism) could also be supported.

Farmers and rural SMEs can also receive specific training and advisory support, depending on the content of the rural development programmes. The supported investments by the EAFRD, however, should be undertaken in the respective rural development programme area.

Transnational cooperation projects could be carried out under Leader. These are carried out between local action groups (LAGs) from different Member States, and could also contain support to rural SMEs in view of common marketing activities, participation at fairs, etc.

Small and medium-sized stakeholders as members of trade and/or inter-trade organisations are potential beneficiaries of the financial support for generic information and promotion campaigns provided within the framework of Council Regulation (EC) No 3/2008. These campaigns can be destined to third countries or in the community market.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002012/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Radiografie a tre dimensioni

È nata la radiologia del Terzo millennio. Immagini delle ossa tridimensionali, dell'intero scheletro, tramite radiazioni bassissime. E subito «lette» dall'intelligenza artificiale in modo che il medico non abbia solo una serie di piatte radiografie, ma disponga di un'elaborazione dei vari carichi dell'apparato scheletrico, delle anomalie, delle possibili correzioni anche millimetriche.

Si chiama Eos è viene utilizzata all'Istituto Humanitas di Rozzano. Si presenta come un'ampia cabina gialla dove si entra in piedi. Pochi secondi e lo scheletro del paziente «esce» virtualmente dal corpo per «ricomporsi» nelle fotografie hi-tech del computer. Si ricompone e parla di sé, racconta acciacchi e defaillance: difetti di postura, danni alla colonna vertebrale, all'anca, al ginocchio, alle articolazioni. Tutto registrato in posizione eretta, come accade naturalmente. Facile poi «progettare» interventi correttivi mini-invasivi, personalizzati e altamente precisi. Il massimo risultato con il minimo dei raggi: niente «bombardamenti», ma una dose di radiazioni inferiore del 90 % rispetto a una comune Tac e di otto volte rispetto a una radiografia tradizionale.

L'utilizzo di Eos è particolarmente vantaggioso nei giovani pazienti portatori di patologie della colonna vertebrale che necessitano di controlli ripetuti nel tempo. Per esempio nel caso di bambini affetti da scoliosi che vanno controllati ogni sei mesi. Poterlo fare con una dose minima di radiazioni è fondamentale.

— Alla luce di quanto sopra, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza della tecnologia delle radiografie a tre dimensioni a bassa radiazione, e se ritiene che tale scoperta innovativa possa usufruire di Fondi Europei, e se sì, di quali?

Risposta data da Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

Nell'ambito della tematica «Salute» del programma specifico «Cooperazione» del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (7° PQ, 2007-2013), la Commissione finanzia da tempo le attività destinate a migliorare la salute dei cittadini europei e a rafforzare la capacità di innovazione dell'industria e delle aziende attive nel settore della salute.

L'immaginografia ad uso medico — di cui fanno parte i nuovi sistemi radiologici tridimensionali — costituisce un elemento importante delle attività di ricerca e innovazione sostenute nell'ambito della tematica «Salute» del 7° PQ. Finora sono stati investiti circa 73 milioni di euro nello sviluppo di nuove tecnologie di immagini per la diagnostica. I pacchetti di lavoro concernenti l'immaginografia fanno inoltre parte integrante di vari altri progetti di ricerca finanziati nell'ambito di altre parti del programma. Nel corso degli ultimi due anni (2010 — 2011: 5° e 6° invito della tematica «Salute» del 7° PQ) circa 400 milioni di euro sono stati destinati al finanziamento della ricerca e dell'innovazione per lo sviluppo della medicina personalizzata (approcci personalizzati per la cura dei pazienti), tra cui le applicazioni di *imaging*.

Il sesto invito in corso nell'ambito della tematica «Salute» del 7° PQ pone un accento particolare sulla ricerca traslazionale con tematiche ampie che offrono ai ricercatori di varie discipline una gamma di possibilità di finanziamento delle proposte collaborative. Nel 7° invito che sarà pubblicato intorno alla metà di luglio di quest'anno la Commissione intende seguire lo stesso approccio per i finanziamenti della ricerca e dell'innovazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002012/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Three-dimensional radiography

Radiology of the third millennium has arrived. Three-dimensional images of bones, of the entire skeleton, with very low doses of radiation. Immediate computer-generated 'readings' mean that the doctor not only has a range of radiographic plates, but a representation of the various loads on the skeletal system, any anomalies and possible corrections, even to within a millimetre.

It goes by the name of Eos and is used at the Humanitas Institute of Rozzano. It comes in the form of a large yellow cabin that you walk into. Just a few seconds later and the patient's skeleton 'leaves' their body virtually, before being 'pieced back together' in the hi-tech computer photographs. It is reassembled and tells a tale in the process, describing any infirmities and failures: posture defects, damage to the spinal column, hip, knee or other joints. All of this recorded in a natural standing position. It is then a simple matter to plan mini-invasive, personalised, ultra-precise corrective surgery. The best possible results with the fewest possible rays: no 'bombardment', but a radiation dose that is 90 % lower than a standard CAT scan and eight times less than conventional radiography.

The use of Eos is particularly beneficial for young patients suffering pathologies of the spinal column, which require regular check-ups, as in the case of children suffering from scoliosis, requiring check-ups every six months. Being able to do this with a minimal dose of radiation is essential.

— In light of the above, can the Commission say whether it is aware of low-radiation, three-dimensional radiographic technology and whether it feels that this innovative discovery should benefit from EU funds? If so, which funds?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Commission has been supporting activities aiming at improving the health of European citizens and boosting the innovative capacity of health-related industry and businesses throughout the Health theme of the Seventh Framework for Research and Technological Development (FP7, 2007-2013) 'Cooperation' Programme.

Medical imaging — to which the newly developed 3D X-ray imaging systems belong — has been an important element of the research and innovation activities supported by the FP7 Health theme. Some EUR 73 million have been invested so far into development of new imaging technologies in the diagnostics area alone. Imaging work packages also represent an integral part of several other research projects funded in other parts of the programme. During the last two years (2010-2011: fifth and sixth call of the FP7 Health theme) some EUR 400 million were also dedicated to the funding of research and innovation for the development of personalised medicine (individualised approaches to treatment of patients) including imaging applications.

The current sixth call of the Health theme of FP7 has placed a strong emphasis on translational research with broadly designed topics offering a variety of opportunities to researchers in multiple disciplines to apply for funding with collaborative proposals. The Commission envisages to follow the same approach in supporting research and innovation in the seventh call which will be published in mid-July 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002013/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Microchip medicamentoso

Apparentemente i sensori e i microchip impiantabili e controllabili da remoto sono la nuova frontiera della biotecnologia avanzata. Istituti di ricerca e società farmaceutiche sperimentano con nuovi approcci, per facilitare la vita ai pazienti ma anche per instaurare con questi ultimi un rapporto ancora più stretto e interdipendente.

Lavorano ad esempio al microchip medicamentoso i ricercatori del Massachusetts Institute of Technology, nel quadro di uno studio che coinvolge sette donne affette da osteoporosi che si trovano nella necessità di assumere un medicinale in dosaggi quotidiani attraverso iniezioni estremamente dolorose.

Il microchip impiantato all'interno del corpo — appena sotto la linea della vita — è invece progettato per rilasciare autonomamente dosi giornaliere dello stesso farmaco, e i medici hanno la facoltà di attivare e programmare da remoto (via comunicazioni radio) gli orari della somministrazione delle varie dosi. Il test del MIT ha avuto successo in sei casi su sette, mentre in un solo caso il dispositivo non ha risposto ai radio-ordini impartiti dai medici, inibendo il rilascio del farmaco.

Laddove le società farmaceutiche potrebbero invece trarre i maggiori vantaggi è nell'impiego di pillole «intelligenti» contenenti chip elettronici «biodegradabili» capaci di fornire dati su come il corpo reagisce alla somministrazione di un farmaco, di «avvertire» un software presente sullo smartphone del paziente e infine di comunicare i risultati al medico curante via posta elettronica.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. è a conoscenza della sperimentazione dei microchip medicamentosi e se ritiene che tale scoperta innovativa possa usufruire di fondi europei e, in caso affermativo, di quali;

2. reputa che l'iniziativa dell'Università del Massachusetts possa essere replicata in paesi europei nell'ambito di futuri progetti pilota.

Risposta data da Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(4 aprile 2012)

I microinfusori e i microchip impiantabili per il rilascio controllato dei farmaci costituiscono un campo di ricerca e sviluppo ormai da quindici anni. I progressi realizzati nelle relative tecnologie sono notevoli. Ciononostante, sarà ancora necessario fare fronte a grandi sfide (quali l'affidabilità, la biocompatibilità, l'interesse clinico, l'efficacia, ecc.) prima che tali dispositivi possano essere immessi sul mercato.

La Commissione contribuisce in misura significativa ai progressi compiuti in materia di dispositivi impiantabili per il rilascio automatico e «intelligente» dei farmaci, attraverso finanziamenti a progetti di ricerca stanziati nell'ambito del 6° e del 7° programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo. L'Europa è molto competitiva, dispone di ottime équipe di ricerca e può vantare un ruolo leader nella ricerca e sviluppo di tecnologie e sistemi di questo tipo. Con inviti a presentare proposte nel settore dei microsistemi, sistemi intelligenti e sistemi micro-nano-bio, il programma per le TIC finanzia proposte che vanno oltre lo stato dell'arte e non replica le sperimentazioni fatte altrove. I dispositivi impiantabili o i farmaci per il controllo medico da remoto di pazienti cronici sono considerati uno dei settori promettenti per il futuro della tecnologia medica.

Il progetto «P-Cezanne» (http://www.pcezanneportal.co.uk), incentrato sui dispositivi impiantabili a circuito chiuso per il controllo e la cura di malattie croniche come il diabete, offre un esempio di progetto di ricerca e sviluppo finanziato nell'ambito del programma sulle TIC del 6° PQ. L'impiego di microchip impiantabili per il trattamento dell'osteoporosi non è ancora stato oggetto di un progetto relativo alle TIC. Tuttavia, progetti in materia rientreranno nel campo di applicazione dei prossimi inviti a presentare proposte di ricerca nel settore dei sistemi micro-nano-bio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002013/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Medicinal microchip

Remote-control microchip and sensor implants seem to be the new frontier in advanced biotechnology. Research institutes and pharmaceutical companies are experimenting with new approaches to enhance patients' well-being and create an even closer, more mutually dependent relationship with them.

Researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, for example, are working on the medicinal microchip as part of a study involving seven women suffering from osteoporosis. This condition means they have to take daily medicine in the form of extremely painful injections.

Implanted into the body just below the waist, the microchip is designed to release daily doses of the drug independently, with doctors able to activate release and programme the times at which the various doses are to be administered remotely (via a radio link). The MIT test has been successful in six out of seven cases — in only one case did the device fail to respond to remote commands, preventing the drug from being released.

Where, however, pharmaceutical companies could achieve the greatest success is in the use of 'intelligent' pills containing biodegradable electronic chips able to provide data on how the body reacts to the administration of a drug, 'notify' software on the patient's smartphone and finally e-mail the results to the doctor concerned.

In light of these facts, can the Commission report say whether:

1. it is aware of the medicinal microchip experiments, believes that this innovation can benefit from European funds, and if so, which;

2. it believes that Massachusetts Institute of Technology's initiative can be replicated in European countries under future pilot projects?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2012)

'Implantable drug delivery micro pumps & microchips' has been a domain of R & D for the last 15 years. Progress in related technologies has been significant but there are still big challenges to address (such as reliability, biocompatibility, clinical relevance and efficiency…) before such device can be commercialised.

The Commission significantly contributes to the great advances in implantable chips for automatic and intelligent drug delivery by funding research projects under the 6th and 7th Framework programmes for R & D. Europe is very competitive, has excellent research teams and can claim the leadership in R & D of these technologies and systems. The ICT program through calls in the area of Microsystems, Smart Systems and Micro-Nano-Bio systems, fund proposals that go beyond the state-of-the-art and does not replicate experiments elsewhere. Implantable chips or 'pills' for remotely controllable medication of chronic patients is considered one of the promising future directions for medical technology.

An example of such R & D project (P.Cezanne) funded under the FP6 ICT programme target close-loop implant systems to monitor and treat chronic diseases such as diabetes (http://www.pcezanneportal.co.uk).Osteoporosis application with implant microchip hasn't been addressed by an ICT project so far, but projects from this topic and nature would be in the scope of our future calls for research proposals in the field of Micro-Nano-Bio systems.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002014/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Programma per fondi diretti alla città di Benevento

Gli enti territoriali, quali comuni e province, sono tra i primi possibili beneficiari dei fondi diretti programmati ed erogati da parte delle direzioni generali della Commissione. Tra i fondi disponibili ci sono ad esempio: il programma Cultura, il programma per l'occupazione e la solidarietà sociale «Progress», il programma per la cittadinanza «Europa per i cittadini», quello per l'ambiente «Life +», quello per gestire i flussi migratori «Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori», quello dedicato alle risorse umane «Investire nelle persone» e tanti altri.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, si interroga dunque la Commissione per sapere:

1. ci sono programmi per i quali la città di Benevento ha fatto richiesta?

2. in caso affermativo, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati i suddetti programmi sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta data da Janusz Lewandowski a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

La città di Benevento ha proposto un progetto nell'ambito dell'invito a presentare proposte 2011 del programma LIFE+, intitolato: «COMUNENERGIA — Città in rete per l'energia sostenibile». Il costo totale del progetto proposto è di 2 918 430 EUR e il contributo richiesto all'UE è di 1 449 650 EUR. Poiché la procedura di selezione e valutazione nell'ambito dell'invito a presentare proposte in questione è ancora in corso, non possono essere fornite in questo momento ulteriori informazioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002014/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Direct funding programme for the town of Benevento

Local and regional authorities, such as municipalities and provinces, are among the first possible beneficiaries of direct funds administered and allocated by the Directorates-General of the Commission. Funds available include the Culture programme, the Progress programme for employment and social solidarity, the Europe for Citizens programme to promote citizenship, the Life+ programme for the environment, the Solidarity and the Management of Migration Flows programme, the Investing in People programme focusing on human resources, and many more.

In light of these facts, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Has the town of Benevento applied for funding under any programmes?

2. If so, which projects received EU funds and what did they achieve?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Town of Benevento has submitted a project proposal under the 2011 call for proposals of the LIFE+ programme: 'COMUNENERGIA — Città in rete per l'energia sostenibile'; the total cost of the proposed project is EUR 2 918 430 and the requested EU contribution is EUR 1 449 650. The selection and evaluation process for that call for proposals is still ongoing, so no further information can be given at this point in time.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002015/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Crollo a Montecalvario

Undici famiglie, residenti in uno stabile di via Concenzione a Montecalvario, sono state costrette a trascorrere la notte fuori casa. Sono state infatti allontanate, in via precauzionale, dalle loro abitazioni a causa dell'apertura di una voragine.

Secondo quanto accertato mentre alcuni operai dell'Arin stavano lavorando in via Lungo Gelso per riparare una condotta, poco lontano si è aperta una voragine nella quale è finito anche un automezzo: in zona passa anche la rete di distribuzione del gas. Sul posto sono intervenuti anche i vigili del fuoco e i poliziotti della volante della questura.

Terminati i lavori e accertato che allo stabile non era stato arrecato alcun danno, le famiglie, che nel frattempo avevano trovato sistemazione presso amici e parenti, hanno potuto fare rientro nelle loro case. La tubazione dell'Arin si presenta integra e, tra l'altro, le superfici della voragine sono asciutte, tanto da far dedurre la mancanza di correlazione tra l'intervento di manutenzione in corso e il dissesto. Precauzionalmente l'Arin ha sospeso l'erogazione idrica e ha proceduto a bypassare il tratto di tubazione interessata.

Alla luce dei fatti sopraesposti, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. Se è a conoscenza dei crolli che si sono verificati nell'arco dell'ultimo anno nel centro di Montecalvario;

2. Se ci sono fondi europei per i quali la città di Montecalvario ha fatto richiesta;

3. In caso di risposta affermativa, quali sono i progetti che hanno avuto accesso a fondi europei e con quali risultati sono stati portati a termine?

Risposta data da Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(28 marzo 2012)

La Commissione non era al corrente degli eventi di Montecalvario menzionati dall'onorevole deputato.

La Regione Campania beneficia del sostegno della politica di coesione dell'UE al fine di incoraggiarere la crescita, la competitività e l'occupazione. In linea col principio di gestione comune usato per l'amministrazione dei Fondi strutturali, la selezione e l'attuazione dei progetti rientrano nelle responsabilità delle autorità nazionali.

Pertanto la Commissione invita l'onorevole deputato a mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione regionale del programma per la Campania:

Autorità di Gestione FESR del POR Campania, Regione Campania, Via Santa Lucia, 81
dario.gargiulo@regionecampania.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002015/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Collapse in Montecalvario

Eleven families residing in a building in Via Concenzione, Montecalvario, were forced to spend the night away from home. They were told to vacate their homes as a precautionary measure after a chasm opened up in the area.

According to reports, while a number of workmen from the company Arin were repairing a pipeline in Via Lungo Gelso, a chasm opened up nearby, swallowing up a vehicle. The mains gas supply also runs through the area. The fire brigade and local police force were called onto the scene to intervene.

Once work was completed and the buildings were inspected to ensure that they had not been damaged, the families, who in the meantime had sought refuge with friends and relatives, were able to return to their homes. The fact that the Arin pipeline was intact and, among other things, the surfaces of the chasm were dry, pointed to the conclusion that there was actually no connection between the repair work and the collapse. As a precaution, Arin has cut off the water supply and has begun bypassing the stretch of pipeline concerned.

In light of the above, can the Commission confirm:

1. whether it is aware of the collapses that have occurred during the last year in the centre of Montecalvario;

2. whether Montecalvario has submitted any applications for EU funding;

3. if so, which projects have had access to European funds and what results have been achieved?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

The Commission was not aware of the events in Montecalvario referred to by the Honourable Member.

The Campania region benefits from the support of EU cohesion policy to foster growth, competitiveness and employment. In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of the Structural Funds, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities.

Therefore the Commission invites the Honourable Member to contact directly the regional managing authority of the programme for Campania:

Autorità di Gestione FESR del POR Campania, Regione Campania, Via Santa Lucia, 81
dario.gargiulo@regionecampania.eu

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-002016/12
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 febbraio 2012)

Oggetto: Monitoraggio della spesa dei finanziamenti europei per corsi di formazione

La Regione Basilicata è stata vincitrice lo scorso anno di finanziamenti PO-FES 2007-13 con lo scopo di organizzare il corso di Alta Formazione sulle «Nuove tecnologie digitali applicate ai beni culturali, archeologici e monumentali», tenutosi presso la sede della società Pragma Group srl, a Matera, dal 14 febbraio al 4 novembre 2011. Durante e dopo lo svolgimento del programma formativo, molte sono state le criticità riscontrate dai partecipanti in merito all'organizzazione delle lezioni, alla qualità del locale in cui si è tenuta la fase d'aula di 450 ore (una sala di circa 40 mq nella quale erano ospitati i 18 corsisti, sprovvista di uscite di sicurezza e di estintori), al personale docente non sempre rispondente alle esigenze formative del corso, alle postazioni informatiche sottodimensionate, allo stage non sempre in linea con l'attività d'aula o coi propositi del corso (difformi rispetto all'iniziale pubblicità d'offerta), ai rimborsi non recepiti a distanza di un anno dall'inizio del progetto; inoltre, non sempre è stato riscontrato un livello didattico idoneo, nessun attestato di partecipazione è ancora pervenuto, la comunicazione con l'ente formativo non sempre è stata chiara ed esaustiva ecc. ecc.

Analoghe difficoltà riguardano in modo particolare il progetto «Un ponte per l'occupazione» — bando che interessa quasi 700 soggetti. In quest'ultimo progetto sono stati riscontrati notevoli ritardi e problemi di pianificazione dell'offerta formativa. Per il «Reddito ponte» le problematiche sono state tali da incentivare la costituzione di un Comitato che ha individuato, tra le varie criticità, in particolare le seguenti: tassazione dell'indennità di frequenza, carenza qualitativa del corpo docente e delle attrezzature didattiche (e informatiche), lentezza e farraginosità nelle modalità di pagamento e nella comunicazione con la Regione, contraddittorietà nelle comunicazioni istituzionali, possibilità di spendere i voucher occupazionali in enti pubblici o in attività commerciali non in linea con gli indirizzi politici dei bandi finanziati dall'UE.

S'interroga allora la Commissione per sapere:

1. se può monitorare l'accurata spendibilità dei FES da parte degli enti vincitori dei bandi (in questo caso la Regione Basilicata), in modo che siano chiari ad esempio i criteri di selezione degli enti formativi, dei docenti e delle aule didattiche nonché la qualità del loro operato, la scelta delle attrezzature informatiche e il rispetto degli obiettivi formativi;

2. se può controllare la trasparenza dei bilanci degli enti formativi nonché evitare che vi sia un eccessivo margine di discrezionalità da parte degli attuatori dei bandi regionali — gli enti formativi, ai quali sono delegate funzioni amministrative anche cruciali, come ad esempio i calcoli dei rimborsi — oltre a ispezionare il profilo lavorativo degli stessi, che sembra ricorrano sporadicamente a personale non assunto.

Risposta data da László Andor a nome della Commissione
(3 aprile 2012)

L'onorevole deputato chiede alla Commissione di esprimersi sull'attuazione dei corsi di formazione condotti nella regione Basilicata, in Italia. Trattandosi di corsi di formazione la Commissione suppone che il fondo strutturale che è intervenuto sia il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) e non il FESR come indicato nell'interrogazione scritta.

La regione Basilicata beneficia del sostegno dei Fondi strutturali europei per promuovere la crescita, la competitività e l'occupazione. Il programma operativo (PO) del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) in particolare mira a rafforzare la coesione socioeconomica migliorando le opportunità occupazionali.

In base al principio di sussidiarietà i PO cofinanziati dai fondi strutturali sono attuati dagli Stati membri e dalle loro regioni, in particolare dall'autorità di gestione del PO. Le autorità nazionali devono tuttavia rispettare le regole di trasparenza che prevedono la pubblicazione obbligatoria degli estremi di tutti i beneficiari.

La Commissione interviene nella selezione, nel monitoraggio e nella valutazione dei progetti, ma procede a effettuare audit regolari per verificare il rispetto delle regole in vigore.

La Commissione chiederà all'autorità di gestione informazioni sulla questione sollevata dall'onorevole deputato.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002016/12
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Frances Silvestris (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Monitoring the cost of EU funding for training courses

Last year, the Basilicata region was awarded OP-ERDF 2007-13 funding for organising the higher education course on 'New digital technologies applied to cultural heritage, archaeological sites and monuments', held at the head offices of the company Pragma Group Srl in Matera from 14 February to 4 November 2011. During and after the training programme, many of those taking part voiced their concern about the organisation of the lessons, the quality of the venue in which the 450-hour course took place (a room of some 40 m^2 accommodating 18 trainees, with no emergency exit or fire extinguisher), teaching staff who did not always meet the training requirements of the course, computer workstations that were too small, work experience that was not always relevant to the classroom activities or the objectives of the course (contrary to the initial advertisement) and refunds still unpaid a year after the project began. Furthermore, the level of teaching was not always suitable, there was no attendance certificate, communication with the training organisation was not always clear and comprehensive and so on.

There were similar difficulties concerning the project 'A bridge to employment' in particular — a bid which involved some 700 individuals. In this project there were significant delays and problems with the planning of the training course. As regards the 'A bridge to income' course, the problems were such that a committee was formed which identified the following problem areas in particular: taxation of the attendance allowance, poor quality of teaching staff and equipment (including IT), slowness and cumbersomeness of payment arrangements and communication with the Region, the contradictory nature of communication between institutions, and the option of spending employment vouchers in public organisations or commercial activities that were not in keeping with the policy guidelines for EU-funded bids.

Can the Commission therefore state:

1. whether it can monitor that EU development funds are being spent carefully by the organisations that win the bids (in this case the Basilicata Region), ensuring, for instance, that the selection criteria for training organisations, teachers and classrooms are clear, and monitoring the quality of the courses, the choice of IT equipment and adherence to learning objectives;

2. whether it can control the transparency of the accounts of training organisations, while avoiding an excessive margin of discretion on the part of those involved in implementing the regional bids (the training organisations, which are also tasked with crucial administrative functions such as, for example, calculating refunds)? Can it also inspect the status of those organisations, which occasionally seem to use staff who are not officially on the books?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The Honourable Member asks the Commission to state its position on the implementation of the training courses set up in the Basilicata region in Italy. Given that the matter concerns training courses, the Commission assumes that the structural fund involved is the European Social Fund (ESF) and not the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as stated in the written question.

Basilicata region benefits from the support of the European structural funds to foster growth, competitiveness and employment. The European Social Fund (ESF) operational programme (OP) in particular aims at strengthening economic and social cohesion by improving employment and job opportunities.

According to the subsidiarity principle, the OPs co-financed by the structural funds are implemented by the Member States and their regions, in particular by the OP managing authority. National authorities must, however, respect transparency rules including the compulsory publication of all beneficiaries.

The Commission does not intervene in the selection, monitoring and evaluating of projects, but proceeds to regular audits to verify the compliance with applicable rules.

The Commission will ask the managing authority for information on the issues raised by the Honourable Member.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-002018/12
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(21 lutego 2012 r.)

Przedmiot: Tlenek węgla przyczyną wielu zgonów w Polsce

Tlenek węgla jest gazem silnie trującym. Powstaje w wyniku braku odpowiedniej ilości tlenu, niezbędnego do zupełnego spalania wszelkich paliw, np. gazu w piecach domowego użytku. Od początku lutego br. tlenkiem węgla podtruło się 508 osób, a 23 osoby zmarły – wynika z informacji polskiego Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych. W Polsce, jak i całej Europie, jest prowadzona akcja informująca o sposobach reagowania, obserwacji skutków emisji niebezpiecznego gazu, jak i kontroli i właściwego użytkowania urządzeń mogących wytwarzać niebezpieczny gaz. Jednak te wszystkie działania nie są wystarczająco skuteczne, zwłaszcza w okresie wzmożonych mrozów, które panują w Europie.

— Czy Komisja monitoruje ten problem i jego konsekwencje w Europie?

— Czy Komisja planuje podjąć dodatkowe działania mające na celu przeciwdziałanie śmiercionośnym skutkom niekontrolowanej emisji tlenku węgla w sprzętach użytku domowego?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johna Dallego w imieniu Komisji
(3 kwietnia 2012 r.)

Państwa członkowskie i Komisja wymieniają się informacjami na temat produktów stanowiących poważne zagrożenie, np. wiążące się z zatruciem tlenkiem węgla, za pośrednictwem systemu RAPEX ([1]). Działający w ramach Komisji Komitet Naukowy ds. Zagrożeń dla Zdrowia i Środowiska przyjął opinię na temat oceny ryzyka związanego z powietrzem w pomieszczeniach, w której uwzględniono tlenek węgla ([2]). Ponadto, w ramach programu w dziedzinie zdrowia, Komisja sfinansowała obejmujące tlenek węgla projekty związane z jakością powietrza w pomieszczeniach, takie jak „Promowanie działań na rzecz zdrowego powietrza w pomieszczeniach (IAIAQ)" ([3]).

Odpowiedzialność za dopilnowanie, aby produkty spełniały wszelkie mające zastosowanie wymogi i przeszły właściwą ocenę zgodności, spoczywa na podmiotach gospodarczych. Egzekwowanie obowiązujących przepisów leży natomiast w kompetencji państw członkowskich.

Państwa członkowskie mogą również wnioskować o inspekcję urządzeń przed ich pierwszym użyciem lub okresowo po zainstalowaniu.

Z dostępnych informacji wynika, że najwięcej wypadków spowodowanych jest nieprawidłową instalacją, brakiem konserwacji i niedostateczną wentylacją, a nie niezgodnością z mającymi zastosowanie wymogami prawnymi. W związku z tym dostarczanie użytkownikom informacji i właściwych instrukcji użytkowania, zgodnie z mającymi zastosowanie wymogami prawnymi, ma zasadnicze znaczenie dla zapobiegania poważnym zagrożeniom.

W odniesieniu do drugiego pytania Komisja uprzejmie prosi Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedziami udzielonymi na pytania pisemne E-000967/2011, E-002563/2011 i E-00116/2012 ([4]). Opracowanie europejskich norm dotyczących detektorów tlenku węgla jest obecnie przedmiotem dyskusji z państwami członkowskimi.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/opinions/en/indoor-air-pollution/index.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/docs/env_iaiaq.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002018/12
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Carbon monoxide causes many deaths in Poland

Carbon monoxide is a highly toxic gas. It forms due to a lack of the necessary oxygen for the full combustion of all fuels, e.g. gas in household heaters and stoves. From the start of February this year, 508 people were poisoned by carbon monoxide and 23 died, according to information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In Poland, as in the rest of Europe, an information campaign has been conducted on response methods, on observing the effects of emissions of this gas, as well as on the regulation and proper use of appliances capable of producing it. However, these actions have not been sufficiently effective, especially during the period of intense cold in Europe.

— Is the Commission monitoring this problem and its consequences in Europe?

— Does the Commission plan on taking any additional action to combat the deadly consequences of uncontrolled emissions of carbon monoxide in domestic appliances?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

Information about products posing serious risks, such as carbon monoxide poisoning, is exchanged between the Member States and the Commission through the RAPEX system ([1]). The Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks of the Commission has adopted an Opinion on indoor air risk assessment, which takes account of carbon monoxide ([2]). Furthermore, under the Health programme, the Commission has funded projects linked to indoor air quality that include carbon monoxide, such as 'Promoting actions for healthy indoor air (IAIAQ)' ([3]).

Responsibility for ensuring that products comply with all applicable requirements and have undergone appropriate conformity assessment lies with the economic operators. Responsibility for enforcing the applicable legislation lies with Member States.

Member States may also request inspection of appliances before their first use or periodically after they have been installed.

According to the information available, most accidents are due to incorrect installation, lack of maintenance and insufficient ventilation rather than to non-compliance with the applicable legal requirements. Therefore, providing the user with information and correct instructions for use, in accordance with the applicable legal requirements, is of crucial importance to the prevention of serious risks.

As regards the second question, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Written Questions E-000967/2011, E-002563/2011 and E-00116/2012 ([4]). Elaboration of European standards for CO detectors is currently under discussion with the Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/opinions/en/indoor-air-pollution/index.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/docs/env_iaiaq.pdf
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-002019/12
a la Comisión
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D) y Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 de febrero de 2012)

Asunto: El futuro del Corredor Mediterráneo después del nuevo anuncio de prioridades en materia de infraestructuras ferroviarias por parte del Gobierno español

El pasado 19 de octubre de 2011, la Comisión confirmó que el Corredor Mediterráneo entraba a formar parte del mapa de prioridades de la Red Básica Transeuropea prevista en el horizonte 2030 y, por lo tanto, se comprometía en la financiación del eje ferroviario de mercancías que conecta el centro de Europa con los principales puertos de la costa mediterránea.

El 15 de febrero de 2012, la Ministra de Fomento, Ana Pastor, anunció la modificación de las prioridades del Gobierno español en materia de infraestructuras y, más específicamente, en lo que atañe a la Red Transeuropea de Transporte. De esta forma, el nuevo Gobierno, encabezado por Mariano Rajoy, altera el mapa propuesto por la Comisión para España que había sido previamente consensuado con las diferentes Comunidades Autónomas.

1. ¿Cambiará la Comisión el mapa de prioridades de la Red Básica Transeuropea en función de las nuevas propuestas del Gobierno español?

2. ¿Cree la Comisión que la modificación de las prioridades del Gobierno español puede suponer el retraso o la suspensión en la adjudicación y ejecución de las obras del Corredor Mediterráneo, pese a ser éste una de las piezas centrales del mapa anunciado por el Comisario Kallas el pasado mes de octubre?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de marzo de 2012)

1. La Comisión ha establecido la red principal de acuerdo con una metodología objetiva, que se debatió en un largo proceso de consulta de dos años anterior a la adopción de la propuesta de orientaciones de la RTE-T. Los Estados miembros han participado activamente en este proceso. Por lo tanto, la Comisión considera que su propuesta es sólida y que no hay ninguna razón para modificarla.

2. A la Comisión no le constan retrasos en los tramos pendientes del Corredor Mediterráneo. El plazo de ejecución de la red principal se ha fijado en el año 2030. En particular, la puesta en servicio de toda la línea de alta velocidad del corredor Barcelona— Figueras está prevista en 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002019/12
to the Commission
Maria Badia i Cutchet (S&D), Raimon Obiols (S&D) and Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: The future of the Mediterranean Corridor after the announcement of new rail infrastructure priorities by the Spanish Government

On 19 October 2011 the Commission confirmed that the Mediterranean Corridor would be included in the map of priorities of the core trans-European transport network planned for 2030, and in doing so it undertook to finance the freight railway axis connecting the centre of Europe with the main ports on the Mediterranean coast.

On 15 February 2012, Minister for Development Ana Pastor announced a change in the Spanish Government's infrastructure priorities and, more specifically, its priorities for the trans-European transport network. In so doing, the new Government, led by Mariano Rajoy, is altering the Commission's proposed map for Spain, which had previously been agreed with the various Autonomous Communities.

1. Will the Commission change the map of priorities for the core trans-European transport network on the basis of the Spanish Government's new proposals?

2. Does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government's change in priorities could result in a delay in, or suspension of, the award and execution of the work on the Mediterranean Corridor, in spite of the fact that it is one of the key elements of the map presented by Commissioner Kallas in October?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(29 March 2012)

1. The Commission has established the Core Network based on an objective methodology that has been discussed during a two year long consultation process preceding the adoption of the TEN-T Guidelines proposal. Member States have been closely involved in this process. The Commission is therefore of the opinion that its proposal is robust and there will be no reason to alter it.

2. The Commission does not have any evidence of delays taking place on the ongoing sections of the Mediterranean Corridor. The deadline for the implementation of the Core Network is set at 2030. Notably, the commissioning of the whole high-speed line along the corridor between Barcelona and Figueras is expected within 2012.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002020/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Austritt Griechenlands aus der Währungsunion

Aktuell wird immer wieder über einen möglichen Austritt Griechenlands aus der Währungsunion diskutiert und in diesem Zusammenhang über eine Vielzahl teils sehr widersprüchlicher und möglicher Folgen spekuliert.

1. Welche Auswirkungen hätte ein möglicher Austritt Griechenlands aus der Währungsunion nach Ansicht der Kommission?

2. Welche wirtschaftlichen und finanziellen Auswirkungen würden sich hieraus für die Union ergeben? Hat die Kommission bereits mögliche Szenarien hierzu untersucht?

3. Welche Kosten würden sich hierbei für die Union sowie für die einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten (bitte Aufstellung) ergeben?

4. Rechnet die Kommission mit einem Staatsbankrott Griechenlands?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(3. April 2012)

Die Unwiderruflichkeit der Mitgliedschaft im Euro-Währungsraum ist ein integraler Bestandteil des Europäischen Vertragswerks (Artikel 140 Absatz 3 AEUV). Die Kommission arbeitet eng mit anderen Beteiligten einschließlich des Europäischen Parlaments zusammen, um die Wirtschaftsführung und die Finanzstabilität im Euro-Währungsraum zu verbessern und somit das künftige Funktionieren der Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion abzusichern. Die Einführung einer neuen Währung oder der Austritt eines Mitgliedstaates aus dem Euro-Währungsraum ist keinesfalls beabsichtigt oder geplant.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002020/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Greece's exit from the Monetary Union

There are widespread discussions regarding the possible exit of Greece from the Monetary Union, leading to speculation on many possible consequences, some of them highly contradictory.

1. In the opinion of the Commission, what are the possible consequences of Greece exiting the Monetary Union?

2. What would be the economic and financial implications for the Union? Has the Commission examined possible scenarios?

3. What costs would be associated with such a development, both for the Union and for the individual Member States? (Please list.)

4. Does the Commission expect Greece to declare state bankruptcy?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

The irrevocability of membership in the euro area is an integral part of the Treaty framework (Article 140(3) TFEU). The Commission is working closely with other stakeholders, including the Parliament, to enhance economic governance and financial stability in the euro area, thereby underpinning the functioning of Economic and Monetary Union for the future. There is no intention or plan to set up a new currency or to have a Member State exit the euro area.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002021/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Wirtschaftliche Zukunft Portugals

Portugal hat Finanzhilfen der Europäischen Union mit dem Ziel erhalten, dass es sich wie geplant spätestens ab Ende 2013 wieder selbst finanzieren kann.

1. Wird dieses Ziel nach heutigem Wissensstand der Kommission erreicht? Sollte dies fraglich sein, wie reagiert die Kommission?

2. Wie überwacht die Kommission die Fortschritte in Portugal? Nach welchen Parametern bemisst sie die Fortschritte?

3. Befinden sich permanent Kommissionsmitarbeiter in Portugal, welche die Entwicklung vor Ort beobachten? Wenn ja, wie viele? Aus welchen Mitgliedstaaten kommen diese Mitarbeiter? Über welche spezifische Expertise verfügen sie?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

Das Finanzhilfeprogramm der EU und des IWF für Portugal läuft von Mitte 2011 bis Mitte 2014. Das Programm soll Portugal dazu befähigen, seine Staatsschulden ab September 2013 teilweise refinanzieren zu können.

Die Kommission überwacht kontinuierlich die Fortschritte bei der Umsetzung des Programms, insbesondere im Rahmen vierteljährlicher Überprüfungsmissionen nach Portugal. Im Rahmen der Missionen wird eine ausführliche Überprüfung von allen Maßnahmen vorgenommen, zu deren Annahme und Umsetzung sich Portugal im Rahmen des „Memorandum of Understanding" verpflichtet hat. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf den jüngsten Bericht verwiesen: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/pdf/ocp89_en.pdf

Die dritte Überprüfungsmission ist beendet und es wurde festgestellt, dass Portugal im Plan liegt. Der Bericht über die Einhaltung der Verpflichtungen soll in Kürze veröffentlicht werden.

Als Mitglied der Troika überwacht die Kommission die Umsetzung des Programms mittels zahlreicher Missionen, die von Expertenteams aus Kommissionsbediensteten durchgeführt werden. Auf lokaler Ebene in Lissabon beobachtet das Kommissionsbüro des Wirtschaftlichen Beraters die Entwicklungen. Das Büro stellt momentan vier weitere Wirtschaftswissenschaftler mit Erfahrungen in den verschiedenen Themenbereichen des Memorandums ein. Die Kommission hat auch eine interne Arbeitsgruppe mit zurzeit drei Bediensteten in Lissabon eingerichtet, die technische Unterstützung für Portugal bieten und organisieren soll. Die Kommissionsbediensteten werden nach Qualifikationen und bisherigen Leistungen ausgewählt, die Nationalität spielt keine Rolle. Die Kommission gibt aus diesem Grund derartige Informationen nicht bekannt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002021/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Economic future of Portugal

The European Union has given Portugal financial aid to enable it to finance itself, as planned, by the end of 2013 at the latest.

1. Based on current information, does the Commission believe this objective will be met? If this is open to question, what is the Commission's response?

2. How does the Commission monitor progress in Portugal? What parameters does it use to measure progress?

3. Does the Commission have a permanent team in Portugal to monitor developments at a local level? If so, how many members of staff are involved? From which Member States are these members of staff drawn? What are their specific areas of expertise?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

The EU/IMF Financial Assistance Programme to Portugal covers the period mid-2011 to mid-2014. The programme targets that Portugal will be able to partly re-finance its government debt from September 2013 on.

The Commission monitors progress in programme implementation on a continuous basis, particularly in the context of quarterly review missions to Portugal. During these missions an in-depth review of all measures Portugal has committed to adopt and implement in the framework of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) is carried out. The Honourable Member is referred to the latest report:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2011/pdf/ocp89_en.pdf

The third review mission has been concluded and found that Portugal is on track. The compliance report will be published shortly.

The Commission as part of the Troika monitors programme implementation with frequent missions of expert teams of Commission officials. At local level in Lisbon, the Commission's office of the Economic Advisor is monitoring developments. The office is recruiting four additional economists with experience in the various areas of the MoU. The Commission has also created a Commission-internal Support Group with the aim of providing and organising technical assistance to Portugal, with currently three officials stationed in Lisbon. Commission staff is chosen on the basis of qualifications and merit without consideration to nationality. The Commission does therefore not divulge this kind of information.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002022/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Wirtschaftliche Zukunft Griechenlands

In der Diskussion um die Zukunft Griechenlands wird immer wieder die Frage aufgeworfen, welche Wirtschaftssektoren die griechische Regierung schwerpunktmäßig aufbauen sollte, um in der Zukunft für Wirtschaftswachstum und Beschäftigung zu sorgen?

1. Gehören die zur Identifizierung dieser Wirtschaftssektoren notwendigen Analysen, Konzeptentwürfe und Strategien ebenfalls mit zu den Aufgaben der Kommissionsmitarbeiter in Griechenland? Erhält das Land hierbei Expertenunterstützung durch die Kommission?

2. Unternimmt die Kommission eigene Aktivitäten, um diese Fragen zu klären?

3. Wenn ja, gibt es bereits erste Ergebnisse?

4. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die in diesem Zusammenhang immer wieder genannten Sektoren Tourismus und Solarenergie?

5. Welche Unterstützung von Kommission und Union könnte Griechenland erhalten, sollte sich das Land gegebenenfalls auf die Sektoren konzentrieren wollen?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(19. April 2012)

Das wirtschaftliche Anpassungsprogramm erklärt Reformen in verschiedenen Bereichen zur Priorität (reglementierte Berufe, Verkehr, Groß- und Einzelhandel, Tourismus, Energie und Telekommunikation), um unnötige Beschränkungen für die Wirtschaftstätigkeit aufzuheben, Preisflexibilität zu begünstigen und ganz allgemein die Produktivität zu steigern. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf den letzten Bericht der Kommission zur Einhaltung der Verpflichtungen seitens Griechenlands verwiesen, der hier abrufbar ist:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/index_en.htm

Im Rahmen des Programms hat Griechenland außerdem externe Berichte zu einzelnen Sektoren in Auftrag gegeben, eine Zusammenfassung ist hier abrufbar:
http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/athens/GreeceExecutiveSummary_new/pdfs/Executive_summary_English.pdf
Die griechischen Behörden prüfen derzeit die Ergebnisse dieser Berichte.

Um die Umsetzung dieser tiefgreifenden Reformen zu erleichtern, wird Griechenland bei der Gestaltung und Mobilisierung wertvoller technischer Hilfe von der Europäischen Kommission mittels der speziell dafür geschaffenen „Task-Force Griechenland“ unterstützt. Die Task-Force arbeitet bereits eng mit den griechischen Behörden zusammen, um in vielen wichtigen Bereichen wie der Absorption von Strukturfondsmitteln (in enger Zusammenarbeit mit der EIB) und den notwendigen Verbesserungen der Rahmenbedingungen für Unternehmen neueste Informationen zu sammeln und Expertenwissen zu mobilisieren. Die Frau Abgeordnete wird auf den letzten Quartalsbericht der Task-Force Griechenland verwiesen:
http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/ president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

Die Frau Abgeordnete wird außerdem auf die in Kürze erscheinende Mitteilung der Kommission zu Griechenland verwiesen, die die Änderungen umreißen soll, welche die Umsetzung des zweiten wirtschaftlichen Anpassungsprogramms bringen wird, wobei der Fokus auf den Aktionen liegt, die schnell angegangen werden müssen, um neuen Kapazitäten für Wachstum freizusetzen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002022/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Greece's economic future

One question keeps coming up in discussions about Greece's future: which economic sectors should the Greek Government focus on in order to generate economic growth and employment in the future?

1. Are the Commission staff in Greece also involved in producing the analyses, position papers and strategies needed to identify the relevant sectors of the Greek economy? Is the country receiving expert support from the Commission?

2. Is the Commission taking steps of its own to clarify these matters?

3. If so, are initial results already available?

4. How does the Commission assess the prospects in the tourism and solar energy sectors, which are often referred to in this context?

5. What support could Greece expect from the Commission and the European Union should it decide to focus on these sectors?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 April 2012)

The economic adjustment programme prioritizes reforms in several sectors (regulated professions, transport, retail and wholesale trade, tourism, energy and telecommunications) to lift unnecessary restrictions to the activity of economic operators, to promote price flexibility and more generally, to increase productivity levels. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's latest compliance report on Greece, published on: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2012/index_en.htm.

In the context of the programme, Greece has also commissioned external reports on specific sectors, a summary of which can be found on: http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/athens/GreeceExecutiveSummary_new/pdfs/Executive_summary_English.pdf. The Greek authorities are assessing the conclusions of those reports.

To help implement these challenging reforms, the European Commission supports Greece in framing and mobilising invaluable technical assistance through the specially created Taskforce for Greece. The Taskforce is already working closely with Greek authorities to identify news and mobilise expertise in many critical areas including on structural fund absorption (in close collaboration with the EIB) and the much needed improvement of the business environment. The Honourable Member is referred to the Task Force's quarterly reports (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm).

The Honourable Member is also referred to the upcoming Commission Communication on Greece, which will highlight the changes that the implementation of the Second Adjustment Programme will bring while focusing on the actions that need to be taken quickly to unblock new sources of growth.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-002023/12
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21. Februar 2012)

Betrifft: Reformen und Aufbau der Staatsverwaltung in Griechenland

Im Zusammenhang mit der Erfüllung von Bedingungen für die weitere Gewährung von EU-Finanzhilfen an Griechenland wird von der sogenannten Troika immer wieder darüber gesprochen, dass Reformen und der Aufbau einer intakten Staatsverwaltung notwendig sind.

1. Was tut die Kommission konkret, um das Land bei diesen Reformen zu unterstützen?

2. Welche Ressourcen und welches Personal hat die Kommission hierfür neben EZB und IWF in Griechenland vor Ort bereitgestellt? Wie setzt sich das Kommissionsteam detailliert zusammen: Expertise, Nationalität?

3. Mit welchem Zeithorizont rechnet die Kommission, was den Einsatz ihrer eigenen Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter in Griechenland betrifft?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(26. April 2012)

1. Die Unterstützung Griechenlands bei der Reform seiner Verwaltung erfolgt im Wege technischer Hilfe, die hauptsächlich von Experten aus den Mitgliedstaaten geleistet und von der Task Force der Kommission für Griechenland (TFGR) koordiniert wird. Die griechische Regierung hat zunächst Frankreich und Deutschland um Unterstützung auf zentralstaatlicher Ebene gebeten. Die beiden Mitgliedstaaten helfen dabei, ein Konzept sowie die Methodik und die Fahrpläne für Verwaltungsreformen auf zentralstaatlicher bzw. regionaler/kommunaler Ebene zu entwickeln.

Sobald die Fahrpläne für die Reform vorliegen, werden neben Frankreich und Deutschland auch andere Länder ihre Unterstützung bei der Umsetzung der geplanten operativen Vorhaben einbringen. So stellen Belgien, Spanien und Österreich bereits operative Unterstützung in ausgewählten Bereichen der Verwaltungsreform bereit. Je nach Bedarf und Fachgebiet werden auch andere Länder technische Hilfe leisten. Nähere Einzelheiten sind dem zweiten Quartalsbericht des Leiters der Task Force an die Kommission und die griechische Regierung zu entnehmen ([1]).

2. Wie bereits ausgeführt, wird die angeforderte technische Hilfe in erster Linie von Experten der Mitgliedstaaten bereitgestellt. Die Kommission koordiniert und begleitet diese Anstrengungen mithilfe der Task Force. Die finanzielle Unterstützung erfolgt durch Erstattung der Reisekosten der einzelstaatlichen Experten.

3. 15 Mitglieder der Task Force (einschließlich einiger abgeordneter nationaler Experten) sind bereits vor Ort tätig; im Anschluss an die Forderung der Eurogruppe vom 21. Februar und die Erklärung der Staats- und Regierungschefs des Euro-Währungsgebiets vom 2. März 2012 wird zurzeit geprüft, ob das Team der Task Force demnächst weiter verstärkt werden soll.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002023/12
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Reform and development of state administration in Greece

In the context of fulfilling conditions for the continued provision of EU financial assistance to Greece, the so-called troika frequently refers to the need for reform and the development of an intact state administration.

1. What specific steps are being taken by the Commission to support Greece in these reforms?

2. What resources and personnel has the Commission provided in Greece for this purpose, alongside the ECB and IMF? What is the precise composition of the Commission team in terms of expertise and nationality?

3. What timeframe is the Commission working with regarding the deployment of its own staff in Greece?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(26 April 2012)

1. Support to Greece in reforming its administration is provided through technical assistance provided mainly by Member States' experts coordinated by the Commission's Task Force for Greece (TFGR). The Greek authorities have decided to request first assistance at the central level, by France and Germany. These two Member States are assisting in setting up the vision, methodology and roadmaps, respectively for the administrative reforms at central level and regional/local level.

Once the roadmaps for the reform are defined, France and Germany, as well as other countries will provide assistance on the implementation of the operational projects deriving from the roadmaps. For example Belgium, Spain and Austria are already providing operational assistance in selected areas of the administrative reform. Other countries will also provide their technical assistance, depending on the needs and domains of expertise. More details can be found in the second quarterly report of the head of the TFGR to the Commission and the Greek authorities ([1]).

2. As described above, the requested technical assistance is mainly provided by Member States' experts. The Commission, through the TFGR, is coordinating and accompanying this exercise. Financial support is given through the reimbursement of travel costs for Member States' experts.

3. Fifteen TFGR staff (including some seconded national experts) are already on the ground and following the request of the Eurogroup of 21 February and the 2 March 2012 statement of the Heads of States and Governments of the euro area further reinforcement of the TFGR is currently being examined with a view of a rapid reinforcement.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/taskforce-greece/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002024/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Animal transportation

The Commission report on Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport of 10 November 2011 [COM(2011) 0700 final] indicates that some 37 million animals were transported within Member States and to and from third countries in 2009.

— Could the Commission set out (for the most recent data available) the numbers of cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and horses that are transported from EU Member States to third countries and vice versa?

— What measures are in place to help ensure that animal welfare provisions are respected for animals in transit to and from the EU?

Answer given by Mr Dalli on behalf of the Commission
(3 April 2012)

During 2011, the number of animals imported to the EU from third countries were approximately 8 000 horses, 19 000 bovines, 800 pigs, 26 000 sheep and 360 goats. The same year approximately 15 000 horses, 800 000 bovines, 1.6 million pigs, 1.5 million sheep and 8 000 goats were exported from the EU ([1]).

Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport ([2]) applies when animals are transported within the Union. When animals are exported to or imported from a third country where the European Convention for the protection of animals during international transport ([3]) is applicable, the transport shall comply with the rules of the Convention as regards the third-country part of the transport.

For the export of bovine breeding animals to certain third countries, the exporter may be entitled to receive an export refund from the EU. Payment of export refunds is subject to respect of animal welfare rules until the first place of unloading in the third country of final destination pursuant to EU legislation ([4]).

When animals are exported outside the framework of the export refunds, the Commission does not have any mandate in relation to the implementation of animal welfare rules after the animals have left the EU. However, to promote animal welfare outside the Union, the Commission supports the work performed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in the development, adoption and promotion of international standards concerning animal welfare ([5]). In particular the OIE has adopted international guidelines on the transport of animals by road, by sea and by air.

([1]) *Source:* Eurostat (COMEXT).
([2]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport; OJ L 3, 5.1.2005.
([3]) http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=193&CM=8&DF=01/03/2012&CL=ENG.
([4]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 817/2010 laying down detailed rules pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards requirements for the granting of export refunds related to the welfare of live bovine animals during transport; OJ L 245, 17.9.2010.
([5]) http://www.oie.int/en/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-key-themes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002025/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Financial transaction tax

CFA francs are used by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). Each of these two groups issues its own CFA franc and these currencies were originally both pegged to the French franc. Since France joined the euro, however, they have been pegged to the European common currency instead.

Under the terms of the agreement which established the WAEMU Central Bank (Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest) and the CEMAC Central Bank (Banque des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale), each African country involved is obliged to keep a set amount of its foreign exchange reserves in an 'operations account' held at the French Treasury. The French in turn help to guarantee the stability of the two CFA franc currencies.

The French Treasury can to invest the foreign exchange reserves in question on the French stock exchange.

Can the Commission confirm whether these investments would be covered by any of the schemes proposed in its Green Paper on a financial transaction tax if the French Treasury were to invest the foreign reserves on the stock exchange in its own name or on behalf of the relevant African governments?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 April 2012)

Under the Commission Proposal on Financial Transaction Tax (COM(2011) 594), essentially the purchase and sale of financial instruments and the conclusion or modification of derivatives agreements are subject to Financial Transaction Tax (FTT). This is on the condition that at least one party to the transaction is established in a Member State and that a financial institution established in the territory of a Member State is party to the transaction, acting either on its own account or for the account of another person, or is acting in the name of a party to the transaction. The underlying concepts, which are critical for the application of the proposed tax, are defined in the proposal, notably the concepts of 'financial transaction' and 'financial institution'.

The information at the Commission's disposal in regard to the operations referred to by the Honourable Member does not allow it to judge whether, in view of all the requirements set out in the draft Directive, the transactions carried out by the French Treasury would be subject to the proposed FTT.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002026/12
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: Erasmus for All

The Grundtvig programme has been designed to respond to the challenges of Europe's ageing population and to help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competences through lifelong learning.

The Commission has proposed a future single programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020) called 'Erasmus for All', which would replace current lifelong learning programmes such as Grundtvig. Whilst I understand the benefits of merging the various education and learning programmes under the Erasmus 'brand name', I note that the new programme appears to offer mobility and cooperation for trainers in adult education but not for adult learners.

— With reference to Europe's aging population, what assurances can the Commission give that adult learners will be able to participate fully in 'Erasmus for All'?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(17 April 2012)

The Commission sees the professional capacities of staff in the adult education sector as a key factor in enhancing quality. The Impact Assessment on Education and Training Actions accompanying the Commission's proposed programme Erasmus for All revealed that the demand-driven effect of mobility was weaker in the adult education sector due to its segmentation. The Commission therefore proposes rather to enhance the mobility of teachers and trainers, so as to have a stronger multiplier effect, benefit more learners and ensure greater systemic impact. Staff mobility in adult education will be significantly boosted, increasing in volume and covering the full breadth of shorter and longer duration mobility activities. Alongside staff mobility, partnerships between adult education providers will continue to be at the heart of activities supported by the new programme, given the strong contribution that they have generated up to now to the quality of providers and learning opportunities for adults of all ages.

The Commission is therefore confident that adult learners, including senior citizens, will derive full benefit from the future 'Erasmus for All' programme through the improved quality of the whole adult learning sector.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002027/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: TAC for North Irish Sea herring

Given the disappointing ten per cent reduction in the 2012 Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for North Irish Sea herring (VIIa), which apparently runs counter to stock trends, can the Commission provide an explanation as to what has been overlooked, given that this has been described by fisheries scientists as probably the most data-rich fish stock in Europe?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(28 March 2012)

For the stock of herring in the North Irish Sea, the ICES 2011 advice identified some uncertainties in the stock assessment; principally that a better determination of the exploitation status is required and that the results of previous assessments are considered to not provide reliable values of the stock's size (measured as the biomass of the spawners or 'SSB') and the fishing mortality (F) currently inflicted on the stock.

This resulted in advice based on precautionary considerations from ICES for no increase in landings. While ICES identified an increasing trend in the SSB they were unable to provide an analytical assessment of the stock. Given a trends only advice the Commission's policy was to treat such stocks as data poor and propose a reduction in TAC appropriate to the uncertainty of the assessment.

The Commission can confirm that nothing has been overlooked. There are however uncertainties within the stock assessment which need to be addressed. This stock was due for benchmarking (13-17 February) and the outcome is expected shortly.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002028/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: TAC for Irish Sea cod

Given the continuing reduction in the total allowable catch (TAC) for Irish Sea cod, which contradicts the evidence received from fishermen, can the Commission suggest a solution to the increasing problem regarding information from fisheries?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2012)

The scientific advice provided in 2011 for the Irish Sea cod stock identified that that the biomass remains below safe biological levels with reduced reproductive capacity and that total mortality remains very high. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice identified that the 2009 year class was estimated to be more abundant, making it imperative to provide protection to this stock to allow for any rebuilding possible. ICES can only incorporate information into stock assessment that is scientifically robust.

The solution is to ensure that there is shared understanding of the process and the data needed to undertake assessments. The reinforcement of data collection and scientific advice has been identified as a need within the CFP reform proposals. Currently ICES stock advice is underpinned by information from observer trips, fishery independent data as well as the UK Fisheries-Science Partnership surveys

The Commission will be seeking to improve the information on fisheries by supporting cooperation and encourage practices such as the Meeting between ICES and Regional Advisory Councils (MIRAC) and the initiative to address data poor stocks by the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council (NWWRAC).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002029/12
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: December 2011 Fisheries Council decision

Will the Commission provide an explanation of the circumstances that led to decisions being taken at the EU's December 2011 Fisheries Council for a 150 % increase in the Celtic Sea cod TAC, compared to a 25 % cut in the cod TAC for the adjoining Irish Sea?

This is particularly relevant as the Irish Sea cod fishery has been the subject of recovery measures for 12 years, whereas the Celtic Sea is outside the remit of the EU's long-term cod recovery plan.

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(27 March 2012)

The decision taken in respect of these two stocks was based upon the scientific advice provided which despite being in adjacent areas identifies underlying differences in the stocks.

The original International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice for 2011 underestimated the strength of the 2009 year class of Celtic Sea Cod stock. This stock has been noted to have a high growth rate and these fish have now entered the fishery resulting in an increased abundance. In the July 2011 advice an increase in the Total Allowance Catch was identified which remained consistent with a maximum sustainable yield (MSY) fishing mortality.

In contrast the advice for the Irish Sea was to reduce catch to zero. This stock is identified as having a spawning biomass (SSB) below safe biological limits, low recruitment and a high total mortality. While the 2009 year class has been estimated as being more abundant than previous years, ICES identifies the need for additional measures to protect the stock and promote its rebuilding.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-002030/12
aan de Commissie (Vicevoorzitter — Hoge Vertegenwoordiger)
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(21 februari 2012)

Betreft: VP/HR — Rizana Nafeek

Op 25 oktober 2010 werd Rizana Nafeek, een 22-jarige huisbediende uit Sri Lanka, ter dood veroordeeld door het hooggerechtshof in Riyad, Saudi-Arabië. Vijf jaar eerder was zij gearresteerd op beschuldiging van de moord op een baby die aan haar hoede was toevertrouwd. Ze was op dat moment 17 jaar oud. Op haar paspoort staat vermeld dat ze geboren is in februari 1982, maar volgens haar geboorteakte is ze geboren in februari 1988. Volgens verschillende bronnen mocht ze haar geboorteakte niet voorleggen op het proces. Bovendien had ze geen toegang tot een advocaat tijdens de periode van voorarrest of tijdens haar eerste proces. Aanvankelijk heeft ze bij een ondervraging de moord „bekend", maar ze heeft die bekentenis later ingetrokken, waartoe ze naar eigen gedwongen werd na fysieke mishandeling. Het doodvonnis moet nu bekrachtigd worden door de koning. Als het bekrachtigd wordt, zal ze onthoofd worden.

Saudi-Arabië is toegetreden tot het Verdrag inzake de rechten van het kind (VRK), dat de terechtstelling van mensen verbiedt voor misdrijven die ze gepleegd hebben toen ze jonger dan 18 jaar oud waren.

— Is de voorzitter/hoge vertegenwoordiger zich bewust van de situatie van Rizana Nafeek?

— Zo ja, heeft zij de Saudische regering ertoe opgeroepen te waarborgen dat de autoriteiten het recht van Rizana Nafeek op een eerlijk proces geëerbiedigd hebben?

— Zal ze druk uitoefenen op de Saudische regering om het VRK na te leven?

— Zo ja, op welke manier?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(24 april 2012)

De EU volgt de zaak van mevrouw Nafeek sinds enige tijd op de voet, met name via haar delegatie in Riyad. Er vinden geregeld discussies plaats tussen de EU en de plaatselijke autoriteiten over mensenrechtenkwesties, met name over concrete gevallen. De EU gebruikt deze gelegenheden ten volle om passende boodschappen over te brengen via alle mogelijke kanalen.

Volgens de Saoedische autoriteiten is de zaak van mevrouw Nafeek nog niet gesloten. De EU zal deze ontwikkelingen zeer nauwlettend blijven volgen, in nauwe samenwerking met de autoriteiten van haar thuisland, Sri Lanka.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002030/12
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Thijs Berman (S&D)
(21 February 2012)

Subject: VP/HR — Rizana Nafeek

On 25 October 2010 Rizana Nafeek, a 22-year-old Sri Lankan domestic worker, was sentenced to death by the Supreme Court in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She had been arrested five years earlier on charges of murdering an infant in her care. She was 17 years old at the time. Her passport states that she was born in February 1982, but according to her birth certificate she was born in February 1988. According to several sources, she was not allowed to present her birth certificate at the trial. Furthermore, she had no access to lawyers either during the pre-trial period or at her first trial. She initially 'confessed' to the murder under interrogation, but has since retracted her confession, which she says she was forced to make under duress following physical assault. The death sentence is now awaiting ratification by the King. If it is ratified, she will be executed by beheading.

Saudi Arabia is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which prohibits the execution of offenders for crimes committed when they were aged under 18.

— Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the situation of Rizana Nafeek?

— If so, has she called on the Saudi government to ensure that the authorities have respected Rizana Nafeek's right to a fair trial?

— Will she put pressure on the Saudi government to respect the CRC?

— If so, how will this be done?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2012)

The EU has been monitoring the case of Ms Nafeek, mainly through its Delegation in Riyadh. Discussions about human rights issues and individual cases between the EU and local authorities take place regularly using all suitable channels and the EU makes full use of these opportunities to convey appropriate messages to Saudi Arabia.

According to the Saudi authorities, Ms Nafeek's case is not yet closed. The EU will continue to follow it very attentively, in close coordination with the authorities of her home country, Sri Lanka.

ABONNEMENTSPRISER 2013 (ekskl. moms, inkl. normale forsendelsesomkostninger)

EU-Tidende, L- + C-udgaven, kun papirudgave	22 officielle EU-sprog	1 300 EUR pr. år
EU-Tidende, L- + C-udgaven, papirudgave + årlig dvd	22 officielle EU-sprog	1 420 EUR pr. år
EU-Tidende, L-udgaven, kun papirudgave	22 officielle EU-sprog	910 EUR pr. år
EU-Tidende, L- + C-udgaven, månedlig kumulativ dvd	22 officielle EU-sprog	100 EUR pr. år
Supplement til EUT (S-udgaven), udbud og offentlige kontrakter, dvd, 1 udgave pr. uge	Flersproget: 23 officielle EU-sprog	200 EUR pr. år
EU-Tidende, C-udgaven — udvælgelsesprøver	Sprog iht. udvælgelsesprøve(r)	50 EUR pr. år

Den Europæiske Unions Tidende, der udkommer på EU's officielle sprog, fås i abonnement i 22 sprogudgaver. EU-Tidende omfatter L-udgaven (retsforskrifter) og C-udgaven (meddelelser og oplysninger).

Der abonneres særskilt på hver sprogudgave.

I henhold til Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 920/2005, offentliggjort i EU-Tidende L 156 af 18. juni 2005, er Den Europæiske Unions institutioner midlertidigt fritaget for forpligtelsen til at udarbejde og offentliggøre alle retsakter på irsk. Irske udgaver af EU-Tidende vil derfor blive markedsført særskilt.

Abonnementet på supplementet til EU-Tidende (S-udgaven (udbud og offentlige kontrakter)) omfatter alle udgaver på de 23 officielle sprog på én dvd.

Abonnenter på *Den Europæiske Unions Tidende* kan uden ekstra omkostninger rekvirere eksemplarer af diverse bilag til EU-Tidende (C … A-udgaver). Abonnenterne gøres opmærksom på udgivelsen af bilagene ved hjælp af »meddelelser til læserne« i *Den Europæiske Unions Tidende*.

Salg og abonnementer

Betalingsabonnementer på diverse tidsskrifter, som f.eks. *Den Europæiske Unions Tidende*, kan købes gennem vore salgsagenter. Listen over salgsagenterne findes på internettet:

http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_da.htm

EUR-Lex (http://eur-lex.europa.eu) giver direkte og gratis adgang til EU-retten. Via dette netsted kan man konsultere *Den Europæiske Unions Tidende*, og netstedet indeholder endvidere traktaterne, retsforskrifter, retspraksis og forberedende retsakter.

Yderligere oplysninger om Den Europæiske Union findes på: http://europa.eu

Den Europæiske Unions Publikationskontor
2985 Luxembourg
LUXEMBOURG

DA